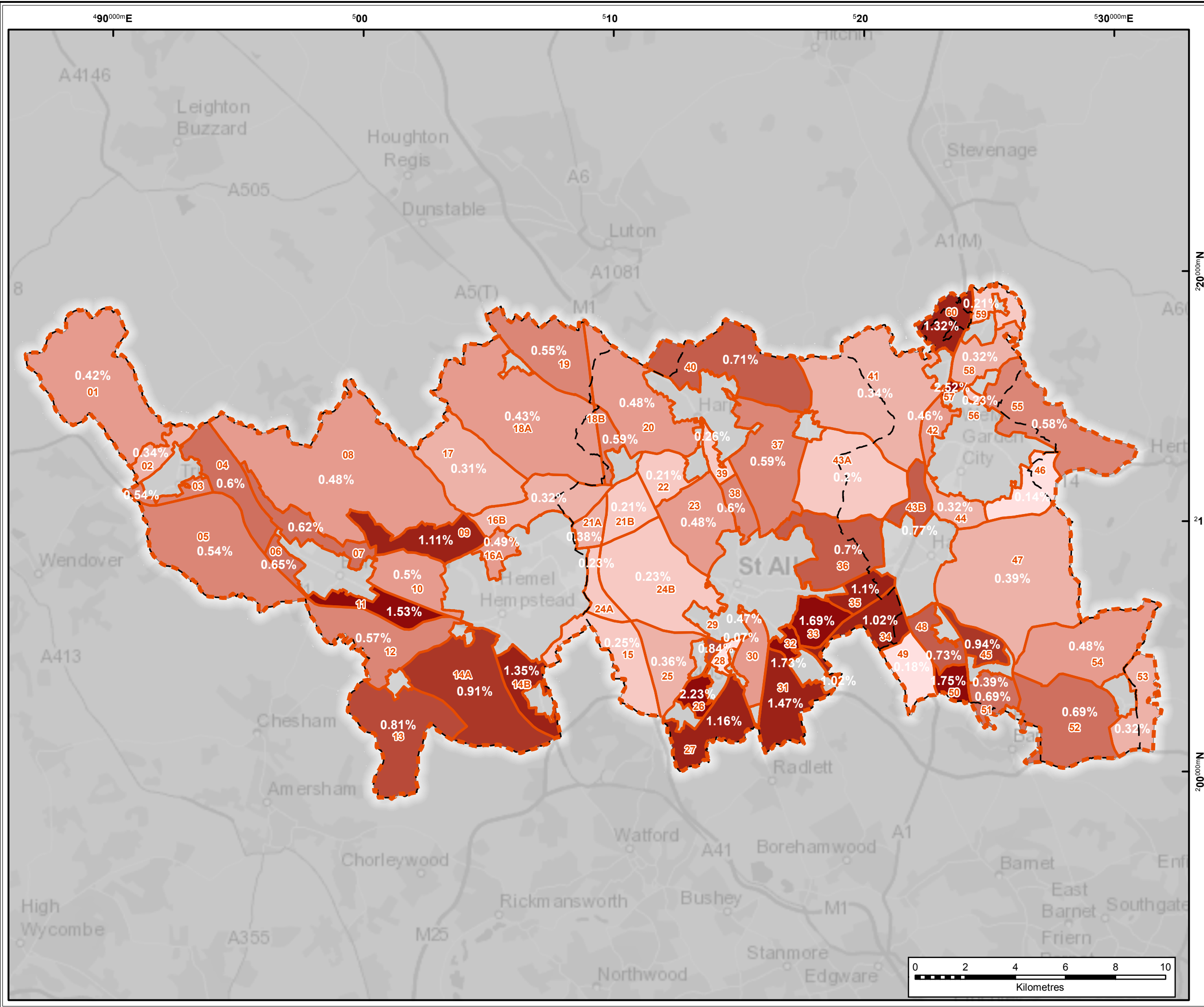


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Name: Figure7.4_Proportion of built development



Key:
 Study Area Outer Boundary
 District Borough Boundary
 Land Parcel Boundary

Percentage Built

- 0 - 0.20%
- 0.21 - 0.30%
- 0.31 - 0.40%
- 0.41 - 0.50%
- 0.51 - 0.60%
- 0.61 - 0.70%
- 0.71 - 0.80%
- 0.81 - 0.90%
- 0.91 - 1.00%
- 1.01 - 1.50%
- 1.51 - 2.52%

Count: 66
 Min: 0.07
 Max: 2.52
 Sum: 44.74
 Mean: 0.68
 S/D: 0.5



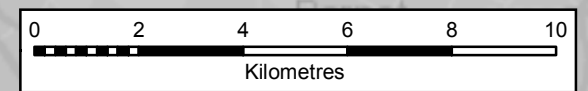
Coordinate System: British National Grid
 Projection: Transverse Mercator
 Datum: OSGB 1936
 Units: Meter

REVISION: D

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

**FIGURE 7.4.
 Proportion of
 Built Development (%)**

SCALE	PROJECT CODE
1:145,000 @ A3	JE30761
CONTENT	DRAWN
Ordnance Survey	KW
CHECKED	DATE
RB	30/11/2013

