



MEETING : DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL
VENUE : COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD
DATE : TUESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2013
TIME : 7.00 PM

MEMBERS OF THE PANEL

Councillors M Carver (Chairman), L Haysey and S Rutland-Barsby

All other Members are invited to attend and participate if they so wish.

Members are requested to retain their copy of the agenda and bring it to the relevant Executive and Council meetings.

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DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

1. A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:
 - must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
 - must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
 - must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
 - if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
 - must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.
2. A DPI is an interest of a Member or their partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom they are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were civil partners) within the descriptions as defined in the Localism Act 2011.
3. The Authority may grant a Member dispensation, but only in limited circumstances, to enable him/her to participate and vote on a matter in which they have a DPI.

4. It is a criminal offence to:

- fail to disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest at a meeting if it is not on the register;
- fail to notify the Monitoring Officer, within 28 days, of a DPI that is not on the register that a Member disclosed to a meeting;
- participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which a Member has a DPI;
- knowingly or recklessly provide information that is false or misleading in notifying the Monitoring Officer of a DPI or in disclosing such interest to a meeting.

(Note: The criminal penalties available to a court are to impose a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale and disqualification from being a councillor for up to 5 years.)

AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Chairman's Announcements

3. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 18 November 2013 (to follow)

4. Declarations of Interests

To receive any Member(s)' Declaration(s) of Interest

5. Transport Update Report and Modelling Results (Pages 5 - 60)

6. East Herts Green Belt Review – Parts 2 to 6 (December 2013) (Pages 61 - 236)

7. Duty to Co-operate – Update Report (Pages 237 - 252)

8. District Plan Update Report and Supporting Document Chapter 6 (Pages 253 - 336)

9. Local Development Scheme (LDS) Version 5 (December 2013) (Pages 337 - 352)

10. Urgent Business

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration and is not likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information.

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL – 3 DECEMBER 2013 EXECUTIVE – 9 DECEMBER 2013

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

TRANSPORT UPDATE REPORT AND MODELLING RESULTS

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- This report presents the November 2013 Transport Update prepared by Hertfordshire County Council as part of the evidence base to inform the emerging East Herts District Plan
- It explains that further transport assessment will be needed following agreement of the Draft District Plan, to assess the feasibility and viability of transport and highways mitigation measures.
- It sets out ATLAS advice that the extended process of evidence-gathering will go beyond the District Plan itself and into further plan-making and planning application stages of the end-to-end development process.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL AND EXECUTIVE: That:</u>	
(A)	Hertfordshire County Council's Transport Update November 2013, informed by transport modelling, be noted and supported as part of the technical evidence base to inform the preparation of the District Plan.
<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL: That:</u>	
(A)	Hertfordshire County Council's Transport Update November 2013, informed by transport modelling, be noted and agreed as part of the technical evidence base to inform the preparation of the District Plan.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Consideration of the potential transport impacts of development options has been a central part of the site selection process for the District Plan. East Herts Officers have been working closely with specialist Officers from Hertfordshire County Council, Essex County Council and the Highways Agency to assess the transport impacts of development at the areas of search for the District Plan. High-level specialist input was used to assist in narrowing down the initial 69 areas of search to the shortlisted options agreed for further testing in summer 2012.
- 1.2 Based on the shortlisted options, and working with specialist guidance from Hertfordshire County Council, East Herts Council commissioned Aecom to undertake high-level transport modelling work using a spreadsheet model called DIAMOND to assist in the options sifting process. The DIAMOND results were presented in the Transport Modelling Update report on 21st February 2013.
- 1.3 Paragraph 32 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that *“development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.”* The 21st February Report pointed out that there is no accepted definition of ‘severe’ transport impacts at present. A definition may emerge over time through practice, interpretation and decisions by the Planning Inspectorate, through the appeals system or in the courts.
- 1.4 Paragraph 32, whilst significant in terms of planning applications and Transport Assessments, has not as yet been a significant feature of Local Plan Examinations.
- 1.5 The 21st February Report also highlighted delays with modelling work using the cross-boundary strategic assessment using the Harlow-Stansted-Gateway-Transport-Model (HSGTM), which covers the eastern side of the district and adjoining districts in Essex. The District Plan Update Report of 25th July 2013 explained how senior Officers at East Herts Council were taking action to progress this work with Essex County Council and others, mindful of the implications of delay on the ability of the Council to prepare a District Plan and respond to planning applications.

- 1.6 Following this, the HSGTM evidence was reported in tranches, with the latest information received in late October 2013. A link to the technical reports is provided under 'Background Papers' below.
- 1.7 The District Plan Update Report on 3rd October 2013 explained that in relation to transport, Hertfordshire County Council (in partnership with Essex County Council and the Highways Agency) has been asked to prepare a document which sets out for the purposes of examination in public the impact on the highway network, taking account of new infrastructure provision and other mitigation measures. This report will draw on the extensive transport modelling work undertaken to date.
- 1.8 Before this, Hertfordshire County Council has prepared an interim Update Report on the work necessary for this stage in the plan-making process, and any further work needed. East Herts Council requested that the report provide an assessment of the shortlist of options agreed for further testing in summer 2012, to assist in strategy selection and formulation of draft District Plan policies. The Update report is the subject of this report to the District Planning Executive Panel.
- 1.9 The District Plan Update Report on 3rd October also set out the intention to prepare an Infrastructure Topic Paper, which will include a section on transport infrastructure. The report explained that the Infrastructure Topic Paper will form a succinct statement of the prospects for the provision of the main items of capital expenditure to support the plan. It will not contain detailed assessment of funding packages and infrastructure costs, but will review the main messages from the key infrastructure and service providers, and identify the next steps towards examination.
- 1.10 The Topic Paper will be proportionate to NPPF requirements at draft Plan stage. More detail, including on a wider range of infrastructure types, and also including further information on funding and costings will be accumulated as the Topic Paper gradually evolves and expands into a Delivery Plan. The Delivery Plan will be accompanied by an infrastructure schedule for ongoing monitoring and updating throughout the lifetime of the plan.

- 1.11 The District Plan Update Report explained that in order to ensure a sound basis for the Delivery Plan, it is proposed to commission a Delivery Study early in 2014, following the agreement of Full Council to consult on the draft Plan. For transport, the Delivery Study will draw together relevant information from the available technical work, including any additional work such as additional transport modelling or consideration of mitigation schemes. This will be provided through work undertaken by East Herts Council, Hertfordshire and Essex County Councils, and the landowner/developers.
- 1.12 In preparing this report, and in reviewing a draft of the Transport Update, East Herts Council has requested advice from ATLAS. The main strand of the advice received from ATLAS relates to the need to understand planning as an end-to-end process, acknowledging that local plans in themselves cannot resolve all issues, but that they do provide a framework for consideration of future planning stages including planning applications. These issues were discussed in a meeting involving ATLAS and Officers from East Herts and Hertfordshire County Council prior to finalisation of this report and the Transport Update.
- 1.13 The District Plan Update Report on 3rd October also set out advice from ATLAS around the assessment of deliverability as part of plan making, and in particular issues relating to timing (of anticipated development and infrastructure requirements), the level of information available, and likelihood of an element of uncertainty. As such, ATLAS has also advised that it may not be possible to determine conclusively what constitutes a 'severe impact' as part of the plan-making process, as further planning stages would refine and provide greater detail to the specific range of necessary transport mitigation measures. This advice is reflected in the report below.
- 1.14 East Herts Council has also discussed the emerging District Plan and development options with the Highways Agency. A letter from the Highways Agency is attached at **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**. This letter states that the Highways Agency's prime consideration is the continued safe operation of its network.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 The report prepared by Hertfordshire County Council is attached at **Essential Reference Paper 'C'**. At this stage it does not

provide advice in relation to whether the impacts of development would be severe in NPPF terms, although it does highlight areas of concern for further assessment before the County Council as Highways Authority is able to reach a view on this matter.

- 2.2 East Herts Council is approaching the Preferred Options in preparation of the District Plan, and is therefore still at a comparatively early stage. Therefore it is not to be expected that the County Council would be able to resolve all the transport issues in the interim Transport Update, although greater clarity will be sought as further work is done through the iterative process of plan preparation.
- 2.3 The County Council's Protocol for Working with Districts and Boroughs during the Local Plan Process (April 2013) sets out Local Plan evidence requirements at each stage of the plan-making process. This is reproduced in Table 1 on Page 8 of the Transport Update. Further work will be needed for pre-submission consultation and subsequent submission in line with the requirements set out in Table 1.
- 2.4 Following advice from Hertfordshire County Council of the need to undertake a further test of development options south of Bishop's Stortford and also at Ware, East Herts Council commissioned a further model run using the HSGTM. These results, along with the HSGTM results for development options north of Harlow, inform the report.
- 2.5 Given the complex and technical nature of both these studies, East Herts Officers have not attempted to directly interpret their conclusions. Hertfordshire County Council's transport modelling specialist has interpreted the conclusions and these comments have been added into the County Council's Transport Update. Some landowner/developers have also submitted transport studies which will need to be taken into account as work progresses. There will need to be an ongoing process to resolve any valid concerns.
- 2.6 Given the specialist nature of the HSGTM work, the Aecom consultancy reports are not included as part of this report, but they are available on the Council's website (see Background Papers below).
- 2.7 The East Herts District Plan potentially has implications for the operation of both the motorway network and also the highway

network in Essex. For this reason, as part of the ongoing process of partnership working, East Herts Council will seek advice from the Highways Agency and Essex County Council, and also from Hertfordshire County Council to inform the pre-submission stage in preparation of the plan.

- 2.8 The key messages from the Transport Update have been taken into account where appropriate in Chapter 6 of the Supporting Document. They will also be used as a basis for the transport section of the Infrastructure Topic Paper.
- 2.9 However, it is clear from the Update that there are concerns about an increase in traffic arising from many of the development options. However, it is understood from discussions with officers at Hertfordshire County Council that they are not recommending that any of the options should be dropped on the basis of the Update Report. To reject options without sufficient evidence would result in the plan being found unsound at examination in public.
- 2.10 Further work in relation to transport will therefore be needed between agreement of the Draft District Plan for consultation and submission to examination in public. The work will need to assess the viability and feasibility of managing traffic impacts through a range of mitigation measures.
- 2.11 This additional evidence will be drawn from the Urban Transport Plan for Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth (forthcoming), the Urban Transport Plan for Hertford and Ware, the A414 Study, the Inter-Urban Route Strategy and any other technical work. This work will need to be pursued through joint working between East Herts Council, the transport and highways authorities and the landowner/developers to test development scenarios and mitigation measures.
- 2.12 The results of this work will inform the Delivery Study (see Paragraphs 1.11 above) which should provide further information in respect of likely viability taking account of other infrastructure and planning costs.
- 2.13 Following these additional studies the Council will need to secure further advice from Hertfordshire County Council as the Highway Authority, as to whether or not development is acceptable.
- 2.14 Finally, it should also be noted that some of the testing work will go beyond the scope of the plan-making process and will rest on

scrutiny of the Transport Assessments accompanying planning applications at future development sites.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

The HSGTM modelling results (October/November 2013) and the DIAMOND modelling results (January 2013) are available on the Council's website at www.eastherts.gov.uk/technicalstudies

Other reports referenced are as follows:

- Transport Modelling Update and DIAMOND Results (21 February 2013)
- District Plan Update Report (25 July 2013)

Both reports may be accessed at:

<http://online.eastherts.gov.uk/moderngov/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=151>

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):	<p>People This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are vulnerable, and delivering strong services</p> <p>Place This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p>Prosperity This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.</p>
Consultation:	None
Legal:	N/A
Financial:	N/A
Human Resource:	N/A
Risk Management:	N/A

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Woodlands
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13 November 2013

Dear Martin

I am writing following the meeting you kindly invited me to last month regarding the East Hertfordshire Local Plan and the current thinking on the preferred options for Housing Allocations.

At that meeting we discussed the potential impact of the emerging District Plan on the Strategic Road Network with particular reference to the options North of Harlow and East of Welwyn Garden City.

We discussed concerns about the capacity of both the A1(M) at junction 4 and the M11 at Junction 8 to cope with the potential developments. However I should refer you to the new Circular (DfT 02/2013) which sets out the Highways Agency's responsibilities, and provides guidance to both local authorities and developers. It should be noted from the Circular that the Highways Agency's prime consideration will be the continued safe operation of its network.

With regard to the capacity of both these junctions and their ability to cope with your proposals, I would expect a robust transport assessment to be carried out which highlights the impact and sets out any potential mitigation that may be required. I would welcome the opportunity be involved and support you in developing this.

The Circular specifically states that 'the Assessment should investigate the cumulative and individual impacts of the Local Plan proposals upon the ability of the road links and junctions affected to accommodate the forecast traffic flows in terms of capacity and safety. Such assessments should be carried out in line with current Department for Transport guidance or on a basis otherwise agreed with the Highways Agency'.

I should also point out that the Hertfordshire Authorities are coming together to discuss their concerns about the A1(M) through a Consortium. Whilst the terms of reference for the Consortium are to be formally agreed, its aim is to improve capacity of the A1(M) in order to support the Hertfordshire economy and growth. The Highways Agency is a member of the consortium and has already been supportive in helping to gather robust data on current traffic flows.

Similarly there is a working group, consisting of East Herts., Harlow, Uttlesford, Hertfordshire and Essex County Council officers looking at the impact of proposed development upon the M11 and its junctions. However, I appreciate that the modelling work is not progressing as rapidly as we all would have hoped.

I appreciate that you are already aware of the Route Based Strategies that are currently being drafted by the Highways Agency and took part in the recent workshop that we held to gain views from stakeholders on the Strategic Road Network. These strategies will be used to recognise the issues faced by our Network and will ultimately provide us with a robust evidence base to develop schemes and improvements which will benefit our customers. Your continued input into this is very welcome.

Please feel free to contact me if you have queries. I have welcomed the opportunity to discuss your proposals and would like to work with you on developing a robust assessment so that we can fully understand the impact that they may have.

Yours sincerely



Jenny Volp
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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'C'

East Herts Local Plan Shortlisted Options (Summer 2012)

Transport Update November 2013

**Hertfordshire County Council
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 East Herts District Council is considering a number of potential housing development options as part of their Local Plan to 2031. This report, prepared by Hertfordshire County Council Highways, provides advice on the current understanding of the transport impacts of the sites in East Herts District Council's Local Plan shortlisted options (summer 2012) prior to the council proceeding to a preferred site stage.
- 1.2 The report provides an update which supersedes work previously presented in January 2013 and draws upon key technical findings from subsequent work as the basis for making further recommendations. The report is intended to give an initial indication of potential transport issues and concerns associated with the remaining options, including an indication of the locations likely to experience increased traffic flows and stress as a consequence of the proposals, in advance of defined mitigation measures.
- 1.3 The advice provided in the report and undertaken by East Herts Council to date is proportionate to the preferred options stage of plan making, as set out in HCC's "Protocol for Working with District and Boroughs during the Local Plan Process April 2013". It aims to set an agenda for issues that need to be addressed, and if possible, resolved during the continued development of the plan.
- 1.4 The potential transport impacts (particularly on the highway network) are a key consideration in the formulation of a preferred development strategy. In order to assist this process, evidence from transport modelling work has been collated and assessed. This work has come from a number of different sources which are listed below:
 - Diamond spreadsheet modelling work – used for sifting between broad initial development options (Sites tested - Appendix A, Table 1)
 - A number of tests of the Harlow Stansted Gateway Transport Model (HSTGM) to consider the implications of varying scales and locations of development in conjunction with various levels of infrastructure improvements. This was undertaken in conjunction with Essex County Council and neighbouring planning authorities. (Site and infrastructure tested – Appendix A, Tables 2 and 3)
 - Detailed Paramics modelling work undertaken by developers of the Bishop's Stortford North (ASR) site to support their planning application.
 - Study to identify existing capacity of the A414 in Hertford and understand what improvements may be possible to improve traffic flows. This is due to the existing congestion issues in peak hours and the need to understand what level of capacity can be achieved using

online mitigations identified in the Hertfordshire Inter Urban Routes Strategy and Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan.

2. Requirements of Infrastructure Planning

- 2.1 HCC as Local Highway Authority has developed a protocol for working with Districts and Boroughs during the Local Plan process. This outlines the evidence required at each stage (see Table 1). The modelling work undertaken to date in East Herts (both Diamond assessment and the HSGTM tests) has been feeding into this process.
- 2.2 At the pre submission consultation stage there is a requirement for outline mitigation measures to be identified including broad cost estimates, indicative delivery timescales and an identification of funding sources with the expectation that this high level feasibility review will be refined moving towards submission of the Strategy.
- 2.3 HCC will work with the district to assess the suitability, feasibility and deliverability of any schemes (including the identification of funding opportunities) and confirm whether they mitigate against harm (based on the criteria set out as part of the Local Plan protocol).
- 2.4 It is considered that the above approach would be consistent with NPPF requirements for Local Plans to assess the quality and capacity of infrastructure and consider the scope for additional capacity or improvements to meet the needs of combined development aspirations. This approach will also ensure that there is a reasonable prospect that planned infrastructure is deliverable and is also consistent with that taken by the Highways Agency in relation to the Strategic Road Network.

3. Transport modelling

- 3.1 The approach to transport modelling work undertaken to date by the planning authority in partnership with the highway authority is set out in appendix 1 of this note.

4. Implications of transport modelling work and next steps

- 4.1 Table 2 summarises the evidence currently available for the emerging preferred option sites, outlines the obvious gaps and indicates suggested next steps for assessment.

North of Harlow

- 4.2 The HSGTM tests undertaken to date (Appendix 1) indicate that even with major infrastructure improvements north of Harlow, the traffic impacts of a development of 10,000 dwellings could not be fully mitigated at the level of infrastructure tested to date. Further work is required to

understand if suitable transport mitigation can be delivered by the development to mitigate the impacts on the highway network.

- 4.3 It was not considered that a development of less than 5000 houses north of Harlow would be worthwhile testing as it is unlikely to be able to fund major new infrastructure and also the services which could be provided on site would be limited. On this basis no testing was undertaken of a smaller scale development, however, further viability work will need to be undertaken to establish the scale of development and how this relates to the delivery of the required mitigation measures.
- 4.4 Given that a high proportion of the traffic on the existing A414 and from the Harlow North development has a destination in Harlow itself the next iterative stage is to test a scheme that provides an alternative means of access from the north to the town centre. The very initial stages of the development of the HSTGM looked at the provision of a second Stort Crossing to the north west of the town. However this simply routed traffic around the south east of Harlow leading to congestion problems on Elizabeth Way and Third Avenue and additional rat running in the Roydon area, therefore it was not included in the tests reported in this note for this reason.
- 4.5 A final test was commissioned to test the implications of an additional Stort crossing further to the east (potentially with a link to Edinburgh Way). This indicates that with 5,000 dwellings north of Harlow the level of traffic congestion in the Harlow area is reduced although there are predicted to be queues and delays in the eastern part of Harlow which require further investigation to identify mitigation. It should be noted that the vehicle trip rates for Harlow North are based on the assumption of good quality sustainable transport alternatives being available and it will be crucial that high quality public transport measures such as dedicated bus lanes or trams as an alternative modes of transport to and from the site given the high demand for trips to and from Harlow. No test has been undertaken to examine the cumulative impact of growth at Harlow North combined with growth South of Bishops Stortford or North of Ware.
- 4.6 Currently it is clear that further transport work is required to identify if there is an infrastructure solution that can be delivered by the development to mitigate the high level of increased traffic predicted and its impact on the highway network. Should the planning authority wish to include the site within their plan this issue must be clearly addressed.

Bishops Stortford

- 4.7 **Bishops Stortford North** - The modelling work undertaken in association with the Bishops Stortford North application has identified capacity improvements which are required on the A120 to mitigate against the additional traffic flows. Proposed mitigation of additional traffic flows in the town centre area is limited to the application of a

smarter choices programme. Consideration should be given to the impact the traffic may have upon Air Quality by the planning authority.

- 4.8 **Bishops Stortford East** - A small scale development to the east of Bishops Stortford has been included in the HSGTM tests and no particular issues with this have been identified.
- 4.9 **Bishops Stortford South** – The initial Diamond modelling indicated that larger scale development south of Bishops Stortford is likely to require improvements to Whittington Way, London Road and key junctions along these routes. An additional test of the HSGTM (Test 5) was commissioned to examine the implications of 1000 dwellings south of Bishops Stortford
- 4.10 The modelling work indicates that compared with the reference case there are significant increases in congestion on London Road NB between Pig Lane and Thorley Hill and additional delays on the London Road / Stansted Road (north south corridor). The junctions with the greatest delays are identified as the South Street / Newton Road / Station Road junction and the Stansted Road / Parsonage Lane junction plus the Hockerill junction (where there are existing capacity problems). These junctions are all signalised so there may be potential for further signal optimisation (with the exception of the Hockerill junction which already operates under Mova control).
- 4.11 The combined impact of the development in Bishops Stortford leads to an increase of between 100- 200 vehicles travelling southbound on the A1184 towards Sawbridgeworth in the AM peak. This (combined with the impact of development in Sawbridgeworth itself) increases pressure on the A1184 / Station Road and A1184 / High Wych Road junctions. The former has already been signalised in the tests and despite the higher traffic volumes the delays are no worse than in the reference case. The High Wych Road junction however becomes more congested with large delays in the AM peak and link capacity issues on the approach from the north.
- 4.12 Although traffic volumes increase by up to 200 vehicles by direction on St James Way the modelling work does not indicate any particular problems with link or junction capacity on the section nearest the development. The approaches to the Great Hadham Road junction however become close to capacity and this junction may require further mitigation measures.
- 4.13 On the A120 corridor the combined impact of the Bishops Stortford North development and the Little Hadham bypass leads to problems with stress and congestion on the EB approach to the A1250 Dunmow Road junction. Adding in the South Bishops Stortford development traffic further increases flow and the EB section of the route to the north of the A1250 (Hadham Road) junction becomes closer to its link

capacity in the PM peak indicating that this route is reaching the capacity for a single lane carriageway section of road.

- 4.14 Goods Yard** - The initial Diamond modelling indicated that this site is likely to result in additional strain on town centre roads. It is recommended that a master plan is revised that considers the impact of this site on the highway network and maximises the sustainable transport links to this town centre development. The site is already used as a temporary car park with 300 car parking spaces.

