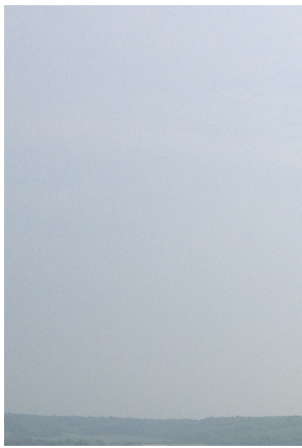


**GREEN BELT REVIEW PURPOSES ASSESSMENT**  
 (Prepared for Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council)

**Annex 1 – Parcel Assessment Sheets for Dacorum Borough Council**

November 2013



SINCLAIR KNIGHT MERZ  
**SKM**

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## Introduction

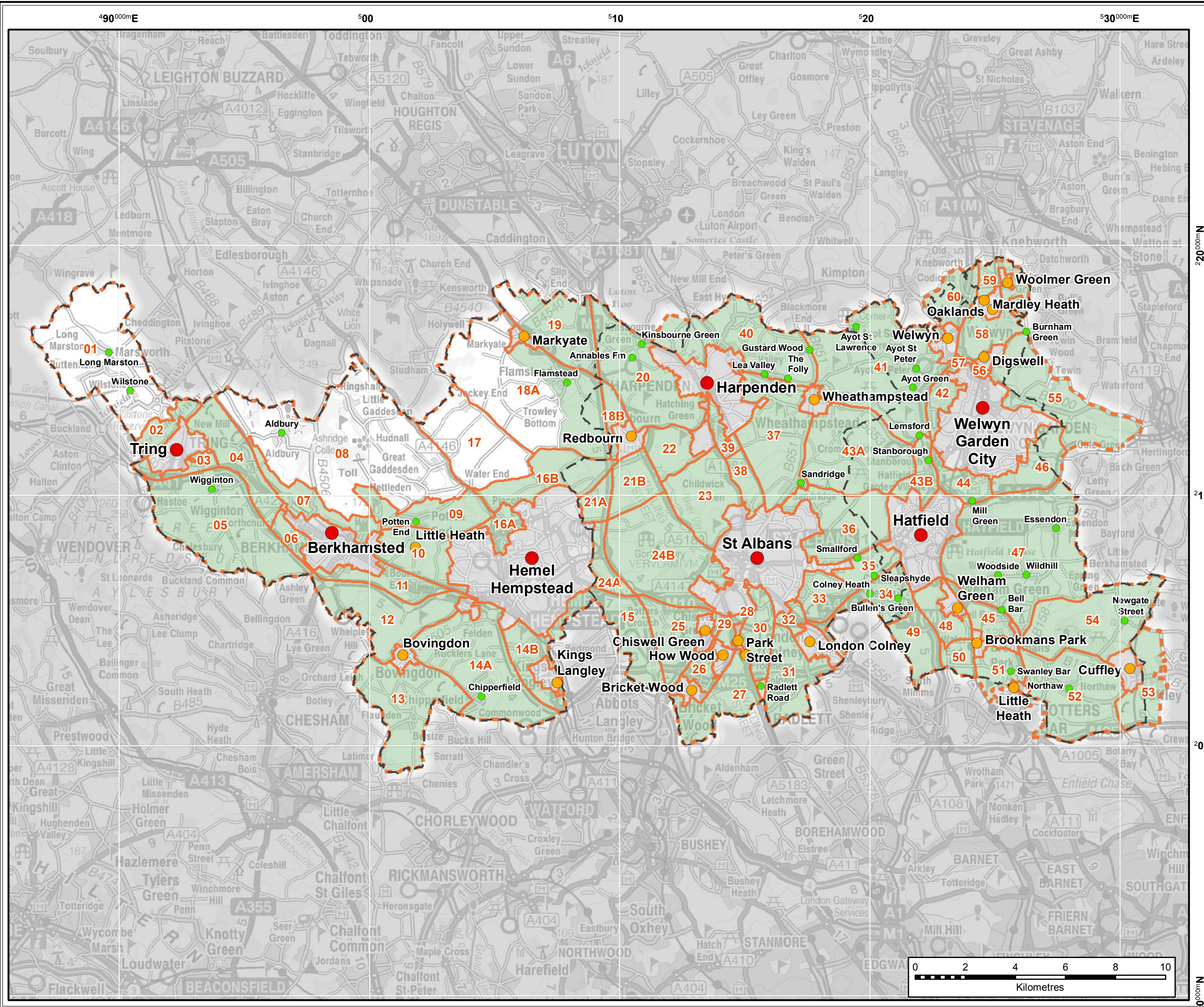
This document forms an Annex to the Green Belt Review Purposes Assessment undertaken on behalf of on behalf of Dacorum Borough Council, St Albans City and District Council, and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council.

The parcel assessment sheets in this annex relate to Dacorum Borough 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 the 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

N

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**

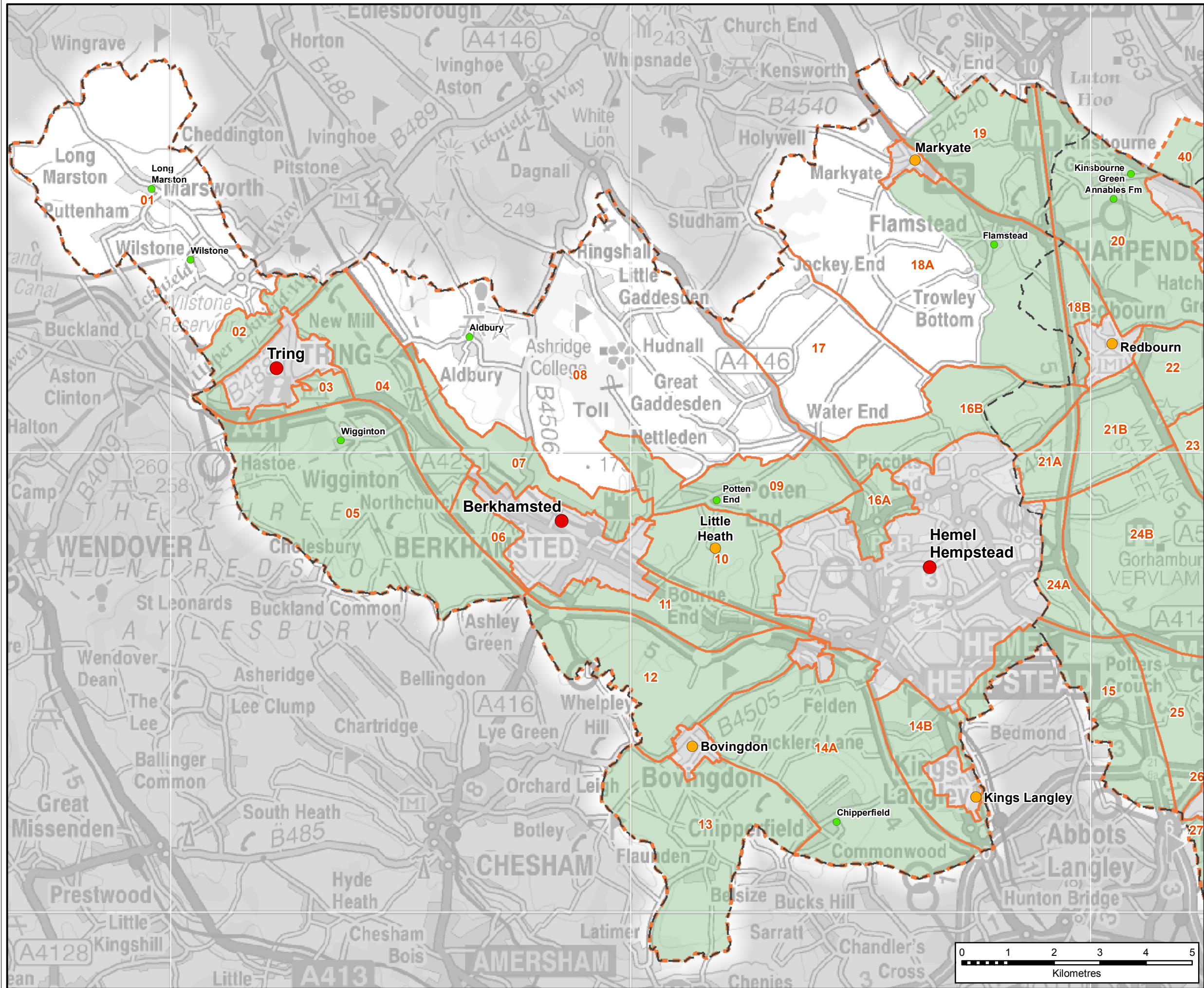
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London.Gov Ordnance Survey	KW
CHECKED	DATE
RB	30/11/2013



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Key:

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

Settlement

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



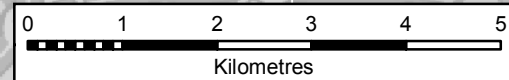
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 Units: Meter

REVISION: G

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

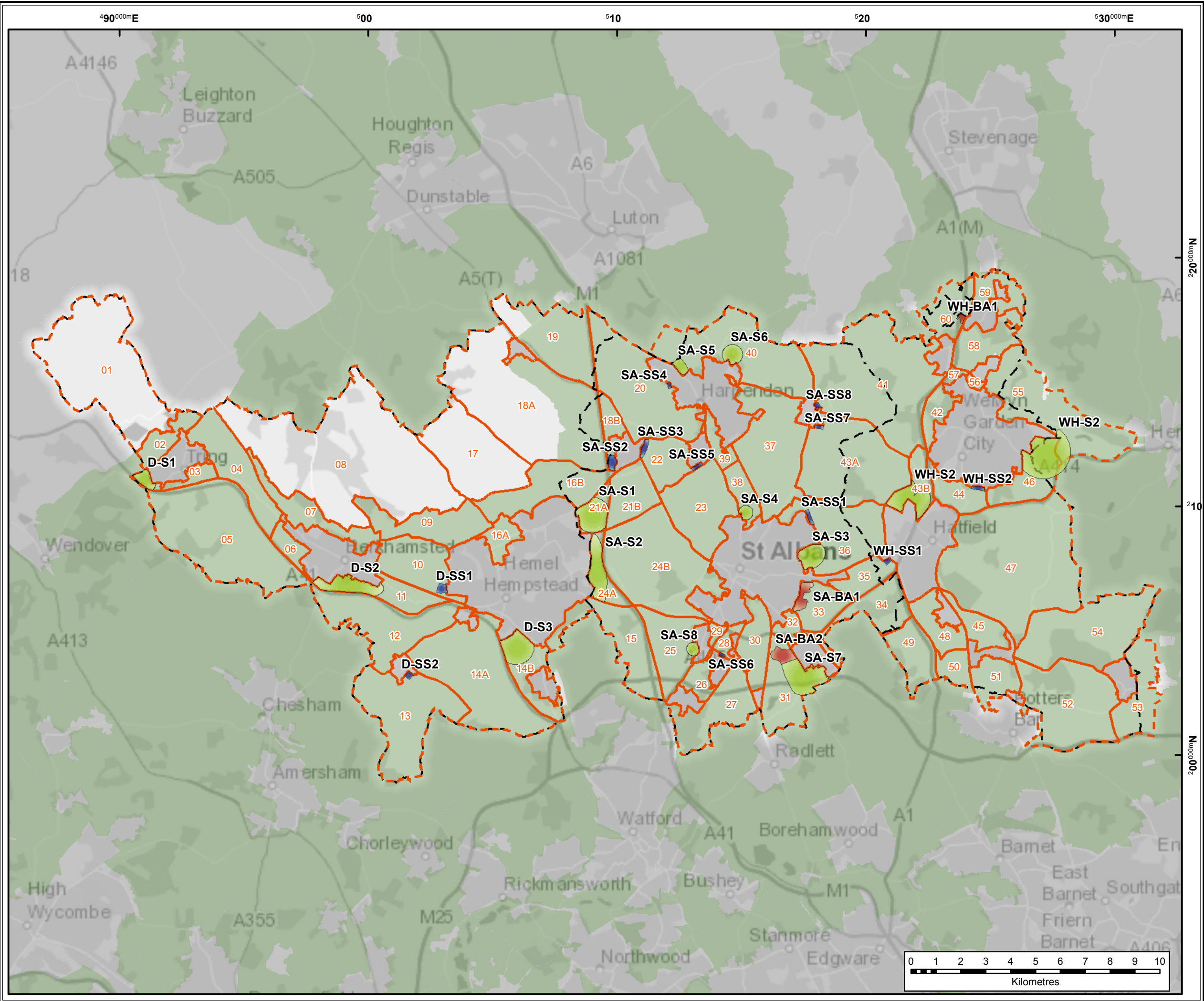
### Strategic Parcel Plan Dacorum

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



File Name: Strategic Parcel Plan\_Dacorum\_20131025  
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 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