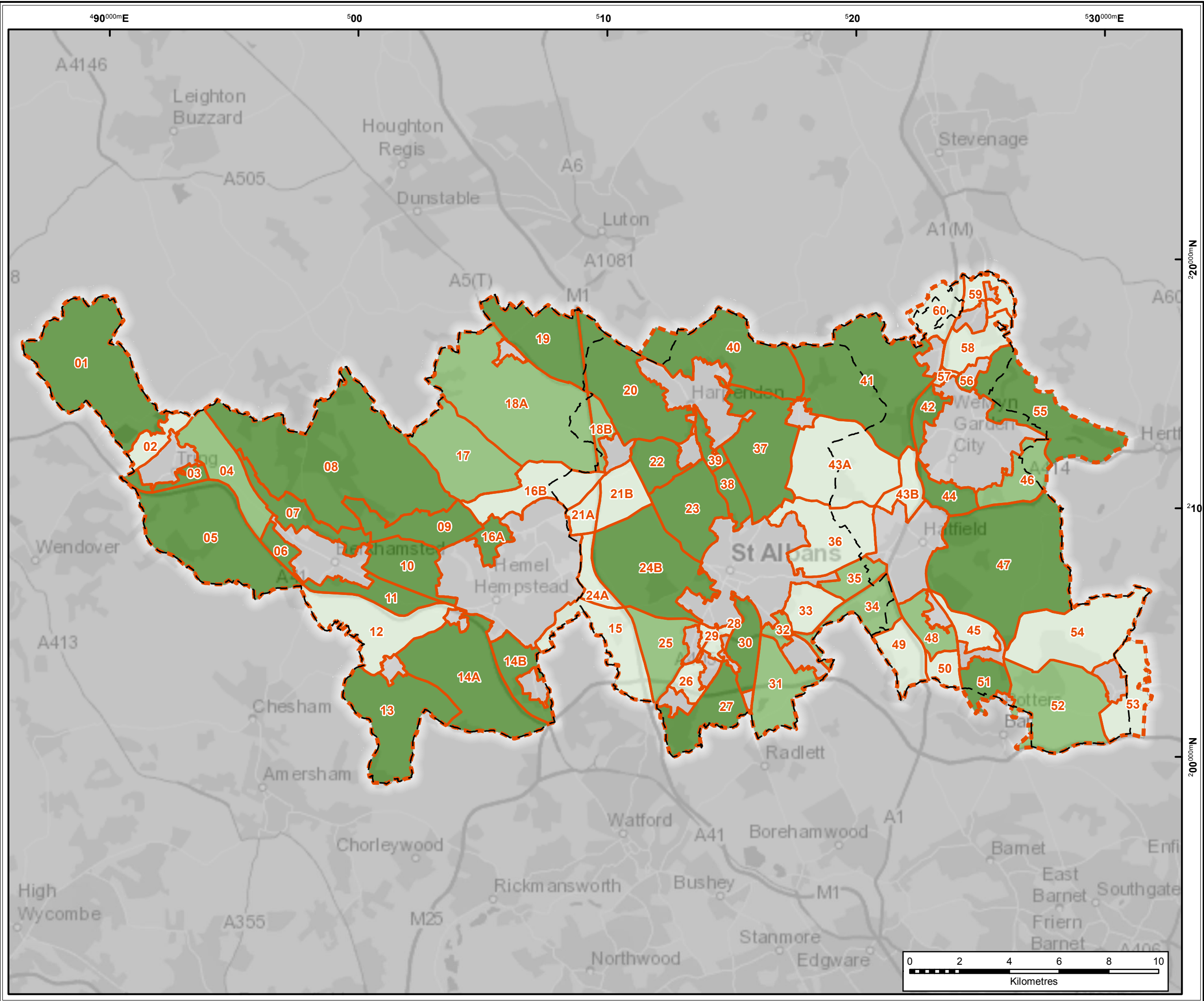




7.5. NPPF Purpose 4: To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

- 7.5.1. Figure 7.5 shows the contribution of each parcel towards preserving the setting and special character of historic towns. It can be seen that many parcels make a significant or partial contribution towards this purpose. This is because the study area is in itself a rich and diverse historic environment, with Green Belt frequently providing a setting for conservation areas and historic parks and gardens. Overall, almost half of all parcels significantly contribute to this purpose.
- 7.5.2. Key networks of parcels which preserve setting and special character are identified as being:
- around Berkhamsted (GB04, 06, 07, 08, 09, 10 & 11) which contains three conservation areas and is surrounded by historic villages as well as Berkhamsted Common. The Grand Union Canal and valley landform makes a key contribution towards preserving setting;
 - to the south, west and north of St Albans (GB23, 24B, 30, 37, 38 & 39), especially to preserve views to the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Alban;
 - to the south, east and west of Welwyn Garden City (GB42, 44 & 55) to preserve the Garden City setting as well as surrounding Historic Parks and Gardens; and,
 - to the east of Hatfield (GB47) to preserve the historic setting of Hatfield House.
- 7.5.3. The absence of historic places within or adjacent to a parcel accounts for any limited contribution towards this purpose.

File Name: Figure7.5_Contribution towards preserving setting



- Key:**
- District Borough Boundary
 - Land Parcel Boundary
 - Study Area Outer Boundary
- Setting**
- Limited or No Contribution
 - Partial Contribution
 - Significant Contribution

N

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

REVISION: F

Green Belt Review for St Albans, Dacorum and Welwyn Hatfield

FIGURE 7.5. Contribution towards Preserving Setting

SCALE	PROJECT CODE
1:145,000 @ A3	JE30761
CONTENT	DRAWN
Ordnance Survey	KW
CHECKED	DATE
RB	30/11/2013

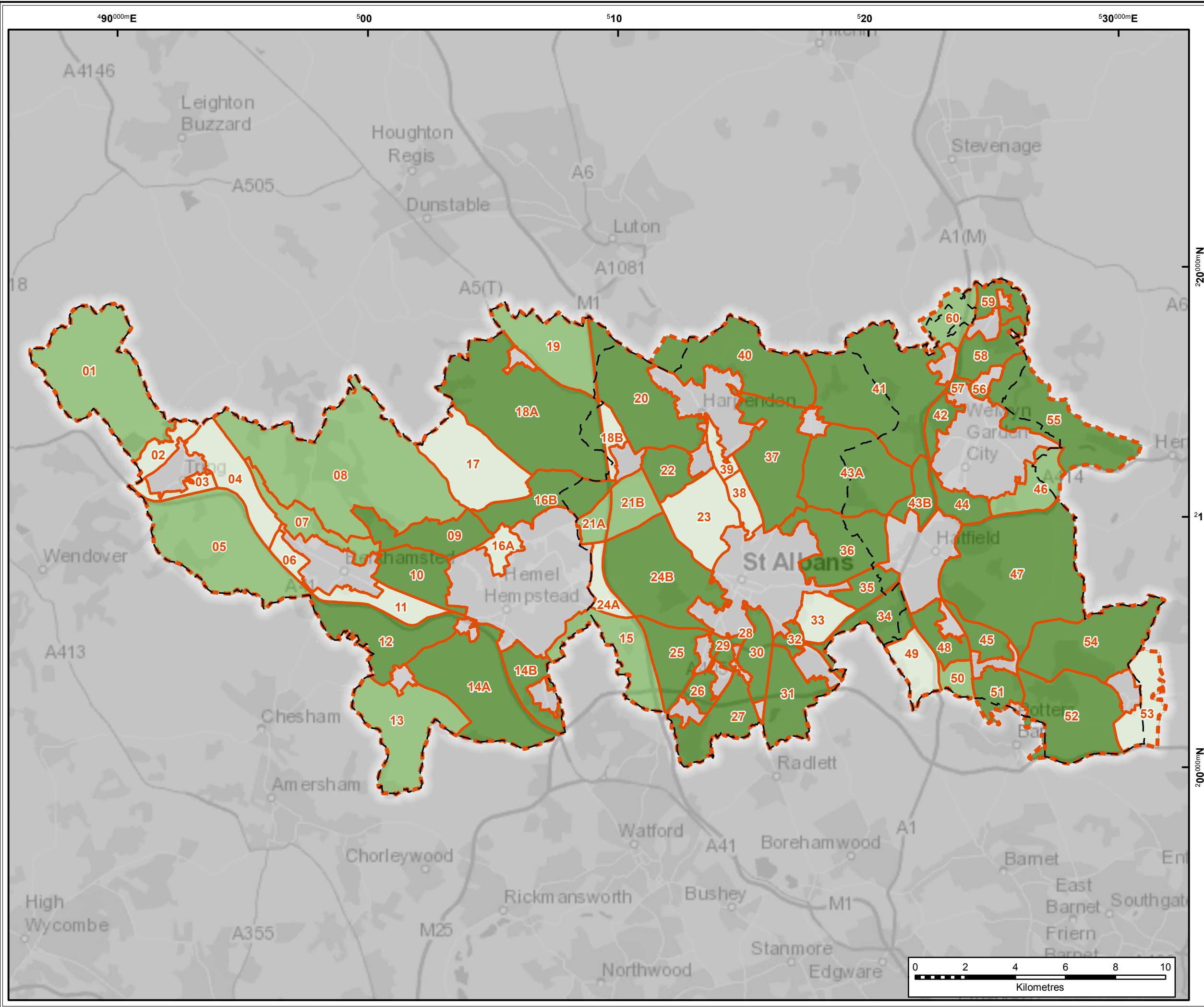




7.6. Local Purpose: To maintain the existing settlement pattern

- 7.6.1. Figure 7.6 shows the contribution of each parcel towards maintaining the existing settlement pattern. It highlights that the majority of Green Belt land contributes towards this local purpose. A series of primary and secondary local gaps separate 1st, 2nd and 3rd tier settlements throughout the study area, as distinct from the strategic gaps identified by the second purpose to prevent merging of neighbouring towns.
- 7.6.2. The pattern of local gaps includes an inner network of parcels and two outer networks to the north and south. The inner band contains the majority of primary local gaps which separate 1st tier settlements from 2nd and 3rd tier settlements, whereas the two outer bands accommodate most of the secondary local gaps which separate 2nd and 3rd tier settlements only.
- 7.6.3. This pattern mirrors the spatial distribution of 2nd and 3rd tier settlements of which ten are located in Dacorum, 19 in St Albans and 22 in Welwyn Hatfield. This distribution of settlements shows that there are more towns and villages closer to London. Therefore the majority of parcels providing a significant contribution are located in the centre and east of the study area.