Ware

- 4.15 The Diamond modelling indicated that without mitigation the development north and east of Ware is likely to cause problems with junction operation on the Baldock Street / High Street corridor. There is limited scope to increase capacity on Baldock Street/High Street due to the existing congestion, historic conservation area status and high street function of the route. Ware is on the periphery of the HSGTM model and the town is modelled in limited detail, therefore this test can only be used to discern the more strategic impacts of the development and not the detailed local junction impacts within the town itself.
- 4.16 To provide further evidence a development of 1,300 dwellings (plus 500 jobs) has been modelled in the HSTGM (Test 5) with the assumption that the main access would be provided via a new direct link into the A1170 Wadesmill Road / A10 roundabout.
- 4.17 This modelling work indicates that the combined effect of this (and other developments) is an increase in flows of over 200 vehicles by direction in the peak periods on the A10 corridor. Due to the dual carriageway nature of the road this doesn't cause any particular capacity issues apart from on the southern section in the Cheshunt area where there are signalised junctions which already have capacity constraints. This will also impact upon M25 junction 25.
- 4.18 There are predicted to be increases in flow of up to 200 vehicles on the A602 Westmill Road westbound in the AM peak and up to 100 by direction in the PM peak. This is a single carriageway stretch of road which already carries large volumes of traffic and addition of development traffic leads to it becoming over capacity in the PM peak.
- 4.19 Although the model can't accurately differentiate the impacts of the development within Ware and Hertford there are increases in flow of up to 100 vehicles on A1170 Wadesmill Road / High Street and Viaduct Road SB in the AM peak. This section has existing congestion issues and is constrained limiting the potential for physical mitigation measures and additional flow would exacerbate this. Similarly there are predicted increases in flow of up to 200 vehicles on the A119 travelling towards Hertford which is already congested at the Hertford

end. Any development proposals would need to seek to minimise the additional vehicular traffic from the development into Ware and Hertford. It is clear that further transport work is required to identify if there is an infrastructure solution that can be delivered by the development to mitigate the high level of increased traffic predicted and its impact on the highway network. Should the planning authority wish to include the site within their plan this issue must be clearly addressed.

East of Welwyn Garden City

- 4.20 A development of development of around 2,000 dwellings within East Herts, to the east of Welwyn Garden City was tested in the Diamond and HSGTM modelling and caused some capacity problems on local links and the junctions on the A414. It is clear that further transport work is required to identify if there is an infrastructure solution that can be delivered by the development to mitigate the high level of increased traffic predicted and its impact on the highway network. Should the planning authority wish to include the site within their plan this issue must be clearly addressed. Due to the proximity of this site and the potential development in Welwyn Garden City it is recommended that a partnership approach is taken by East Herts Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council to develop the required evidence base.

A414 Hertford

- 4.21 Following the adoption of the Inter Urban Route Strategy Hertfordshire County Council commissioned AECOM in 2013 to refine a paramics transport model of the A414 corridor through Hertford and test the cumulative impacts of growth in Hertfordshire against the suggested online interventions in the Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan. This document should report in mid February 2014 and should provide an indication to the level of growth that can be accommodated on the existing alignment. A clearer understanding on this issue will be required prior to submission.

5 Next Steps

- 5.1 Where further evidence is required the Planning Authority will need to lead in developing a strategy to ensure that sufficient evidence is in place to demonstrate that the plan is deliverable. The local highway authority will support East Herts through this process; however, other relevant stakeholders need to be engaged where appropriate including site promoters, neighbouring planning authorities, Highways Agency, Essex County Council, public transport providers.
- 5.2 HSGTM tests included the cumulative impact of development elsewhere in the area and therefore the resulting stress / capacity problems on the network are not solely due to the East Herts

development. It is essential that an infrastructure delivery plan is developed in partnership with neighbouring planning authorities giving consideration to this issue.

- 5.3 A number of studies are underway which will feed into this process. However there is a risk that no viable solutions may be found in relation to online improvements on the A414 in Hertford (through the A414 corridor study) or on the A10 (Broxbourne Transport Study) and that the improvements identified as part of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan modelling and design work may be insufficient to accommodate large scale development for both districts in the south east Welwyn Garden area. The A414 study is due to report in mid February 2014, however, it is not clear when Welwyn Hatfield and Broxbourne will have obtained the required evidence for the transport impacts associated with East Herts sites in there areas.
- 5.4 It is recommended that EHDC maintain close liaison with Hertfordshire County Council, Essex County Council, the Highways Agency, Welwyn Hatfield and Broxbourne .throughout their plan development process and seek further opportunities to incorporate their preferred sites into parallel modelling work being undertaken.
- 5.5 HCC would also seek assurance that Network Rail and the train operating companies within East Herts, operating services on the West Anglia Main Line and the Great Northern Hertford Loop, have been consulted as part of the development of the plan. In particular confirmation should be sought that both station and rail infrastructure is positioned to be able to cope with likely demands placed upon it in respect to the preferred development sites.
- 5.6 In relation to bus services HCC would seek to ensure that development is situated in locations where there are already existing services or where new services could be provided long term commercially and would therefore not be reliant on HCC funding to operate and serve communities.

6. Summary

6.1 The key findings of the various strands of modelling work undertaken to date indicate the following:

- The modelling has indicated the potential capacity issues with different development locations and identified areas which are likely to require major investment in new highway infrastructure if development went ahead.
- Mitigation measures will need to be identified and costed to understand if the proposed growth strategy can be reasonably delivered. This will require a phased infrastructure delivery plan that identifies how funding will be secured. Mitigation measures required to address the cumulative impacts of a number of smaller development sites or upon key inter urban routes that are affected by development occurring in more than one authority area, would be identified as candidates for CIL funding and listed in the charging authority's Regulation 123 list. Wherever possible these schemes will be identified as strategic or local level schemes and may also be appropriate to secure other funding source. Where an existing highway capacity / congestion issue is exacerbated by growth coming forward (or existing conditions act as a barrier to development) the potential for CIL or S106 monies will also be considered along with other funding opportunities.
- Due to the cross boundary nature of a number of sites further cooperative work with the relevant local transport and planning authorities will be required. Engagement with the relevant bodies to investigate alternative funding sources should also be considered.

6.2 It is not possible at this stage to determine with any certainty what level of mitigation will be possible to manage the transport impact of the proposals. In view of this, the Update Report does not make recommendations as to whether any options should be discounted from further consideration at this stage. Table 2 summarises the evidence currently available for the shortlisted test options, outlines the obvious gaps, and indicates suggested next steps for assessment. Going forward the Highway Authority will need to be satisfied that the identified evidence gaps will be adequately addressed, otherwise it will have concerns with the impact of the strategy on its network and will request further evidence is developed prior to submission.

Table 1 Local Plan Evidence Requirements from Hertfordshire County Council Highways Local Plan Protocol Document – Current stage highlighted in blue.

Stage	Information required	Appropriate evidence	LHA role	HA Input
Issues and options consultation	Review of current network issues (infrastructure deficit) & schemes already identified	Urban Transport Plans, Congestion Hotspots, IURS HIIS, LTP	Highlight key highways issues on local road network related to proposed development locations & provide appropriate information from LTP and UTPs.	Highlight key issues wrt SRN
Preferred options	Indication of locations likely to experience increased traffic flow / stress as result of options	Diamond (or high level runs of transport model if available)	Technical client for any modelling work. Assistance with interpretation of results	Involvement in discussions of model results where SRN affected
Pre-submission consultation	Outline mitigation measures, broad cost estimates, indicative delivery timescales, identification of funding sources where known	Run of preferred option through highway model if required & if key issues identified. High level feasibility review of mitigation measures. including assessment of broad costs & deliverability ¹	Technical client for modelling work. Provide advice guidance for feasibility review	Involvement in discussions in relation to any mitigation measures affecting SRN.
Submission	Confirmation that proposed measures mitigate against severe harm. Indicative cost estimates of measures, high level feasibility assessment and identification of funding sources	Refinement of designs & costs through modelling work. Indication of likely level of CIL/S106 sought & identification of funding gaps	Identification of potential funding opportunities	

Source: Table 1 from HCC Protocol for Working with Districts and Boroughs during the Local Plan Process April 2013

¹ High level feasibility review consists of desk based exercise of proposed scheme to identify any critical showstoppers to the delivery of the scheme (e.g. environmental or physical constraints) and to establish reasonableness of identifying appropriate funding sources.

Table 2 East Herts Local Plan Testing – Transport Evidence for Key Sites (Full list of sites and tests in Appendix A)

Impact / Issues RAG Key

Red - Significant impacts on highway network requiring additional transport modelling and/or further work to determine new infrastructure required to mitigate traffic impacts

Amber - Confirmed impact on highway network. Additional work required to determine the scope of mitigation measures

Green - Limited impact on the highway network. Mitigation measures likely to be low key.

Bishop's Stortford	Number of dwellings	Testing to date	Impact / Issues	Likely mitigation measures	Evidence gaps	Suggested next steps for planning authority
ASR 1-2	700	Diamond, HSGTM & Paramics model	Detailed in Transport Assessment work.	Developer proposals for: Capacity improvements at A1250/ A120 and A120/ B1383 junctions, new bus route and application of Smarter choices /Travelsmart initiative. M11 jct 8 improvements as per Stansted G1 application.	Highway Authority response on planning application sent to EHDC on 27/10/2013. Essex CC has highlighted concerns on mitigation of impact on M11 J8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate agreed mitigation measures in IDP. Clarify impact upon Essex and HA transport network (M11 Junction 8)
ASR 3-4	1500	Diamond, HSGTM & Paramics model				
ASR 5	400	Diamond, HSGTM & Paramics model				
Goods Yard	200	160 tested in Diamond, 200 in HSGTM tests	Increased stress on London Road & South Street The site currently has a permission and operates as a	None identified to date. Consider ways of increasing sustainability of site due to town centre location.	Site requires a revised master planning due to proximity to town centre and existing strained highways	Revise master plan for site with detailed consideration to transport section.

			temporary car park with 300 parking spaces		network.	
East	150	Tested in Diamond 150 scenario 2B & HSGTM 150	Little impact on highway network. Some additional vehicles on B1383 and Whittington Way.	None identified to date. Some comments proved by highways on issues to be considered.	Site will require transport assessment via the usual planning application procedure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local junction assessments via the usual planning Application procedure.
South	500-1000	800 tested in Diamond scenarios 2A & 2C. 1000 included to date in HSGTM test 5	<p>HSGTM Modelling works indicates significant increases in congestion on London road NB between Pig Lane and Thorley Hill and additional delays on London Road /Stanstead Road (north south corridor)</p> <p>Combined effect of development in Bishops Stortford leads to increase on A1184 towards Sawbridgeworth in AM peak. Increased pressure on the A1184/Station Road and A1184/High Wych Road junctions</p>	<p>Cumulative impact of this site with Bishops Stortford North to be considered. Initial comments on access suggest further improvement to A120 bypass may be required.</p> <p>Numbers of junctions are signalised, but potential for further signal optimisation. Capacity issues at Hockerill Junction which is already operating under MOVA and is classified as an AQMA.</p> <p>No test undertaken with combined growth North of Harlow to date.</p>	<p>Identification of costed mitigation measures.</p> <p>Delivery plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of Air Quality at Hockerill Identify and cost mitigation measures. Identify delivery plan for transport infrastructure. Undertake test to understand impact of development with combined with growth North of Harlow.

Buntingford	Number of dwellings	Testing to date	Impact /Issues	Likely mitigation measures	Evidence gaps	Suggested next steps for planning authority
North	200	500 dwellings allowed for in Diamond scenario 2B. 500 included in HSGTM test 5	Diamond work indicated that this level of development (500) can be accommodated on the existing road network.	None identified to date A10 Southbound, south of Buntingford close to capacity. Development options should consider access off local roads than from A10 primary route.	Any additional mitigation measures are likely to be small scale and should be identified as part of any subsequent planning application process.	Any additional mitigation measures are likely to be small scale and should be identified as part of any subsequent planning application process
South	300					
Additional growth beyond 500 dwellings	Undefined	1500 tested in Diamond scenario 2A and 2000 in 2C Not tested in HSGTM to date	Test indicated significant increase in trips on High Street and B1038 Baldock Road which becomes highly stressed. Also increases congestion on A10 between Buntingford & Puckeridge & on A120 at Standon and increase in congestion on A507 to Stevenage.	None identified to date If this option to be considered detailed Master Planning is required.	Confirmation of impacts. Identification of costed mitigation measures. Delivery Plan.	Could potentially be tested in HSGTM (although network & zoning would require enhancement) Cost mitigation measures. Identify delivery plan.

Sawbridge-worth	Number of dwellings	Testing to date	Impact /Issues	Likely mitigation measures	Evidence gaps	Suggested next steps for planning authority
North - West	100	Tested in HSGTM	Not specifically identified	None identified to date		
South - West	300	Total of 300 dwellings allowed for in all Diamond scenarios. 60 allowed for in HSGTM Tests 1-4. 300 in Test 5	<p>Total of 400 additional dwellings have been modelled west of Sawbridgeworth. combined with the impact of additional traffic from Bishops Stortford South leads to capacity issues on the A1184 south of the Station Road junction and in particular long delays at the A1184 Harlow Road / High Wych Road junction indicating the need for additional mitigation here.</p> <p>The section of the A1184 Cambridge Road on the northern boundary of Harlow (between Redricks Lane and Edinburgh Way) also becomes over capacity due to the combined impact of development in</p>	<p>Signalisation of junctions Should be considered.</p> <p>Liaison with Essex required over cross boundary impacts.</p> <p>Consideration required air quality on A1184 Corridor due to previous AQMA status.</p>	<p>No evidence yet available on isolated impact of these developments from growth sites south of Bishops Stortford.</p> <p>Consideration of Air Quality Impacts required due to previous AQMA site on A1184.</p> <p>Identification of costed mitigation measures.</p> <p>Delivery plan.</p>	<p>Further work required by planning authority to identify and cost mitigation measures for development at this location. HCC will provide continued technical support.</p> <p>Identify delivery plan.</p> <p>Consideration of Air Quality Impacts</p>

		north east Harlow and further to the north in Sawbridgeworth and Bishops Stortford.			
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North Harlow	Number of dwellings	Testing to date	Impact /Issues	Likely mitigation measures	Evidence gaps	Suggested next steps for planning authority
Strategic site	Up to 10,000	8,000 allowed for in Diamond scenario 1A, 5,000 in scenario 1B. Between 0 - 10,000 allowed for in HSGTM tests to date	Further detailed transport and viability assessments is required, however, HSGTM testing to date has indicated that 10,000 dwellings traffic impacts could not be fully mitigated, with the assumed likely large scale measures such as Harlow Northern Link Road. 5,000 dwellings also highlighted a number of constraints on the highway network that need to be mitigated.	Capacity enhancements to Eastwick Roundabout, Dualling of A414 between Eastwick & Burnt Mill, Signalisation & capacity enhancements to Amwell roundabout, Signalisation of Station Road / London Road junction Sawbridgeworth, M11 jct7a & associated capacity improvements in NE Harlow, Second Stort crossing. Improvements to junctions on the A10 in Cheshunt and A414 in Hertford. High quality sustainable transport link to Harlow Town, Railway Station and beyond. Strategic access points 2 or 3 required to serve all section of the development. Needs to promote all modes of transport Mitigation measures and timing of delivery should be clearly identified junctions in	Confirmation of size of development which is enabled by an additional second Stort crossing along with mitigation measures listed to left & indicative mitigation costs. Consideration of alternative transportation modes from development to Harlow. Confirmation of impacts. Identification of costed mitigation measures. Delivery Plan.	Consideration of alternative transportation modes between Harlow and Development. Transport master plan required to fully investigate impacts and understand if mitigation of the high level of increased traffic predicted is possible. This should be led by the planning authority in partnership with other stakeholders

				Harlow are already congested which require wide range of mitigation measures.		
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Ware	Number of dwellings	Testing to date	Impact /Issues	Likely mitigation measures	Evidence gaps	Suggested next steps for planning authority
North (off High Oak Rd)	200 -1300	Allowed for in all Diamond scenarios & HSGTM tests	Diamond work suggests that with 3000 dwellings there is additional traffic and stress on A602, A1170 north & south of Ware, A119 Ware Road & Thieves Lane. Large number of additional vehicles on A10 between A602 and M25 & increase in stress on A120. Main impact of additional 1700 dwellings is on A602 plus A1170 to north and south and on A119 Ware Road. Existing congestion problems on. Large Baldock Street /High Street corridor would be exacerbated. Due to density of housing and high pedestrian usage Air Quality impacts would need to be carefully considered in urban environment. No capacity issues on A10 but A602 and local roads will have	Capacity increases likely to be required on A602 and A10 at Cheshunt.	Confirmation of impacts.	Detailed impacts within Ware would need to be determined through more detailed town based modelling.
Larger Strategic site	Undefined	1300 tested in Diamond scenario 2C, 1,700 in scenario 2A & 3,000 in scenario 1B & C HSGTM Test 5 1300.		Physical mitigation options on Baldock Street /High Street corridor are likely to be limited so development is likely to require new access to A10. No detailed modelling yet undertaken and Ware is on edge of HSGTM Remodelling of A1170/A10 roundabout with upgrading of slip roads need to be considered.	Identification of costed mitigation measures. Delivery Plan.	Consideration of Air Quality Impacts Liaison with Broxbourne Borough Council to incorporated East Herts housing figures into Broxbourne Borough Council Local Plan tests to understand impacts upon the A10 and M25 junction 25. Identify delivery plan jointly with Broxbourne Borough Council for A10 Mitigation measures for A602 capacity issues will need to be investigated. Review outputs of A414 Study

			significant capacity issues		<p>Cost mitigation measures.</p> <p>Transport master plan required to fully investigate impacts and understand if mitigation of highway impacts is possible. This should be led by the planning authority in partnership with highway authority.</p>
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Hertford	Number of dwellings	Testing to date	Impact /Issues	Likely mitigation measures	Evidence gaps	Suggested next steps for planning authority
Impact of all sites within the local plan upon A414 in Hertford		DIAMOND MODELLING – A414 Study underway and due to report on initial work in February 2014	Cumulative increase in trips on A414 Gascoyne Way corridor A414 currently running very close to capacity during peak periods in Hertford. A414 through Hertford is currently designated as an AQMA due to transport emissions.	Capacity enhancements at roundabouts from UTP to be investigated to identify if they provide sufficient capacity for scale of growth under consideration within Local Plan.	Confirmation of whether online junction improvements can provide required additional capacity on the A414.	A study is currently being undertaken by Hertfordshire County Council to understand what improvements can be undertaken to improve capacity of the A414 through Hertford to understand how much additional traffic can be accommodated. This study is due to report in February 2013. The report will identify the scope for further growth on the corridor and constraints to further growth. Highway mitigation to be identified by planning authority in partnership with Highway Authority and delivery plan identified.
West Welwyn Rd	300	600 allowed for in all Diamond scenarios, 550 in HSGTM tests		Should capacity not be available within the current transport corridor then consideration may need to be given to alternative solutions.	Identification of costed mitigation measures. Delivery plan.	
West (Thieves Lane)	250					
North	150	100 allowed for in all Diamond scenarios, 150 in HSGTM tests				
National Grid	200	Allowed for in all Diamond scenarios & HSGTM tests				
South of Mead Lane	100	Allowed for in all Diamond scenarios & HSGTM tests				
South Hertford	100	Allowed for in all Diamond scenarios & HSGTM tests				

East of WGC	Number of dwellings	Testing to date	Impact /Issues	Likely mitigation measures	Evidence gaps	Suggested next steps for planning authority
Development off Birchall Lane	1700	2,000 allowed for in Diamond Scenario 2D, 1,500 -1,700 allowed for in HSGTM tests	Diamond work suggests additional traffic & stress on B195 Birchall Lane / Black Fan Road & Cole Green Lane which are likely to become highly congested. Also additional traffic and stress on A414 & A1M junctions 3-4. Access to the development should be considered via local road network than A414 primary route.	Potential capacity improvements identified for A414 and A1m junctions plus Mundells gyratory and Birchall Lane / A414 junction as part of Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan work. Capacity improvements also likely to be required for B195 corridor. Detailed modelling work has not yet been undertaken of this area.	Detailed modelling work required to confirm that proposed mitigation measures can cope with anticipated additional traffic from both Welwyn Hatfield and East Herts sites. Identification of costed mitigation measures. Delivery plan.	Transport Impacts currently undefined. Transport master plan required to fully investigate impacts and understand if mitigation of the highway impacts is possible. This should be led by the planning authorities in partnership with highway authority. Cost mitigation measures Identify delivery plan jointly with Welwyn Hatfield.

APPENDIX A Detailed summary of modelling work undertaken to date in East Herts

Summary of initial option sifting – Diamond spreadsheet model

East Herts District Council in conjunction with Hertfordshire County Council commissioned an initial assessment of the impact of various development options in the district using the Diamond model. Table 2 i lists the options which were tested at this stage. These included large development sites North of Harlow plus alternative large sites at Buntingford, Ware, East of Welwyn Garden City and west of Sawbridgeworth. Other large sites such as east of Stevenage had already been discounted by EHDC through earlier technical appraisal work.

Diamond is a spreadsheet based tool rather than full traffic model and therefore is unable to give detailed assessment of the impacts of development and associated new infrastructure. However the work did provide an indication of likely locations where there would be problems with highway capacity and delay with different development locations.

The Diamond Modelling exercise indicated that the option with the least overall highway impact across the District is to concentrate development to the north of Harlow, however, there were considerable impacts within the Harlow area indicating the need for major new infrastructure such as new crossings of the River Stort and a potential northern link road to relieve pressure around the northern Harlow and High Wych areas.

Other key findings from this initial assessment work were as follows:

There will be a need to upgrade the capacity of the A414 a Hertford whichever development scenario is chosen. Further work is required to understand how this can be achieved.

Large-scale development at Sawbridgeworth would probably require major new infrastructure (such as a new bypass)

Larger scale development south of Bishops Stortford is likely to require improvements to Whittington Way, London Road and key junctions along these routes.

Small scale development east of Bishops Stortford (150) can be accommodated without any significant highways infrastructure.

Up to 500 dwellings should be capable of being accommodated at Buntingford without significant changes to the highway.

For development east of Ware, there are likely to be problems with junction operation on the Baldock Street / High Street corridor due to limited existing capacity for further growth in high street environment. Development of around 2,000 dwellings within East Herts, to the east of Welwyn Garden causes some problems on local links and junction capacity on the A414 may be an issue.

On the basis of this initial work and other non highways considerations, options to concentrate large scale development north of Harlow were taken forward by EHDC for detailed modelling work (along with development east of Bishops Stortford and east of Welwyn Garden City). No further work was undertaken on the options for large scale development south of Bishops Stortford, at Buntingford, Ware and Sawbridgeworth, however, this has been revisited due to the need to evidence the impacts of wider sites.