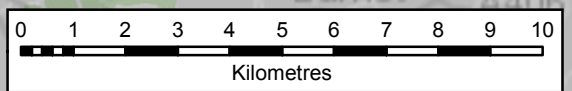
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 Units: Meter

REVISION: H

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

**FIGURE 8.1.**  
**Land Contributing Least Towards Green Belt Purposes**

SCALE	PROJECT CODE
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CONTENT	DRAWN
London.Gov Ordnance Survey	KW
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RB	2/12/2013

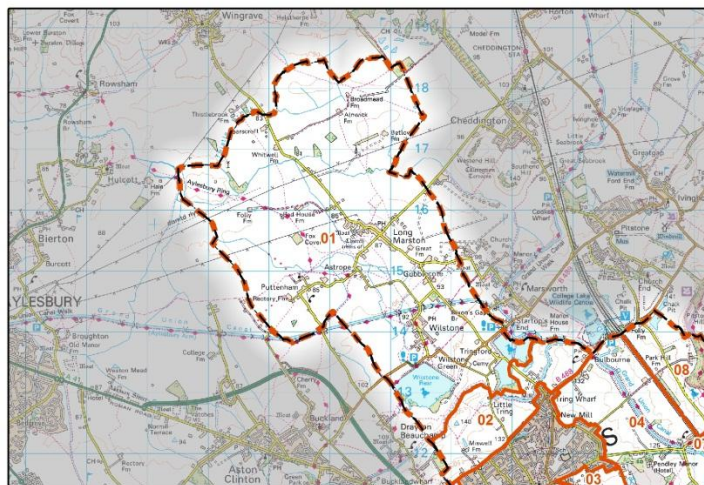


The Assessment Criteria for the Green Belt Review Purposes Assessment is set out below. The full methodology is set out in Chapter 5 of the Final Report.

<b>NATIONAL PURPOSES</b>	
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>	
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?
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>	
3)	Does the parcel provide, or form part of, a gap or space between existing 1 <sup>st</sup> 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?
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>	
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)
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>	
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?
<b>HERTFORDSHIRE PURPOSE</b>	
<b>Maintaining existing settlement pattern</b>	
14)	Does the parcel provide, or form part of, a gap or space between existing 1 <sup>st</sup> 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?
<b>Presentation of Contribution to Green Belt Purposes</b>	
<b>Significant contribution to GB purpose</b>	
<b>Partial contribution to GB purpose</b>	
<b>Limited or no contribution to GB purpose</b>	

## GB01: Non-Green Belt Land Northwest of Tring

**Description:** The parcel is non-Green Belt land extending from the edge of the Green Belt to the northwest of Tring. It is 1,756 ha in size and comprises a low lying undulating agricultural clay plain, between the Chiltern escarpment and low hills above Wingrave and the distinctive Mentmore Park.



**Land use:** Predominantly arable and pastoral farmland, including a section of the Grand Union Canal and small scale reservoirs used for recreational purposes.

View to southeast towards Tring shows strong rural and open characteristics



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside from encroachment and preserving the setting of Wilstone and Long Marston. Partial contribution towards maintaining the existing settlement pattern. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 2 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.



<b>GB01 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in arable and pastoral farmland. Medium sized fields are bounded by hedgerows interspersed with mature hedgerow trees including native Black Poplars and fields laid to pasture, close to the Grand Union Canal. Reservoirs for the canal (designated SSSIs) are located in the south of the parcel. There is very limited built development apart from the 3 <sup>rd</sup> tier settlements of Long Marston and Wilstone, and scattered mainly farming related, development. There is no evidence of significant encroachment. Levels of visual openness are generally very high due to the relative absence of built development.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel contains Wilstone and Long Marston Conservation Areas. Both villages are well integrated into the countryside. There is a strong rural and open setting and views to and from the AONB. The parcel also contains a SAM at Puttenham and two SAMs north of Long Marston.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel contributes (with GB02) to the primary local gap which separates Tring (1 <sup>st</sup> ) and Wilstone (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) and provides the secondary local gap which separates Wilstone (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) and Long Marston (3 <sup>rd</sup> ). The gaps are large at 1.6 km and 1.2 km respectively and are well-maintained (relatively free from development). There is no evidence of ribbon development and no major routes pass through the parcel. Any small scale reduction in either gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms, or their overall visual openness.		

### **Level of Openness and Countryside Character**

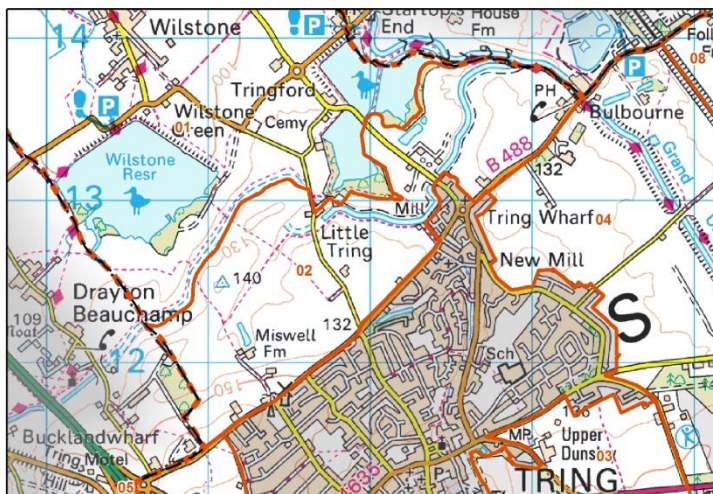
**Existence of built development** The level of built development is low at 0.4%. The parcel contains small villages and hamlets washed over by the Green Belt which have experienced limited recent development. The parcel is crossed by minor roads and some electricity pylons.

**Visual Openness** The gently rolling landform allows for open long distance views from many locations from within the parcel particularly to the surrounding Chiltern Hills. The lack of built development and woodland cover gives the parcel a generally open visual character. The urban edge of Tring lies at a minimum distance of 300m from the southern edge of the parcel and is not visible from most locations within the parcel due to the landform and intervening vegetation.

**Countryside Character** The parcel has a strong rural character and is relatively remote whilst displaying few urban influences.

## GB02: Green Belt Land Northwest of Tring

**Description** The parcel is 225ha in size and contiguous with the northwest edge of Tring and B488 (Icknield Way and Bulbourne Road). It is bounded to the north by the edge of the Green Belt. The eastern edge is defined by the edge of the study area and the western edge by the A41. It is partially covered by the Chilterns AONB and comprises a transitional landscape between the low lying land and the Chilterns, with topography falling from the northern built edge of Tring.



**Land use** Predominantly arable farmland, plus a section of the Grand Union Canal and a sewage works.

View north from the edge of Tring shows strong open and rural characteristics



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 1 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

<b>GB02 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED / NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>LIMITED / NO</b>
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in large to medium scale arable fields with some pasture and one small block of woodland. The fields are bound by hedgerows interspersed with mature hedgerow trees. The Grand Union Canal lies on the northern boundary and is tracked by the Grand Union Canal Walk. Part of the parcel lies within the Chilterns AONB (national landscape designation) which reflects its high landscape quality. There is very limited built development apart from scattered farm buildings and large scattered single dwellings, and there is no significant encroachment. The main urban influence is the north edge of Tring which represents a strong and linear settlement boundary defined by the B488. This edge contains residential development and an industrial estate. Beyond the edge is a sewage works along Tringford Road. Levels of visual openness are generally very high due to a relative absence of built development.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>LIMITED / NO</b>
The parcel does not provide setting for any specific historic designations, although it provides part of the setting for the historic market town of Tring.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>LIMITED / NO</b>
The parcel (together with GB01) provides the primary local gap between Tring (1 <sup>st</sup> ) and Wilstone (3 <sup>rd</sup> ). The Gap is at 1.6 km, of which GB2 provides 0.6 km. It is large and well-maintained (relatively free from development). There is no evidence of ribbon development and no major routes pass through the parcel. Any small scale reduction in this gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms, or overall visual openness.		

### **Level of Openness and Countryside Character**

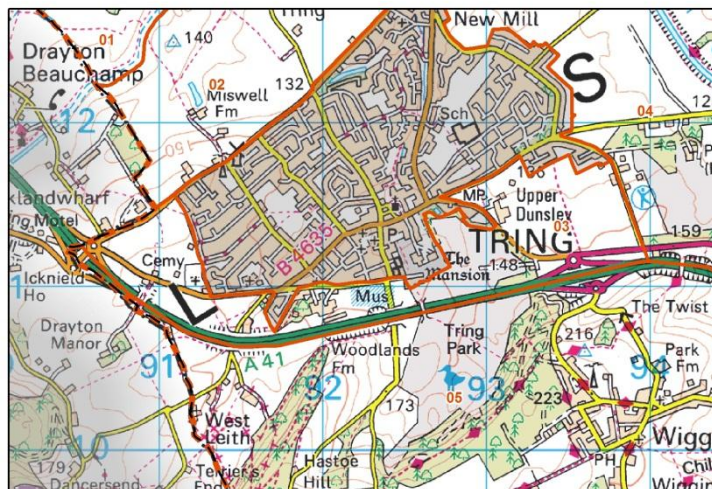
**Existence of built development** The level of built development is low at 0.3%. The parcel contains some built development close to the northern edge of Tring but physical features are generally limited within the parcel as a whole.

**Visual Openness** The gently rolling landform allows for long distance views, especially to the north from the B488. The limited level of built development and woodland cover combined with the falling landform gives the parcel an open visual character. The urban edge of Tring is not visible from many locations within the parcel due to the landform.

**Countryside Character** The parcel lies on the urban edge of Tring with the busy B488 Icknield Way providing a clear linear boundary but beyond this the parcel has a rural character with few urban influences with the exception of a sewage works.

## GB03 – Green Belt Land South West of Tring

**Description** The parcel is contiguous with the southwest edge of Tring and extends to the south along the A41 and along Cow Lane to the east. It is covered by the Chilterns AONB and is 153 ha in size comprising gently undulating underlying chalk geology which is more locally pronounced at the interface with the elevated Chiltern escarpment surrounding Tring Park to the south of the A41.



**Land use** Predominantly arable farmland with some pasture, and Tring Park / estate parkland plus recreational activities including cricket ground and playing fields.