File Name: Figure7.6_Maintaining settlement_pattern



Key:

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

Pattern

- Limited or No Contribution
- Partial Contribution
- Significant Contribution

N

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

REVISION: D

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

FIGURE 7.6.
**Contribution towards Maintaining
the Settlement Pattern**

SCALE	PROJECT CODE
1:145,000 @ A3	JE30761
CONTENT	DRAWN
Ordnance Survey	KW
CHECKED	DATE
RB	30/11/2013





7.7. Assessment of Non-Green Belt Land

- 7.7.1. The study area includes a network of non-Green Belt parcels located in Dacorum comprising GB01, GB08, GB17, GB18A & part of GB19. The purposes assessment demonstrates that this non-Green Belt land makes a contribution towards Green Belt purposes. This land most significantly contributes towards the national Green Belt purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. This is the primary reason for its national landscape designation as The Chilterns AONB. It is important to recognise the distinction between the Green Belt and AONB designation. The Green Belt serves five purposes, and was primarily established to achieve urban containment, whereas the AONB designation mainly relates to protecting the landscape only. This area exhibits strong countryside and rural characteristics and levels of openness are generally high. This is demonstrated as the proportion of built development is very low at 0.4%.
- 7.7.2. The characteristics of the non-Green Belt land differ from Green Belt land in the rest of the study area in so far as it does not directly adjoin any 1st tier settlements and only contains a total of three settlements listed in the Hierarchy Table 3.2²⁵, which represents a very sparse scattering given the scale of the area. Therefore its contribution towards the separation of settlements function is limited. However it does contribute towards large strategic gaps between Luton and Dunstable to the north of the study area and Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring to the North West.
- 7.7.3. Some non-Green Belt land also contributes towards preserving historic places setting, especially GB01 and 08 which contain a number of conservation areas. Only GB18A makes a contribution towards checking sprawl the large built-up area of Luton and Dunstable to the north of the study area.
- 7.7.4. Therefore areas of non-Green Belt could realistically be designated as Green Belt as a compensatory measure. The justification for this is the relatively high level of contribution towards the Green Belt purposes from non-Green Belt land and in that non-Green Belt land is effectively already surrounded by Green Belt (as illustrated by Figure 2.1). At the strategic parcel level it is inappropriate and difficult to sub-divide the parcels into suggested new areas of Green Belt. Overall, the character of the land is relatively consistent and the area appears to lack strong natural or physical features which might form the edges of a revised Green Belt boundary. If compensatory Green Belt is sought, then it may be appropriate to undertake further assessment of the non-Green Belt areas to confirm the most appropriate boundaries.

²⁵ Long Marston, Wilstone and Aldbury.



7.8. Summary of Purposes Assessment

7.8.1. The primary roles of the Green Belt identified from the purposes assessment are set out in Figure 7.7. The map is a simplified diagrammatic representation of the complex ways in which Green Belt functions have effect in the study area. The Green Belt plays a significant role across the study area to contribute to the four national purposes and local Hertfordshire purpose as follows:

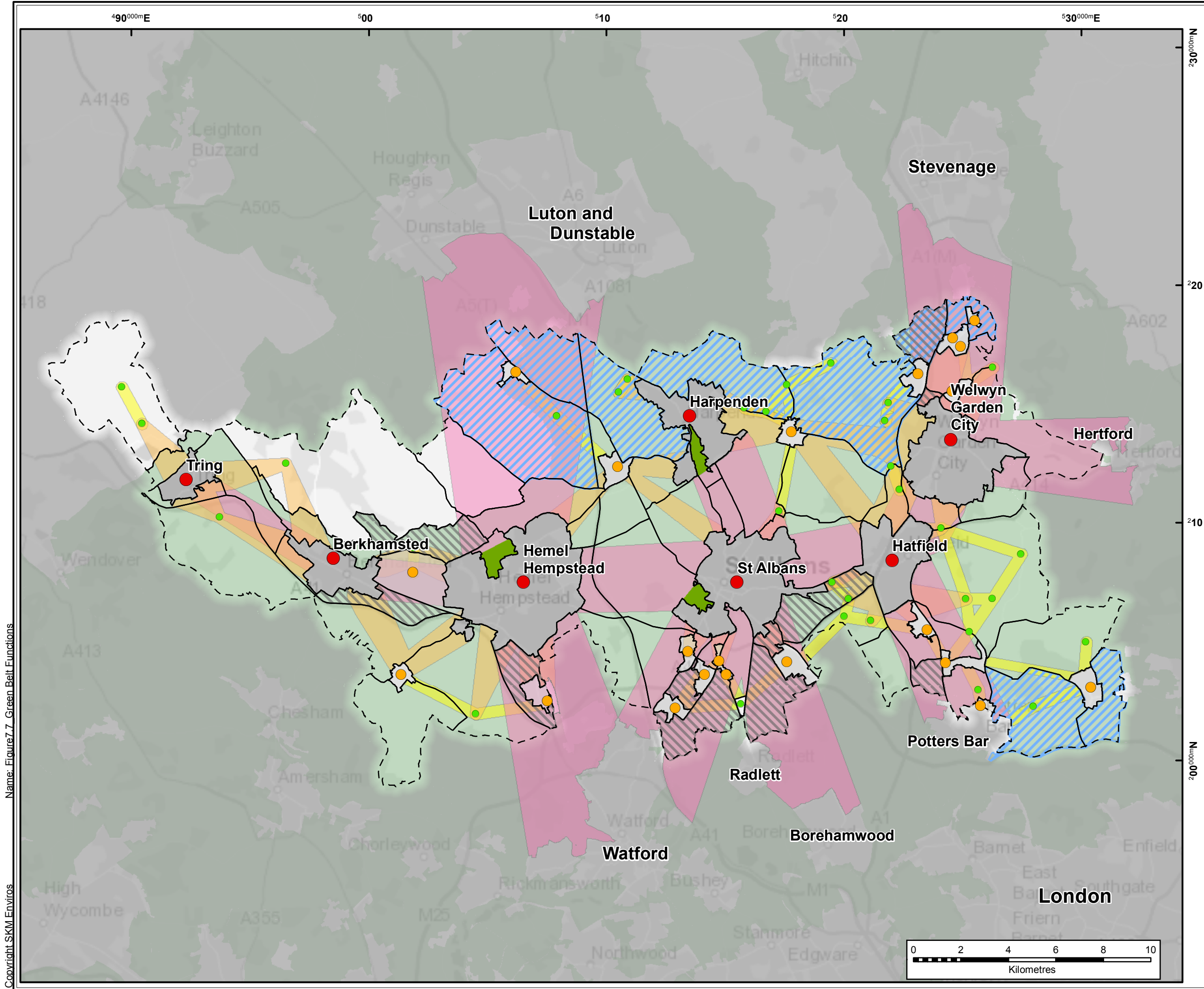
- Sprawl from built-up areas of London, Luton and Dunstable, and Stevenage is restricted by the outer northern and eastern land plus the southeast corner of the study area
- Neighbouring towns within the study area are prevented from merging by a series of strategic gaps across the centre of the study area. Larger strategic gaps extend outwards to the north, south and east to prevent merging with 1st tier settlements outside of the study area.
- Safeguarding of the high quality countryside is evident across the study area, however some parcels display urban fringe characteristics.
- Preserving setting and special character of historic towns is strong but geographically dispersed across the study area.
- Primary and secondary local gaps to maintain the existing settlement pattern are also evident across the study area (however they are relatively absent from non-Green Belt land).



7.8.2. Urban fringe environments are generally more prevalent to the south of the study area because they are more often associated with the scatter of smaller settlements in close proximity, which is more evident towards London. This separation of settlements function is very significant in these areas especially in the light of increased development pressures, linked to existing urbanisation on the character of the area. This conclusion is supported by the proportion of built development analysis (see Figure 7.4). Countryside characteristics are generally stronger to the north, as a result of landscape quality, wider gaps between settlements and the stronger presence of rural land uses. As a result the contribution of Green Belt towards the protection countryside is stronger to the north.

7.9. Major Developed Sites (in Dacorum only)

7.9.1. One of the objectives within the Study Brief was to consider whether any further major developed sites should be identified in Dacorum. Table 2 in the Dacorum Core Strategy (adopted September 2013) sets out seven major developed sites in the Green Belt. The purposes assessment revealed that there are limited additional large brownfield sites within the Dacorum Green Belt which might be suitable for major developed site designation. Therefore seven identified sites are considered to be sufficient and, based on the assessment of the area, appear to be exhaustive.