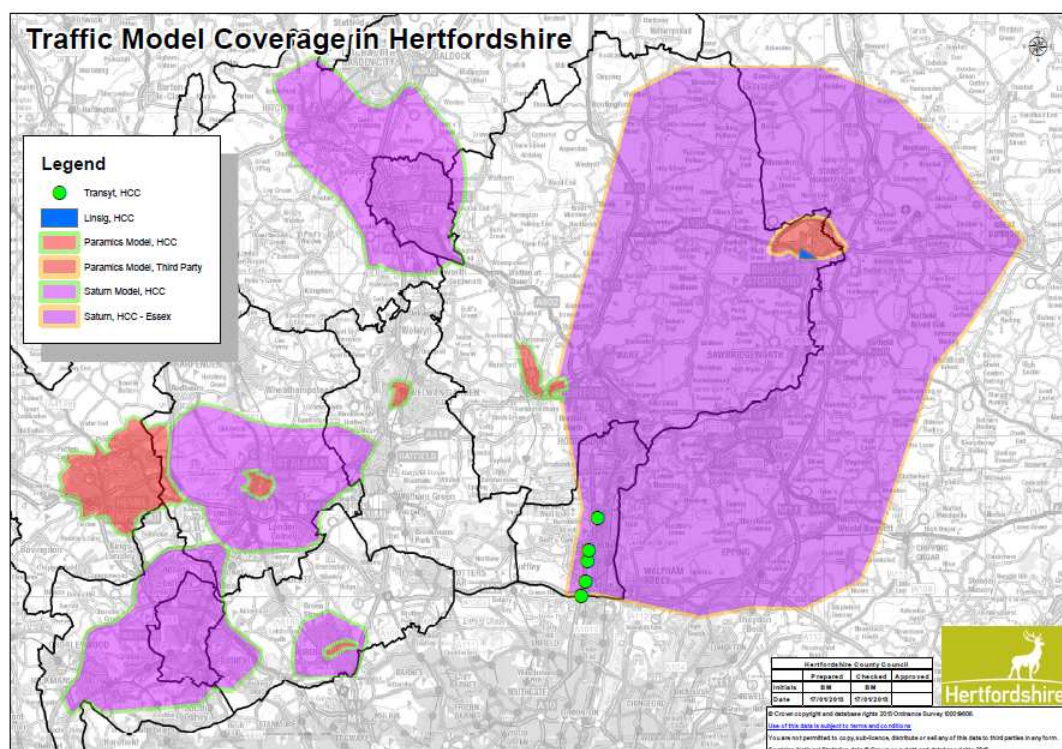
Harlow Stansted Gateway Transport Model – Impact of Harlow North Growth

ALL THE COMMENTS BELOW RELATE TO THE MODEL TEST UNDERTAKEN TO DATE, FURTHER WORK IS REQUIRED ON TRANSPORT AND VIABILITY.

The Harlow Stansted Gateway Model (HSGTM) is a sub regional Saturn model covering the Harlow, Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth areas. It coverage is shown on the plan below. Unlike a spreadsheet based approach it is able to take into account the impact of new infrastructure, congestion effects at junctions and also behavioural changes such as the re routing of existing traffic to avoid congestion.

Officers from Hertfordshire County Council and East Herts District Council have been liaising with officers from Essex County Council, Uttlesford District Council and Epping Forest District Council as well as the Highways Agency to develop model tests which take into account the cumulative impact of development in the various authorities.

A series of option tests were specifically commissioned to identify the detailed implications of adding a large scale development north of Harlow and to confirm the level of highway infrastructure improvements which are likely to be required.



Plan showing traffic model coverage in Hertfordshire. Large purple area in eastern part of the County shows extents of HSGTM.

As the lead authority for the HSGTM Essex County Council has undertaken modelling work which indicates that junction 7 of the M11 is a key constraint even with existing permitted development and that a new junction (7a) along with a link to Gilden Way and improvements in north east Harlow is required to enable the Harlow LEZ and New Hall developments. These improvements therefore have been included in all option tests.

Reference case 2036

A reference case test has been developed for comparative purposes. This includes committed developments within the HSGTM model area (amounting to 4,260 additional dwellings in Harlow largely around the New Hall and Gilden Way areas with associated infrastructure) plus a further 1,282 committed dwellings in East Herts). No additional highways infrastructure has been assumed in East Herts.

This leads to traffic increases across the network of between 14 – 17% in the peak periods leading to stress at a number of locations even before additional Local Plan growth. Key pinch points are as follows:

A120 Little Hadham crossroads

A1184 Station Road / West Road mini roundabouts Sawbridgeworth

A414 / Fifth Avenue to Burnt Mill roundabout Harlow

A414 / Howard Way Roundabout Harlow

Option Test 1 (10,000 dwellings North of Harlow with minimal infrastructure).

Test 1 included 10,000 houses North of Harlow (contributing to a total of around 17,000 new dwellings in East Herts) plus 2500 jobs. Preliminary testing indicated that capacity problems with the current road layout around Eastwick prevented much of the traffic being able to exit the development. Therefore in addition to the M11 junction 7a and associated improvements, signalisation of the Eastwick roundabout plus dualling of Fifth Avenue (A414) up to the Burnt Mill roundabout were also included in the test. Improvement (optimisation) of timings at existing signal junctions (such as the A10 at Rush Green) was also included after the first model runs indicated large delays at this location.

Results of the revised test (with optimisation) indicated that even with these improvements there is still predicted to be significant queuing on the rest of the network and not all traffic is able to exit from the Harlow North development because of ongoing queues and delays around the Eastwick area. This indicates that a Harlow North development of this size would require further additional highways/transportation infrastructure.

Test 2 (5,000 dwellings North of Harlow)

Test 2 was undertaken to confirm whether a smaller development of 5000 dwellings North of Harlow could be accommodated with limited infrastructure improvements. In addition to the M11 junction 7a, Eastwick Improvements and signal optimisation

included in Test 1, the following highways schemes were added (to address issues identified in Test 1):

A120 Little Hadham bypass
Bishops Stortford North direct access onto A120 plus junction improvements identified in the planning application.
Traffic signals at the A1184 London Road / Station Road junction in Sawbridgeworth
Signalisation of the Amwell Roundabout

Because of the reduced development size plus these additional schemes, queuing and delay is reduced by around 6-7% (compared to test 1). The schemes listed above resolve the delay problem at these particular junctions but a consequence of this is to attract more traffic to these routes which often causes a knock on effect elsewhere.

For example, the reduction in delay with the Little Hadham bypass attracts more vehicles to the A120 corridor and traffic flows increase. The proposed BSN improvement measures at the A120 / A1250 (Tesco's) roundabout and the A120 / B1383 junction and M11 junction 8 however do appear to be able to cope with these traffic increases although the additional traffic puts extra stress on the A120 eastbound approach to the A120/ A1250 Dunmow Road junction to the east of Bishops Stortford, indicating the need for additional improvements here to provide enough capacity for the development.

Signalisation of the junction in Sawbridgeworth attracts additional traffic on the A1184 northern arm and on Station Road, although there is a reduction in overall junction delay there are additional delays on the A1184 approaches. This site has a history of air quality issues that will require consideration. Signalisation of the Amwell Roundabout reduces delays at the junction on all approach arms except the A414 east.

In the Harlow area more traffic is able to exit the Harlow North development but the release of this traffic causes additional problems in Harlow with significant traffic congestion still apparent and delays are still forecast at the Eastwick junction and there is significant congestion along the Edinburgh Way corridor. This indicates even with a smaller development size and additional infrastructure this is not sufficient to accommodate the predicted development flows. Therefore further transport infrastructure would be required to mitigate the highway impact and on this basis was further infrastructure was included in the next test undertaken.

Option Test 3A (10,000 dwellings North of Harlow with partial Northern Link Road)

Test 3A included a new link road between the A414 at Eastwick and the A1184 Cambridge Road (along with associated online improvements between this corridor and Gilden Way). This potentially would be a lower cost option than the full link to provide an alternative route for development traffic and for through traffic trying to access the M11 from the A414.

The test did assume direct access to the northern link road via the Eastwick junction and this still acts as a constraint limiting the amount of traffic able to exit the Harlow North development.

The test results indicated that there would be problems and congestion at the junction with the A1184 and the junctions in north east Harlow were not be able to handle the additional traffic with the level of infrastructure tested. A further test was then undertaken with further infrastructure.

Option Test 3b (10,000 dwellings North of Harlow with full Northern Link Road)

This included a full northern link road between the A414 at Eastwick and M11 junction 7a. This would be a high cost option as it necessitates the provision of a viaduct over the Stort Valley east of the A1184. As in Test 3a direct access from the North of Harlow development was provided via the Eastwick junction.

A full link road connection does provide more capacity for East West movements and reduces congestion in north east Harlow as the link is being used as an alternative to Cambridge Road and Gilden Way, however there is still significant congestion at Eastwick and the A1184 junctions and within Harlow itself. Even the full link road therefore is not able to fully mitigate the Harlow North development.

The test confirmed that even with a full link road, traffic congestion problems remain in Harlow as the amount of through traffic on the existing A414 through Harlow is relatively low and a large proportion of Harlow development traffic is predicted to travel to central Harlow.

The provision of a new northern link road therefore does not fully mitigate the impact of a large development north of Harlow and widespread congestion impacts would remain within the Harlow area and would require additional mitigation measures.

Option Test 4 (5,000 dwellings North of Harlow with a second Stort Crossing to the west)

Given the limited congestion relief potential of the Northern Link Road, a further option was investigated to provide a second crossing of the River Stort. Although the scoping work undertaken by Places for People for the Harlow North site considers a second Stort crossing to the west of the development connecting with Elizabeth Way, preliminary testing using the HSGTM in December 2012 indicated this had limited potential to resolve congestion issues in central Harlow and the resulting traffic re routing caused queuing and delays in South West Harlow and did not provide additional capacity for journeys from the North Harlow development to the town centre. As an alternative a new crossing further east has been investigated connecting Eastwick Road with River Way. This provides a shorter and more direct connection into the Harlow urban area.

This results in a reassignment of traffic away from the existing Stort crossing at Eastwick and provides relief to this area and High Wych Road. Compared to Test 2 traffic is more freely able to move into Harlow and there are significant reductions in delay particularly in the PM peak.

There is however forecast to be continued network stress at a number of locations in eastern Harlow and further work is to be undertaken by Essex County Council to look at further mitigation measures.

Once these have been developed further it is the intention that these will be tested along with the second Stort crossing plus 10,000 dwellings at North Harlow.

Implications of Bishops Stortford North Development

A planning application has been submitted in relation to development of the ASR sites to the North of Bishop's Stortford (totalling 2500 homes). This has included a technical assessment of the impact of the additional vehicle trips on the highways network in the local area using a detailed traffic microsimulation model (Paramics). The transport work submitted in support of the planning application is available on the application website at www.bishopsstortfordnorth.com.

The Paramics results indicate that a development of this scale could be accommodated providing a number of key mitigation measures were in place including the following:

- Geometric improvements at the A1250 / A120 junction

- Geometric improvements at the A120 / B1383 junction

- Minor improvements at M11 junction 8 (as proposed in Stansted G1 application)

- Measures to reduce vehicle trip rates from the new development (provision of new bus service, travel plan pack for new residents and provision of local facilities – local neighbourhood centres and schools).

- Funding of a Travelsmart programme for the Bishop's Stortford urban area to encourage travel by non car modes.

The Transport Assessment does not indicate any requirement for dualling of the A120 north of Bishop's Stortford.

It is assumed that the development would be accessed via new junctions with the A1250 Hadham Road and Rye Street. It has also been tested with / without a new direct access onto the A120. Results indicate improved network performance if the new junction was provided.

The modelling work indicates that development traffic could be accommodated at M11 junction 8 with the proposed level of mitigation. Essex County Council has raised concerns that they have evidence that indicated further improvements are required.

The technical work predicts that relatively few vehicles would travel from the development towards Little Hadham. Although there would be some increases in queues and delays and the application suggests that this could be mitigated by redesign of the Little Hadham signals rather than requiring a new bypass.

It should be noted however that the HSGTM tests strengthen the case for a bypass of Little Hadham to mitigate to the cumulative impacts of development across the area plus the addition of background traffic growth. The bypass scheme has been included as a bid for the Local Transport Body funding stream and a business case is currently being prepared.

The other proposed mitigation measures relate to proposed capacity improvements at the A120 / A1250 Hadham Road and A120 / B1383 junctions. These are predicted to reduce queues and delays on the A120 and the HSGTM tests confirm that they would be able to accommodate additional traffic attracted to the corridor following completion of the Little Hadham bypass. These improvements would be funded through developer contributions.

The development does result in additional traffic impacts within the town with increases in queues and delays on the A1250 Hadham Road and Rye Street and Stansted Road corridors. Analysis is currently being finalised to quantify the additional level of delay upon these routes due to the impact upon air quality management areas and bus services which are considered as indicators of a 'severe' impact. Due to the constrained nature of the highway network the potential for physical capacity improvements is limited and the main mitigation measure proposed is to encourage mode shift away from the car within the wider Bishops Stortford area through the introduction of a Travelsmart personalised travel planning programme and sustainable transport infrastructure measures funded through developer contributions.

A test of the BSN development on the wider Bishops Stortford area was commissioned using the HSGTM model. The test assumed the access and mitigation measures associated with the development but no reduction in trips for smarter choices being applied across the wider town.

This confirms that the impacts of the development are relatively localised. Although traffic volumes increase on the A1184 St James Way between B1004 Great Hadham Road and A1250 Hadham Road relatively little development traffic travels further south (around 50 two way trips)..

Wider modelling confirms that the Hockerill junction is at capacity and therefore little additional traffic travels through this junction. There is an increase in traffic on the Haymeads Lane / Beldams Lane route although additional volumes are relatively low.

Impacts of the development in the wider town centre appear to be limited with no particular problems evident in the station area although with development there are some capacity issues at the South Street / Dane Street junction.

Alternative proposed strategic development locations Test 5

In September 2013, EHDC decided to revisit the potential for inclusion of previously discounted strategic locations in its development strategy – these being north of Ware, Buntingford and South of Bishops Stortford.

These locations require further transport assessment to understand the highways issues highlighted in the initial DIAMOND modelling run. A clearer understanding of the highways issues, mitigation measures, and likelihood of delivery is required for these sites prior to submission.

An additional test of the HSGTM has been commissioned to examine the implications of development at these sites, which included the following:

1,000 dwellings South of Bishops Stortford (additional to 2,500 at the ASR sites)
1,300 dwellings North of Ware,
400 west of Sawbridgeworth ,
500 at Buntingford and
1,700 East of Welwyn Garden City.

The total number of new dwellings tested in East Hertfordshire was 11,115. In addition Local Plan growth in Harlow, Uttlesford and Epping has been included (to allow consistency with the other HSGTM tests and to ensure that the cumulative impact of development is taken into account).

The test also allowed for infrastructure improvements including the Little Hadham Bypass, the link road, accesses and A120 junction mitigation measures associated with the Bishops Stortford North development plus signalisation of the Station Road / London Road junction in Sawbridgeworth and the Amwell roundabout (identified as pinch points in the 2036 reference case)

Impacts of Bishops Stortford South Development

- 4.6 A development of 1000 dwellings south of Bishops Stortford has been tested assuming connections with the existing road network at Obrey Way and Whittington Way.
- 4.7 The modelling work indicates that compared with the reference case there are significant increases in congestion on London Road NB between Pig Lane and Thorley Hill and additional delays on the London Road / Stansted Road (north south corridor). The junctions with the greatest delays are identified as the South Street / Newton Road / Station Road junction and the Stansted Road / Parsonage Lane junction plus the Hockerill junction (where there are existing capacity problems). These junctions are all signalised so there may be potential for further signal optimisation (with the exception of the Hockerill junction which already operates under Mova control).
- 4.8 The combined impact of the development in Bishops Stortford leads to an increase of between 100- 200 vehicles travelling southbound on the A1184 towards Sawbridgeworth in the AM peak. This (combined with the impact of development in Sawbridgeworth itself) increases pressure on the A1184 / Station Road and A1184 / High Wych Road junctions. The former has already been signalised in the tests and despite the higher traffic volumes the delays are no worse than in the reference case. The High Wych Road junction however becomes significantly more congested with large delays in the AM peak and link capacity issues on the approach from the north.
- 4.9 Although traffic volumes increase by up to 200 vehicles by direction on St James Way the modelling work does not indicate any particular problems with link or junction capacity on the section nearest the development. The approaches to the Great Hadham Road junction however become close to capacity and this junction may require further mitigation measures.
- 4.10 On the A120 corridor the combined impact of the Bishops Stortford North development and the Little Hadham bypass leads to problems with stress and

congestion on the EB approach to the A1250 Dunmow Road junction. Adding in the South Bishops Stortford development traffic further increases flow and the EB section of the route to the north of the A1250 (Hadham Road) junction becomes closer to its link capacity in the PM peak indicating that this route is reaching the capacity for a single lane carriageway section of road.

Impacts of development north of Ware

- 4.11 Ware is on the periphery of the HSGTM model and the town is modelled in limited detail, therefore this test can only be used to discern the more strategic impacts of the development and not the detailed local junction impacts within the town itself.
- 4.12 A development of 1,300 dwellings (plus 500 jobs) has been modelled with the assumption that the main access would be provided via a direct link into the A1170 / A10 roundabout.
- 4.13 The modelling work indicates that the combined effect of this (and other developments) is an increase in flows of over 200 vehicles by direction in the peak periods on the A10 corridor. Due to the dual carriageway nature of the road this doesn't cause any particular capacity issues apart from on the southern section in the Cheshunt area where there are signalised junctions which already have capacity constraints.
- 4.14 There are predicted to be increases in flow of up to 200 vehicles on the A602 Westmill Road westbound in the AM peak and up to 100 by direction in the PM peak. This is a single carriageway stretch of road which already carries large volumes of traffic and addition of development traffic leads to it becoming over capacity in the PM peak.
- 4.15 Although the model can't accurately differentiate the impacts of the development within Ware and Hertford there are increases in flow of up to 100 vehicles on A1170 Wadesmill Road / High Street and Viaduct Road SB in the AM peak. This section has existing congestion issues and is constrained limiting the potential for physical mitigation measures and additional flow would exacerbate this. Similarly there are predicted increases in flow of up to 200 vehicles on the A119 travelling towards Hertford which is already congested at the Hertford end. Any development proposals would need to seek to minimise the additional vehicular traffic from the development into Ware and Hertford.

Impacts of development west of Sawbridgeworth

- 4.16 400 additional dwellings have been modelled west of Sawbridgeworth. These combined with the impact of additional traffic from Bishops Stortford South leads to capacity issues on the A1184 south of the Station Road junction and in particular long delays at the A1184 Harlow Road / High Wych Road junction indicating the need for additional mitigation here.
- 4.17 The section of the A1184 Cambridge Road on the northern boundary of Harlow (between Redricks Lane and Edinburgh Way) also becomes over capacity due

to the combined impact of development in north east Harlow and further to the north in Sawbridgeworth and Bishops Stortford.

Impacts of development at Buntingford

- 4.18 Buntingford is outside the model area so the impacts of locating 500 dwellings here can't be fully assessed. The modelling work does however indicate that flows on the A10 north of the A120 increase by up to 200 vehicles by direction in the PM peak (less in the AM) due to the cumulative impact of this and other development. There are also increases of up to 50 vehicles by direction on the alternative north south route the B1368. The impact on the east west route (Hare Street) is however complicated by the diversion of traffic from this route due to the A120 Little Hadham bypass.
- 4.19 The impact of these flow changes is to increase stress on the A10 SB to the south of Buntingford so that it becomes close to capacity in the AM peak.

Cumulative impacts of sites included in final East Herts test

- 4.20 The test included the cumulative impact of development elsewhere in the area (including around 9,000 new dwellings in the Harlow area even though the North Harlow development was not included) and therefore the resulting stress / capacity problems on the network are not solely due to the East Herts development.
- 4.21 As a result the majority of the congestion issues are within Harlow itself including at junctions serving the town (such as Eastwick).
- 4.22 Within Hertfordshire the key congestion hotspots include the A1184 through Sawbridgeworth where additional mitigation (above signalisation of the Station Road junction) needs to be considered and the Eastwick junction (indicating further mitigation and dualling of the section to the Burnt Mill roundabout may be required even without Harlow North).
- 4.23 Further away from Harlow it is easier to discern the impact of the individual development sites (as outlined above).

Appendix A Table 1 – Development scenarios and included sites in East Herts Diamond Modelling

DIAMOND Modelling Options for East Hertfordshire District Plan					Group 1 - Harlow upto 15,000 by 2031			Group 2 - No Harlow upto 13,000 by 2031			
	Location	Sieve 1 total dwellings capacity in East Herts	2031 Reference Case	2031 Ref Case + N Bishop's Stortford	Scenario 1A 10K at Harlow North	Scenario 1B 5K at Harlow North	Scenario 1C Nothing at Harlow North	Scenario 2A	Scenario 2B	Scenario 2C	Scenario 2D - inc 2,000 in Welhat
KEY TEST VARIABLES	North of Harlow A	10,000			8,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
	North of Harlow B	5,000			0	5,000	0	0	0	0	0
	South of Bishop's Stortford	800			0	0	0	800	0	800	0
	East of Bishop's Stortford	150			0	0	0	0	150	0	0
	Sawbridgeworth West	3,000			0	0	3,000	2,000	3,000	0	2,000
	Ware North (1700) Ware East (1300)	3,000			0	3,000	3,000	1,700	0	1,300	0
	Buntingford A (2000) and B (500)	2,000			0	0	0	1,500	500	2,000	0
	East of WGC (East Herts 2000, Welhat 2000)	2,000			0	0	2,000	0	2,000	2,000	4,000
	Terlings Park	270			0	0	0	0	270	0	0
OTHER LOCATIONS	North of Bishop's Stortford	2,500	0	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
	Bishop's Stortford Goods Yard	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
	Bishop's Stortford Old River Lane/Causeway	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	BS SLAA sites	268	268	268	268	268	268	268	268	268	268
	BS other permissions	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
	Buntingford SLAA Sites	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
	Buntingford other permissions	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
	Hertford West	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600
	Hertford North	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Hertford South	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Hertford South Mead Lane	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Hertford National Grid/Norbury Woodyard	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
	Hertford West of Marshgate Drive	182	182	182	182	182	182	182	182	182	182
	Hertford - former police station	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126
	Hertford SLAA Sites	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190	190
	Hertford other permissions	77	77	77	77	77	77	77	77	77	77
	Sawbridgeworth - N and S of West Road	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
	Sawbridgeworth - Crofters	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80
	Sawbridgeworth SLAA sites	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
	Sawbridgeworth other permissions	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
	Ware Land East of Trinity Centre	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81	81
	Ware (High Oak Road Area only)	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
	Ware SLAA Sites	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34
	Ware Other permissions	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32
	Villages (total only - breakdown provided separately)	900	900	900	900	900	900	900	900	900	900
Sub-total - non-variable elements			3,758	6,258	6,258	6,258	6,258	6,258	6,528	6,258	6,258
Total - including variable elements			3,758	6,258	14,258	14,258	14,258	12,258	12,178	12,358	12,258

Source Table 5.1 East Hertfordshire Diamond Non Technical Report December 2012

Appendix A - Table 2 – Development scenarios and included sites in East Herts Harlow Stansted Gateway Modelling

East Herts Local Plan Harlow Stansted Gateway Transport Model Tests - Housing Assumptions Used