View from south edge of Tring to the south towards the concealed A41. Housing and urban fringe characteristics are evident



View over land to west of Tring towards settlement edge



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards preserving the setting of Tring and Tring Park. Partial contribution towards preventing merging (providing strategic gap between Tring and Berkhamsted) and maintain the existing settlement pattern. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 1 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

<b>GB03 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel contributes (with GB04, 05, 06 & 07) to the strategic gap between Tring and Berkhamsted. The overall gap is 3.9 km. There is no evidence of ribbon development along the A41 however the southern built edge of Tring extends along London Road (which contains a Tesco development) and Cow Lane. The A41 and Tring are generally visually concealed by mature planting. There is some visibility of the gap from the A41. Any reduction in the size of the gap, especially to the west of Tring, would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms, but would heavily impact on the visual openness and character of the parcel.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in a mixture of medium sized arable and pasture fields with areas of estate parkland. Fields are predominantly arable to the east and west and equine pasture to the centre of the parcel, close to Tring. They are generally bound by hedgerows interspersed with mature hedgerow trees. The estate parkland of Tring Park (which flows into GB05) is a distinctive landscape and includes a number of fine mature trees. Woodland cover is generally restricted to parkland planting and linear belts along transport corridors. The main urban influence is the surrounding roads including the audibly intrusive A41, B488 and Aylesbury Road which enclose the south and west of Tring. This disconnects the parcel to the surrounding countryside, especially to the west. The south has also been subject to encroachment by large single dwellings. It displays some urban fringe characteristics overall. Levels of visual openness are variable.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel adjoins Tring Conservation Area and contains Tring Park Historic Park & Garden (HPG). The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel contributes (with GB05) to the secondary local gap between the settlements of Tring (1 <sup>st</sup> tier) and Wigginton (3 <sup>rd</sup> tier). This gap is 0.9 km in size and is well-maintained by the HPG. It also forms part of an important gap between Tring and Aston Clinton (in Aylesbury Vale). There is no evidence of ribbon development and limited visual perception of any settlements from the A41. Any small scale reduction in the gaps would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical or visual terms, but would reduce levels of overall visual openness.		

### **Level of Openness and Countryside Character**

**Existence of built development** The level of built development is low at 0.5%. The parcel contains some limited semi urban fringe development adjacent to Tring with a mix of grazing and various recreational uses, including playing fields and allotments.

**Visual Openness** The gently rolling landform allows for some medium distance views with the wooded belt surrounding the A41 limiting many views beyond this. The parcel is generally enclosed with the urban edge of Tring acting as a visual barrier to the north of the parcel whilst high hedgerows also limit views to farmland.

**Countryside Character** The parcel is clearly located on an urban edge and displays some urban fringe

influences such as estate land, a cemetery, playing fields and horse pasture. The busy road network surrounding the parcel also has an urbanising influence.

### **GB03 – Next Steps**

Land enclosed by B488, A41 and west of Tring is recommended for further assessment as a strategic sub-area (D-S1). In light of the functions of the strategic parcel, land to the west and southwest of Tring is considered to contribute least towards the Green Belt purposes. This sub-area is enclosed by the B488, A41 and west edge of Tring, and contains the Aylesbury Road. It is therefore subject to urban influence and localised levels of landscape enclosure as it is bound by physical features which interrupt the landscape and act as barriers to the wider countryside. In relation to the overall parcel assessment this sub-area does not make a significant contribution towards preserving setting. Furthermore, a reduction in the size of the parcel would not significantly compromise the primary functions of the Green Belt or the separation of existing settlements. Assessed in isolation the strategic sub-area makes a limited or no contribution towards all of the five Green Belt purposes assessed. It is noted that a section of this strategic parcel is allocated for removal from the Green Belt to accommodate new housing and associated development (Local Allocation LA5 within Dacorum's Core Strategy).

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## GB04 – Green Belt Land North of Tring

**Description** The parcel extends from the north edge of Tring to the west edge of Berkhamsted. It is bounded by the railway line to the north and A41 to the south. It is also partly covered by the Chilterns AONB. It is 623 ha in size comprising the flat and gently undulating valley floor of the River Bulbourne and the west coast mainline cutting. The land falls gradually to the southeast and the Grand Union Canal runs through the parcel from northwest to southeast.



**Land use** Predominantly arable farmland, plus Pendley Manor Park, a small cluster of development around Tring Station, a garden centre and playing fields.

View to east from canal showing strong open and rural characteristics



Grand Union Canal running through the parcel



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards preventing merging (providing strategic gap between Tring and Berkhamsted) and safeguarding the countryside. Partial contribution towards preserving the setting of Dudstell. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 2 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.



<b>GB04 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel contributes (with GB03, 05, 06 & 07) to the strategic gap between Tring and Berkhamsted. The overall gap is 3.9 km. It is large and well-maintained. There is no evidence of ribbon development along the A41 however there is scattered development along the Grand Union Canal. The parcel is highly visible from the A41 however settlements are well concealed by landscape buffering. Any small scale reduction in the gap would be unlikely to comprise the separation of settlements in physical terms, or significantly affect its overall visual openness.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in large scale arable fields bound by hedgerows interspersed with mature hedgerow trees. There are some limited areas of deciduous woodland surrounding Pendley Manor. The main urban influences are the A41, A4251 and railway line which are well concealed but audibly intrusive. In spite of these physical features the countryside is continuous across the parcel, as long views are provided. There are limited urban influences apart from farm buildings and scattered development along the Canal and there is no significant encroachment. Levels of visual openness are high mainly due to the absence of built development.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel contains Dudswell conversation area and is close to Tring Park HPG. There is also a SAM near Cow Roast. The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside and especially from the Bulbourne Valley and along the canal. It also provides setting to Berkhamsted Conservation Areas.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not separate any 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> tier settlements.		

### **Level of openness and countryside character**

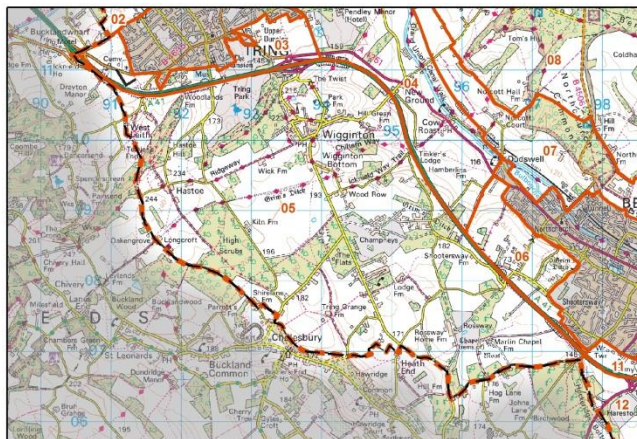
**Existence of built development** The level of built development is low at 0.6%. There are limited semi urban influences in the parcel around Tring including a sports ground off Love Lane and a garden centre.

**Visual Openness** The open flat landscape allows for views to the northeast of the parcel and also particularly to the Chilterns escarpment with long distance views framed and contained by wooded scarp slopes.

**Countryside Character** The parcel has a strong rural character and despite being located adjacent to a built area. The urban influence is limited to the edge of Tring with the majority of the parcel having a relatively remote character.

## GB05 –Green Belt Land between Tring and Berkhamsted

**Description** The parcel is located between but not adjoining the south of Tring and Berkhamsted. The boundary to the north and east runs along the A41 and to the south and west along the edge of the study area. It is covered by the Chilterns AONB and is 1,657 ha in size comprising an undulating plateau falling to the Bulbourne valley to the north.



**Land use** Mix of pasture and arable farmland, plus Tring Park / estate parkland and Champneys health spa and beauty college.

View to Tring Park from the south / Marlin Hill showing strong open and rural setting



View to northwest from elevated Wigginton showing long distance views to GB04, GB07 & GB08



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards preventing merging (providing strategic gap between Tring and Berkhamsted), safeguarding the countryside and preserving the setting of Tring Park. Partial contribution towards maintain the existing settlement pattern. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 3 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

<b>GB05 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel contributes (with GB03, 04, 06 & 07) to the strategic gap between Tring and Berkhamsted. The overall gap is 3.9 km and is large and well-maintained. Although the parcel does not directly adjoin settlements it still performs a significant separation function. There is evidence of scattered ribbon development across the parcel, at Wigginton, hamlets, scattered large singledwellings and farm buildings. The parcel is highly visible from the A41 however settlements are well concealed by planting. Any small scale reduction in the gap would be unlikely to comprise the physical separation of settlements or the overall visual openness of the parcel.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in open farmland, primarily pasture especially on higher elevations with arable on lower slopes, as well as Tring Park. It also contains a high proportion of mature woodland including numerous pockets of ancient woodland of acidic oak/beech. The parcel also comprises the Chilterns AONB and two SSSIs. There is evidence of built development and encroachment scattered across the Green Belt along minor roads including Wigginton, unclassified settlements, large single dwellings, farm buildings and other developments such as Champneys. The main urban influence is the A41 which is concealed but is audibly intrusive. Levels of visual openness are generally high as the parcel is well integrated into the wider countryside, providing long views to GB04, GB07 & GB08.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel contains the majority of Tring Park HPG (also located in GB03). The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside. The elevated nature of parcel also contributes to wider setting of surrounding settlements. Two SAMs are located at Marlins Chapel Farm and Grims Ditch.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel contributes with GB03 to the primary local gap between Tring (1 <sup>st</sup> ) and Wigginton (3 <sup>rd</sup> ). The gap is 0.9 km and is relatively well maintained (relatively free of development) by Tring Park and also contains the A41. Any small scale reduction in the gap would be unlikely to comprise the separation of settlements in physical terms, or local levels of visual openness.		

### **Level of Openness and Countryside Character**

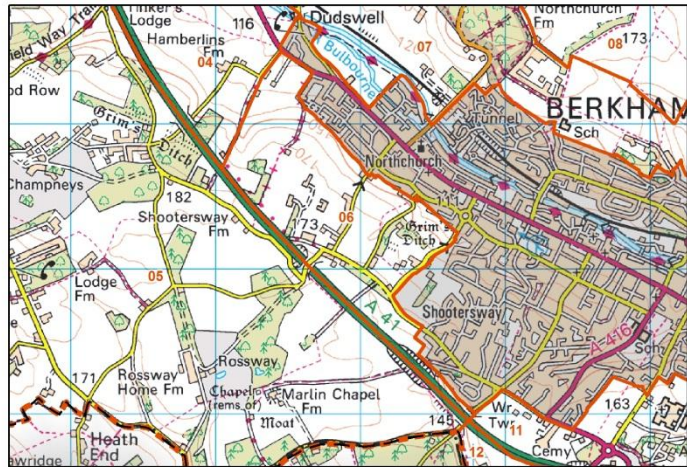
**Existence of built development** The level of built development is low at 0.5%. The parcel contains some villages washed over by Green Belt such as Wigginton and numerous hamlets which have experienced little notable recent development. The busy A41 on the northern and eastern boundary is the key urban influence.

**Visual Openness** The rolling landform allows for long distance views from open locations especially in more elevated areas. The prevalence of woodland combined with high roadside hedgerows limits views from many locations to give more containment.

**Countryside Character** The parcel has a strong rural character and is relatively remote. It also displays few urban influences.

## GB06 –Green Belt Land Southwest of Berkhamsted

**Description** The parcel is Green Belt land contiguous with southwest edge of Berkhamsted (Northchurch). The boundary to the south runs along the A41 and Two Ponds Lane to the west and Denny's Lane to the east. The parcel is 143 ha in size forming a flat plateau which falls steeply to the built edge of Berkhamsted to the northeast. More than half of the parcel is within the Chilterns AONB.