Key:

- Project Study Area
- Land Parcel Boundary
- 1st Tier Settlement
- 2nd Tier Settlement
- Area with >1% Built-Up Area
- Check Sprawl
- Green Wedge
- Strategic Gap
- Primary Local Gap
- Secondary Local Gap
- Green Belt

Settlement

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

N

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

REVISION: H

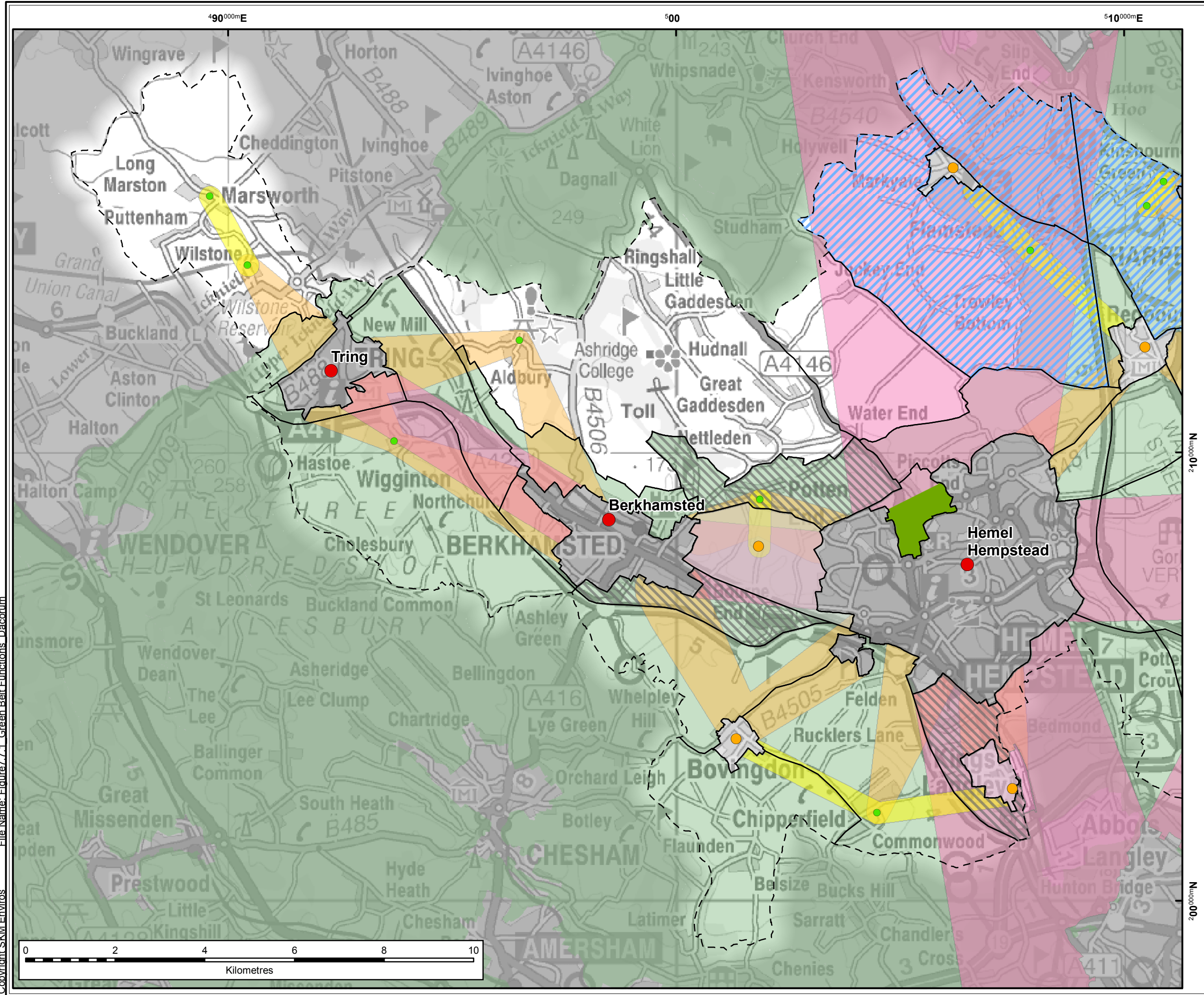
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**FIGURE 7.7.
 Green Belt Functions**

SCALE	PROJECT CODE
1:150,000 @ A3	JE30761
CONTENT	DRAWN
	KW
CHECKED	DATE
RB	3/12/2013



Name: Figure 7.7 Green Belt Functions



Key:

- Project Study Area
- Land Parcel Boundary
- 1st Tier Settlement
- 2nd Tier Settlement
- Area with >1% Built-Up Area
- Green Wedge
- Check Sprawl
- Secondary Local Gap
- Strategic Gap
- Primary Local Gap
- Green Belt

Settlement

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

N

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

REVISION: H

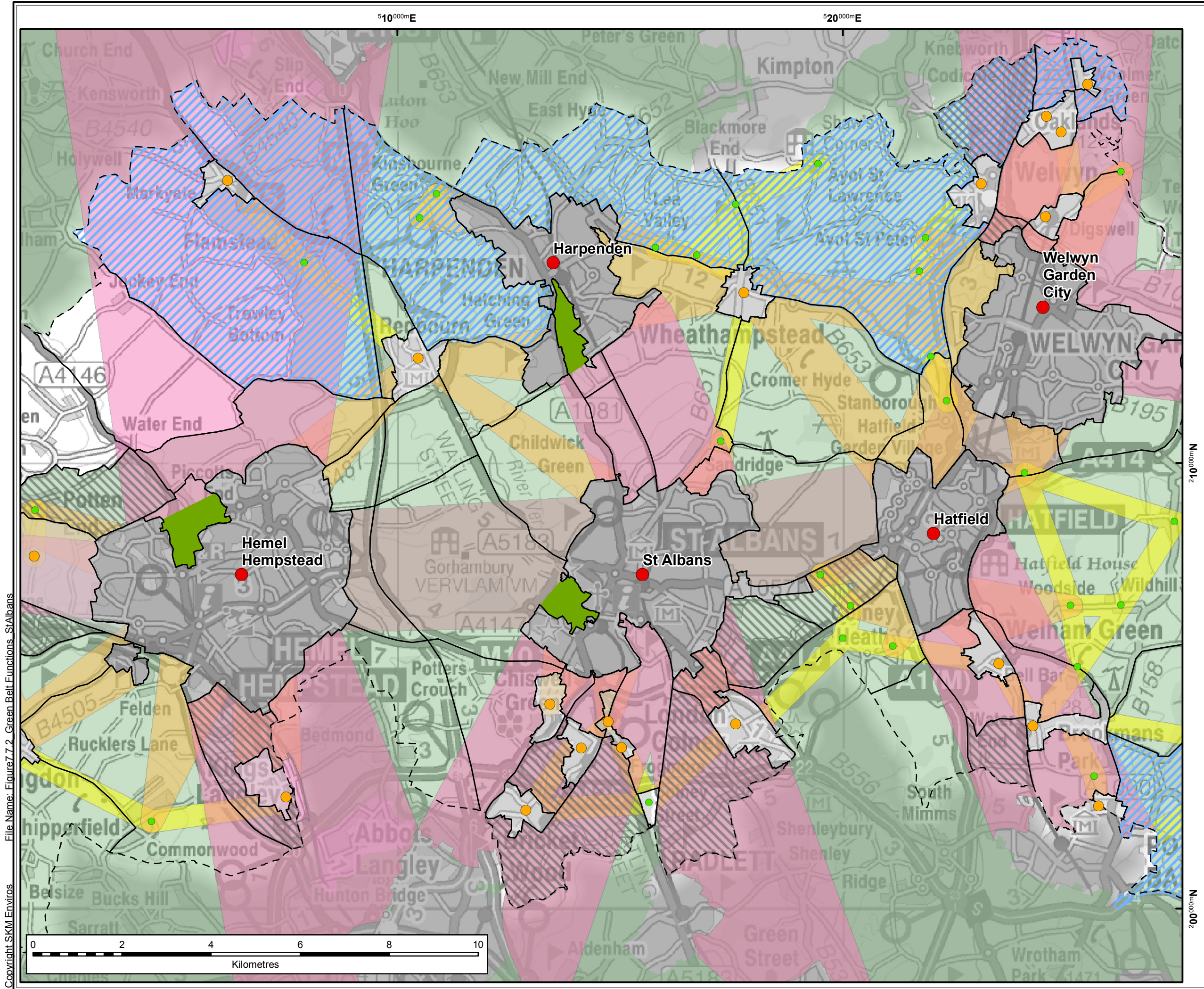
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**FIGURE 7.7.1.
 Green Belt Functions
 Dacorum Borough Council**