Location	Development	Status	Reference case	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3a	Test 3b	Test 4	Test 5
Hertford	Hertford West	District Plan Shortlisted Option		550	550	550	550	550	550
Hertford	Hertford North	District Plan Shortlisted Option		150	150	150	150	150	150
Hertford	Hertford, West of Marshgate	District Plan Shortlisted Option		182	182	182	182	182	182
Hertford	Hertford National Grid	District Plan Shortlisted Option		200	200	200	200	200	200
Hertford	Hertford South Mead Lane	District Plan Shortlisted Option		100	100	100	100	100	100
Hertford	Hertford , Former Police Station	District Plan Shortlisted Option		126	126	126	126	126	126
Hertford	Hertford South	District Plan Shortlisted Option		100	100	100	100	100	100
Hertford	National Grid Site/ Norbury Woodyard	SLAA Site		200	200	200	200	200	
Hertford	Fire Station & Fire Service HQ	SLAA Site		40	40	40	40	40	40
Hertford	West Street Allotments	SLAA Site		10	10	10	10	10	10
Hertford	1-14 Dicker Mill	SLAA Site		50	50	50	50	50	
Hertford	30-34 and 33-41 Chambers Street	SLAA Site		18	18	18	18	18	18
Hertford	Land at Braziers Field	SLAA Site		18	18	18	18	18	18
Hertford	Hertford Delivery Office	SLAA Site		18	18	18	18	18	18
Hertford	Land opposite 343-381 Ware Road	SLAA Site		14	14	14	14	14	14
Hertford	Land west of Marshgate Drive	SLAA Site	182	182	182	182	182	182	
Hertford	Land to south of Mead Lane	SLAA Site		100	100	100	100	100	

Hertford	Former Hertford and Ware Police Station	SLAA Site	126	126	126	126	126	126	
Hertford	Adams Yard, Bull Plain	SLAA Site		8	8	8	8	8	8
Hertford	15 Currie Street	SLAA Site		5	5	5	5	5	5
Hertford	7 & 8 Bluecoats Avenue	SLAA Site		12	12	12	12	12	12
Hertford	Former Dolphin PH Car Park	SLAA Site		14	14	14	14	14	14
Hertford	85 Railway Street	SLAA Site		8	8	8	8	8	8
Hertford	87-89 Railway Street	SLAA Site		6	6	6	6	6	6
Hertford	8, 10 & 12 Railway Street	SLAA Site		7	7	7	7	7	7
Hertford	10-12 The Wash	SLAA Site		2	2	2	2	2	2
Hertford	Former Waters Garage Site, North Rd	SLAA Site		14	14	14	14	14	14
Hertford	Beesons Yard, 72 Railway Yard	SLAA Site		8	8	8	8	8	8
Hertford	Baker Street Car Park	SLAA Site		14	14	14	14	14	14
Hertford	Bentley House, Pegs Lane	SLAA Site		24	24	24	24	24	24
Hertford	Elbert Wurlings, Pegs Lane	SLAA Site		10	10	10	10	10	10
Hertford	Grehan House, 57 Molewood Road	Committed Development	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Hertford	Sacombe Road	Committed Development	97	97	97	97	97	97	97
Hertford	Balls Park	Committed Development	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
Hertford	Calton House	Committed Development	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
Hertford	Balls Park Mansion	Committed Development	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
Hertford	Former Dolphin P H Car Park	Committed Development	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
Hertford	Former Stenoak Tools Site	Committed Development	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
Hertford	Bircherley Court	Committed Development	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
Hertford	Garage Court	Committed Development	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Hertford	85 Railway Street	Committed Development	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
Hertford	8, 10 & 12 Railway Street	Committed Development	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Hertford		Sub-Total	612	2620	2620	2620	2620	2620	1962

Location	Development	Status	Reference case	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3a	Test 3b	Test 4	Test 5
Welwyn Garden City	Welwyn Garden City	LDF Option		1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1700
Welwyn Garden City		Sub-Total	0	1500	1500	1500	1500	1500	1700

Location	Development	Status	Reference case	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3a	Test 3b	Test 4	Test 5
Ware	Ware, East of Trinity	District Plan shortlisted option		81	81	81	81	81	81
Ware	Ware North - High Oak Road area	District Plan shortlisted option		200	200	200	200	200	
Ware	Ware - Cintel Site	SLAA site		13	13	13	13	13	13
Ware	Ware - Swains Mill & land south of Crane Mead	SLAA site		80	80	80	80	80	80
Ware	Ware - 16 New Road	SLAA site		24	24	24	24	24	24
Ware	Ware - Star Street (Co-op Depot)	SLAA site		15	15	15	15	15	15
Ware	Ware - Rear of 39 High Street	SLAA site		6	6	6	6	6	6
Ware	Ware - London Road, Ware (adjacent to New River Court)	SLAA site		7	7	7	7	7	7
Ware	Ware - Former Musley Infants School	SLAA site		2	2	2	2	2	2
Ware	Ware - 49-51 Star Street	SLAA site		5	5	5	5	5	5
Ware	Ware - The Sun & Harrow PH, 34 Fanhams Road	SLAA site		6	6	6	6	6	6
Ware	Ware - Charvill Bros, Baldock Street	Committed Development	39	39	39	39	39	39	39
Ware	Strategic option north of Ware	District Plan shortlisted option							1300
Ware		Sub-Total	39	478	478	478	478	478	1578

Location	Development	Status	Reference case	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3a	Test 3b	Test 4	Test 5
Hunsdon and Widford	S of 10 Acorn Street, Hunsdon	Committed Development	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
Hunsdon and Widford	Terling Park	District Plan shortlisted option		270	270	270	270	270	270
Hunsdon and Widford	North Harlow Spatial Option Harlow A inc 30Ha Business Park	District Plan shortlisted option		10000		10000	10000		
Hunsdon and Widford	North Harlow Spatial Option Harlow B	Spatial Option Test Number 2 only			5000			5000	
Hunsdon and Widford		Sub-Total	16	10286	5286	10286	10286	5286	286

Location	Development	Status	Reference case	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3a	Test 3b	Test 4	Test 5
Much Hadham and Sawbridgeworth	Leventhorpe School	Committed Development	55	55	55	55	55	55	55
Much Hadham and Sawbridgeworth	Lawrence Avenue	Committed Development	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
Much Hadham and Sawbridgeworth	Adj 33 & 35 Crofters End	Committed Development	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Much Hadham and Sawbridgeworth	19 Cambridge Road	Committed Development	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
Much Hadham and Sawbridgeworth	Sawbridgeworth West North	District Plan shortlisted option		100	100	100	100	100	100

Much Hadham and Sawbridgeworth	Sawbridgeworth West South	District Plan shortlisted option		60	60	60	60	60	300
Much Hadham and Sawbridgeworth		Sub-Total	111	271	271	271	271	271	511

Location	Development	Status	Reference case	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3a	Test 3b	Test 4	Test 5
South Bishop's Stortford	Former Fyfe Wilson Site	SLAA Site		42	42	42	42	42	42
South Bishop's Stortford	Part of Tanners Wharf (also known as Atkins & Cripps site)	Committed Development	76	76	76	76	76	76	76
South Bishop's Stortford	Part of BS Goods Yard (was 100)	SLAA Site		32	32	32	32	32	32
South Bishop's Stortford	2-16 Mill Street	Committed Development	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
South Bishop's Stortford	South Road Nurseries	Committed Development	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
South Bishop's Stortford	Part of BS Goods Yard (was 268)	SLAA Site		88	88	88	88	88	88
South Bishop's Stortford	38 Castle Street	Committed Development	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
South Bishop's Stortford	Part of BS Goods Yard (was 124)	SLAA Site		40	40	40	40	40	40
South Bishop's Stortford	Riverside Site (Jackson Square)	Committed	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
South Bishop's Stortford	3a South Street	Committed Development	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
South Bishop's Stortford	Part of Tanners Wharf	Committed	41	41	41	41	41	41	41
South Bishop's Stortford	Works, Southmill Road	SLAA Site		35	35	35	35	35	35

South Bishop's Stortford	110-114 South Street	SLAA Site		24	24	24	24	24	24
South Bishop's Stortford	71-77 South Street	SLAA Site		40	40	40	40	40	40
South Bishop's Stortford	Land at Jeans Lane	SLAA Site		6	6	6	6	6	6
South Bishop's Stortford	3a South Street and the Dells	SLAA Site		18	18	18	18	18	18
South Bishop's Stortford	South of Whittington Way	District Plan shortlisted option							1000
South Bishop's Stortford		Sub-Total	261	586	586	586	586	586	1586
Location	Development	Status	Reference case	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3a	Test 3b	Test 4	Test 5
East Bishop's Stortford	Part of Land East of Bishop's Stortford	District Plan Shortlisted Option		40	40	40	40	40	40
East Bishop's Stortford	Part of Land East of Bishop's Stortford	District Plan Shortlisted Option		110	110	110	110	110	110
East Bishop's Stortford		Sub-Total	0	150	150	150	150	150	150

Location	Development	Status	Reference case	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3a	Test 3b	Test 4	Test 5
North Bishop's Stortford	ASR2 and part of ASR3	District Plan Shortlisted Option		1300	1300	1300	1300	1300	1300
North Bishop's Stortford	Whitehall College	Committed Development	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
North Bishop's Stortford	Part of ASR3	District Plan Shortlisted Option		16	16	16	16	16	16
North Bishop's Stortford	Part of ASR4	District Plan Shortlisted Option		32	32	32	32	32	32

North Bishop's Stortford	Part of ASR3 and ASR4	District Plan Shortlisted Option		752	752	752	752	752	752
North Bishop's Stortford	ASR5	District Plan Shortlisted Option		400	400	400	400	400	400
North Bishop's Stortford	Part of 23 Hockerill Street	Committed Development	32	32	32	32	32	32	32
North Bishop's Stortford	Part of Hocherill Street	Committed Development	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
North Bishop's Stortford	Part of Bishop's Stortford Causeway	Committed Site	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
North Bishop's Stortford	Part of Bishop's Stortford Causeway	Committed Site	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
North Bishop's Stortford	3 Chantry Road	Committed Development	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
North Bishop's Stortford	Pearse House, Parsonage Lane	SLAA Site		25	25	25	25	25	25
North Bishop's Stortford	Playing Field Associated with Birchwood High School	SLAA Site		40	40	40	40	40	40
North Bishop's Stortford	Part of 23 Hockerill Street	SLAA Site		32	32	32	32	32	32
North Bishop's Stortford		Sub-Total	158	2755	2755	2755	2755	2755	2755

Location	Development	Status	Reference case	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3a	Test 3b	Test 4	Test 5
Buntingford	Buntingford North	District Plan Shortlisted Option							200
Buntingford	Buntingford distribution depot	New test option		0					300
Buntingford		Sub-Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	500

Page 6	Location	Development	Status	Reference case	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3a	Test 3b	Test 4	Test 5
	EERM2 Zone 10319 Stansted Abbots and St Margarets		Committed	87	87	87	87	87	87	87
	EERM2 Zone 10319 Stansted Abbots and St Margarets		Sub-Total	87	87	87	87	87	87	87

TOTAL HOUSING NUMBERS INCLUDED IN TESTS									
East Herts	East Herts Totals	sum of numbers above	1284	18583	13583	18583	18583	13583	10965
Uttlesford	Uttlesford totals	Indicative plan numbers	5513	8501	8501	8501	8501	8501	8501
Epping	Epping totals	Indicative plan numbers	569	12243	12243	12243	12243	12243	12243
Harlow	Harlow totals	Indicative plan numbers	4260	9229	9229	9229	9229	9229	9229
Combined total new houses in model area for each test			11626	48556	43556	48556	48556	43556	40938

East Herts Local Plan Harlow Stansted Gateway Transport Model Tests - Employment Assumptions Used (Total assumed number of new jobs)									
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TOTAL ASSUMED NUMBERS OF NEW JOBS									
Location	Source	Status	Reference case	Test 1	Test 2	Test 3a	Test 3b	Test 4	Test 5
Uttlesford	East Herts Totals	Indicative plan numbers	9153	2179	2179	2179	2179	2179	2179
Epping	Uttlesford totals	Indicative plan numbers	0	2781	2781	2781	2781	2781	2781
Harlow	Epping totals	Indicative plan numbers	4347	10808	10808	10808	10808	10808	10808
East Herts	Harlow totals	Indicative plan numbers	324	4695	4695	4695	4695	4695	4695
Combined total new jobs in model area for each test			13824	20463	20463	20463	20463	20463	20463

Appendix A Table 3 – Infrastructure improvements tested within Harlow Stansted Gateway modelling tests

Scheme Name	Reference case test	Test 1	Include in Test 2 5000 North Harlow	Include in Test 3a 10000 North Harlow	Include in Test 3b 10000 North Harlow	Test 4	Test 5
New A1184 Cambridge Road / Riverway Signalised Junction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A414 Edinburgh Way : River Way to A1184 Cambridge Road				✓	✓		✓
New Access A414 to London Road Enterprise Zone	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
New Access to New Hall : A414 to London Road	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Closure of London Road north of Link Road	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Relocation of Mark Hall School entrance to London Road	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A414/First Avenue - Introduction of dedicated left turns		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
B183 between A414 and London Rd – Upgrade to D2		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
B183, London Road to Gilden Way Development Access Junction - Upgrade to 3L		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A414/A1184 Junction - Introduction of dedicated left turns		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A414, Dualling from Cambridge Rd Roundabout to First Ave Roundabout				✓	✓		✓
A414, Dualling from First Ave Roundabout to London Rd Enterprise Zone Access Junction				✓	✓		✓

A414 / Second Avenue Roundabout dedicated left turns	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A414 / Second Avenue Roundabout upgraded to North-South Hamburger			✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
Goods Yard Link Road, Bishops Stortford			✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
A414 M11 J7 to Southern Way Dualling	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A414 Burnt Mill Roundabout Capacity Improvement	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A414 Eastwick Junction - Signalised Capacity Improvement		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A414 Eastwick to Burnt Mill Dualling		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
New Stort Crossing west of Harlow – Dual Carriageway			✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
A120 Bishop's Stortford Roundabout Improvements			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A120 Bishops Stortford Bypass Dualling			✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
A120 Little Hadham Bypass			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
M11 J7A and Link Road (Phase 1) [J7a, + short link to and online improvements along Gilden Way]		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Link Road and M11 J7a (Phase 2) [Phase 1 plus dual c'way connecting A414 Eastwick to A1184 (Route C) plus at-grade rfts A414 to A1184]			✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
Link Road and M11 J7a (Phase 3) [Phase 2 plus Option 3 link to J7a]			✗	✗	✓	✗	✗

A1184 Hart Road to New Link Rd RAB upgrade to D2			x	✓	x	x	x
B183 Gilden Way Rbt main site access to Land North of Gilden Way	✓	✓	✓			✓	
B183 Gilden Way Rbt main site access to Land North of Gilden Way	✓	✓	✓			✓	
B183 Gilden Way Rbt main site access to Land North of Gilden Way	✓	✓	✓			✓	
B183 Gilden Way Rbt main site access to Land North of Gilden Way	✓	✓	✓			✓	
B183 Gilden Way Rbt main site access to Land North of Gilden Way	✓	✓	✓			✓	
Amwell roundabout (A414. A1170) - signalisation			✓	✓	✓	✓	
BSN A120 Access			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
A414 dualling - NE Harlow Cambridge Road to Church Langley Way			x	✓	x	x	x
A414 junctions convert to throughabout -							x
Cambridge Road / Edinburgh Way			x	✓	x	x	x
Gilden Way			x	✓	x	x	x
Gilden Way dualling from B183 / J7a junction			x	✓	x	x	x
A1184 Dualling River Way to Edinburgh Way			x	✓	x	x	x
Second Avenue additional capacity at roundabouts							x

Howard Way			x	x	x	x	x
Manston Road			x	x	x	x	x
Velizy Ave			x	x	x	x	x
A1184 Sawbridgeworth - signalling of Station Road junction			✓	✓	✓	✓	x
Epping - Capacity improvements at B1393 / B181 signal junction							x
M11 j7 - Additional flaring on A414 east approach			x	x	x	x	x
Second Stort Crossing Modified Eastern alignment						✓	
Existing Eastwick Crossing severed south of Gilston						✓	

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL – 3 DECEMBER 2013

EXECUTIVE – 9 DECEMBER 2013

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

EAST HERTS GREEN BELT REVIEW – PARTS 2 to 6, (DECEMBER 2013)

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- This report summarises the findings of the East Herts Green Belt Review – Parts 2 to 6 (December 2013), and seeks endorsement to use the Review to inform the preparation of the East Herts District Plan.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL AND EXECUTIVE: That:</u>	
(A)	the East Herts Green Belt Review – Parts 2 to 6, December 2013, be supported as part of the evidence base to inform and support the East Herts District Plan; and
(B)	the Head of Planning and Building Control, in consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, be authorised to make non-material, and typographical corrections to the Green Belt Review.
<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL: That:</u>	
(A)	the East Herts Green Belt Review – Parts 2 to 6, December 2013, be agreed as part of the evidence base to inform and support the East Herts District Plan; and
(B)	the Head of Planning and Building Control, in

	consultation with the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, be authorised to make non-material, and typographical corrections to the Green Belt Review.
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1.0 Background

- 1.1 Over the last two years the Council has been undertaking a process of short-listing options as part of the emerging development strategy to deliver the District's objectively assessed needs. Evidence gathered through this process, including through the ongoing Strategic Land Availability Assessment, indicates that only a small fraction of the District's residential development needs can be accommodated within the existing built-up areas on previously developed sites. There is therefore no option but to look outside the towns for suitable locations in which to accommodate development. As four of the five main towns in the District are surrounded by Green Belt, this will result in the need to release Green Belt land.
- 1.2 In order to inform the strategy selection process and to determine the most suitable and appropriate location for development within the Green Belt, a Green Belt Review is being undertaken. The purpose of the Review as a whole is twofold:
- To address whether the District's objectively assessed need for development can be accommodated within the constraints created by the Green Belt;
 - To inform the strategy selection process of the District Plan.
- 1.3 The Review is split into two parts. Members will recall that on 3 October this year, Part 1 of the Green Belt Review was presented to the District Plan Executive Panel.
- 1.4 Part 1 of the Review has informed the Detailed Site Assessments undertaken in Part 2 of the Review, the subject of this report. The purpose of Part 2 is to undertake a detailed assessment of the Green Belt for the shortlisted areas of search remaining at the end of Chapter 4 of the Supporting

Document. This report also contains Parts 3 to 6, which includes more information on the approach towards Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt, minor boundary amendments necessary as a result of digital mapping improvements, new or compensatory Green Belt and the approach towards safeguarding Green Belt land for future development beyond the emerging Plan period.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 Part 2 of the Green Belt Review comprises 9 sections, beginning at section 3 (where Part 1 of the Review left off). Section 3 describes the approach and methodology of the detailed site assessments, which is undertaken in two stages: Stage 1 is a purpose test; an assessment of the Green Belt against the purposes of the Green Belt as defined by the NPPF. Stage 2 is a boundary assessment; identifying new boundaries within which to contain development in order to reinforce the strength of the Green Belt boundary against the built-up edges of settlements. Section 3 also describes the approach taken towards assessing villages.
- 2.2 Section 4 of Part 2 explains how the Green Belt Review works alongside and in parallel to the strategy selection process. It explains how the strategy selection process has informed the detailed site assessments and how the detailed site assessments go on to inform the strategy selection process in an integrated manner.
- 2.3 Sections 5 to 11 of Part 2 contain the two-stage detailed site assessments arranged by settlement, which concludes with two options; one based upon the extent to which a location performs against the purposes of the Green Belt (Option 1) and one based upon the strength of potential new Green Belt boundaries (Option 2).
- 2.4 Each settlement section contains an overview location map showing the shortlisted areas of search and a map of each area of search showing the detailed site assessment areas. Each section also contains the stage 1 purpose assessment, comprising a series of tables for each Green Belt purpose with supporting explanatory text, and the stage 2 boundary assessment, illustrated by a series of maps showing strong

boundaries and recommended options for new Green Belt boundaries based upon the assessment with explanatory text.

- 2.5 These options are simply suggestions based on Green Belt considerations, and will be used in conjunction with the Review itself to inform the emerging strategy of the District Plan. It must be emphasised that any land that is released from the Green Belt will be determined by the Council through the District Planning process based on a balance of considerations.
- 2.6 Part 3 of the Review comprises section 12, which details the Council's approach to Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt and the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt. If amendments to the Major Developed Site boundaries are required in due course, then this will be done as part of the Minor Boundary Review undertaken in Part 4.
- 2.7 Part 4 of the Review comprises section 13, which explains the need for a detailed review of existing boundaries as a result of digital mapping technology improvements, as a result of developments that have occurred since the Green Belt was established, and to rectify anomalies where boundaries dissect buildings for example. This Minor Boundary Review will be undertaken in the next few months and will be presented to Members in due course.
- 2.8 Part 5 of the Review comprises section 14, which examines the need for longer term Green Belt planning in order to ensure the permanence of the Green Belt. Translated, this means that sufficient flexibility should be drawn into boundary amendments to reduce the need to review the Green Belt in the foreseeable future. Whilst it is impossible at this stage to predict what may be necessary in twenty years time as a result of potential further population growth, the NPPF requires this to be considered as part of the Review. As such, section 14 details the Council's intended approach towards the safeguarding of land for future development.
- 2.9 Part 6 of the Review comprises section 15, which details the Council's intended approach to the creation of new Green Belt required as a result of potential future development, i.e. the need for compensatory Green Belt. At this stage, there are

several broad locations for growth being considered as part of the development strategy, but their final form will not be determined for some time. As such, it is not possible to assess how much land should be covered by a Green Belt designation until such time that the final development strategy is determined and any planning applications are determined as a result.

- 2.10 It is also important that the approach to any new Green Belt is not simply a numbers game – that if 10 hectares is released for development then 10 hectares of new Green Belt is designated. This undermines the purpose of the Green Belt. It will be necessary to undertake a detailed assessment of potential new Green Belt at such time as the development strategy for the District is determined. The creation of new Green Belt is likely to have a wider impact than the release of small areas of Green Belt adjacent to the existing settlements and may need a single issue public consultation on this matter. Further work will be undertaken and will be presented to Members in due course.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

- Criteria-Based Assessments on Green Belt, Strategic Gaps and Boundary Limits, included in Chapter 3 of the Strategy Supporting Document, presented to the District Plan Executive Panel 29 March 2012.
- East Herts District-Wide Green Belt Review – Part 1 (September 2013), www.eastherts.gov.uk/greenbeltreview

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):	<p>People This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are vulnerable, and delivering strong services</p> <p>Place This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p>Prosperity This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.</p>
Consultation:	None
Legal:	None Known
Financial:	None Known
Human Resource:	None other than existing staff resources.
Risk Management:	In order to be found sound at examination, it is essential that the District Plan should be based on a robust evidence base, of which the Green Belt Review – Parts 2 to 6 forms an important part.

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East Herts Green Belt Review

Parts 2 - 6

December 2013

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PART 2: Detailed Site Assessment and Boundary Review

Comprising Sections 3 to 11

3 Detailed Site Assessment and Boundary Review

3.1 Approach to the Detailed Site Assessment

3.1.1 The Settlement Evaluations undertaken in Chapter 4 of the Strategy Supporting Document concluded with identifying 25 Areas of Search which were considered suitable to be taken forward for further assessment, including for a Green Belt Review. These remaining 25 shortlisted Areas of Search are used as a basis for scenario testing for the development strategy options and are therefore the subject of the detailed site assessment in Part 2 of the Green Belt Review. These Areas of Search are listed in Table 3.1 below. In addition, a number of villages were shortlisted for further assessment to potentially accommodate a 10% additional increase in growth. Further work on the villages has since refined this list therefore the detailed Green Belt Review focuses on a smaller number of villages. These villages are listed in Table 3.2 below. Please note that the Green Belt Review ID Area numbers differ from those used in the strategy selection process.