**Land use** Predominantly arable farmland, plus a golf driving range and a hospice.

View to northwest to Berkhamsted from Durrants Lane showing steep slope to the edge of the settlement



View to south over Berkhamsted onto GB06 showing glimpse of Green Belt setting



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards preserving the setting of Dudswell and Northchurch. Partial contribution towards preventing merging (of Tring and Berkhamsted) and safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 1 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

<b>GB06 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>	<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.	
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>	<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel contributes with GB03, 04, 05 & 07 to provide the strategic gap between Tring and Berkhamsted. The overall gap is 3.9 km. It is large and well-maintained however there is limited evidence of ribbon development along Darrs Lane close to the A41, which is well concealed by planting and therefore visual perception of the gap is limited. Any small scale reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the physical separation of existing settlements, but might impact on the overall visual openness of the parcel.	
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>	<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel displays a mix of urban and countryside characteristics. It contains open arable farmland and is punctuated by limited mixed woodland including ancient woodland. Fields are medium sized and bound by high mature hedgerows with hedgerow trees which conceal the audibly intrusive A41, which represents a key urban influence. There is evidence of built development along Darrs Lane and The Larches and levels of visual openness and localised landscape enclosure are variable. The south edge of Berkhamsted provides the strongest boundary. Encroachment is limited due to the steep slope rising to the south to the A41.	
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel does not contain any historic settlements but adjoins Berkhamsted which contains three Conservation Areas. Grims Ditch SAM passes directly through the middle of the parcel. It provides setting to Dudswell and Northchurch Conservation Areas especially due to visibility of the steep slope to the A41 as well as along the Bulbourne Valley.	
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>	<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not separate any 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> tier settlements.	

### Level of openness and countryside character

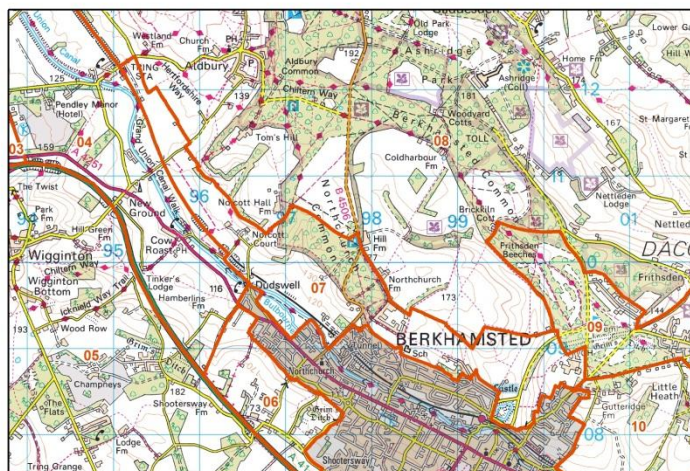
**Existence of built development** The level of built development is low at 0.6%. Roads which lead to Berkhamsted have experienced some residential ribbon development at Darrs Lane and The Larches.

**Visual Openness** The landform and open fields allow for long distance views from many locations, especially to the hills of Ashridge across Berkhamsted, giving the parcel an open visual character. The prevalence of roadside trees results in views from routes being mostly contained by vegetation.

**Countryside Character** The parcel is crossed by relatively busy minor roads and has views to the settlement of Berkhamsted which increase its urban edge character.

## GB07 –Green Belt Land North of Berkhamsted

**Description:** The parcel is contiguous with the north edge of Berkhamsted. The boundary to the north follows the edge of Green Belt boundary. It is partially covered by the Chilterns AONB and is 416 ha in size comprising undulating chalk slopes rising to the Bulbourne valley and incorporating part of an intervening spur to the north of Berkhamsted.



**Land use:** Predominately mixed farmland, plus Berkhamsted Castle (remains), Berkhamsted Hill (Major Developed Site), Northchurch Common (SSSI), school, and recreational activities including sports ground and allotments. It also includes sections of the Grand Union canal and railway.

View to west from allotments north of Berkhamsted showing strong open and rural characteristics



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside and preserving the setting of Berkhamsted Castle (remains), Dudswell and Northchurch. Partial contribution towards preventing merging (of Tring and Berkhamsted) and maintaining the existing settlement pattern. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 2 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

<b>GB07 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large, built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel contributes (with GB03, 04, 05 & 06) to the strategic gap between Tring and Berkhamsted. The overall gap is 3.9 km. It is large and well-maintained. Any scale reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of existing settlements in physical, but might impact on overall localised levels of visual openness given the narrow shape of the parcel.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in open mixed farmland with large scale fields bound by hedgerows interspersed with mature hedgerow trees. Grazing and pasture are evident on lower slopes with arable frequent at higher elevations. There are blocks of deciduous woodland, in particular at Northchurch Common (SSSI) which is also covered by the Chilterns AONB. Berkhamsted Castle (remains) and Berkhamsted Castle retirement village represent the only built development as the settlement edge provides a strong boundary and there is no encroachment. The main urban influence is the railway line, which is concealed by planting but is audibly intrusive. Levels of visual openness are high but variable due to the narrow and relatively enclosed historic nature of the parcel. In spite of the urban edge location the parcel is well connected to the countryside to the north (GB08).		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel contains Berkhamsted Castle (remains), a SAM, and part of the Berkhamsted Conservation Area. The Green Belt provides an immediate historic setting and connection to the open countryside. It also provides setting and views, especially along the Bulbourne Valley, to and from Conservation Areas at Dudswell and Northchurch.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel contributes to primary local gaps between Berkhamsted (1 <sup>st</sup> ) and Aldbury and Potten End (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) located in GB08 and GB09 respectively. The gaps are large, at 2.5 km and 0.8 km respectively, and are mainly provided by other parcels. Therefore any small scale reduction in gaps would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms, but impact on localised levels of visual openness around settlements.		

### **Level of Openness and Countryside Character**

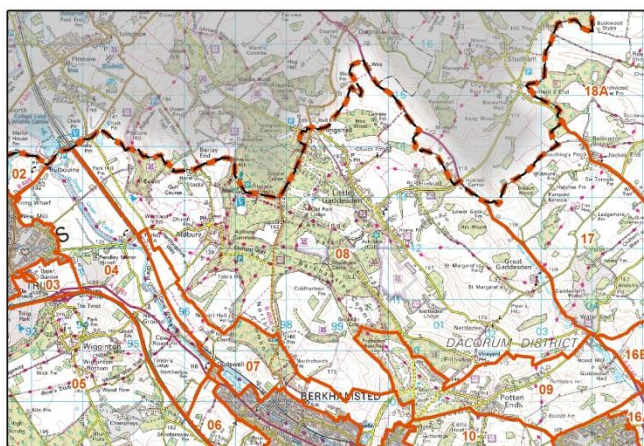
**Existence of built development** The level of built development is low at 0.6%. There are few semi urban influences evident around the northern edge of Berkhamsted.

**Visual Openness** The open flat landscape allows for medium distance views, particularly to the woods of Ashridge and Berkhamsted Common.

**Countryside Character** The parcel has a strong rural character despite being located adjacent to a built area. Urban influences are limited to the edge of Berkhamsted which is clearly defined.

## GB08 – Non-Green Belt Land North of Berkhamsted

**Description** The parcel is non-Green Belt land stretching from the north edge of the Green Belt boundary (north of Berkhamsted) towards the edge of the study area along the River Gade valley. The eastern boundary is marked by the Leighton Buzzard / Hemel Hempstead Road. It is covered by the Chilterns AONB and is 3,039 ha in size forming a gently undulating chalk plateau which falls to dry valleys to the north and east.



**Land use** Diverse mix of predominantly arable farmland and grassland including Aldbury Common (SSSI) and Berkhamsted Common (SSSI), Aldbury Nowers nature reserve and disused sewerage works and pits.

View to Ashridge House located within open Green Belt setting



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside and preserving the setting of Aldbury, Ringshall, Little Gaddesden, Great Gaddesden, Water End and Nettleden, and Ashridge House and Park. Partial contribution towards maintaining the existing settlement pattern. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 2 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.



<b>GB08 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics through a diverse mix of uses including ancient semi natural woodland, wood pasture, chalk grassland, common, secondary woodland, plantations and the estate parklands of Ashridge to the south, and large scale arable fields bound by deciduous woodland belts to the north and east. The parcel is also covered by the Chilterns AONB and Aldbury Common and Berkhamsted Common have SSSI and SAC designations. Aldbury Nowers is a Local Nature Reserve. Limited urban influences are evident as very few built developments are scattered across the parcel. These include large single dwellings, isolated farm buildings, Ashridge Management College and Aldbury village. There is no encroachment. Levels of visual openness are high due to a relative absence of built development.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel contains seven full or partial Conservation Areas at Aldbury, Ringshall, Little Gaddesden, Great Gaddesden, Water End and Nettleden. It also contains Ashridge Historic Park and Garden as well as Ashridge House itself, a listed building which now houses a management college. There also SAMs within the parcel. The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural backdrop, providing wide ranging views to and from the countryside.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel mainly contributes to the primary local gaps between Aldbury (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) and Berkhamsted and Tring. Both gaps are large at 2.5 km and 2.7 km respectively and are well maintained (relatively free of development). No major routes pass through the parcel and any ribbon development is limited to scattered large dwellings. Due to the scale and nature of the gaps any reduction would be unlikely to compromise the separation of existing settlements in physical terms, or the overall visual openness of the parcel. The parcel also provides a number of secondary local gaps between unclassified settlements.		

### **Level of openness and countryside character**

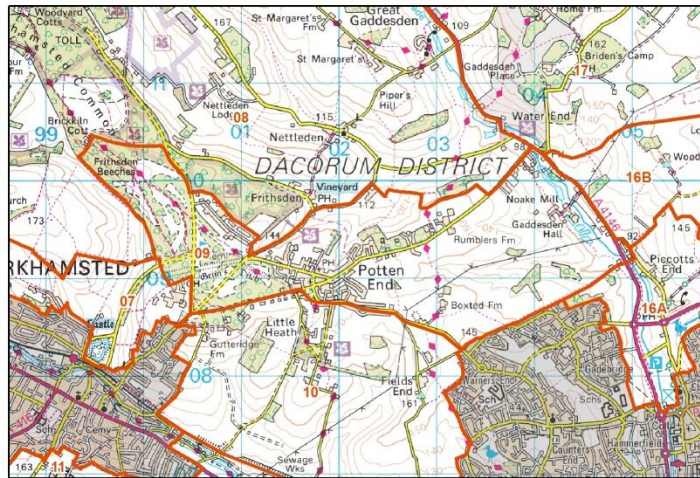
**Existence of built development** The level of built development is low at 0.5%. The parcel contains some small villages and hamlets which have experienced limited recent development.

**Visual Openness** The plateau landform and woodlands is largely concealed. To the south and west, the scale of the landscape elements is large, with open tracts of publicly accessible common land and woodland allowing medium distance views however there is a contained character within the woodland and parklands. Landform also contains views to the north and east within the more open arable farmland.

**Countryside Character** The parcel has a strong rural character and the high proportion of woodland contributes to a relatively remote and well-preserved character.

## GB09 –Green Belt Land Northwest of Hemel Hempstead

**Description** The parcel is located between Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead. The boundary to the north runs along the edge of the Green Belt designation and to the south along The Common / Hempstead Lane / Berkhamsted Road. It is partially covered by the Chilterns AONB and is 581 ha in size forming an undulating upland chalk plateau including Little Heath Common which is punctuated by numerous small gravel dells.