SCALE	PROJECT CODE
1:80,000 @ A3	JE30761
CONTENT	DRAWN
	KW
CHECKED	DATE
RB	3/12/2013



File Name: Figure7.7.1_Green Belt Functions_Dacorum



Key:

- Project Study Area
- Land Parcel Boundary
- 1st Tier Settlement
- 2nd Tier Settlement
- Area with >1% Built-Up Area
- Green Wedge
- Check Sprawl
- Strategic Gap
- Primary Local Gap
- Secondary Local Gap
- Green Belt

Settlement

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

N

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

REVISION: H

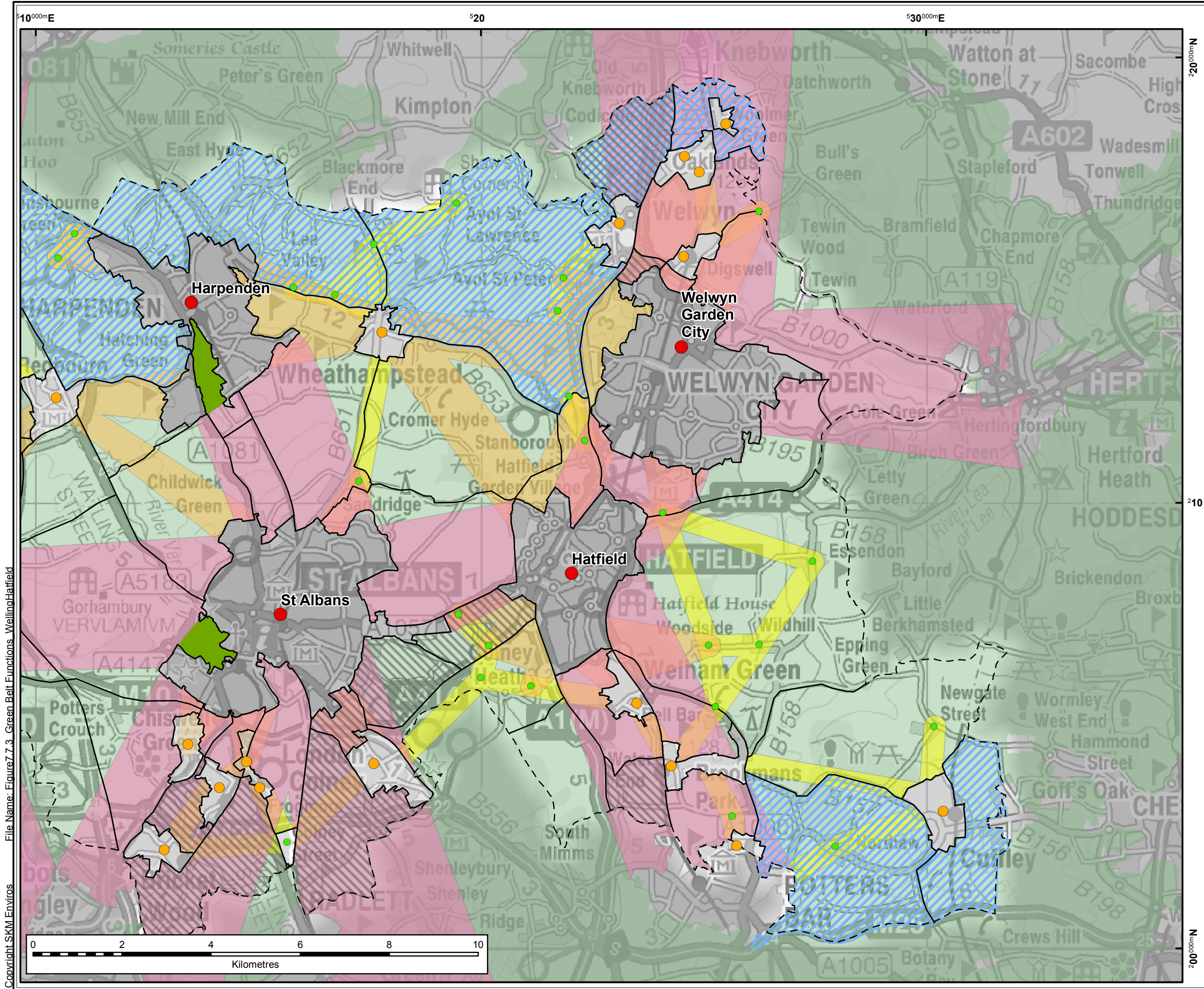
**Green Belt Review for
 St Albans, Dacorum and
 Welwyn Hatfield**

**FIGURE 7.7.2.
 Green Belt Functions
 St Albans District Council**

SCALE	PROJECT CODE
1:80,000 @ A3	JE30761
CONTENT	DRAWN
	KW
CHECKED	DATE
RB	3/12/2013



Copyright SKM Enviro. File Name: Figure7.7.2_Green Belt Functions - StAlbans



Key:

- Project Study Area
- Land Parcel Boundary
- 1st Tier Settlement
- 2nd Tier Settlement
- Area with >1% Built-Up Area
- Green Wedge
- Check Sprawl
- Strategic Gap
- Primary Local Gap
- Secondary Local Gap
- Green Belt

Settlement

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

N

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

REVISION: H

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

**FIGURE 7.7.3.
 Green Belt Functions
 Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council**

SCALE	PROJECT CODE
1:80,000 @ A3	JE30761
CONTENT	DRAWN
	KW
CHECKED	DATE
RB	3/12/2013



File Name: Figure7.7.3_Green Belt Functions_WelwynHatfield



8. Land Contributing Least to Green Belt Purposes

8.1. Overview

- 8.1.1. Drawing on the findings of the purposes assessment, this section identifies land which contributes least towards the four national Green Belt purposes and the local Hertfordshire purpose. Green Belt land contributing least towards Green Belt purposes has been classified as either a strategic sub-area or a small scale sub-area. The strategic sub-areas are large scale with no defined boundaries whereas the small-scale sub-areas have more clearly defined edges.
- 8.1.2. These sub-areas of Green Belt land form part of individual strategic parcels defined in the study. When these sub-areas are considered as stand-alone areas, their limited contribution towards the four national purposes and local Hertfordshire purpose (relative to the overall performance of the strategic parcel as a whole) is evident. This judgement emerges from the overall purposes assessment, which took a view on the overall strategic performance of each parcel, as well as the existing levels of openness and the local landscape and urbanising features which help define the character of land. Therefore it is recognised, where appropriate, that some sub-areas do contribute towards the five purposes assessed. However this level of contribution is relatively low compared to other parts of the Green Belt.
- 8.1.3. On the basis of the assessment undertaken it is considered that some reduction in the size of the individual strategic parcels in which sub-areas have been identified would not significantly compromise the primary functions of the Green Belt or compromise the separation of existing settlements.
- 8.1.4. A brief description of each of these sub-areas is provided in Sections 8.2 and 8.3 below. Further assessment of all these sub-areas will be required to determine their precise boundaries and to consider the wider range of planning issues that will need to be taken into account when reviewing Green Belt boundaries in the context of Local Plan preparation. It is anticipated that these further assessments will be undertaken separately by each planning authority to form part of the evidence base to help the planning authorities '*determine the manner and degree to which change in the Green Belt could be considered without damaging the purposes for including land in the Green Belt and the degree to which harm to the Green Belt would result if development were to take place*²⁶.
- 8.1.5. Given the non-strategic nature of the small-scale sub-areas identified those identified may not be exhaustive. This is because this Green Belt Review has been undertaken at a strategic level. It is therefore possible that additional potential small-scale boundary

²⁶ Study Brief (St Albans, Dacorum and Welwyn Hatfield, 2013)



changes that would also not compromise the overall function of the Green Belt might be identified through a more detailed survey. It is also important to note that this study does not set out precise outer boundaries for any land considered to contribute least to Green Belt purposes. As previously stated, this work must be undertaken through separate studies by each planning authority.