Table 3.1 Areas of Search brought forward for the Green Belt Review

Area of Search	Assumption Range	Current Green Belt Status	Green Belt Review Area ID
Bishop's Stortford North – Sub-Area A	700 dwellings	Majority Safeguarded Land and small part Green Belt.	GBR 01
Bishop's Stortford North – Sub-Area B	1,400 dwellings	Green Belt and Safeguarded Land	GBR 02
Bishop's Stortford North – Sub-Area C	400 dwellings	Safeguarded Land	N/A
Bishop's Stortford East – Sub Area B	150 dwellings	Green Belt	GBR 03
Bishop's Stortford South – Sub-Area A	800 dwellings	Green Belt	GBR 04
Bishop's Stortford	Total: 4,700 or 3,900 dwellings (including 1,233 in the Built-Up Area)		
Buntingford South and West – Sub-Area B	500	Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt	N/A
Buntingford South & West – Sub-Area C	120	Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt	N/A
Buntingford North - Sub-Area A	500	Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt	N/A
Buntingford North-East – Sub-Area B	300	Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt	N/A
Buntingford East	500	Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt	N/A
Buntingford	Total: 2,000 (rounded) or fewer than 2,000 (including 67 in the Built-Up Area)		
Hertford West - Sub-Area A	300	Green Belt	GBR 05

Hertford West - Sub-Area B	300	Green Belt	GBR 06
Hertford North - Sub-Area C	100	Green Belt	GBR 07
Hertford South - Sub-Area C	100	Green Belt	GBR 08
Hertford	Total: 1,700 (including 875 in the Built-Up Area)		
Sawbridgeworth West - Sub-Area A	200 or share of 3,000	Green Belt	GBR 09
Sawbridgeworth West - Sub-Area B		Green Belt	GBR 10
Sawbridgeworth North - Sub-Area A	Share of 3,000	Green Belt	GBR 11
Sawbridgeworth	Total: 300 or 3,000 (including 111 in the Built-Up Area)		
Ware North - Sub-Area A	200 or share of 1,500	Green Belt	GBR 12
Ware North - Sub-Area B	200 or share of 1,500	Green Belt	GBR 13
Ware East - Sub-Area A	1,300	Green Belt	GBR 14
Ware	Total: 350 or 1,850 or 3,150 (including 147 in the Built-Up Area)		
East of Welwyn Garden City	2,000	Green Belt	GBR 15
East of Welwyn Garden City	Total: 2,000		
North of Harlow - Sub-Area A	10,000	Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt	N/A
North of Harlow - Sub-Area B		Green Belt	GBR 16
North of Harlow - Sub-Area C (Terlings Park only)	270	Green Belt	N/A
North of Harlow	Total: 10,000 or 270		
Hunsdon Area	5,000	Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt	N/A
Hunsdon Area	Total: 5,000		

Table 3.2 Villages brought forward for the Green Belt Review

Area of Search	Assumption Range	Current Green Belt Status	Green Belt Review ID
Villages	Total: 10% additional increase in growth		
High Wych	18	Green Belt	N/A
Thundridge	19	Green Belt	N/A
Wadesmill	14	Green Belt	N/A
Watton-at-Stone	87	Inset from Green Belt	GBR 17

- 3.1.2 This detailed site assessment comprises two stages: firstly, to assess how an area of search or a sub-area within it performs its Green Belt role against the five Green Belt purposes and therefore whether the area should be retained as Green Belt or could be considered for release in response to a need for development; secondly, a consideration of potential boundaries that could be used to reinforce the Green Belt if a release were to occur in this location. The villages are considered in a similar manner, but have an additional level of assessment prior to the two stages of Green Belt assessment which is explained in Section 3.4.

3.2 Methodology of the Detailed Site Assessment – Purpose Test

- 3.2.1 For the purpose of Part 2 of the Review, the district's four towns located within the Green Belt; Bishop's Stortford, Hertford, Sawbridgeworth and Ware are the focus of the assessment, in addition to east of Welwyn Garden City, north of Harlow and the villages of High Wych, Thundridge, Wadesmill and Watton-at-Stone. Of the remaining shortlisted Areas of Search, Bishop's Stortford Sub-Area C, North of Harlow Sub-Area A and Buntingford are not assessed in the Green Belt Review as they are all located outside of the Green Belt. Chapter 4 of the Strategy Supporting Document explains that for the purposes of assessment, a new settlement in the Hunsdon Area is assumed to be located beyond the outer Green Belt boundary so this area is also not assessed in the Review. The only part of North of Harlow Sub-Area C which was shortlisted is Terlings Park, which has recently been granted planning permission for residential development. It is not considered feasible to consider releasing the Green Belt designation in this location before the planning permission has been implemented or completed, and therefore this site is discounted from further assessment in the Review. Following on-site assessments, each Area of Search to be assessed has been sub-divided using visible features on the ground. This enables a finer degree of accuracy when undertaking the detailed site assessments. As a result, some of the sites may overlap the indicative areas of search if no visible features are found within them. These subdivisions are detailed in **Appendix 2**. Owing to its scale, North of Harlow has not been subdivided to such an extent as other Areas of Search. Should this location be required for the development strategy, it is expected that a further detailed Green Belt Review will be necessary to take account of the proposed scale and potential form of development.
- 3.2.2 In order to assess the role of the Green Belt in terms of the five purposes prescribed by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), a series of scores and criteria have been assigned to each purpose. These criteria have not been weighted, as the significance of each criterion varies between sites. Assessing the Green Belt using a scoring basis provides an overview as to how the site fulfils the purposes, but the detail and significance of site-specific issues can then be drawn upon in the narrative of the Review. Using a scoring system also provides a means of comparison between sites. The assessment criteria used for assessing each site are as follows:

Purpose I: Check unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas – digital mapping techniques and site visits have been used to identify where the openness of the Green Belt is encroached upon by the built-up area and where development has occurred on distributor roads radiating away from settlements.

Assessment	Criteria and Score	Purpose
Digital mapping and site visits		Used to determine openness and identify ribbon development.
Openness	<p>3 – Abutting a built-up area on one side only but open on all remaining sides/not abutting an urban area</p> <p>2 – Abutting a built-up area on two or more sides but open on two or more sides</p> <p>1 – An open area between two parts of the same built-up area, open on only one side</p>	<p>The site is awarded more points where there are less sides abutting the built-up area, and less points where the site has more sides abutting the built-up area. For the purposes of this assessment, the built-up area is that as defined on the Proposals Map of the Local Plan (2007).</p> <p>Sites that are abutted by the built-up area on more sides are regarded as better connected to the built-up area and consequently as less open. The less open a site, the weaker defence it has in checking unrestricted sprawl as it is more vulnerable to encroachment.</p>
Impeding ribbon development	<p>3 – Site does not contain development along a distributor road which extends beyond the existing built-up area</p> <p>1 - Site contains development along a distributor road which extends beyond the existing built-up area</p>	<p>The site is awarded more points where it does not contain ribbon development and fewer points where ribbon development is shown to have occurred within the site. For the purposes of this assessment, ribbon development is development located along a distributor road* which extends beyond the existing built-up area.</p> <p>Ribbon development from the built-up area is a form of sprawl. Owing to its formation along transport routes, there is rarely a limit to the extent it could continue. Therefore sites containing ribbon development are shown to have not checked this unrestricted sprawl.</p>

* Distributor roads as defined in *Roads in Hertfordshire: Design Guide 3rd Edition* (2011), Hertfordshire County Council.

Purpose II: prevent neighbouring towns from merging – each site location is given a score depending on the strategic gap measurement. The strategic gap is measured from the outer boundary of each site to the nearest built-up area in respect

of growth direction, i.e. where release of that site would reduce the existing strategic gap and/or encroach upon the neighbouring built-up area. Three thresholds of less than 1 kilometre, 1 to 2 kilometres and greater than 2 kilometres have been chosen to allow for a more precise assessment of the strategic gap between settlements. The thresholds are thought to best reflect the characteristics of the district given its large, rural nature that is interspersed with villages where the strategic gap can be critical. Although the NPPF only addresses neighbouring towns in this purpose, the Review takes the opportunity to also assess each site on its proximity to villages as this would need to be considered as part of the strategy selection process. The most sensitive areas in the district have already been discounted from the shortlisted development options, such as between Hertford and Ware and between Sawbridgeworth and Harlow.

Assessment Technique	Criteria and Score	Purpose
Digital mapping		Used to measure accurate distances.
Shortest distance between the site's outer boundary and the boundary of the built-up area of the nearest** town	3 – Less than 1 kilometre 2 – 1-2 kilometres 1 – Greater than 2 kilometres	The site is awarded more points if the distance is lower as it is shown to fulfil the purpose of preventing merging by physically separating the settlements and protecting the gap between them. The site is awarded less points if the distance is higher as it is not considered to serve such a significant role in physically separating the settlements.
Shortest distance between the site's outer boundary and the boundary of the built-up area of the nearest** village	3 – Less than 1 kilometre 2 – 1-2 kilometres 1 – Greater than 2 kilometres	The site is awarded more points if the distance is lower as it is shown to fulfil the purpose of preventing merging by physically separating the settlements and protecting the gap between them. The site is awarded less points if the distance is higher as it is not considered to serve such a significant role in physically separating the settlements.

** Nearest settlement in respect of growth direction, i.e. the settlement with which release of that sub-area would reduce the existing strategic gap with the most and/or encroach upon the most significantly.

Purpose III: assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment – as the countryside has different qualities this is a more difficult purpose to assess. Therefore five criteria have been used to assess what each location contributes to the countryside: nature conservation value (biodiversity and geological conservation value); the presence of trees/hedgerows; agricultural land quality; accessibility to the countryside; and the landscape character which has been assessed using the scores given in the Landscape Character Topic Assessment in Chapter 3 of the Strategy Supporting Document, based on the Landscape Character Assessment (2007). The five criteria are used to assess the extent to which the nature and character of each

site contribute to the countryside, as the greater the extent the greater the Green Belt fulfils the purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

Assessment Technique	Criteria and Score	Purpose
Digital mapping and site visits		Used to identify applicable land designations and classifications, landscape character areas, public rights of way, recreational open spaces, protected woodland and the vegetation cover.
Nature Conservation Value	<p>3 – Presence of designated land (statutory and non-statutory)</p> <p>2 – Adjacent to designated land (statutory and non-statutory)</p> <p>1 – No designated land</p>	<p>The site is awarded more points if it contains designated land of a nature conservation type, including local wildlife sites, Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), RAMSAR Sites, Sites of Special Scientific Importance (SSSIs) and internationally important sites. If the site contains such designated land, it is considered to hold a higher nature conservation value.</p> <p>The site is awarded less points if a site is adjacent to such designated land, recognising that it may still assist in conserving the natural features and habitats to some extent, and the least points if there is no proximity to designated land.</p> <p>Sites containing or adjacent to designated land are considered to better assist in conserving natural features and habitats which contribute to the value of the countryside.</p>
Trees	<p>3 – Presence of ancient or other protected trees</p> <p>2 – Presence of non-protected woodland, forests, trees or hedgerows</p> <p>1 – No trees or hedgerows</p>	The site is awarded more points if it contains trees designated by a Tree Preservation Order for their great age, size, condition or exceptional value for wildlife, in the landscape or culturally, or if it contains ancient woodland (an area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD). Sites which contain

		<p>these trees are considered to provide additional benefit to East Herts' countryside.</p> <p>The site is awarded less points if it contains non-protected woodland, forests, trees or hedgerows and the least points if it contains no trees or hedgerows.</p> <p>Sites containing woodland, forest, trees or hedgerows are considered to provide additional benefit to East Herts' countryside and are considered of greater additional benefit if they are of importance or age to be designated.</p>
Landscape Character Assessment	<p>3 – red sites 2 – amber sites 1 – green sites</p>	<p>The site is awarded more points if it is located within a landscape character area that scored 'red' in East Herts Council's Assessment of Landscape Character in Chapter 3 of the Strategy Supporting Document. These ratings were given based on the evaluations given in the Landscape Character Assessment (2007) SPD which rate the landscape character area as having a moderate strength of character but being in good condition, or having a strong character and being in good or moderate condition. The sites within these areas have been considered necessary to conserve and strengthen or safeguard and manage.</p> <p>The site is awarded less points if it is located within a landscape character that scored 'amber'. This is based on landscape character areas with a weak strength of character but in good condition, with a moderate sense of character and a moderate condition, or a strong character but in a poor condition. These sites are considered necessary to strengthen and reinforce, improve and</p>

		<p>conserve, or restore condition to maintain character.</p> <p>The site is awarded the least points if it is located within a landscape character area that scored 'green'. This is based on landscape character areas with a weak sense of character that are in moderate or poor condition, or a moderate sense of character in a poor condition. These sites are considered necessary to improve and reinforce, reconstruct, or improve and restore.</p> <p>The higher the rating of the landscape character area within which the site is located, the more value it is considered to add to the countryside of the district, in strength of character and/or condition.</p>
Agricultural Land Classification	<p>3 – High quality (Grade 1 or 2)</p> <p>2 – All other agriculture (Grade 3 and below)</p> <p>1 – No agriculture</p>	<p>The site is awarded more points for the higher quality agricultural land classification, less for the lower quality agricultural land classification and the least points if the land has not been given an agricultural land classification grading.</p> <p>The higher the agricultural classification, the better the site contributes to the countryside characteristics.</p>
Accessibility	<p>3 – Presence of a designated park/common/recreational open space together with a public footpath or bridleway.</p> <p>2 – Presence of either a designated park/ common/ recreational open space or a public footpath/ bridleway.</p> <p>1 – None of the above</p>	<p>The site is awarded more points if it provides formal public access to the site through public rights of way and if it serves as a designated park or open space for members of the public or private users.</p> <p>The site is awarded the least points if there is no presence of public rights of way or designated parks, commons or recreational open space.</p> <p>The better the accessibility to the</p>

	present.	site, the greater the ability for nearby communities to enjoy the countryside.
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Purpose IV: preserve setting and special character of historic towns – Two criteria have been used to assess the sites; the presence and close proximity to designated heritage assets and Conservation Areas. Not all designated heritage assets will contribute to the setting or special character of historic towns, as this is very much dependent on the individual asset. However, identifying them through the assessment draws attention to historic areas which are more likely to be of potential contribution and then allows that judgement to be explored in the narrative. The presence of a Conservation Area in a site would increase its contribution to preserving the setting and special character of the historic town.

Assessment Technique	Criteria and Score	Purpose
Designated Heritage Asset	<p>3 - Contains a Historic Park & Garden, Area of Archaeological Significance, Scheduled Monument or Listed Building</p> <p>2 - Adjacent to the above</p> <p>1 - None of the above</p>	<p>The site is awarded more points if it contains a designated heritage asset, including Historic Parks and Gardens, Areas of Archaeological Significance (AASs), Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings.</p> <p>The site is awarded less points if it is adjacent to a designated heritage asset.</p> <p>The least points are awarded if the site is not in the proximity of a designated heritage asset.</p> <p>Sites containing or adjacent to a designated heritage asset are considered more likely to better contribute to and preserve the historic setting and character of the town.</p>
Conservation Area	<p>5 - Within a Conservation Area</p> <p>3 - Adjacent to a Conservation Area</p> <p>1 - Not within, nor adjacent to, nor affecting the setting of a Conservation Area</p>	<p>The site is awarded more points if it is located within a Conservation Area.</p> <p>The site is awarded less points if it is adjacent to a Conservation Area.</p> <p>The least points are awarded if the site is not in the proximity of a Conservation Area.</p> <p>Sites containing or adjacent to a Conservation Area are considered to better contribute to and preserve the historic setting and character of the town.</p>

Purpose V: assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land – Every site within the Green Belt contributes to fulfilling this purpose by encouraging development to locate within the urban area instead. Consequently this purpose has been excluded from the assessment as all the sites would score the same for this criterion.

- 3.2.3 The Review seeks to identify which sites best fulfil the purposes of the Green Belt. Part 1 of the Review has undertaken a high level assessment of these purposes, the findings of which are used to inform the assessments in Part 2. Wider strategic issues that have been identified in Part 1 that have not been addressed through the criteria assessment in Part 2 will be taken into account in the more detailed assessment where appropriate. From analysing the criteria scores and taking into account any wider strategic issues, a summary can be reached as to whether the Green Belt meets each purpose or not, and if sites can be identified within these sub-areas which differ from the overall summary. Applying a sequential test should result in areas of least Green Belt value being released first for development over other locations if required. Therefore, measuring and examining the extent to which the sites fulfil the Green Belt purposes enables comparisons between the different sites within an area of search, to suggest which are preferable for strategic release.
- 3.2.4 The Review does not compare the preference of sites between different settlements, as each settlement is being tested with settlement-specific scenarios considering differing levels of development as part of the strategy selection process. Instead, it aims to establish the extent to which the Green Belt could be released at each area of search, and in each sub-area, in order to accommodate development. This stage of Part 2 concludes with an 'Option 1' recommendation of which sites are preferable for potential release from the Green Belt based upon examination of the purpose test scores. It is important to note that this recommendation is a suggestion, and will be taken into account with the full assessment made in the Review alongside other wider considerations when informing the District Plan.
- 3.2.5 In principle, the strategy would seek to use locations which are least sensitive in Green Belt terms, while more sensitive locations (those which score more against their contribution to the Green Belt purposes) are discounted or reserved for potential 'safeguarded land'. However, this may not always be appropriate or possible in practice. Some locations may need further interventions before they become suitable for development, such as land assembly or remediation. Such sites may not be forthcoming within the early planned phases of the development strategy and therefore, although they hold less value in Green Belt terms, they may be more suitable as safeguarded land. Alternatively, the most appropriate release may provide excess land capable of accommodating a greater yield than the proposed level of development. These findings will inform the development strategy and contribute to refining the shortlisted development options with regard to location as well as to the potential level of development. The results of this assessment are contained in Section 5 to Section 11.

3.3 Methodology of the Detailed Site Assessment – Boundary Assessment

- 3.3.1 The second stage of Part 2 of the Review seeks to identify potential new Green Belt boundaries. The NPPF requires that when defining Green Belt boundaries, local planning authorities should use physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent, and must be capable of enduring beyond the Plan period (paragraph 85). In a number of areas there

are cases where it would be inappropriate to release land from the Green Belt because there are no identifiable strong boundaries. This could be the case for some of the releases suggested in the 'Option 1' recommendations. This second stage therefore proposes a number of bolder changes to the Green Belt, in some instances involving the release of larger areas of land in order to achieve a strengthened boundary in line with the requirements of the NPPF. The subsequent 'Option 2' recommendation provides suggested improvements to the overall Green Belt boundaries to ensure further incremental changes are not needed in the foreseeable future, and to identify land that could be safeguarded for future need.

- 3.3.2 There are two parts to this second stage of detailed site assessment; firstly an assessment of the strength of the existing Green Belt boundary to the built-up area and secondly the identification and mapping of all strong boundaries located within the area of search being assessed. This stage of the Review concludes with an 'Option 2' recommendation for potential release based on improving boundary strength, taking into account the strength of the existing Green Belt boundary against the strong potential new ones identified.

Boundary Strength Criteria

- 3.3.3 In considering the strength of the Green Belt boundaries, the existing Green Belt boundary at each sub-area (or area of search if not divided into sub-areas) will be classified as 'strong' or 'weak' using the criteria below. A 'strong' boundary is one that will remain over the long term and is extremely difficult to alter or destroy, especially by planning decision or appeal. A 'weak' boundary is one that is visible, but can be easily altered or destroyed by a physical means or by planning decision or appeal.

Table 3.3: Examples of Boundary Strength

Strong Boundaries	Weak Boundaries
Motorways	
Functioning mainline railway lines	Disused railway lines
Primary roads (motorways and some A roads), main and secondary distributor roads (A and B class only)	Other classified roads Private/unmade roads Rights of way
Rivers	Other watercourses including streams and drainage courses
Protected hedgerows / woodlands	Non-protected hedgerows / woodlands / tree lines
Prominent physical features (i.e. ridgeline)	Power lines
Residential development with clearly defined physical boundaries (not back gardens)	Residential curtilages (including back gardens)
Non-residential development with clearly defined physical boundaries	Non-residential development with indeterminate boundaries
	Recreational field/park boundaries

- 3.3.4 Where the existing boundary to a sub-area contains strong and weak boundary characteristics, it will be given an overall assessment based on the strength of the majority of it. The accompanying description will detail the characteristics of the strong and weak sections. Once the existing boundary has been classified, the Review identifies and maps strong boundaries within the area of search. Consideration of potential new boundaries is primarily given to strong boundary features contained within the area of search, but also to boundary features contained outside of but within close proximity to the area of search if no suitable one can be found within.
- 3.3.5 The strong boundaries identified from the assessment will be compared with the strength of the existing Green Belt boundary in order to form an 'Option 2' recommendation for potential release of the Green Belt. 'Option 2' is based solely on boundary strength. In some cases it may be appropriate to reduce the area for release from that suggested in 'Option 1' in order to utilise existing boundary features to assist in the containment of new development. In other cases the release of additional land may provide the most appropriate strong boundary. Alternatively, a suitably strong boundary may not be identifiable within the sub-area, in which case it may be considered that the site should not be released and no 'Option 2' recommendation will be made. However, if the existing Green Belt boundary is weak this provides impetus to establish a strong boundary and so an identifiable strong boundary outside of the sub-area may be suggested for 'Option 2', if within reasonable proximity. It should also be noted that it is possible to design in strong boundary features through development if necessary.

Recommendations for the East Herts Green Belt

- 3.3.6 The Detailed Site Assessment will conclude with the two options proposed together for each area of search; Option 1 based on the extent that the Green Belt purposes are met and Option 2 based on the strength of potential new boundaries. These options are simply suggestions based on Green Belt considerations, and will be used in conjunction with the Review itself to inform the emerging strategy of the District Plan. It must be emphasised that any land that is released from the Green Belt will be determined by East Herts Council through the District Planning process based on a balance of considerations.
- 3.3.7 For comprehensiveness, the results of both the purpose test and boundary assessment have been grouped together by settlement. This also aids comparison between the two recommended options.

3.4 Approach and Methodology to Villages

- 3.4.1 The Settlement Evaluations undertaken in Chapter 4 of the Strategy Supporting Document shortlisted a number of villages to be further assessed for potential inclusion in the development strategy. Since Chapter 4 was published, further work on these villages has refined the shortlist of those that could accommodate the assumed level of development of an additional 10% increase in growth. Of these, four villages are located within the Green Belt

and therefore are subject to assessment in Part 2 of the Green Belt Review; High Wych, Thundridge, Wadesmill and Watton-at-Stone.