**Land use** Predominately arable farmland, plus Berkhamsted Common (SSSI) and Little Heath Common and recreational activities including a golf course.

Potten End



View to west from northwest Hemel Hempstead



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside and preserve the setting of Potten End, Water End and Berkhamsted Common, and maintaining the existing settlement pattern. Partial contribution towards preventing merging (of Hemel Hempstead and Berkhamsted). Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 3 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

<b>GB09 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton, Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel contributes with GB10 to the strategic gap between Hemel Hempstead and Berkhamsted. The gap is 2.6 km and contains evidence of ribbon development around Potten End, and especially towards the hamlet of Little Heath to the south in GB10. Any small scale reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the physical separation of settlements, or reduce overall levels of visual openness.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in a mix of arable farmland to the east with paddocks. In general, large fields are enclosed by hedges and ancient woodland and tree belts with intermittent irregular field patterns also visible. Berkhamsted Common (SSSI) enters the parcel from the west. It is more wooded and is next to a golf course. Built development is focused at Potten End and scattered large housing extends to the east, west and south of the village towards the hamlet of Little Heath. There is no significant encroachment as the northwest edge of Hemel Hempstead acts as strong linear boundary. Levels of visual openness are higher to the east of the parcel.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel contains Potten End and Water End Conservation Areas, and is adjacent to Piccotts End Conservation Area. It also contains Berkhamsted Common. The green belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside especially at Potten End.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
<b>Significant contribution.</b> The parcel provides primary local gaps between Potten End (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) and Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead. These gaps are 0.8 km and 0.9 km respectively. It also contributes (with GB10) to the secondary local gap to separate Potten End (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) and Little Heath (2 <sup>nd</sup> ). There is limited perception of this gap which is very narrow and subject to small scale ribbon development. Any small scale reduction in gaps would be likely to comprise the physical separation of the settlements, and reduce local levels of visual openness.		

### **Level of openness and countryside character**

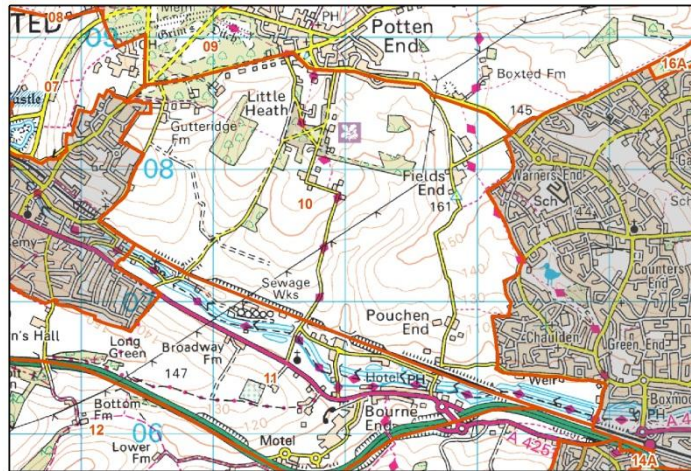
**Existence of built development** The level of built development is relatively high at 1.1%. Semi urban development including large single dwelling ribbon development around Potten End. This is limited elsewhere within the parcel.

**Visual Openness** Views in the west of the parcel are often truncated by the frequent woodland and the presence of mature hedgerows to the east often limits views within the more open agricultural landscape.

**Countryside Character** A settled plateau influenced by the residential fringes of Hemel Hempstead which form a semi urban edge quality. Towards Little Heath (in GB10) the character becomes more intimate, with narrow country lanes and wooded dells.

## GB10 –Green Belt Land between Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead

**Description** The parcel is located between Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead. The boundary to the south runs along railway line and to the north along The Common / Hempstead Lane / Berkhamsted Road. It is partially covered by the Chilterns AONB and is 545 ha in size comprising the northern slopes of the Bulbourne valley characterised by steep rolling slopes spreading up onto the adjacent plateau.



**Land use** Predominantly arable farmland.

View to southwest from Hemel Hempstead showing important open green space



Land to southeast of Hemel Hempstead displays greater levels of localised landscape enclosure



### Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards preventing merging (of Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead), safeguarding the countryside, preserving the setting of Potten End, and maintaining the existing settlement pattern. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 4 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

<b>GB10 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from the large built-up areas of London, Luton, Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>SIGNITFICANT</b>
The parcel acts as a strategic gap to separate Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead. This gap is 2.6 km and is generally clear from development. There is small-scale ribbon development between Little Heath and Potten End. The Green Belt is visible from the railway line which runs along the southern boundary. Due to the scale of the gap, any small scale reduction would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms but would reduce localised levels of visual openness of the parcel at settlement edges.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNITFICANT</b>
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in arable farmland on undulating and steeper slopes in large fields, with few hedges and narrow verges which are interspersed with small blocks of ancient woodland. The valley floor is predominately pasture with areas of wet meadow across smaller field units enclosed by tall hedges. The western section of the parcel is also covered by the Chilterns AONB. Limited built development is located at Little Heath and other scattered unclassified settlements. The railway line is the main urban influence. There is no significant encroachment and settlement boundaries are generally strong however there is development in the Green Belt along Pouchen End Lane. Some settlement boundaries display urban influence and a greater sense of localised landscape enclosure due to landform and planting for example at southwest of Hemel Hempstead. An important green space is also identified at playing fields to the south of Hemel Hempstead enclosed by the A41 and railway line, which are well concealed by planting but audibly intrusive. Levels of visual openness are generally high across the parcel.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>SIGNITFICANT</b>
Parcel contains Potten End Conservation Area and adjoins Berkhamsted and Bourne End Conservation Areas. Winkwell Conservation Area lies immediately to the south of the parcel. The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside especially at Potten End.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>SIGNITFICANT</b>
The parcel provides primary local gaps between Little Heath (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) and Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead. These gaps are 1.1 km and 1.2 km respectively. It also contributes (with GB09) to the secondary local gap to separate Little Heath (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) and Potten End (3 <sup>rd</sup> ). There is limited perception of this gap which is very narrow and subject to small-scale ribbon development. Any small scale reduction in the gaps would be likely to comprise the separation of the settlements in physical terms, and reduce local levels of visual openness.		

### **Level of openness and countryside character**

**Existence of built development** The level of built development is low at 0.5%. There is some ribbon residential development around Potten End and electricity pylons cross the parcel adding an urban influence.

**Visual Openness** Within the valley the landscape is enclosed but has with some longer distance views along corridors and to more elevated areas. The parcel is more open on the valley sides which contain some residential development. There are some longer distance views across the valley with a number being urban in character.

**Countryside Character** An agricultural landscape which generally feels rural in character exhibits urban

influence from the residential fringes of Hemel Hempstead.

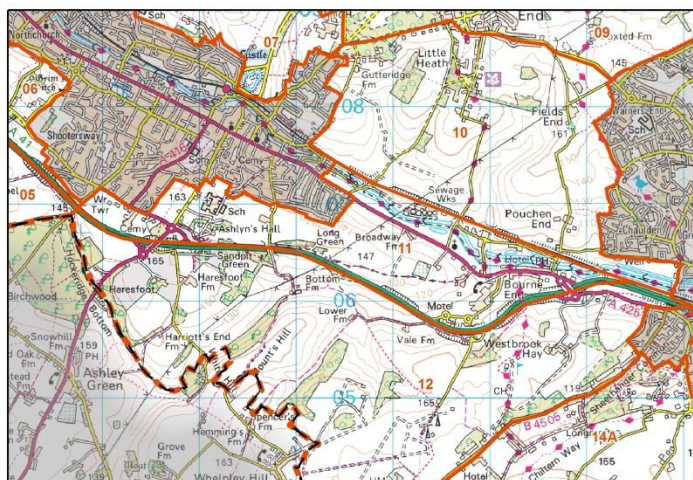
### **GB10 – Next Steps**

Land west of Hemel Hempstead bound by Pouchen End Lane to the west, Chaulden Lane to the south and settlement edge to the east is recommended for further assessment as a small-scale sub-area (D-SS1). The northern extent of the sub-area should be determined as a result of further analysis. Assessed in isolation this land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps. The land makes a relatively limited contribution to the primary functions of the Green Belt. It is noted that a section of strategic parcel GB10 is allocated for future removal from the Green Belt to accommodate new housing and associated development (Local Allocation LA3, Dacorum Core Strategy).

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## GB11 –Green Belt Land Southeast of Berkhamsted

**Description** The parcel is located to the southeast of Berkhamsted. The boundary to the north runs along railway line and to the south along the A41. It is 361 ha in size and contains the River Bulbourne and the undulating southern slopes of its valley with flatter land close to Berkhamsted and steeper slopes to the east of the parcel.



**Land use** Mix of arable and pasture farmland, plus Ashlyns School (MDS), BFI National Archives, sewage works, educational buildings and playing fields. The parcel also includes Bourne End Mills employment area (MDS) and Bourne End service area on the A41.

View to east from Swing Gate Lane shows strong open and rural characteristics.



View to south from Berkhamsted shows Green Belt on higher land.



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards preventing merging (of Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead) and preserving the setting of Winkwell and Berkhamsted. Partial contribution towards safeguarding the countryside. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 2 of the 5 Green Belt purposes.



<b>GB11 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
Together with GB10, the parcel contributes to the strategic gap between Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead. This gap is 2.6km and contains some evidence of ribbon development between the railway line and A41 around Bourne End. The Green Belt is visible from the railway line and A41 as the gap is large. However it exhibits strong urban fringe characteristics close to settlement edges. Therefore any small scale reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of existing settlements in physical terms, but could reduce visual openness at the edge of Berkhamsted.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel displays a mix of urban fringe and typical rural and countryside characteristics. On higher slopes through the centre of the parcel, large arable fields with few hedges divided by small belts of woodland are dominant and the valley floor is predominately used for pasture with areas of wet meadow. Urban features are stronger close to the Berkhamsted settlement edge, especially in the east of the parcel. Within this area built development includes Ashlyns School (MDS) and BFI National Archives. These are located within the narrow stretch of land between Berkhamsted and the A41 to the west, and Bourne End including an employment area located between the A41 and Berkhamsted Road. There is also scattered ribbon development and encroachment along the Canal and Railway line including a sewerage treatment works. The A41 and railway line represent concealed but highly audible urban influences. As a result levels of visual openness and enclosure are varied throughout the parcel.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel contains Winkwell Conservation Area and adjoins Berkhamsted Conservation Area. The Green Belt preserves the open valley setting providing views to higher land.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not separate any 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> tier settlements. It does however help provide a gap around Bourne End (unclassified) settlement.		

### **Level of Openness and Countryside Character**

**Existence of built development** The level of built development is relatively high at 1.5%. Built development is located south of Berkhamsted includes Ashlyns School (MDS) and BFI National Archives as well as development along the valley floor.

**Visual Openness** Large scale open arable fields on the valley sides sit alongside the residential development to the west of Berkhamsted and the settlement is relatively concealed by mature tree belts. The valley floor is more enclosed with medium to short distance views along the transport corridors.

**Countryside Character** The arterial character of the valley is a key feature with the main line railway, canal and A41 all occupying the valley floor. This has created a busy semi urban character within the valley floor. The slopes have a simple open agricultural character.