- 8.1.6. Furthermore, some Green Belt land which has been subject to substantial development has been identified for potential detailed boundary adjustments, to more appropriately reflect current development boundaries. The suggested boundary changes take account of the reality of the position on the ground. Where boundaries have lost their integrity as a result of encroachment and piecemeal development they no longer provide a clear demarcation of the Green Belt. In such contexts, adjustment is about re-emphasising and strengthening the barrier to further development and about regaining policy clarity. The Green Belt land suggested for boundary adjustments is generally located at the edges of existing settlements. It is possible that other boundary adjustments may be identified in supplementary technical work prepared by planning authorities.
- 8.1.7. In respect of revisions to Green Belt boundaries, Dacorum have undertaken detailed work as part of their Site Allocations DPD. This work is currently in draft form, but indicates that some minor boundary adjustments are likely to be justified. These adjustments will be taken forward through the Council's Site Allocations process. They are not considered as part of this purposes assessment.
- 8.1.8. Land contributing least towards Green Belt purposes is discussed in more detail in 8.2, 8.3 and 8.4, and mapped in Figure 8.1 below.



8.2. Strategic sub-areas contributing least to Green Belt Purposes

8.2.1. Strategic sub-areas identified for further assessment are described below and mapped in Figure 8.1. These areas of land which form part of wider strategic parcels identified for the purposes of assessment have no defined boundaries. They are considered to contribute least towards the four national Green Belt purposes and local Hertfordshire purpose. Further detailed assessment work will need to be undertaken to inform any decisions on the precise extent of these areas and the future role of specific areas of land within them. As previously stated, any Green Belt land judged as contributing least to national purposes will require further consideration in respect of wider issues, relating to infrastructure capacity, sustainability and landscape. These issues are not covered by this study but will need to be considered in Local Plans preparations.

Dacorum (Strategic Land contributing least to Green Belt purposes)

8.2.2. **D-S1 – Land enclosed by B488, A41 and west of Tring (GB03).** The strategic parcel contributes significantly towards 1 of the 5 Green Belt purposes whereby it preserves the setting of Tring and Tring Park. It also makes a partial contribution towards preventing merging (providing strategic gap between Tring and Berkhamsted) and maintains the existing settlement pattern. However, 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).

D-S2 – Land enclosed by A41 and southeast Berkhamsted (GB11). The strategic parcel contributes significantly towards 2 of the 5 Green Belt purposes whereby it prevents merging (of Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead) and preserves the setting of Winkwell and Berkhamsted. It also makes a partial contribution towards safeguarding the countryside. However, 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).

D-S3 – Land south of Hemel Hempstead enclosed by the A41 and railway line, and in the vicinity of Rucklers Lane (GB14B). The strategic parcel contributes significantly towards 2 out of 5 Green Belt purposes whereby it preserves the setting of Kings Langley, and maintains the existing settlement pattern (providing gap between Hemel Hempstead and Kings Langley). It also makes a partial contribution towards preventing merging and safeguarding the countryside. However, 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 Rucklers 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.

St Albans (Strategic Land contributing least to Green Belt purposes)

- 8.2.3. **SA-S1 & S2 – Land enclosed by east Hemel Hempstead and M1 (GB21A & GB24A).** The strategic parcels significantly contribute towards 1 out of the 5 Green Belt purposes whereby GB24A only safeguards the countryside from encroachment. The parcels however make a partial contribution towards preventing merging and maintaining the existing settlement pattern. The sub-areas 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.
- 8.2.4. **SA-S3 – Area enclosed by residential development at east St Albans along Sandpit Lane (GB36).** The strategic parcel contributes significantly 3 of the 5 Green Belt



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

- 8.2.5. **SA-S4 – Enclosed land at north St Albans along Sandbridgebury Lane (GB38).** The strategic parcel significantly contributes towards 2 of the 5 Green Belt purposes whereby it prevents merging (of St Albans and Harpenden) and preserves the setting of Old Harpenden. It also makes a partial contribution towards safeguarding the countryside. The sub-area identified has relatively strong countryside characteristics as the landscape is a mix of open arable and some more enclosed areas in particular locations. However land along and around Sandbridgebury Lane penetrates into the north of St Albans to border existing development and settlement boundaries which contain it on at least two edges. This sub-area displays urban fringe characteristics and greater levels of localised landscape enclosure as a result of existing planting and field patterns and activities within the Green Belt including outdoor recreation. The small scale enclosed character of the sub-area makes it a valuable part of the countryside, but also provides screened from views from the wider strategic parcel. However, given the scale of the gap at 2.5km between St Albans and Harpenden, a reduction in the size of the strategic parcel would not significantly compromise the physical separation of settlements. This land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl or preserving setting.
- 8.2.6. **SA-S5 – Enclosed land at north Harpenden in the vicinity of Luton Road, Couters End Lane and Ambrose Lane (GB40).** The strategic parcel contributes significantly towards 4 of the 5 Green Belt purposes. It checks sprawl from Luton and Dunstable, safeguards the countryside, preserves setting and maintains the existing settlement pattern. However, the sub-area identified to the north of Harpenden penetrates into the urban area and it displays urban influence. There is strong urban influence as substantial development has taken place along the Luton Road, with adjacent development forming an extended urban edge to Harpenden in the northwest. Therefore, assessed in isolation, it makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging or maintaining local gaps. Existing field patterns and boundary planting produces sense of local landscape enclosure, which creates a valuable part of the countryside, but also provides partially screened from views from the wider countryside



and surroundings. A reduction in the size of the strategic parcel would not significantly compromise the overall role of the Green Belt or compromise the separation of settlements.

- 8.2.7. **SA-S6 – Enclosed land at northeast Harpenden along Lower Luton Road, and extending to the vicinity of Whittings Close (GB40).** The strategic parcel contributes significantly towards 4 of the 5 Green Belt purposes. It checks sprawl from Luton and Dunstable, safeguards the countryside, preserves setting and maintains the existing settlement pattern. However, the relatively small (in comparison to the strategic parcel as a whole) sub-area identified to the northeast of Harpenden follows the angular urban edge which increases localised levels of enclosure and urban influence. In addition, existing field patterns and boundary planting create a greater sense of local landscape enclosure. This creates a valuable part of the countryside, but also provides partially screened views from the wider countryside and surroundings. At the strategic level, a reduction in the size of the parcel would not significantly compromise the overall role of the Green Belt or compromise the separation of settlements. Assessed in isolation the sub-area makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting and maintaining local gaps.
- 8.2.8. **SA-S7 – Land south and south west of London Colney (GB31).** The strategic parcel only contributes significantly towards 1 of the 5 Green Belt purposes whereby it maintains the existing settlement pattern. In terms of landscape character and physical openness the sub-area identified is subject to significant urbanising influence. Assessed in isolation, the sub-area to the south and south west of London Colney makes a limited or no contribution towards the primary role of the Green Belt to maintain the local gap between settlements. This is mainly because of the configuration of the urban edge in relation to adjoining Green Belt and the character of the landscape and relationship to the M25, which disrupts the countryside and acts as a major physical barrier. Given the scale and nature of the local gap, which contains the M25, a limited reduction in the size of the strategic parcel would not significantly compromise the physical separation of any settlements or primary role of the Green Belt.
- 8.2.9. **SA-S8 – Enclosed land at Chiswell Green Lane at Chiswell Green (GB25).** The strategic parcel significantly contributes towards 2 of the 5 Green Belt purposes whereby it safeguards the countryside and maintains the existing settlement pattern (providing gap between St Albans and Chiswell Green). It also makes a partial contribution towards preventing merging and preserving setting. However the sub-area identified on pasture land at Chiswell Green Lane displays urban fringe characteristics due to its proximity to the settlement edge and Butterfly World along Miriam Road to the west. This development bounds the outer extent of the pasture land and creates a physical barrier to the open countryside. The pasture land also displays greater levels of landscape enclosure due to localised planting along field boundaries. This creates potential to integrate development into the landscape with lower impact on views from the wider



countryside and surroundings. At the strategic level, a reduction in the size of the parcel would not significantly compromise the overall role of the Green Belt or compromise the separation of settlements. Assessed in isolation the land makes a limited or no contribution towards all Green Belt purposes.