- 3.4.2 Of these villages, Watton-at-Stone is already inset from the Green Belt. However, in order to accommodate an additional 10% increase in growth it is necessary to review the existing Green Belt boundary. Although development is anticipated to be delivered by communities through Neighbourhood Plans, only the local planning authority can amend Green Belt boundaries. Therefore in order to ensure this level of development is achievable, the Green Belt immediately surrounding Watton-at-Stone will be assessed through this Review.
- 3.4.3 The remaining villages of High Wych, Wadesmill and Thundridge are currently washed over by Green Belt and do not have defined village boundaries. In order to accommodate an additional 10% increase in growth, they would need to be inset from the Green Belt which would subsequently provide defined village boundaries. However, north of Harlow and Ware North and Ware East are being considered for development in the draft District Plan. Given Thundridge and Wades mill's location close to the north of Ware and High Winch's location close to north of Harlow, it is suggested that they stay washed over by the Green Belt until such a time that the scale and form of development in these locations is better known to avoid merging and weakening strategic gaps. Therefore they will not be subject to assessment in this Review.
- 3.4.4 With the exception of Watton-at-Stone, the villages that are already inset from the Green Belt are not expected to accommodate an additional 10% increase in growth and consequently will not be subject to assessment in the Review. This includes Hertford Heath, Tewin and Stanstead Abbots & St Margarets. Although Stanstead Abbots & St Margarets is a main settlement in the Local Plan 2007, it is to be categorised as a village in the emerging draft District Plan.
- 3.4.5 In order to assess Watton-at-Stone's Green Belt, the land surrounding the village was divided into assessment sites and a review was undertaken into the Green Belt purposes and boundary strength, as for urban extensions. Prior to recommending options for possible release of Green Belt land, it was necessary to undertake an assessment of the constraints to development around the existing built-up area. The assessment used desk-based study and site visits to evaluate the suitability and availability of the land, taking into account policy constraints and physical site constraints to identify land that has the least development potential. A comparison was then drawn between the suitability of land for development and the Green Belt function to assess which are the most preferred Green Belt sites for release, if any, which could accommodate development. The findings provide a steer as to if the proposed level of development is achievable and will be used to inform the development strategy.

4 Linking the Detailed Site Assessments to the Strategy Selection Process

4.1 How has the strategy selection process informed the detailed level assessments?

4.1.1 This stage of the Green Belt Review is an integrated part of the strategy selection process. As mentioned in the introduction, the need for a Green Belt Review only arises due to the need to accommodate new development. The amount of new development is related to the objectively assessed housing need. In simple terms, once the number of new properties needed is known, using an assumed density a calculation can be made of the quantity of land required for development. As this level of land would not be available within the existing built-up areas, there will be a need to find areas outside existing settlements to accommodate this development. As four of the five main settlements in the district are surrounded by Green Belt, it follows that land will need to be released from the Green Belt.

4.1.2 The strategy selection process thus far has considered the Green Belt through the Topic Assessments in Chapter 3 of the Strategy Supporting Document and as a balance of wider considerations in the Settlement Evaluations in Chapter 4. The relationship between the Green Belt Review and the strategy selection process is closely integrated. Part 1 of the Green Belt Review examined the Green Belt across the entire district at a high level and reflects the issues highlighted in the Topic Assessments in Chapter 3 of the Supporting Strategy Document. Part 2 of the Green Belt Review is informed by the issues that are highlighted in Part 1, but assesses the Green Belt against the five purposes as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 80, p.19) at a more detailed level which allows for differentiation between more specific areas.

4.1.3 Furthermore, the Settlement Evaluations undertaken in Chapter 4 of the Strategy Supporting Document concluded with identifying 25 Areas of Search which are subject of the detailed site assessment in Part 2 of the Green Belt Review. With regard to the villages, Part 2 of the Review focused on a more refined list than those shortlisted in Chapter 4 which was taken from preparation of Chapter 6 of the Strategy Supporting Document. Further work during this preparation has discounted some villages from accommodating the assumed level of a 10% increase in growth, therefore it was not felt necessary to assess them in the Green Belt Review.

4.2 How will the results of the detailed level assessments be used to inform the strategy selection process?

4.2.1 The detailed site assessments undertaken in Part 2 of the Review inform the strategy selection process by endorsing the assumptions made in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 of the Strategy Supporting Document and by advising where development would be best located in each area of search in Green Belt terms. It is the remit of the strategy selection process to take this information

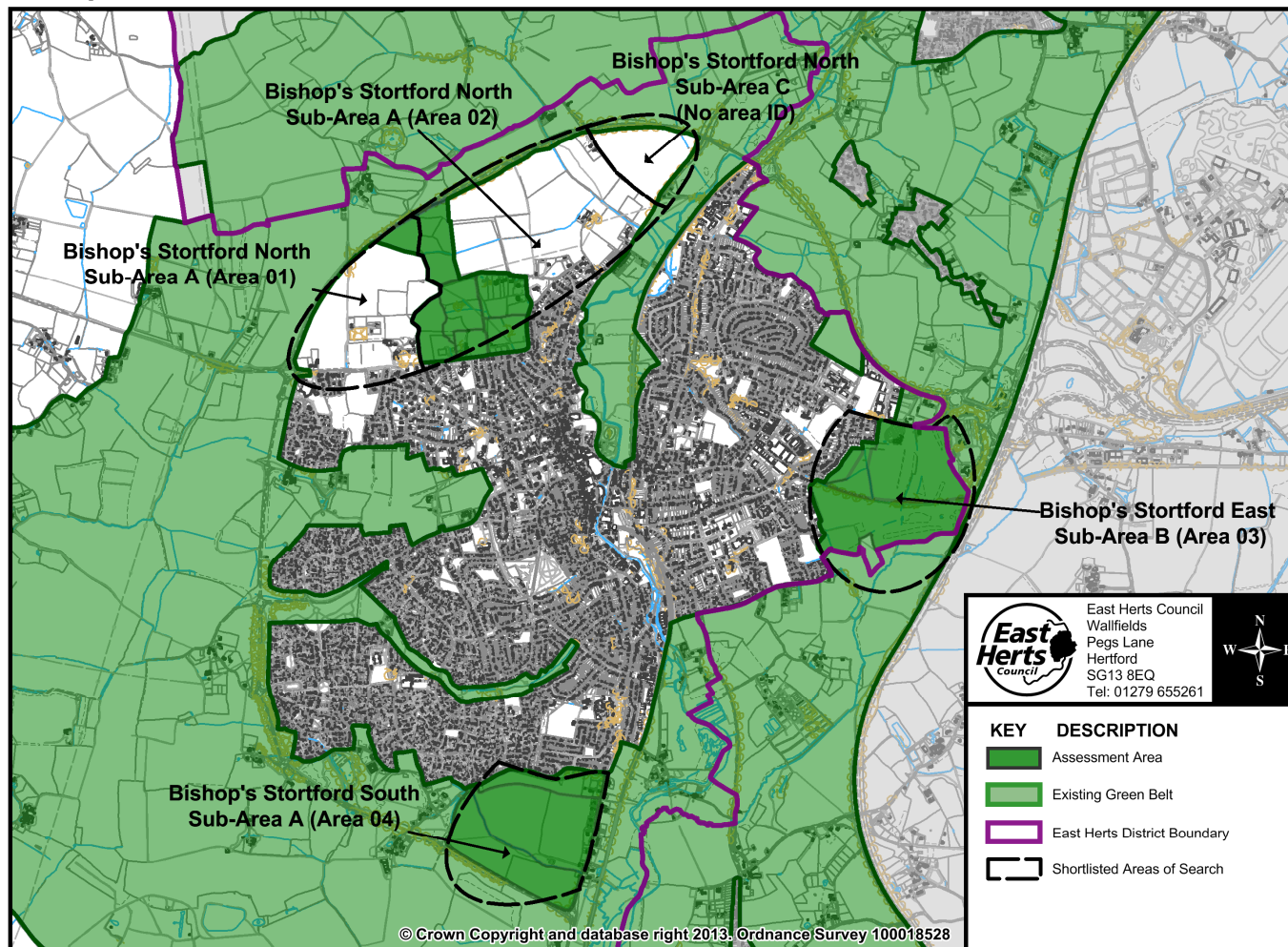
and use it to determine where development should be located after the consideration of a range of planning matters. Chapter 6 of the Strategy Supporting Document draws together these range of matters, including those related to Green Belt to justify the development strategy and settlement policies for the District.

- 4.2.2 With regard to the villages, Part 2 assessed the refined list from early work on Chapter 6 of the Strategy Supporting Document to determine the most suitable areas to release in Green Belt terms and in respect of deliverability of the Green Belt sites that were being assessed. This informed the development strategy which is explained and justified in Chapter 6.

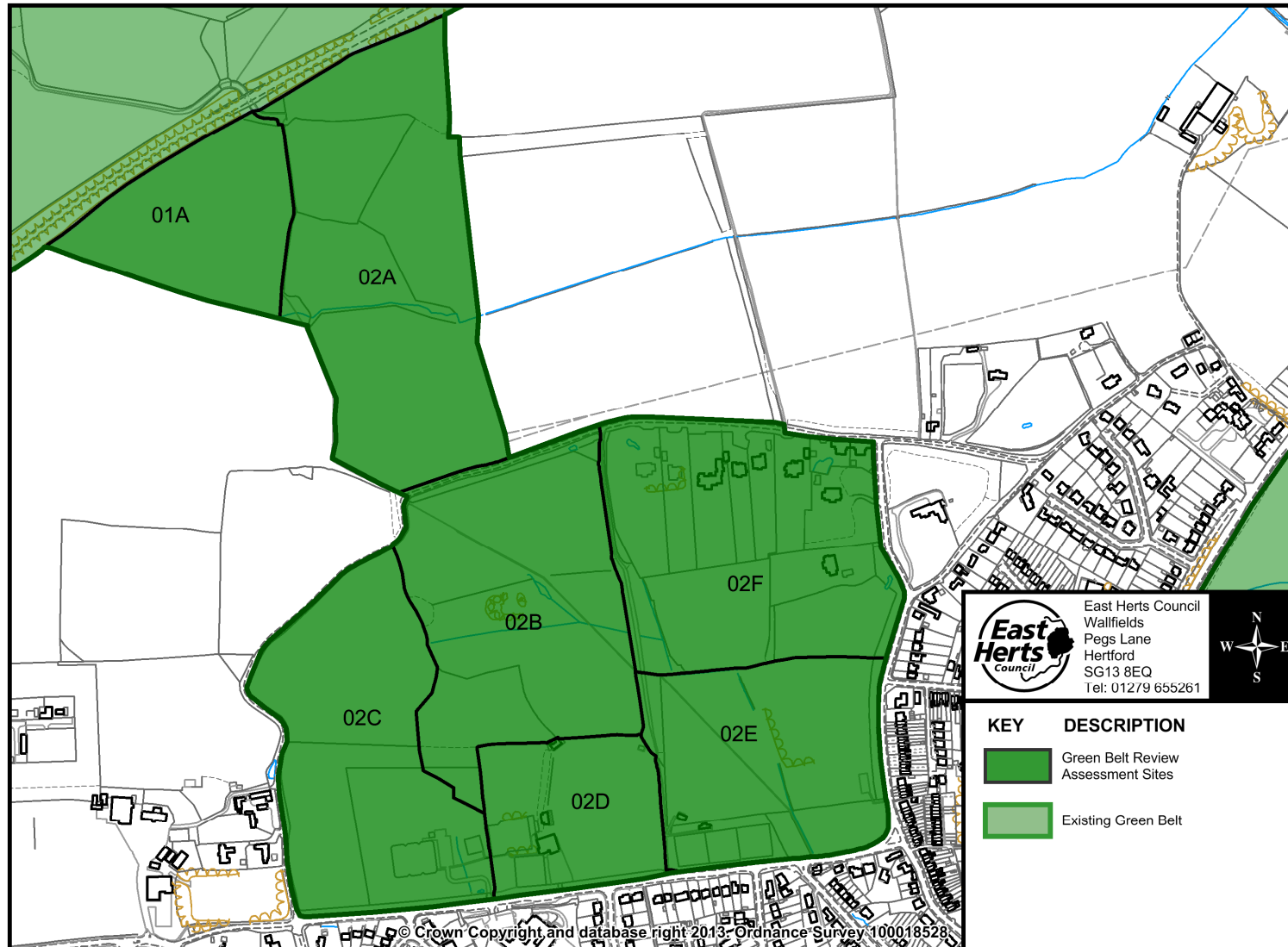
5 Detailed Site Assessment of Bishop's Stortford

5.1 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 1 - Green Belt Purpose Assessment

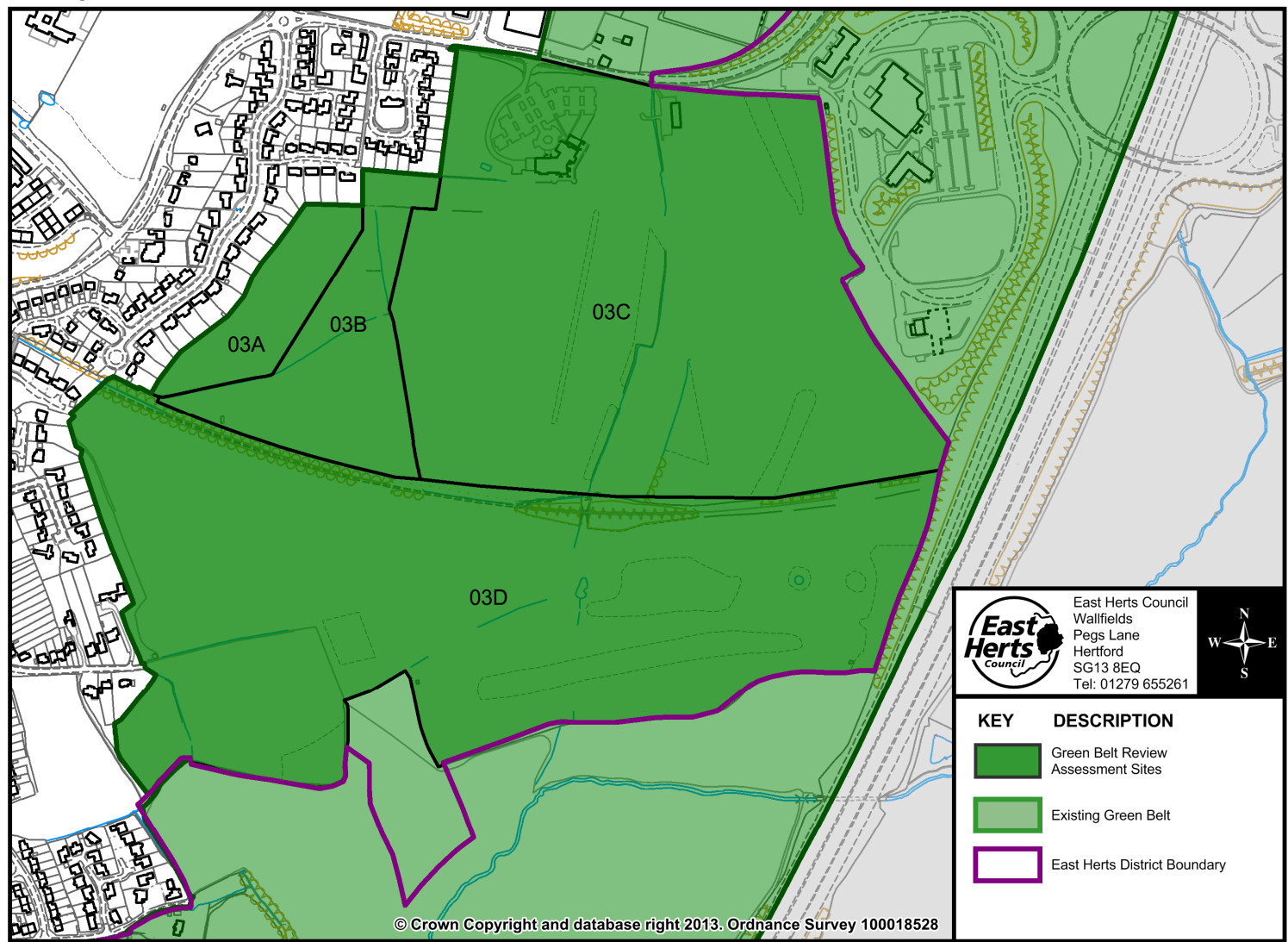
Bishop's Stortford Shortlisted Areas of Search



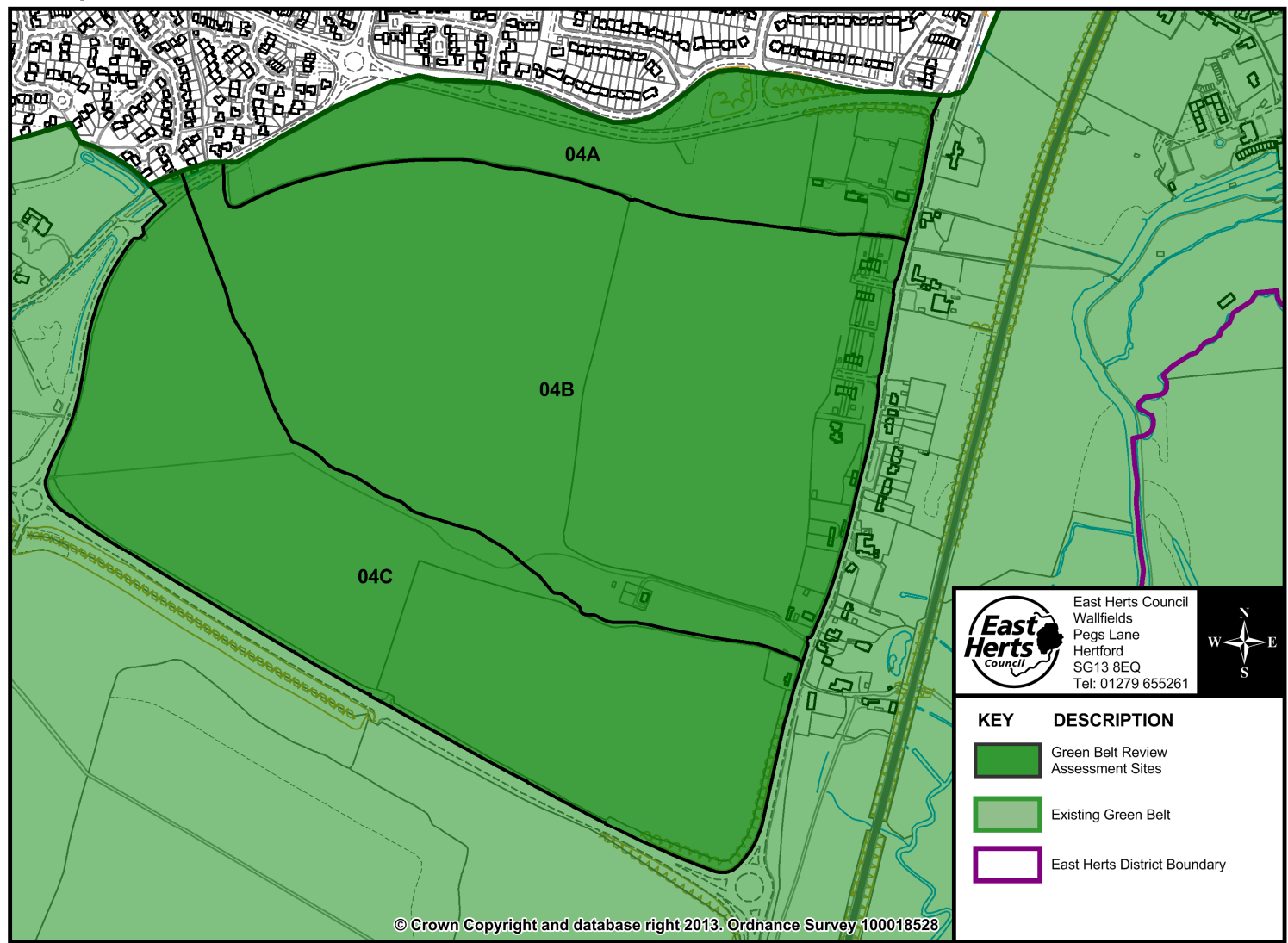
Bishop's Stortford North Assessment Sites



Bishop's Stortford East Assessment Sites



Bishop's Stortford South Assessment Sites



Purpose 1: Check unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas

	Bishop's Stortford North							Bishop's Stortford East				Bishop's Stortford South		
	Sub-Area A	Sub-Area B						Sub-Area B				Sub-Area A		
GBR Ref	01A	02A	02B	02C	02D	02E	02F	03A	03B	03C	03D	04A	04B	04C
Openness	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	3
Impeding ribbon development	3	3	3	3	1	1	3	3	3	1	3	1	1	1
Purpose Total	6	6	6	5	4	3	6	5	5	3	6	3	4	4

The Green Belt at Bishop's Stortford North serves a strong role in checking the unrestricted sprawl of the built-up area of the town by impeding ribbon development. Although Sites 02D and 02E contain ribbon development in the form of a club house and sports pavilions along Cricketfield Lane, it is acknowledged that these developments do not extend beyond the built-up area on the southern side of the road therefore do not contribute to unrestricted sprawl of the built-up area westwards. The Green Belt at Bishop's Stortford North also serves a strong role in checking unrestricted sprawl of the town by maintaining the openness of the area, particularly the northern sites. Sites 02C and 02E differ slightly as they are better connected to the existing built-up area than the other sites. Site 02F also does not maintain the openness as well as the other sites, as it contains a number of dwellings along Dane O'Coys Road on the former Whitehall College site. These dwellings do not form part of the existing built-up area so were not identified in the scores. However, if they were to be included in the built-up area then Site 02E would be far less open and more vulnerable to encroachment and sprawl from the built-up area. It should be noted that upon development of the Areas of Special Restraint and Special Area of Conservation, the Green Belt in this area will be further surrounded by the built-up area of the town and therefore individual sites may be encroached upon and may not be as open. However, collectively the sites will provide and maintain the openness of a green wedge to the town centre in keeping with the existing form of the town, which will assist in checking unrestricted sprawl.

The Green Belt at Bishop's Stortford East is largely open which assists in checking unrestricted sprawl, although Site 03A is comparatively better connected to the existing built-up area. The sides of Site 03B which abut the built-up area are relatively small,

rendering only a small part of the site as connected to the built-up area and the rest rather open. The same can be said of Site 03C, however the site also borders Birchanger Services to the east, which decreases the openness of the northern part of the site, although the services are located within Green Belt. The northern part of Site 03C also contains the club house and associated development of Bishop's Stortford Golf Club on Dunmow Road, so the site scores lower in preventing ribbon development and thus checking unrestricted sprawl. Although the northern part of Site 03C does not assist greatly in checking unrestricted sprawl, the majority of the site in the southern region serves a stronger role due to maintaining the openness. Site 03D serves to check unrestricted sprawl the most as it is the most open, with only the western side abutting the built-up area.