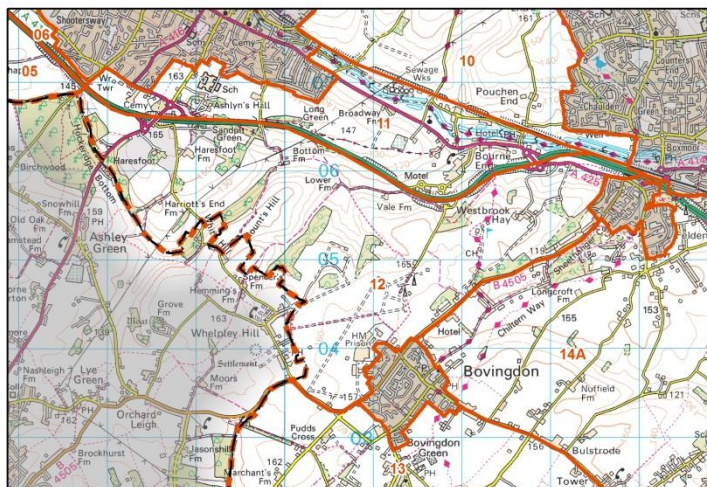
## **GB11 – Next Steps**

Land enclosed by A41 and southeast Berkhamsted is recommended for further assessment as a strategic sub-area (D-S2). In light of the functions of the strategic parcel land enclosed by the A41 and southeast Berkhamsted is considered to contribute least towards the five Green Belt purposes. A reduction in the size of the strategic parcel would not significantly compromise the primary functions of the Green Belt or compromise the separation of existing settlements. The sub-area identified displays some strong urban influences as a result of being enclosed by the A41 and the edge of the residential area of Berkhamsted. It also contains a range of large-scale built development including Ashlyns School and BFI National Archives, both of which are designated as Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt. Existing landscape planting and buffering is strong and this limits the visual appearance and views of physical features. It is noted that a small section of this strategic parcel is allocated for future removal from the Green Belt to accommodate new housing and associated development (Local Allocation LA4 within Dacorum's Core Strategy).

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## GB12 –Green Belt Land to North of Bovingdon

**Description** The Parcel located to the north of Bovingdon and extends to along the A41 to Feldon (south Hemel Hempstead). To the east the boundary follows the B4505 and extends south to the edge of the study area. It is 890 ha in size and forms a flat upland chalk plateau which falls strongly to the north towards the Bulbourne valley across undulating dry valleys slopes.



**Land use** Predominately arable farmland, plus rough grassland, Bovingdon Airfield, Bovingdon Prison (MDS), education, recreational uses including Little Hay Golf Course.

View to west towards Berkhamsted showing strong open and rural characteristics.



Bovingdon Airfield, a large scale derelict site in the Green Belt.



## Principal Function / Summary

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

<b>GB12 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton, and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel does not fully separate 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements. However it contributes with GB09, GB10 & GB11 to provide a strategic gap between Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead. There are strong views of the parcel from the A41. The gap is well maintained (relatively free of development) and the parcel does not directly adjoin Hemel Hempstead or Berkhamsted settlement edges. Any reduction in the gap would be unlikely to compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms, or overall visual openness.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in large arable fields with smaller areas of grazing in valley bases and elongated woodlands on slopes including ancient woodland. Field boundaries vary with hedgerows, hedgerow trees and post and wire fencing. Urban influences include the former Bovingdon Airfield, as well as Bovingdon Prison (MDS. Scattered ribbon development is located along the B4505 between Feldon and Bovingdon. The A41 represents an urban influence which is concealed but audibly intrusive. Levels of visual openness are generally high.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not provide setting for any historic places. Bovingdon Conservation Area lies immediately to the south (in GB14A).		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel provides primary local gaps between Bovingdon (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) and Berkhamsted and Feldon / Hemel Hempstead. These gaps are relatively large at 2.7km and 2.4 km respectively. The gap to Berkhamsted is strong and well-maintained. However the gap to Feldon is weaker due to ribbon development along the B4505. The parcel also contributes to the very narrow gap between Hemel Hempstead and Feldon. Any small scale reduction in the gap to the north of Feldon would compromise the separation of settlements in physical terms, and overall visual openness. The gap to the south is larger and therefore a reduction here would not compromise the separation of settlements.		

### **Level of openness and countryside character**

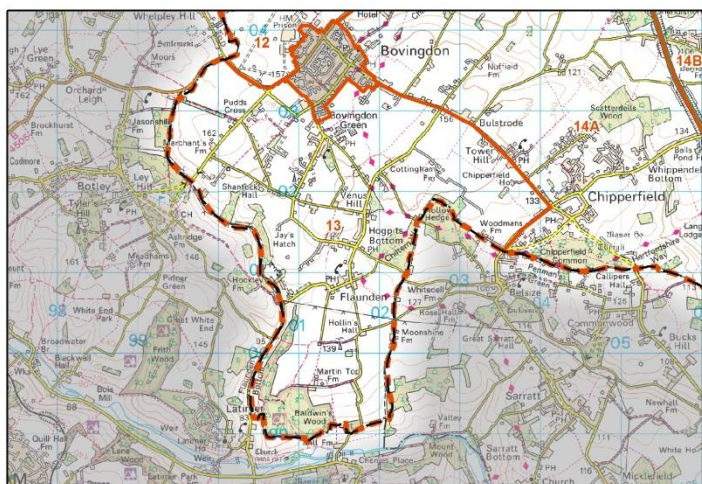
**Existence of built development** The level of built development is low at 0.6%. There is semi urban development due to the Prison (HMP The Mount) and on the former Bovingdon airfield which has stock car and go-cart racing circuits and a Sunday Market.

**Visual Openness** Large scale open fields on the upland plateau slopes allow for long distance views but a lack of access to more open areas and roadside hedgerows limit views from many locations.

**Countryside Character** Bovingdon Airfield, the radio masts and The Mount HMP are locally intrusive whilst the A41 corridor adds a further urbanising influence to the north of the parcel. The pattern of large rolling arable fields and woodland create a remote compartmentalised character of large scale agriculture to the west.

## GB13 –Green Belt Land to the South of Bovingdon

**Description:** The parcel is located to the south of Bovingdon extending south to the edge of the study area. It is 1,087 ha in size and comprises a large gently undulating chalk plateau.



**Land use:** Predominately arable farmland, plus Bovingdon Brickworks (MDS), caravan site (travelling show-people) and playing fields.

View to northwest from Flaunden Lane towards Bovingdon showing strong open and rural characteristics as well as development in the Green Belt



Example of enclosed southeast edge of Bovingdon displaying enclosure and urban influence



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside and preserving the setting of Flaunden and Chipperfield. Partial contributions towards maintaining the existing settlement pattern. Overall the parcel contributes significantly to 2 out of 5 purposes.

<b>GB13 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in medium sized arable fields with some pasture, bound by dense hedgerows and frequent hedgerow trees. Fragmented small pockets of deciduous woodland are scattered over the parcel with larger areas of ancient woodland, particularly at Baldwin's Wood in the south. Urban features include the Brickworks and other development and unclassified settlements. Dispersed ribbon development and large single dwellings extend along minor routes, particularly from Bovingdon Green to Flaunden and Chipperfield. As a result the parcel exhibits mixed levels of visual openness. Land to the southeast of Bovingdon in particular displays greater levels of enclosure due to landscape features and urban influence due to residential edges.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel contains Flaunden and part of Chipperfield Conservation Areas and is adjacent to Bovingdon Conservation Area. It forms part of the wider setting for the historic villages of Latimer and Chenies to the south of the parcel (in Chiltern District). The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel provides the secondary local gap between Bovingdon (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) and Chipperfield (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) which is 2.1km. The gap is large and has been subject to ribbon development which limits the perception of the gap. Any small scale reduction in the gap could be likely to compromise separation of the settlements in physical terms, or levels of visual openness.		

### **Level of openness and countryside character**

**Existence of built development** The level of built development is low at 0.8%. Residential ribbon development has spread from villages and hamlets along narrow country lanes.

**Visual Openness** The parcel has limited opportunities for open views due to the densely hedged narrow lanes and there are few focal points or vistas within the landscape.

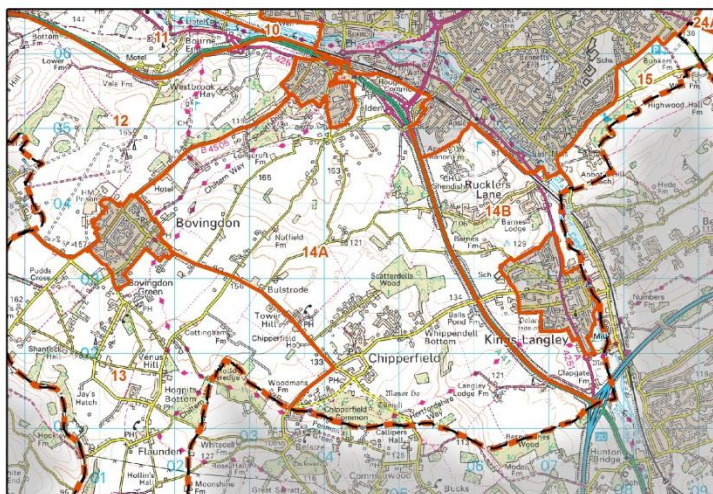
**Countryside Character** Predominantly agricultural but the settlement pattern comprises a number of villages which have spread across the plateau organically, leaving settlement edges loose and indistinct in many places.

### **GB13 – Next Steps**

Land at southeast edge of Bovingdon at Homefield, off Green Lane is recommended for further assessment as a small scale sub-area (D-SS2). Assessed in isolation this land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging or maintaining local gaps. The land makes a relatively limited contribution to the primary functions of the Green Belt.

## GB14A –Green Belt Land Southwest of Hemel Hempstead

**Description** The parcel located to the southwest of Hemel Hempstead and including the village of Chipperfield. The eastern edge is marked by the A41 and to the south extends to the edge of the study area. It is 1,402 ha in size covering a large area of gently undulating chalk plateau.



**Land use** Predominantly arable farmland, plus Sheethanger and Chipperfield Commons. A hotel and small mobile home site lie in the far north of the site, off the Hempstead Road.

View to north towards Hemel Hempstead from Roughdown Common allowing long distance views



View to east towards Rough Common along A41, showing how the A41 is visually concealed through mature planting.



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside, preserving the setting of Chipperfield and Bovington, and maintaining the existing settlement pattern. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 3 out of 5 Green Belt purposes.



<b>GB14A – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>	<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.	
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>	<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements.	
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in undulating medium sized arable fields with pasture close to settlements enclosed by dense hedgerows and frequent hedgerow trees. There are also pockets of deciduous woodland with some larger areas of ancient woodland, particularly at Scatterdells Wood, with rough grassland and secondary woodland at Sheethanger and Chipperfield Commons. There is evidence of built development mainly through scattered ribbon development comprising large single dwellings along routes extending from the south of Feldon and around Chipperfield. The A41 also represents an urban influence which is concealed by landscape features but is audibly intrusive. The southern edge of Hemel Hempstead is strong and linear and defined by the elevated Roughdown Common providing a gap between the A41 and long distance views. As a result, levels of visual openness are variable due to scattered development and woodland, but are generally high.	
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel contains the Chipperfield Conservation Area and part of the Bovingdon Conservation Area. The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside. There is a SAMs at Chipperfield Common.	
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel provides a narrow gap between Hemel Hempstead / Feldon and Bovingdon (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) and Chipperfield (3 <sup>rd</sup> ). These gaps are 2.4 km and 2.1 km respectively and contain scattered development allowing for perception of the gaps. Any small scale reduction in the gaps would be unlikely to compromise separation of the settlements in physical terms but could reduce localised levels of visual openness.	