Welwyn Hatfield (Strategic Land contributing least to Green Belt purposes)

- 8.2.10. **WH-S1 – Land at Hatfield Garden Village enclosed by north Hatfield, Coopers Green Lane (to the west) and A1(M) (GB43B).** The strategic parcel contributes significantly towards 2 of the 5 Green Belt functions. It prevents merging and maintaining the existing settlement pattern (providing gaps between Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield with Stanborough). It also makes a partial contribution towards safeguarding the countryside. The sub-area identified as around Hatfield Garden Village and south of Coopers Green Lane penetrates the angular north edge of Hatfield. This creates increased localised levels of enclosure and containment. In addition, surrounding commercial and industrial development, residential area and the A1(M) represent strong urban influences on the sub-area. The location of the northern boundary to the sub-area requires careful consideration as the gap between Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City is narrow at 1km. However it is considered that a reduction in the size of the parcel will not significantly compromise the overall functions of the Green Belt, or separation of existing settlements. Given existing strong physical features bordering the sub-area it is partly screened from the surrounding countryside. Assessed in isolation this land contributes least towards Green Belt purposes. This land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl or preserving setting.
- 8.2.11. **WH-S2 – Land southeast of Welwyn Garden City enclosed by the A414 (GB46 and GB55).** The strategic parcel contributes significantly towards 1 of the 5 Green Belt Purposes, whereby it safeguards the countryside. It also partial contributes towards preventing merging and maintaining the existing settlement pattern. The sub-area identified on land southeast of Welwyn Garden City enclosed by the A414 contains grassland and is partly used for pastoral agriculture. The settlement edge runs along the western edge and the A414 wraps around the southern and eastern extent of the site and these strong physical features act as urban influences on the site. Woodland to the north and southwest offers the potential to help integrate the area with surroundings. Assessed in isolation the parcel contributes least towards Green Belt purposes. The land does not significantly contribute towards preventing merging given the scale of the gap of 2.7km between Welwyn Garden City and Hertford. It makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preserving setting or maintaining the existing settlement pattern. It is noted that this strategic sub-area area of search crosses into East Hertfordshire therefore discussions with the adjoining planning authority area required. This is the only cross-boundary strategic sub-area identified in the study.



8.3. Small-scale sub-areas contributing least to Green Belt Purposes

8.3.1. Small scale sub-areas within strategic parcels which contribute least towards the four national Green Belt purposes and local Hertfordshire purpose are summarised below and mapped in Figure 8.1. Each description provides a high level summary of the sub-area only. This land is non-strategic in nature and therefore is assumed that it will not significantly adversely impact upon the strategic function of the Green Belt. Given the strategic nature of this study, this land will need to be further assessed by planning authorities in more detail to fully consider wider issues which are not covered by in this report, but that should be considered in preparing Local Plans.

Dacorum (Small-scale sub-areas contributing least to Green Belt Purposes)

8.3.2. **D-SS1 – Land west of Hemel Hempstead (GB10)** bound by Pouchen End Lane to the west, Chaulden Lane to the south and settlement edge to the east. The northern extent of the sub-area requires to be determined as a result of further assessment. 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).

8.3.3. **D-SS2 – Land at southeast edge of Bovington (GB13)** at Homefield, off Green Lane. Assessed in isolation this land makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging or maintaining local gaps. The sub-area makes a relatively limited contribution to the primary functions of the Green Belt.

St Albans (Small-scale sub-areas contributing least to Green Belt Purposes)

8.3.4. **SA-SS1 – Land at northeast edge of St Albans (GB36)** bound by House Lane to the east, and settlement edge to the south and west. The northern extent of the area runs level with Pirton Close. Assessed in isolation this sub-area makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.

8.3.5. **SA-SS2 – Land at southwest edge of Redbourn (GB18B)** enclosed by the M1 to the west in the vicinity of Gaddesden Lane. Assessed in isolation this sub-area makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, safeguarding the countryside, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.

8.3.6. **SA-SS3 – Land at southeast edge of Redbourn (GB22)** enclosed by A5183. Assessed in isolation this sub-area makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, safeguarding the countryside, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.



- 8.3.7. **SA-SS4 – Land at west of Harpenden (GB20)** south of Falconers Field and north of Roundwood Park School. Assessed in isolation this sub-area makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.
- 8.3.8. **SA-SS5 – Land south of Harpenden (GB22)** enclosed by Beesonend Lane to the south and settlement edge to the north and east. Assessed in isolation the sub-area makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.
- 8.3.9. **SA-SS6 – Land north of How Wood (GB28)** enclosed by Tippendell Lane to north and settlement edge to south, east and west. Assessed in isolation this very small sub-area makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, safeguarding the countryside, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.
- 8.3.10. **SA-SS7 – Land south of Wheathampstead (GB43A)** to south of Hill Dyke Road and enclosed by Dyke Lane to the east and settlement edge to the west. The southern extent of the land runs level with Beech Crescent. Assessed in isolation this very small sub-area makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.
- 8.3.11. **SA-SS8 – Land east of Wheathampstead (GB41)** to east of Brocket View. Assessed in isolation this very small sub-area makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.

Welwyn Hatfield (Small-scale sub-areas contributing least to Green Belt Purposes)

- 8.3.12. **WH-SS1 – Land west of Hatfield (GB35)** to south of Wilkins Green Lane urban edge and west of Ellenbrook Lane. The southern extent of the land runs to the cyclepath to the south of the existing play area at Ellenbrook Lane. Assessed in isolation this sub-area makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.
- 8.3.13. **WH-SS2 – Land south of Welwyn Garden City (GB44)** to the south of Golden Dell, enclosed by Ascots Lane to the south and settlement edge to the east. The west boundary has the potential to extend beyond Hollybush Lane. Assessed in isolation this sub-area makes a limited or no contribution towards checking sprawl, preventing merging, preserving setting or maintaining local gaps.



8.4. Boundary Adjustments

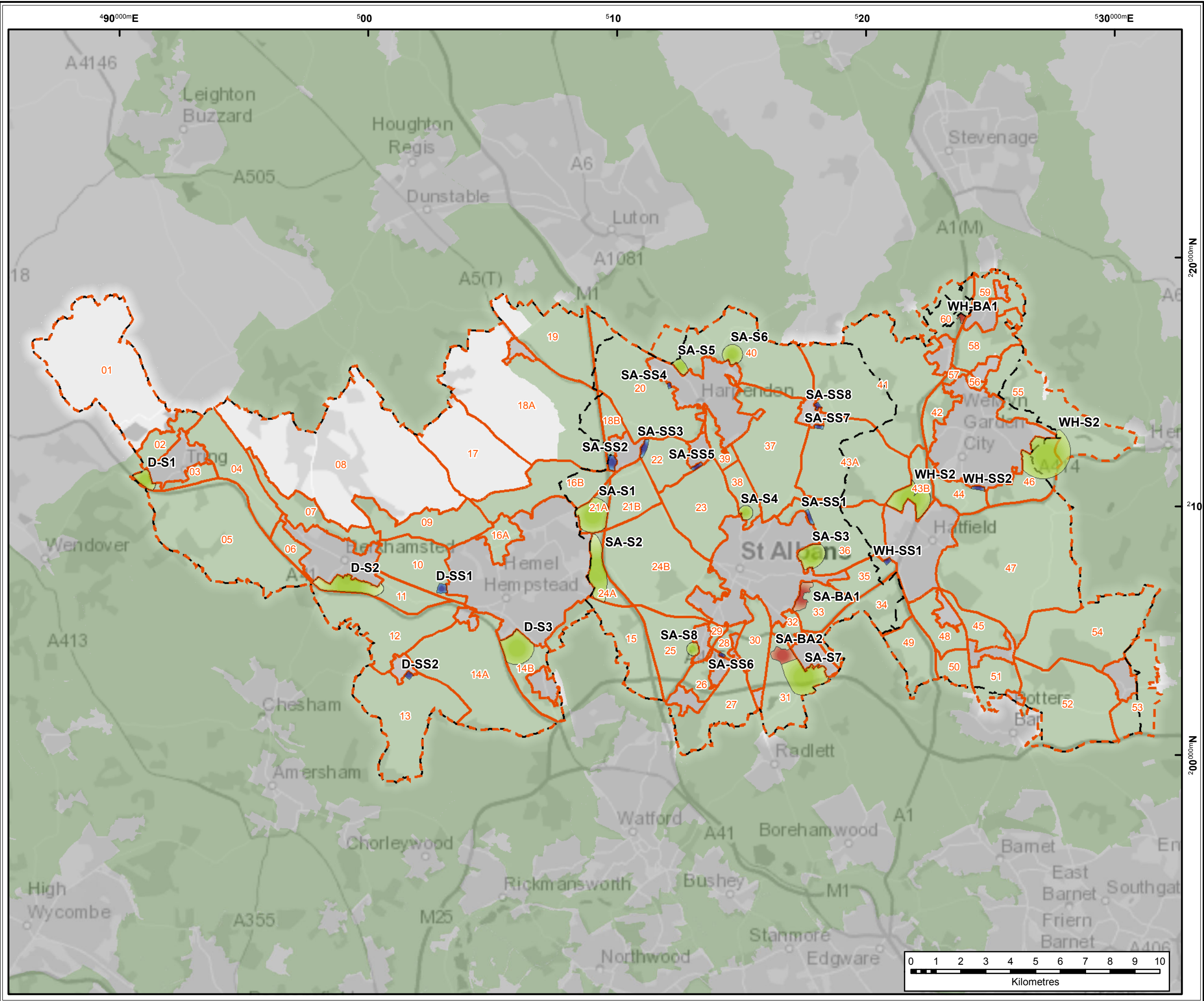
8.4.1. Land recommended for boundary adjustments as a result of development within the Green Belt is listed below and mapped in Figure 8.1.