The Green Belt at Bishop's Stortford South assists in maintaining the openness of the land, though it is better connected to the built-up area at Site 04A than at Sites 04B and 04C. The Inspector gave considerable weight in his report regarding the recent Bishop's Stortford Schools appeal to the adverse impact on the openness of the Green Belt that the proposed development would have in this location. Although all the sites assessed contain ribbon development along London Road/Thorley Street, albeit only one dwelling in Site 04C, it is acknowledged that some of these were present before designation of the Green Belt.

Purpose 2: Prevent neighbouring towns from merging

	Bishop's Stortford North							Bishop's Stortford East				Bishop's Stortford South		
	Sub-Area A	Sub-Area B						Sub-Area B				Sub-Area A		
GBR Ref	01A	02A	02B	02C	02D	02E	02F	03A	03B	03C	03D	04A	04B	04C
Distance to neighbouring town	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Distance to neighbouring village	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	3	3	3	3
Purpose Total	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	4	4

The Green Belt at Bishop's Stortford North does not play a significant role in preventing Bishop's Stortford merging with the nearest town of Stansted Mountfitchet, nor to the nearest village of Farnham. Although Sites 01A and 02A are within 2 kilometres of Farnham, the A120 to the north of the site provides a strong physical barrier which is considered would assist in preventing potential future sprawl and merging with nearby settlements.

The Green Belt at Bishop's Stortford East does not play a significant role in preventing Bishop's Stortford merging with the nearest town of Stansted Mountfitchet. Although Sites 03C and 03D are less than a kilometre away from Birchanger and Great Hallingbury respectively, the surrounding roads of the A1250/Dunmow Road, the A120 and the M11 are again considered to provide strong physical barriers to prevent any potential merging with these settlements and therefore the Green Belt is not thought to serve the purpose of preventing merging with nearby villages. However, as identified in Part 1 of the Review, the Green Belt in this location does play a significant role in preventing merging of Bishop's Stortford with the large urban area of Stansted Airport when taking into account Birchanger Green Services and the existing road infrastructure that serves Stansted Airport as urban features. Although this is a large urban area rather than a town, it is still an important consideration in the Plan-making process. Site 03C serves the strongest role in preventing this merging, given that it lies adjacent to Birchanger Green Services.

The Green Belt at Bishop's Stortford South does not play a significant role in preventing Bishop's Stortford merging with the nearest town of Sawbridgeworth. The Green Belt does however serve the purpose of preventing merging with development along Thorley Street, which is considered part of the village of Thorley in its own right. Although the Old Thorley part of the village is less than a kilometre from the assessment sites, and Sites 04B and 04C lie less than a kilometre away from Spellbrook, it is considered that merging would be prevented by the presence of the A1184/St James Way to the south of Site 05C providing a strong physical barrier.

Purpose 3: Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

	Bishop's Stortford North							Bishop's Stortford East				Bishop's Stortford South		
	Sub-Area A	Sub-Area B						Sub-Area B				Sub-Area A		
GBR Ref	01A	02A	02B	02C	02D	02E	02F	03A	03B	03C	03D	04A	04B	04C
Nature conservation	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	1	1	1

Trees/hedgerows	2	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2
Landscape character assessment	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	3
Agricultural land classification	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	3
Accessibility	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	2
Purpose Total	10	11	10	11	11	10	12	9	9	11	11	12	11	11

The Green Belt at Bishop's Stortford North assists in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, particularly as the sites are of a high nature conservation value with numerous wildlife sites contained within the area; Hoggate's Wood in Site 02A, Dane O'Coys Meadow in Site 02B and Whitehall Field in Site 02F. All the sites assessed lie adjacent to one of these wildlife sites, providing them with some buffer protection. All the sites contain trees and/or hedgerows, though several of these are protected by a designation or preservation order which demonstrates a more significant contribution to the countryside value. Site 02A contains ancient woodland in the form of Hoggate's Wood, whilst Site 02B contains grassland as well as Ash Grove, a small area of woodland. The majority of Site 02F is protected by a tree preservation order, and there is a small protected cluster of trees to the south of Site 02D, and some individually protected trees to the south of Site 02C along Cricketfield Lane. Again, the surrounding sites provide a partial buffer to these clusters and ancient woodland. These features demonstrate a fairly high contribution to the countryside character which the Green Belt helps to safeguard. In addition, there is relatively good public access to the countryside via public footpath and other public access routes. Sites 02C, 02D and 02E also provide recreational facilities by way of tennis courts and playing pitches, and Sites 02D and 02F also contain allotments. These recreational uses and the public access also contribute to signifying the value of the countryside in this area. The area does not score so highly with regard to landscape character and agricultural land grading. The majority of Bishop's Stortford North lies within the Bourne Brook Valley, with only Site 01A lying within the Hadham Plateau. Both landscape character areas are of moderate strength, although the Bourne Brook Valley is in poor condition whilst the Hadham Plateau is in moderate. The majority of land across the area has been assessed as Grade 3 agricultural land, which is relatively low, with non-agricultural fringes to the south of the southern sites.

Bishop's Stortford East meets the criteria that demonstrate a contribution to the countryside character to a lesser extent. The area was not assessed in the Landscape Character Assessment (2007) as it was not considered to be countryside, and although the area is a golf course which serves recreational purposes, Site 03A is not actively used by Bishop's Stortford Golf Club and there is limited public access with only Site 03D containing a short stretch of public footpath. The land has also been assessed as relatively low Grade 3 agricultural land, although Site 03C contains some higher Grade 2 agricultural land. None of the sites contain

protected trees or hedgerows although Site 03D lies adjacent to a strip of protected trees to the west. Sites 03C and 03D have a higher nature conservation value as they contain the three Bishop's Stortford Golf Club wildlife sites, whilst Site 03A and 03B border the wildlife site part to the south of them which covers the disused railway track and Site 03B also abuts the part to the north covering the club house. The Green Belt of Sites 03A and 03B is therefore considered to hold a further limited role in assisting in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment than the remaining area.

The Green Belt at Bishop's Stortford South met a greater number of the criteria that demonstrate a contribution to the countryside character as the sites are located in the Thorley Uplands which scored 'red' in the landscape character assessments for being in good condition, though of moderate strength. The Inspector's report from the Bishop's Stortford schools appeal notes 'the intrinsic value of the current open, rural and isolated character of the site' and considered that extending development further south than the existing settlement boundary would conflict with the Green Belt purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. All the sites contain higher quality agricultural land classed as Grade 2 and the sites are well served by public footpaths, including Hertfordshire Way at Sites 04A and 04B, providing access to the countryside for members of the public. However, the nature conservation value is deemed to be low as the site does not contain nor border designated land. All the sites do contain trees and hedgerows however, and Site 05A contains two copses of protected trees. Although not directly adjacent, the northern part of Thorley Flood Pound Site of Special Scientific Interest also lies further west of Site 04C.

Purpose 4: Preserve setting and special character of historic towns

	Bishop's Stortford North							Bishop's Stortford East				Bishop's Stortford South		
	Sub-Area A	Sub-Area B						Sub-Area B				Sub-Area A		
GBR Ref	01A	02A	02B	02C	02D	02E	02F	03A	03B	03C	03D	04A	04B	04C
Designated heritage assets	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	3
Conservation Area	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Purpose Total	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	4	4

The Green Belt at Bishop's Stortford North is not considered to play a notable role in preserving the setting and special character of Bishop's Stortford as a historic town. Site 02C lies adjacent to Dane O'Coys Farm House which is a listed building, but there are no other designated heritage assets within or near to the Green Belt sites assessed. Site 02C is located the closest to the Conservation Area of Bishop's Stortford, though it is not considered to affect the setting of the Conservation Area given the buffer of residential development and Cricketfield Lane.

The Green Belt at Bishop's Stortford East does little to preserve the setting or special character of the historic town, as it is distanced far from the Conservation Area and has no designated heritage assets within the area or nearby.

The Green Belt at Bishop's Stortford South contains a number of heritage assets. All the assessment sites contain at least one listed building along Thorley Street. However, these listed buildings are distanced far from the historic town centre and thus they are not considered to contribute to the special character of the town. The majority of Site 04C is covered by an Area of Archaeological Significance though it does not surround or relate to any physical features that may contribute to the character and setting of the town. The area is distanced from the Conservation Area of Bishop's Stortford and thus is not considered to affect its setting.

Bishop's Stortford Summary of Green Belt Purposes Served

Bishop's Stortford North: Area 1 (Sub-Area A) and Area 2 (Sub-Area B)

- The Green Belt in both areas serves the purpose of maintaining the openness and thus checking unrestricted sprawl from the existing built-up area. Taking into account future development of the Areas of Special Restraint, its role in maintaining openness is expected to increase as the Green Belt would provide a green wedge into the town. Sites 02C, 02E and 02F do not serve the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl to such an extent as Sites 02C and 02E are better connected to the built-up area than other sites and Site 02F contains development which limits its openness.
- The Green Belt does not serve the purpose of preventing merging with the nearest town of Stansted Mountfitchet, and although closer to the nearest village of Farnham, the A120 is thought to provide a strong barrier that would prevent such merging. The Green Belt at Site 03C does prevent merging of Bishop's Stortford with the large urban area related to Stansted Airport.
- The Green Belt serves the purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, particularly given the number of wildlife sites and natural features characteristic of the countryside, with good public access.
- The Green Belt does not serve the purpose of preserving the setting and special character of the historic town.

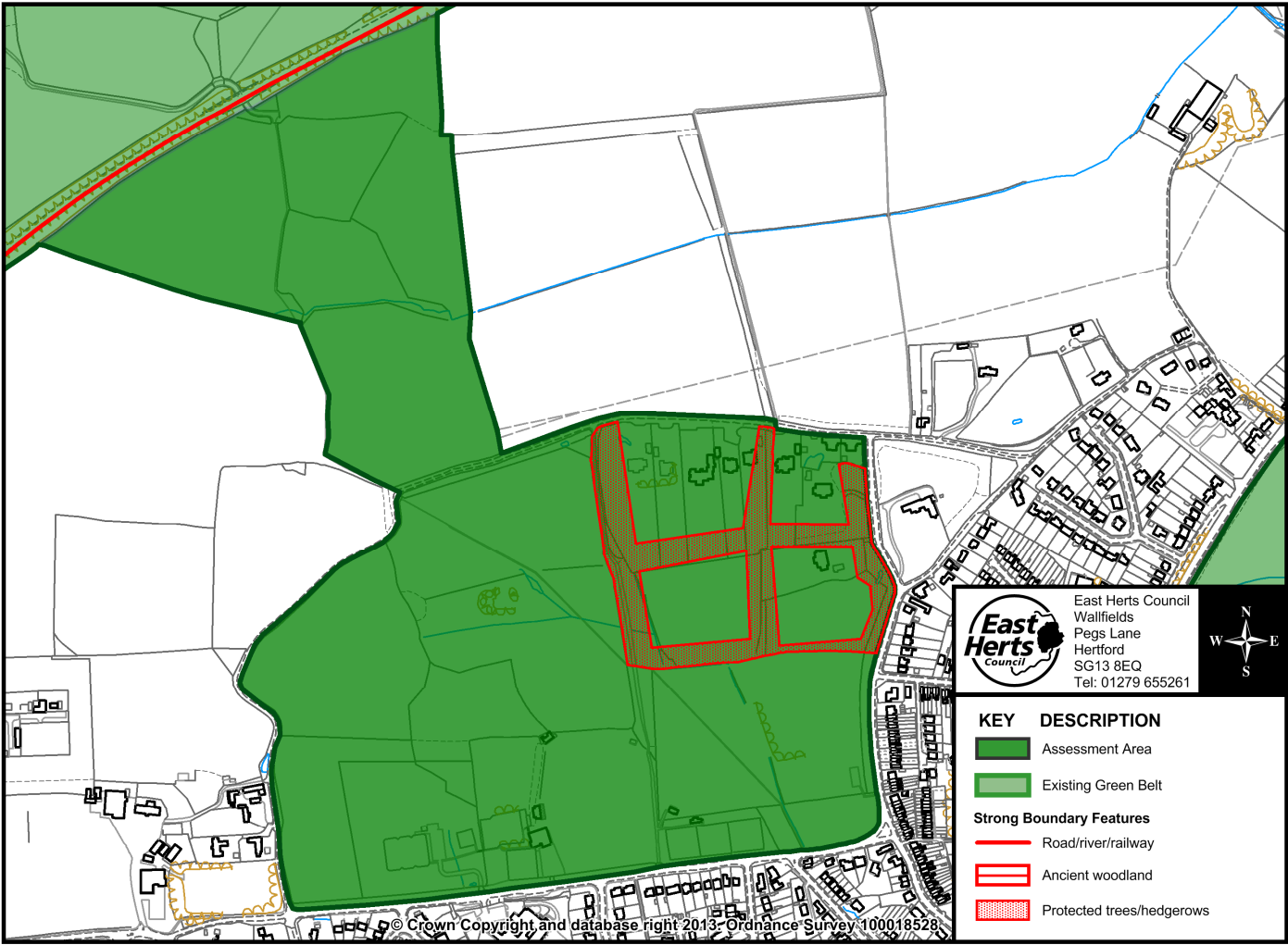
Bishop's Stortford East: Area 3 (Sub-Area B)

- Parts of the Green Belt in this area serve the purpose of checking unrestricted urban sprawl by maintaining the openness of the land such as Sites 03B, 03D and the southern part of Site 03C. Site 03A serves the purpose to a lesser extent, given that it is better connected to the built-up area than other sites. The northern part of Site 03C also serves the purpose to a lesser extent as its openness is limited by the built-up area and Birchanger Services, in addition to containing ribbon development along the A1250/Dunmow Road.
- The Green Belt does not serve the purpose of preventing merging with the nearest town of Stansted Mountfitchet and although closer to the nearest villages of Birchanger and Great Hallingbury which are less than a kilometre away, the surrounding A1250/Dunmow Road, A120 and M11 are considered to be strong barriers that would prevent such merging. Site 03C assists in preventing merging with the large urban area associated with Stansted Airport.
- The Green Belt serves a limited purpose in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, particularly at Sites 03A and 03B. The area lacks in countryside character and although Sites 03C and 03D contain wildlife sites, these can be protected by other means than Green Belt designation. However it does provide recreational open space, although access for members of the public is somewhat limited.
- The Green Belt does not serve the purpose of preserving the setting and special character of the historic town.

Bishop's Stortford South: Area 4 (Sub-Area A)

- The Green Belt in this area somewhat serves the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl. Although the Green Belt has generally maintained the openness of the land, Site 04A is slightly better connected to the existing urban area and all sites contain ribbon development along Thorley Street, although it is noted that some of this is historic.
- The Green Belt does not serve the purpose of preventing merging with the nearest town of Sawbridgeworth although it does serve the purpose of preventing merging with development along Thorley Street, which is considered part of the village of Thorley. It is not considered to play such a strong role in preventing merging with the Old Thorley part of the village which is less than a kilometre away, nor with Spellbrook, as the A1184/St James' Way is considered to be a strong barrier that would prevent such merging.
- The Green Belt assists in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, given the strength and condition of the landscape character, the presence of protected trees at Site 04A, the high grade of agricultural land and the accessibility via public rights of way including Hertfordshire Way.
- The Green Belt does not serve the purpose of preserving the setting and special character of the historic town.

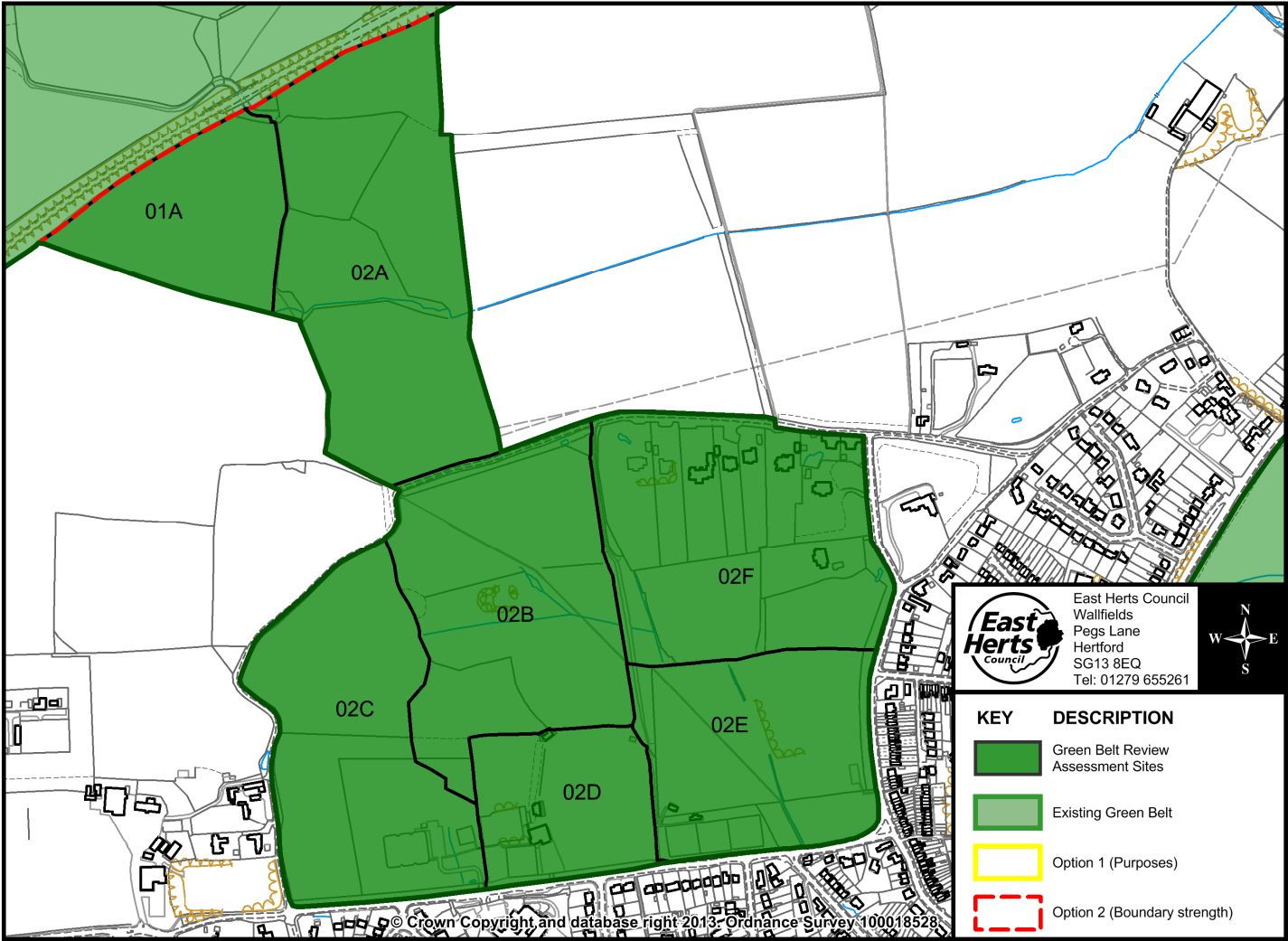
5.2 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment of Bishop’s Stortford North
Map showing strong boundaries at Bishop’s Stortford North Sub-Area A and Sub-Area B



As a main distributor road, the A120 to the north of Bishop’s Stortford provides a strong boundary. Site 02F contains a blanket tree preservation order. The thick tree lines contained within the site which are protected therefore provide strong boundaries, although these are not as strong as the A120 in containing development.

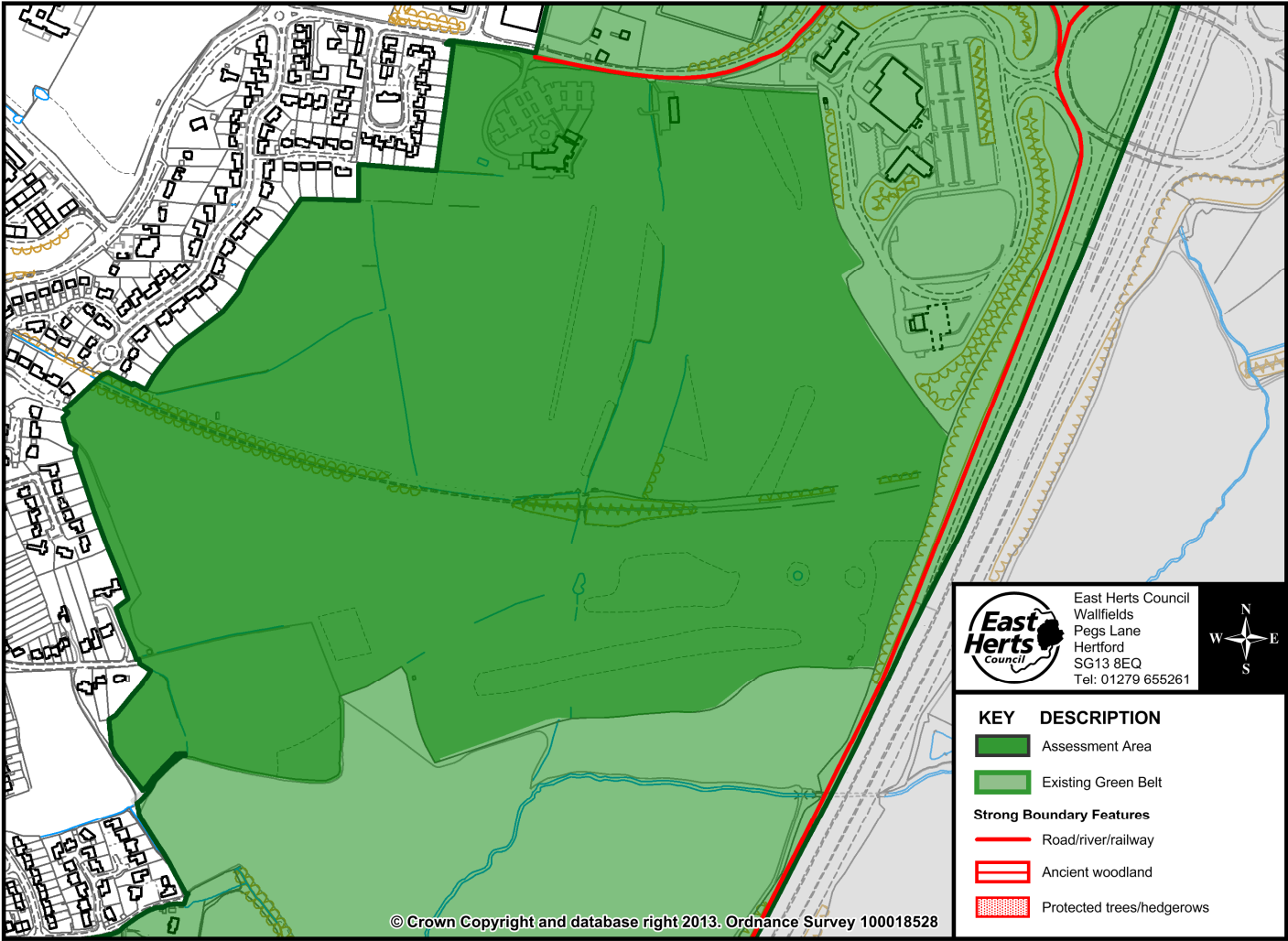
Existing boundary strength	Existing boundary description
Sub-Area A: N/A	The Green Belt boundary at Sub-Area A does not abut the existing built-up area. Instead it lies adjacent to Area of Special Restraint (ASR) 2. The boundary cuts across the corner of a field and there are no clear identifiable features that mark it.
Sub-Area B: Strong	The Green Belt boundary at Sub-Area B to the existing built-up area abuts Cricketfield Lane which is a relatively minor road. However, this road marks a clearly defined physical boundary of the residential and non-residential development to the south of it, and thus is considered to be strong. Similarly, Barrels Down Road and Whitehall Lane to the east are also minor roads but bound the residential development further to the east, so are considered to be strong. Instead of residential development, the northernmost part of Whitehall Lane lies adjacent to Whitehall Leys to the east. Therefore the use of this minor road as a boundary here is weak, although it should be noted that the dense tree line that encompasses this site is protected by a tree preservation order, and consequently although the boundary of the road is weak, the next nearest boundary, i.e. the tree line, is strong. Overall the majority of the boundary at this sub-area is deemed to be strong.