### **Level of openness and countryside character**

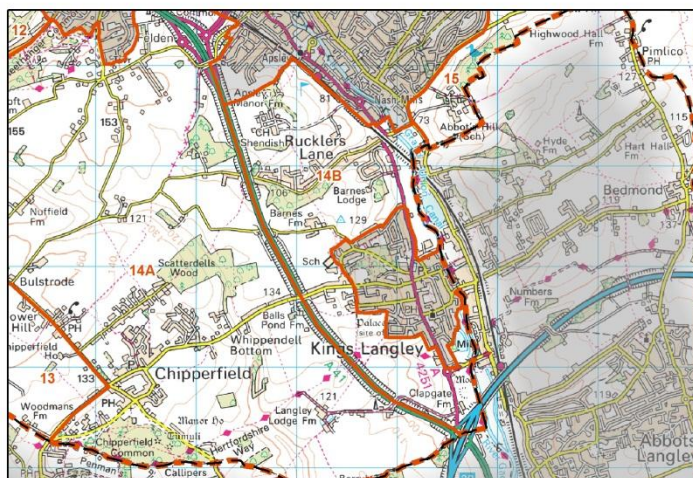
**Existence of built development** The level of built development is low at 0.9%. Residential ribbon development has spread from villages and hamlets along narrow country lanes, especially around Feldon and Chipperfield.

**Visual Openness** The parcel has limited opportunities for open views due to the densely hedged narrow lanes and woodland.

**Countryside Character** An ordered agricultural landscape but the residential ribbon settlement surrounding Bovingdon, Feldon and Chipperfield has left precise boundaries between settlements and rural areas indistinct.

## GB14B –Green Belt Land between Hemel Hempstead and Kings Langley

**Description** The parcel located between Hemel Hempstead and Kings Langley. It is bounded to the west by the A41 and to the east by the railway line and Lower Road. It is small at 403 ha in size and comprises the upper Gade valley which forms a narrow floodplain to the south of Hemel Hempstead. The Grand Union Canal combines with the River Gade for most of the valley.



**Land use** Mix of arable and pasture farmland, plus allotments, some industrial uses and playing fields / recreational space, and hotel and golf course at Shendish Manor.

Rucklers Lane ribbon development in the Green Belt



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards preserving the setting of Kings Langley, and maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing gap between Hemel Hempstead and Kings Langley). Partial contribution towards prevent merging and safeguarding the countryside. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 2 out of 5 Green Belt purposes.

<b>GB14B – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>	<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>	<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.	
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>	<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel helps provide (with GB15) the strategic gap between Hemel Hempstead and Watford (Abbots Langley), located in Watford Borough Council to the south of the study area. This gap is 2km in total and contains Kings Langley. Any small scale reduction in the gap would be unlikely compromise the physical separation of 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements but would reduce overall levels of visual openness. Such a reduction in the north of the parcel could compromise the separation of Hemel Hempstead and Kings Langley.	
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>	<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel displays a mix of urban fringe and rural and countryside characteristics. Medium sized pasture fields are located close to housing with arable fields on more open land to the south of Kings Langley bound by hedgerows and hedgerow trees. There are also pockets of deciduous woodland, particularly surrounding the steep valley at Rucklers Lane. On the valley floor there is a mosaic of pasture with recreational activities including the canal, allotments and football club. There is a strong urban influence from industrial sites along Lower Road / Railway Terrace (outside / north of the parcel) in addition to extensive ribbon development along Rucklers Lane, which runs adjacent to the southern edge of Hemel Hempstead. Urban characteristics are strongest to the southwest of Hemel Hempstead where the concealed but audibly intrusive A41 and railway line enclose the northern part of the parcel. Levels of visual openness vary considerably throughout the parcel mainly due to the presence of built development.	
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel contains Kings Langley Conservation Area which partially extends into the Green Belt. It provides immediate setting for the conservation area as well as the central Kings Langley Conservation Area, allowing direct views into the Green Belt and provides a setting for the listed buildings and parkland at Shendish Manor. There are SAMs adjacent to Kings Langley Common (relating to the Old Priory and site of a former royal palace) and further south of the Kings Langley village (site of former hunting lodge).	
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>	<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel provides the primary local gap between Hemel Hempstead and Kings Langley (2 <sup>nd</sup> ). The gap is relatively narrow at 0.7km and contains ribbon development especially along Rucklers Lane which stops are the A41. The parcel is partly visible from the A41 and settlements are well concealed. Any scale reduction in the gap (at the narrowest point) would be likely to compromise the physical separation of settlements, and reduce levels of visual openness.	

### **Level of openness and countryside character**

**Existence of built development** The level of built development is relatively high at 1.4%. There is a strong influence from built development to the north of the parcel and industrial and residential developments follow the narrow road network both in the valley and on the slopes.

**Visual Openness** The north of the parcel has limited opportunities for long distance views within the narrow lanes and there is a sense of containment. To the south long distance views are obtained to the M25 viaduct, a

landmark feature within the landscape but the A41 is hidden from view as it passes the parcel in cutting.

**Countryside Character** To the north the proximity and frequency of built form gives an urban edge character. On the slopes to the south of the parcel the primary land use is agricultural.

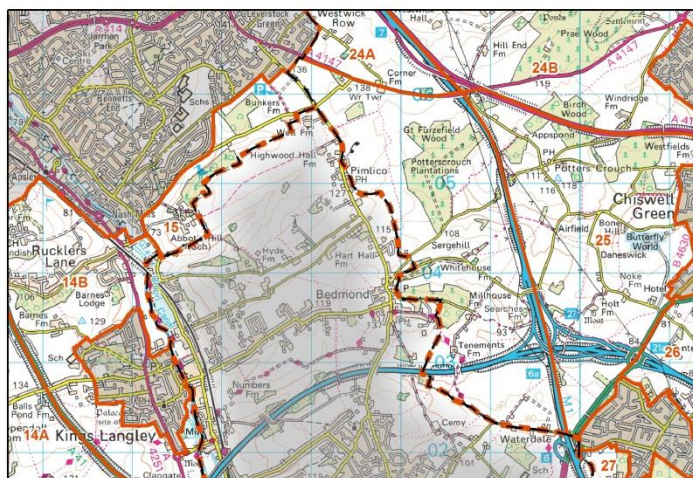
### **GB14B – Next Steps**

Land south of Hemel Hempstead enclosed by the A41 and railway line, and in the vicinity of Rucklers Lane is recommended for further assessment as a strategic sub-area (D-S3). In light of the functions of the strategic parcel the sub-area identified is enclosed by A41 to the east and railway line and urban edge to the west is considered to contribute least towards the five Green Belt purposes. This land is enclosed by strong urban features and contains the relatively large-scale ribbon development along Ruckers Lane in the Green Belt. It therefore displays strong urban fringe characteristics. Assessed in isolation the strategic sub-area makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging or safeguarding the countryside. A reduction in the size of the strategic parcel would not significantly compromise the primary functions of the Green Belt or compromise the separation of existing settlements. It is also noted that part of the sub-area falls within an Area of Archaeological Significance, so plays a role in terms of preserving historic setting.

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## 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.

<b>GB15 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
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.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
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.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not provide setting for any historic places.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel contributes to the primary local gap between Hemel Hempstead with Kings Langley (2 <sup>nd</sup> ). It also contributes with GB25 to secondary local gaps from Hemel Hempstead / Kings Langley to Chiswell Green (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) and Bricket Wood (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) 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**

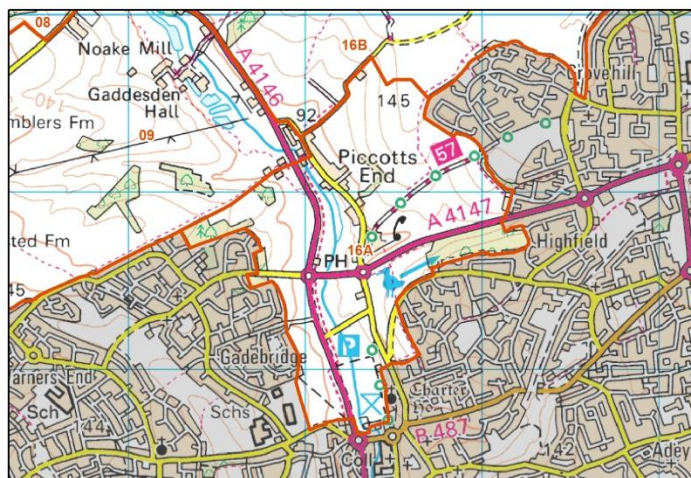
**Existence of built development** The level of built development is very low at 0.2%. There is ribbon development along several lanes including limited industrial activities. The wireless mast at Hyde Lane is an obtrusive and notable vertical feature within the landscape. The M25 and M1 are the major 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 20<sup>th</sup> century housing. The major roads of the M1 and M25 interject two large scale transport corridors into this rural character with substantial associated noise.

## GB16A –Green Belt Land North of Hemel Hempstead (Piccotts End)

**Description** The parcel is located to the north of Hemel Hempstead, surrounding Piccotts End. It includes Gadebridge Park which splits the neighbourhoods of Grovehill and Highfield in the east from Gadebridge in the west. It is 177ha and comprises the broad and undulating V-shaped chalk valley of the River Gade.



**Land use** Mix of farmland and recreational activities including Gladebridge Park and playing fields.

View to south from River Gade towards Hemel Hempstead



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside and preserving the setting of Piccotts End and Hemel Hempstead. Partial contribution towards preventing merging as the parcel acts as a Green Wedge. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 2 out of 5 Green Belt purposes.



<b>GB16A – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel acts as green wedge into Hemel Hempstead and prevents neighbourhoods on adjacent valley sides from merging. Limited ribbon development exists along Piccotts End and there is strong perception of the gap from the A4146. Any small scale reduction in the gap would be likely to compromise the separation of neighbourhoods in physical terms, and reduce overall visual openness.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
In spite of its urban fringe location the parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in arable farmland at Piccotts End and a Green Belt wedge containing Gadebridge Park, a former estate parkland. The course of the River Gade is bordered in most places by water meadows and pasture with some relic watercress beds. There is evidence of some urban influence as the parcel penetrates the north of Hemel Hempstead however strong planting conceals residential development well and enables the park to integrate with the wider countryside. There is no significant encroachment, although the parcel is dissected by the A4146. Levels of visual openness are generally high especially through to the wider countryside to the north.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel contains Piccotts End Conservation Area and adjoins Hemel Hempstead Old Town Conservation Area. There are SAMs at Home Wood and south of Gadebridge Park. The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not separate any 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> 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 ribbon development at Piccotts End in the centre of the parcel which is enclosed by three urban edges.

**Visual Openness** Open views are obtained along the river valley and across to the surrounding slopes.

**Countryside Character** The parcel mainly comprises a semi urban landscape with the busy road corridors and public parks creating a strong urban influence.

### **GB16A – Next Steps**

It is noted that two areas within the parcel are already proposed for development within the Core Strategy: Local Allocation LA1: Marchmont Farm and LA2: Old Town.