- SA-BA1 – Development at Highfield Park along southeast edge of St Albans (GB33)
- SA-BA2 – Development at Napsbury Park to west of London Colney (GB31)
- WH-BA1 – Development at The Avenue to west of A1(M) adjoining west of Oaklands village (GB60).

8.4.2. Boundary changes are recommended in light of the purposes assessment and field visits, which have identified Green Belt land which has been subject to substantial development. As a result this land no longer contributes towards the four national Green Belt purposes and the local Hertfordshire purpose. Development has caused the Green Belt boundary to be compromised and therefore it is suggested that it is redrawn along the new built edges. This adjustment of the Green Belt boundary will result in a cleaner and clearer edge and a reaffirmation of the importance of landscape openness and policy permanence beyond that edge.

8.4.3. Further boundary adjustment may be identified by planning authorities in separate supplementary technical studies.

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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



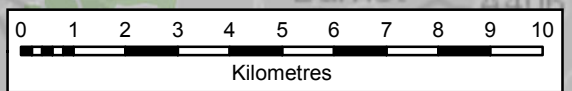
Coordinate System: British National Grid
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: OSGB 1936
Units: Meter

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



Key to Figure 8.1 Land Contributing Least towards Green Belt Purposes

Strategic sub-areas	
D-S1	Land enclosed by B488, A41 and west of Tring (GB03)
D-S2	Land enclosed by A41 and southeast Berkhamsted (GB11)
D-S3	Land south of Hemel Hempstead enclosed by the A41 and railway line, and in the vicinity of Rucklers Lane (GB14B)
SA-S1&S2	Land enclosed by east Hemel Hempstead and M1 (GB21A & GB24A)
SA-S3	Area enclosed by residential development at east St Albans along Sandpit Lane (GB36)
SA-S4	Enclosed land at north St Albans along Sandbridgebury Lane (GB38)
SA-S5	Enclosed land at north Harpenden in the vicinity of Luton Road, Couters End Lane and Ambrose Lane (GB40)
SA-S6	Enclosed land at northeast Harpenden along Lower Luton Road, and extending to the vicinity of Whitings Close (GB40)
SA-S7	Land south and south west of London Colney (GB31)
SA-S8	Enclosed land at Chiswell Green Lane at Chiswell Green (GB25)
WH-S1	Land at Hatfield Garden Village enclosed by north Hatfield, Coopers Green Lane (to the west) and A1(M) (GB43B)
WH-S2	Land southeast of Welwyn Garden City enclosed by the A414 (GB46 and GB55)
Small Scale sub-areas	
D-SS1	Land west of Hemel Hempstead (GB10)
D-SS2	Land at southeast edge of Bovington (GB13)
SA-SS1	Land at northeast edge of St Albans (GB36)
SA-SS2	Land at southwest edge of Redbourn (GB18B)
SA-SS3	Land at southeast edge of Redbourn (GB22)
SA-SS4	Land at west of Harpenden (GB20)
SA-SS5	Land south of Harpenden (GB22)
SA-SS6	Land north of How Wood (GB28)
SA-SS7	Land south of Wheathampstead (GB43A)
SA-SS8	Land east of Wheathampstead (GB41)
WH-SS1	Land west of Hatfield (GB35)
WH-SS2	Land south of Welwyn Garden City (GB44)
Boundary Adjustments	
SA-BA1	Development at Highfield Park along southeast edge of St Albans (GB33)
SA-BA2	Development at Napsbury Park to west of London Colney (GB31)
WH-BA1	Development at The Avenue to west of A1(M) adjoining west of Oaklands village (GB60)

9. Conclusions and Next Steps

9.1. Conclusions

- 9.1.1. Today, almost seventy years since the original designation of the Metropolitan Green Belt and over fifty years since the first definition of the Hertfordshire Green Belt boundaries, the Green Belt continues to perform an important role in²⁷ checking the restricted expansion of large built-up areas, preventing neighbouring towns from merging by providing strategic gaps and preserving the special character of towns. It also safeguards the high quality countryside from encroachment and assists urban regeneration²⁸ as well as maintaining the existing settlement pattern²⁹ by providing local gaps.
- 9.1.2. Most land within the study area exhibits high levels of openness, in terms of visual openness and an absence of built development, which is considered to be an essential characteristic of the Green Belt.
- 9.1.3. A clear distinction is evident and has been maintained between land which is built-up and part of existing settlements and the adjacent surrounding countryside, and this is in large part a result of the success of the Green Belt designation.
- 9.1.4. The study identifies the key functions of the Green Belt, which effectively deliver the five purposes as set out in national and local planning policy. All strategic parcels in the Green Belt, at least in part, clearly perform a key role and need to be given maximum protection into the future. The main roles are represented in the simplified diagram in Figure 7.7.
- 9.1.5. However, a number of sub-areas within some of the strategic parcels have been assessed as making the least contribution towards Green Belt purposes.
- 9.1.6. Therefore the degree to which different parts of the Green Belt contribute to its overall success varies across the study area. The assessment identifies both larger (strategic sub-areas) and smaller scale areas of land which could be considered for further assessment, where a reduction in the size of the strategic parcels within which they lie would not significantly compromise the overall functions of the Green Belt.
- 9.1.7. The assessment against the four national purposes and the local Hertfordshire purpose also indicates that some boundary adjustments could be made without compromising the achievement of the overall purposes of the Green Belt. Potential adjustments could clarify the Green Belt's boundaries and reassert its significance as a key policy tool.

²⁷ Three Green Belt purposes from Circular 42/55

²⁸ Two Green Belt purposes added by Draft PPG2 (1988)

²⁹ Local Green Belt purposes set out in Hertfordshire Structure Plan



9.2. Next Steps

- **To protect and strengthen the existing Green Belt designation.** This has been achieved by identifying land which significantly contributes towards Green Belt purposes. In addition, the primary roles and functions, which deliver the purposes assessed, have been represented in the simplified diagram in Figure 7.7. It is vital that these functions are protected and maintained. These functions relate to checking sprawl, preventing merging, safeguarding the countryside, preserving setting and maintaining the local settlement pattern (which remains an important local characteristic of the study area).
- **To further consider land identified as contributing least towards Green Belt purposes.** Strategic sub-areas within parcels which have been assessed as contributing least to the four national Green Belt purposes and local Hertfordshire purpose have been identified for further assessment. This study has not defined the boundaries for these sub-areas or undertaken detailed analysis of sub-areas. Therefore this land will need to be subject to further consideration by each planning authority in respect of wider issues, relating to infrastructure capacity, sustainability and landscape issues which have not been examined in this study but must be considered in preparing the Local Plans in which any boundary changes can be set out if required.