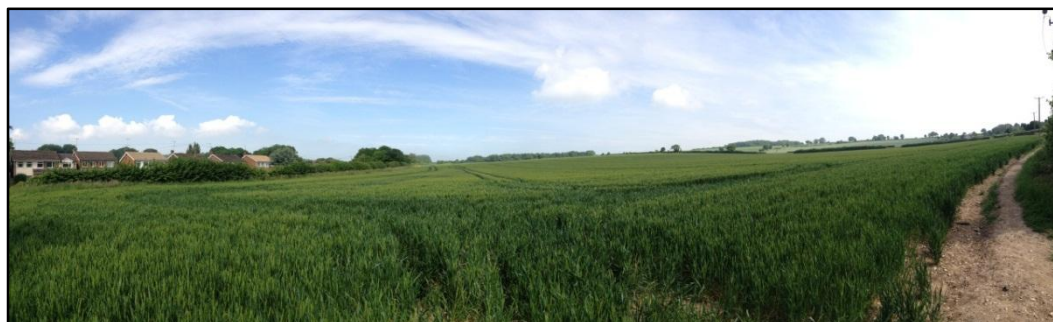
## GB16B –Green Belt Land to North of Hemel Hempstead

**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.

<b>GB16B – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements. However it contributes with 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 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements in physical terms, or overall visual openness.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics 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.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
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.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel contributes with GB21A towards the primary local gap between Hemel Hempstead and Redbourn (2 <sup>nd</sup> ). 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**

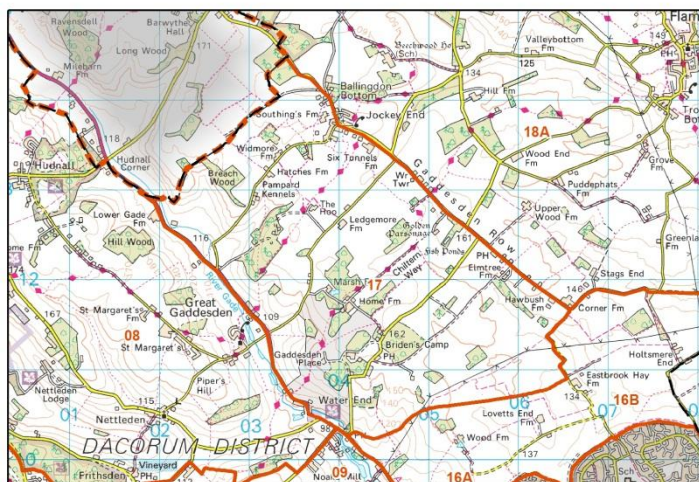
**Existence of built development** The level of built development is very low at 0.3%. There is limited residential ribbon development spreading from villages and hamlets along narrow country lanes.

**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.

## GB17 – Non-Green Belt Land North of Hemel Hempstead

**Description** The parcel is non-Green Belt land located to the north of Hemel Hempstead and extends from the northern edge of the Green Belt to the north edge of the study area connecting with the Luton and Dunstable Green Belt. It is covered by the Chilterns AONB and is 993 ha in size, containing the broadly V-shaped valley of the River Gade rising to the east to a chalk plateau.



**Land use** Predominately arable farmland.

View to west from northwest corner of GB17 showing strong countryside characteristics



## Principal Function / Summary

Significant contribution towards safeguarding the countryside. Partial contribution towards checking sprawl from Luton and Dunstable, and preserving setting of Water End and Great Gaddesden. Overall the parcel contributes significantly towards 1 out of the 5 Green Belt purposes.

<b>GB17 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>Partial</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl. It includes an area of the Luton and Dunstable Green Belt to the north.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel displays typical rural and countryside characteristics in medium sized arable and pasture fields forming a patchwork with occasional deciduous woodland blocks including pockets of ancient woodland. The River Gade is bordered in most places by water meadows and pasture with wet woodlands, meres and relic watercress beds. The parcel is also within the Chilterns AONB. There are limited urban influences and built development or encroachment however there is some development along the A4146. The parcel displays very high levels of visual openness.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel adjoins Water End and Great Gaddesden Conservation Areas. The Green Belt acts as an immediate open and rural historic setting, providing views to and from the countryside.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not separate any 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> tier settlements.		

### **Level of Openness and Countryside Character**

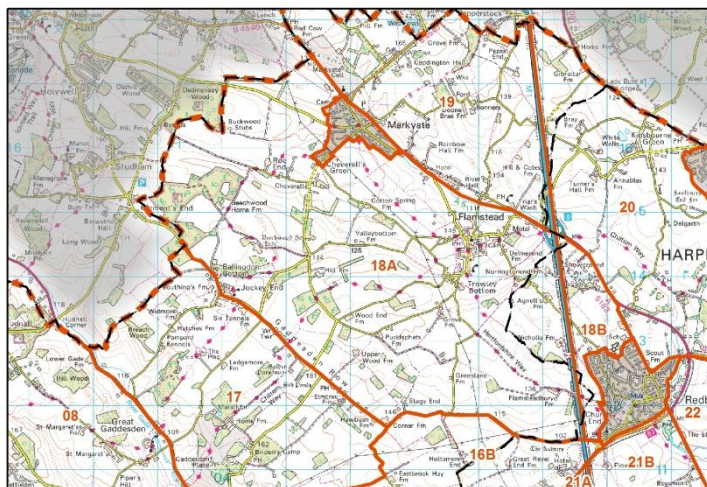
**Existence of built development** The level of built development is very low at 0.3%. The A4146 follows the length of the valley and associated prominent commercial premises and nurseries are located along the route.

**Visual Openness** Some open locations provide opportunities for long distance views to the surrounding countryside and to Hemel Hempstead.

**Countryside Character** The parcel has a strong rural character with a few urban influences except along the main A4146 route corridor.

## 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.

<b>GB18A – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
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		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements. However it contributes with 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 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements in physical but would reduce overall visual openness as the parcel does not directly adjoin 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
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.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
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.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel provides secondary local gaps between Markyate (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) to Flamstead (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) and Redbourn (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) 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 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> 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.



<b>GB18B – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
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.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
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.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel contributes with GB18A to the secondary local gap between Redbourn (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) and Flamstead (3 <sup>rd</sup> ). 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.

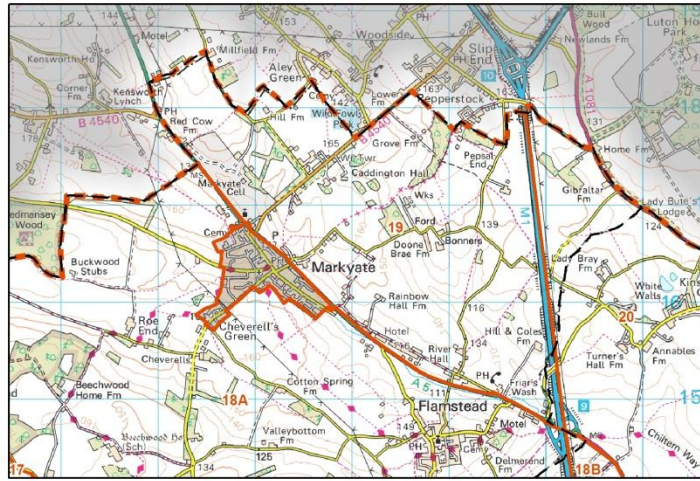
**Countryside Character** The landscape close to the M1 is notably disturbed and the constant presence of large lorries and the influence of the transport system in this area is strong. The north and west boundaries of Redbourn are well defined.

### **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.

<b>GB19 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
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.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements. However it contributes with 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 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements in physical terms but would be likely to reduce the overall visual openness of the parcel, which does not directly adjoin 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
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.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
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.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel contributes to separation of Markyate (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) 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**

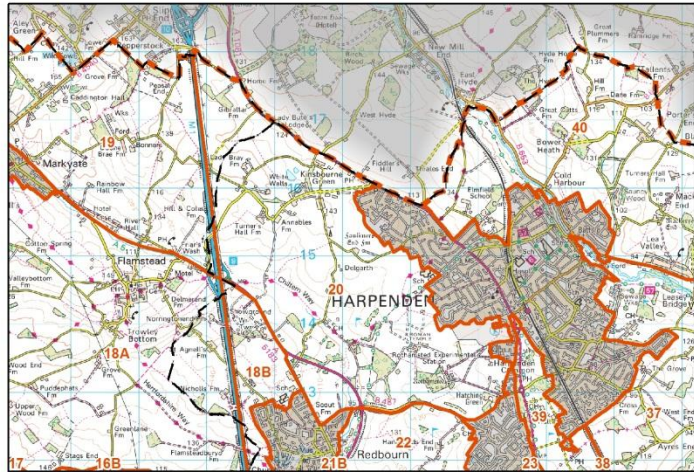
**Existence of built development** The level of built development is low at 0.6%. There is some ribbon development adjacent to the Roman Watling Street A5 / Ver valley.

**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.

<b>GB20 – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
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.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not fully separate neighbouring 1 <sup>st</sup> tier settlements.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
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.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
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.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
The parcel provides the primary local gap to separate Harpenden (1 <sup>st</sup> ) and Redbourn (2 <sup>nd</sup> ). 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 comprise 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 Kinsbourn Green (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) 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.

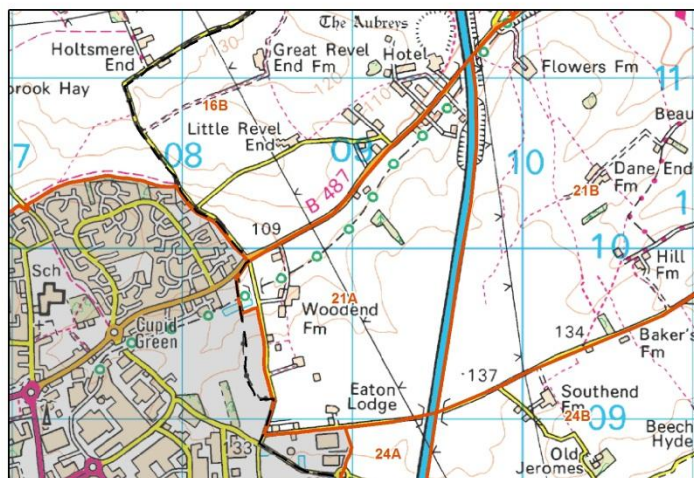
## **GB20 – Next Steps**

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.



<b>GB21A – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
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.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
Parcel does not fully separate 1 <sup>st</sup> 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.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>SIGNIFICANT</b>
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.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not contain any Conservation Areas but does contain a SAM at The Aubreys.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel helps provide the primary local gap between Hemel Hempstead (1 <sup>st</sup> ) and Redbourn (2 <sup>nd</sup> ) 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.

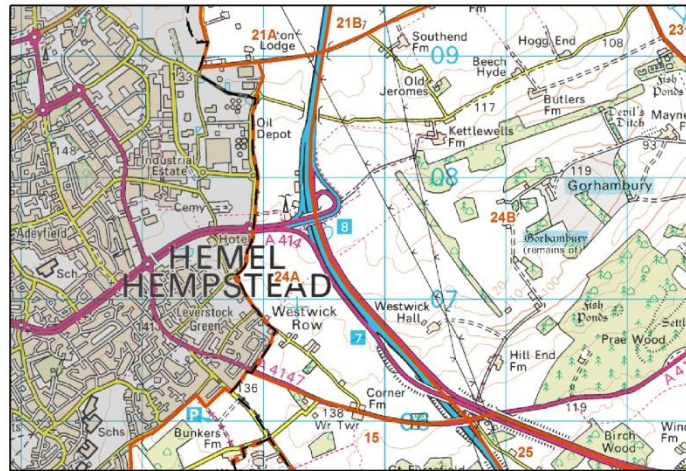
## **GB21A – Next Steps**

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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## 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.

<b>GB24A – Green Belt Purposes Assessment</b>		<b>Contribution</b>
<b>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel is located away from large built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable and Stevenage. It does not form a connection with a wider network of parcels to restrict sprawl.		
<b>To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
The parcel 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.		
<b>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>		<b>PARTIAL</b>
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.		
<b>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not provide setting for any historic places.		
<b>To maintain existing settlement pattern</b>		<b>LIMITED OR NO</b>
The parcel does not separate any 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> 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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