5.3 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for Bishop’s Stortford North
Map of recommended options for Bishop’s Stortford North Sub-Area A and Sub-Area B



	Recommendation	Justification
Option 1	No release	The Green Belt serves an important role in maintaining the openness and checking unrestricted sprawl of the existing built-up area. Although Sites 02C, 02E and 02F are less open than the others, all sites contribute strongly to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; Sites 02C and 02E due to their accessibility via public footpaths and recreational provision in the form of tennis courts/playing pitches and Site 02F due its accessibility via allotments, as well as its high nature conservation value and as it provides a buffer to the Dane O'Coys Meadow wildlife site. The Green Belt is considered to meet the purposes of checking unrestricted sprawl and safeguarding the by providing and maintaining the openness of a green wedge, in keeping with the existing form of the town. The role of the Green Belt in preventing sprawl will continue to increase in the future with development of the Areas of Special Restraint. The Green Belt will form an important green wedge to the town and provide access to the countryside.
Option 2	Release of all sites	If the Green Belt were released, the A120 provides the strongest physical barrier to form a defensible Green Belt boundary. This would be stronger than the existing boundary where although mainly strong, is weak in parts. It would also be stronger than the protected tree lines around the former Whitehall College.

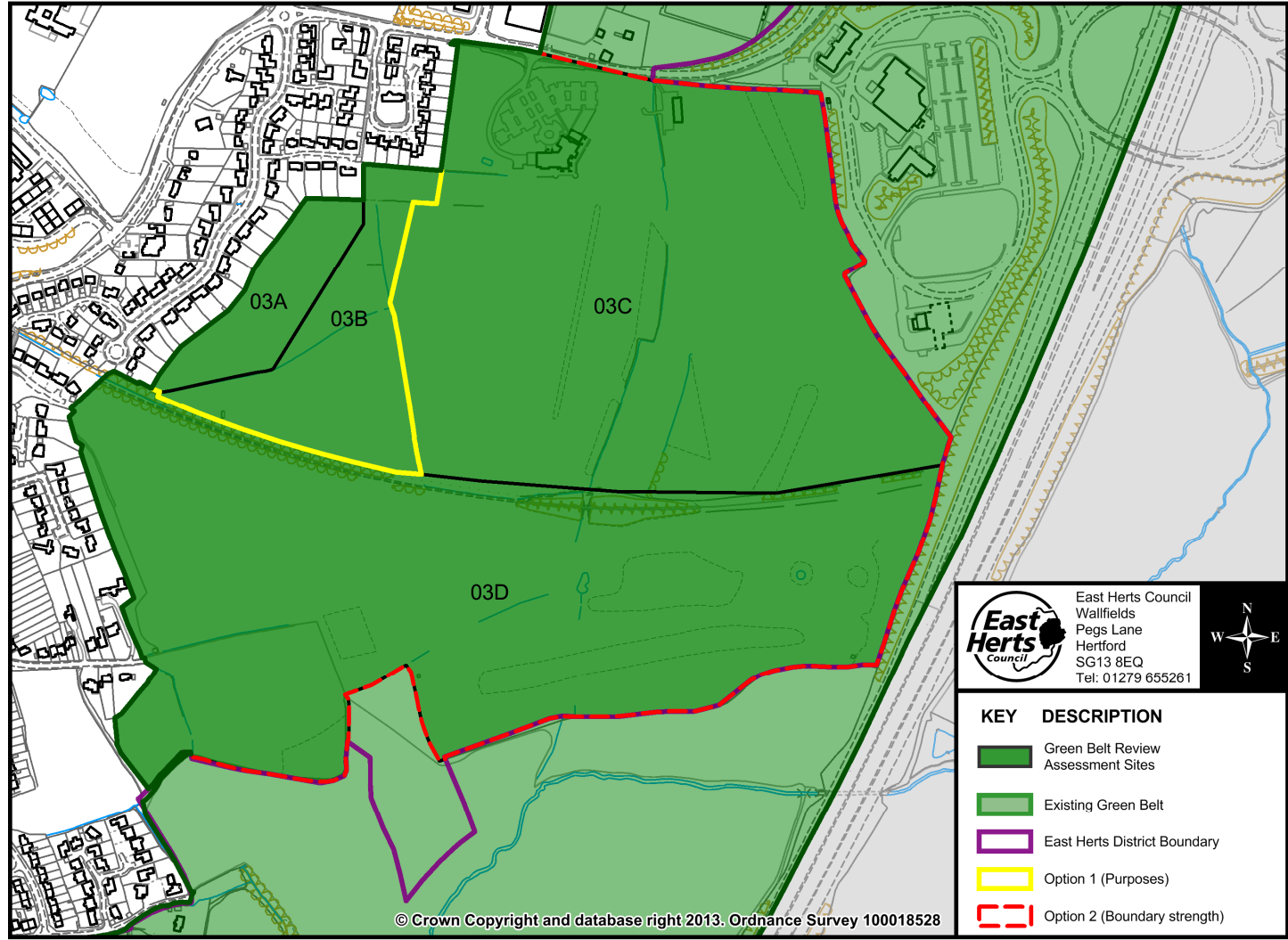
5.4 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Bishop’s Stortford East
Map showing strong boundaries at Bishop’s Stortford East Sub-Area B



As a primary road, the M11 motorway provides the strongest boundary to the east of Bishop’s Stortford. The main distributor road of the A120 to the north and the A1250/Dunmow Road also provide strong boundaries.

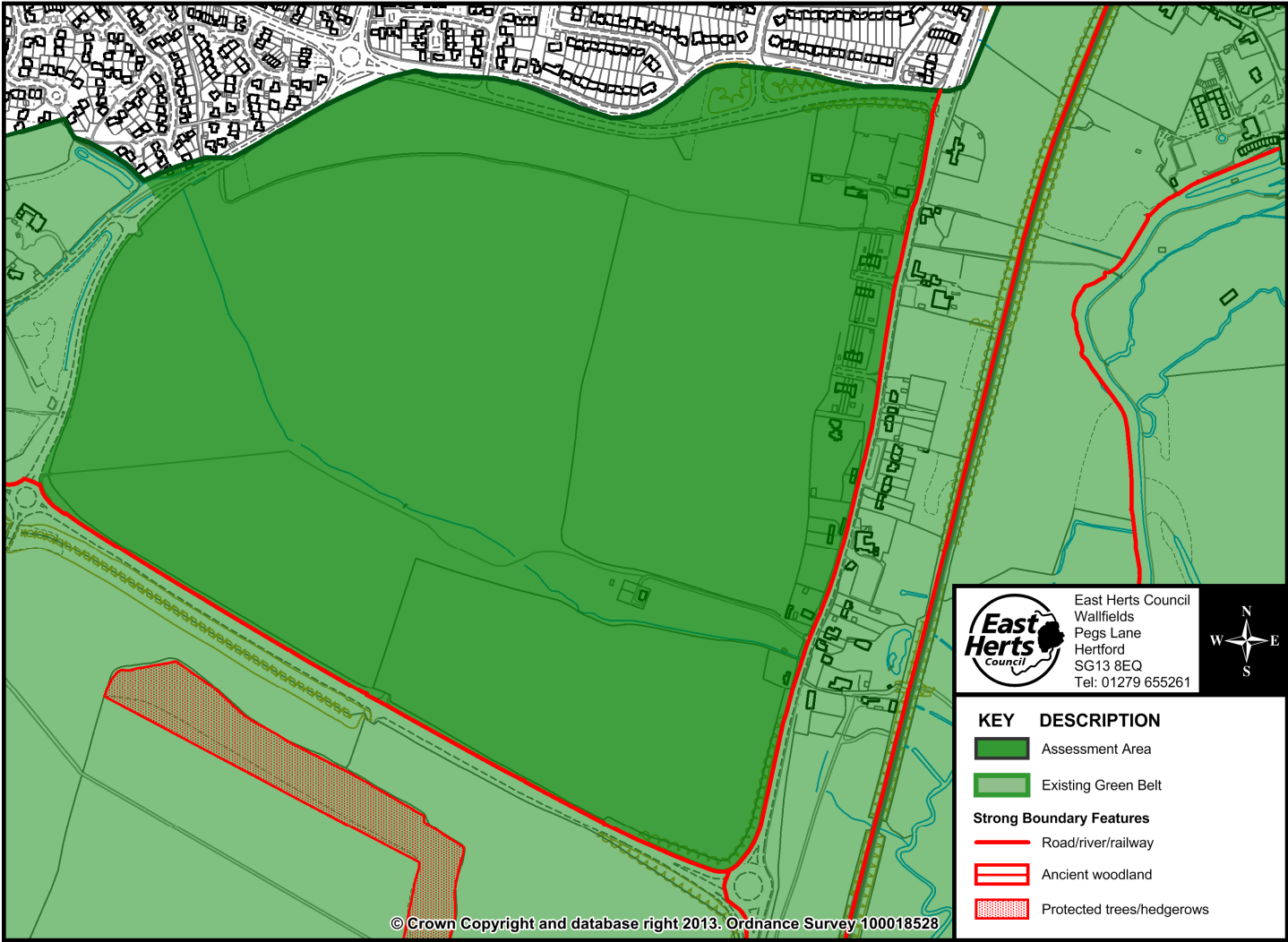
Existing boundary strength	Existing boundary description
Weak	The boundary of Sub-Area B follows residential curtilages in the form of back gardens of the properties at Manor Links, Cecil Close and Shortcroft to the west and the north. Further south the boundary borders the end of the disused railway line that bisects Bishop's Stortford Golf Club, and then continues southwards to follow the residential curtilages of properties at Brooke Gardens, Haycroft, Haymeads Lane and a public footpath adjacent to the allotments. Residential curtilages, disused railway lines and rights of way are considered to be weak boundaries.

5.5 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for Bishop’s Stortford East
Map of recommended options for Bishop’s Stortford East Sub-Area B



	Recommendation	Justification
Option 1 (Purposes)	Release of Sites 03A and 03B	<p>Although the Green Belt at Site 03A and the northern part of Site 03C fulfil the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl the least, Site 03A is better connected to the existing built-up area and Site 03C holds an important role in preventing merging with Stansted Airport. Although Site 03A is also better connected to the built-up area than Site 03B, the additional release of Site 03B would logically fill in the gap left by the encroachment of the built-up area to the north of the site and from the release of Site 03A. The Green Belt in the area does not greatly safeguard the countryside from encroachment due to the lack of countryside features. This is more so at Sites 03A and 03B as they do not contain wildlife sites unlike Site 03C and 03D.</p> <p>Existing potential new boundaries are weak. The eastern boundary of Site 03A is marked by a change in the vegetation cover from shrubs to the grass of the driving range at Site 03B. The eastern boundary of Site 03B is slightly stronger as it consists of a thick tree lined stream to the south but this becomes much weaker and sparse northwards until it reaches a small area of woodland which abuts the existing built-up area. The disused railway and surrounding woodland to the south provide a boundary, however this also demarks the wildlife site so it is likely a buffer would be needed and a new southern boundary formed slightly further north. The only physical feature which could be used is a small stream that runs from the south of Site 03A in a north-easterly direction across Site 03B but this is not a strong boundary in itself. The existing eastern boundary would need to be strengthened and a stronger boundary to the south would need to be established that takes into account a buffer necessary for the wildlife site.</p>
Option 2 (Boundary strength)	Release of Sites 03A, 03B, 03C and 03D	<p>Release of all the sites would provide a stronger Green Belt boundary than the existing boundary. The eastern boundary of Site 03C of Birchanger Services and the M11 would be much stronger than the existing boundary of residential curtilages. The southern boundary would follow the thickly tree lined field boundary to the south of Site 03D which largely follows the East Herts District boundary. Although this is not regarded as a strong boundary in the criteria, it is considered to be stronger than the existing boundary along residential curtilages. The A1250/Dunmow Road provides a strong boundary to the north in which to contain development.</p>

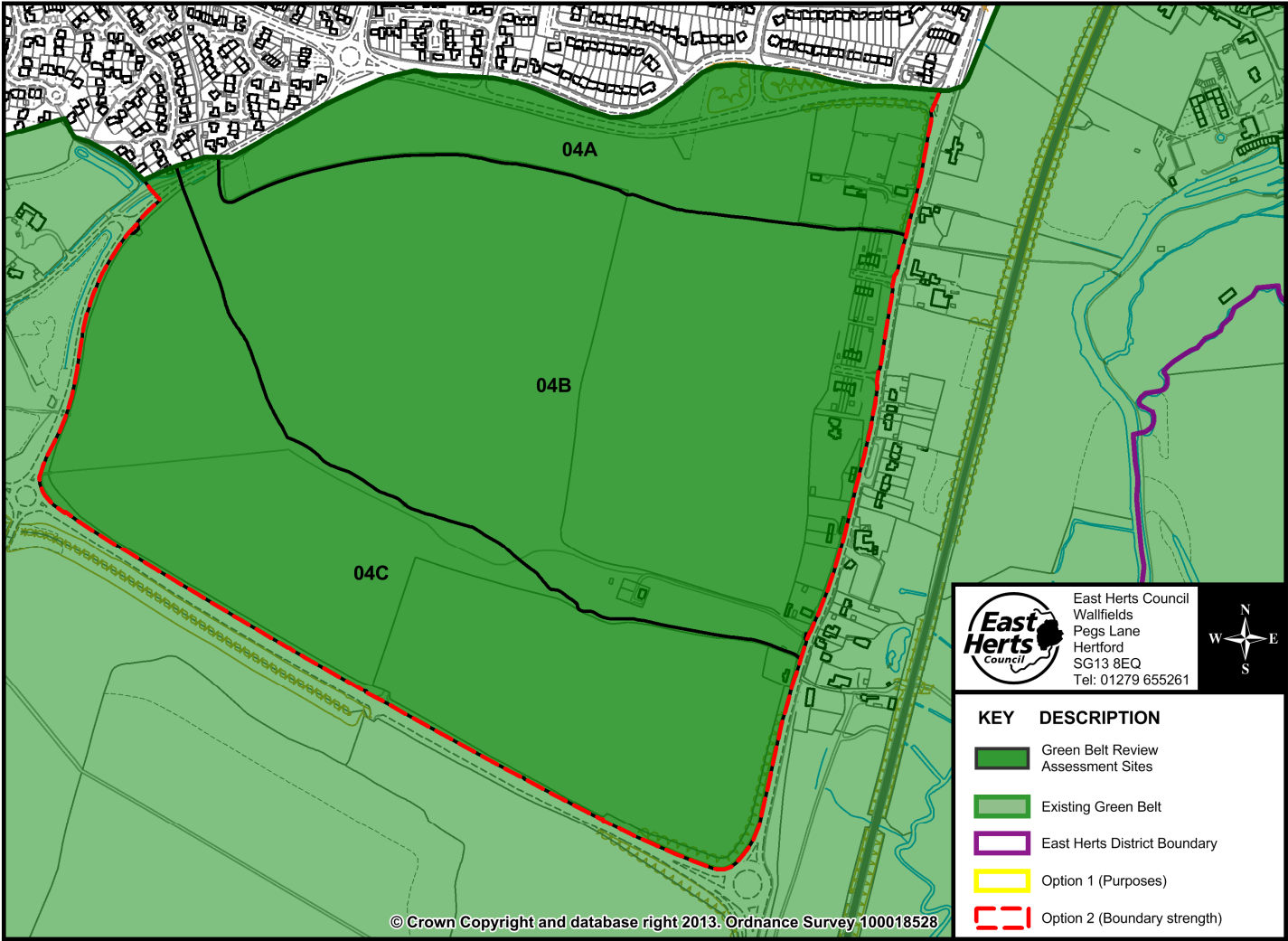
5.6 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Bishop’s Stortford South
Map showing strong boundaries at Bishop’s Stortford South Sub-Area A



As a secondary distributor road, the B1529/Thorley Street/London Road presents a strong boundary. As a main distributor road, the A1184/St James Way provides a stronger boundary. To the south of the area of search, the ancient woodland of Thorley Wood which is also protected by a tree preservation order presents another strong boundary, although lesser so than the A1184/St James Way which is more continuous and thus defensible.

Existing boundary strength	Existing boundary description
Weak	<p>The boundary to the existing built-up area passes through residential properties and curtilages at Abbotts Way and cuts across the curtilage of a property at Dove Close, across Obrey Way to the edge of the protected copse within Site 04A. It then follows the tree line between the field boundary and Obrey Way northwards, dipping south of the dense area of vegetation adjacent to the Villiers-sur-Marine Avenue roundabout. To the north, it passes through Whittington Way and follows a dense hedgerow which borders residential curtilages at Pynchbek and the minor road of Thorley Lane. This hedgerow contains a number of individual protected trees to the west, although not continuous enough to render it a strong boundary. Further west the land opens up to a cluster of protected trees. The Green Belt boundary follows the northern section of this cluster, where the boundary is strong. It then continues to follow a hedgerow to the west which is much sparser in nature, before adjoining the northern edge of the minor road of Whittington Way, passing across London Road and heading northwards. Although the boundary is strong where it abuts two areas of protected vegetation, this only forms a small part of the boundary to the existing built-up area at this sub-area. Therefore the boundary is considered to be weak by nature of the unprotected tree lines and hedgerows that it largely follows, and where no physical feature is followed to the south-west where it cuts through residential curtilages.</p> <p>It should be acknowledged that the boundary generally follows the line of Whittington Way which although would be a clearer boundary, is not regarded as a strong boundary in this Review as the road is not an A or B class road.</p>

5.7 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for Bishop’s Stortford South
Map of recommended options for Bishop’s Stortford South Sub-Area A

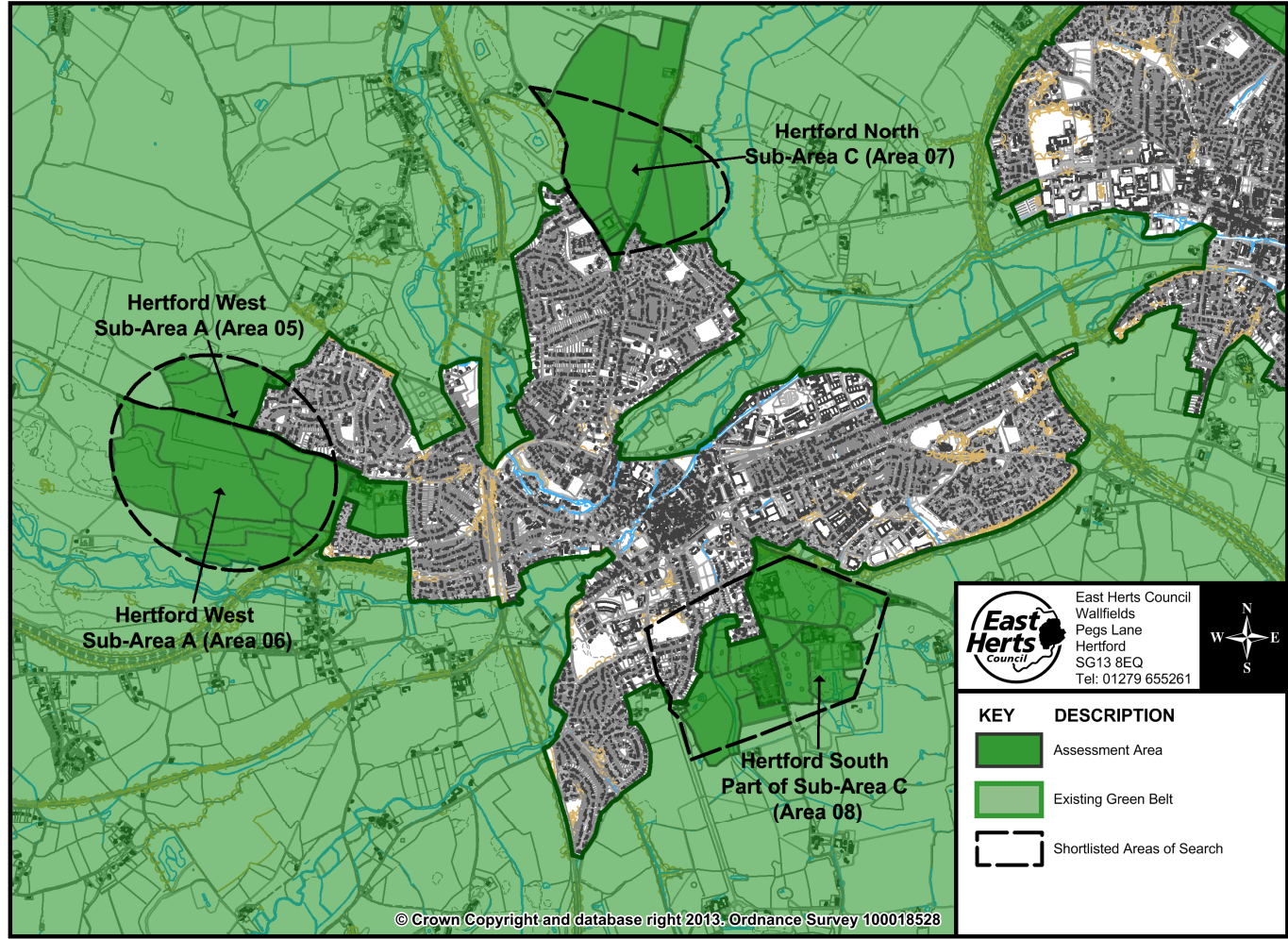


	Recommendation	Justification
Option 1 (Purposes)	No release	The Green Belt serves an important role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment in this area, as well as maintaining the openness and checking unrestricted sprawl. Although 04A is slightly better connected to the existing built-up area and ribbon development is evident in all sites along Thorley Way, particularly at Sites 04A and 04B, release is not recommended due to the important countryside character of the area that the Green Belt serves to safeguard across all sites.
Option 2 (Boundary strength)	Release of Sites 04A, 04B and 04C	If the Green Belt were to be released the A1184/St James' Way and the B1529/Thorley Way would provide the strongest boundaries. The western boundary would follow Obrey way which is more minor than the other roads and is consequently not as strong, but it is of the same strength as Whittington Way which the existing boundary generally follows. The overall boundary strength would be improved from the existing boundary which is weak.

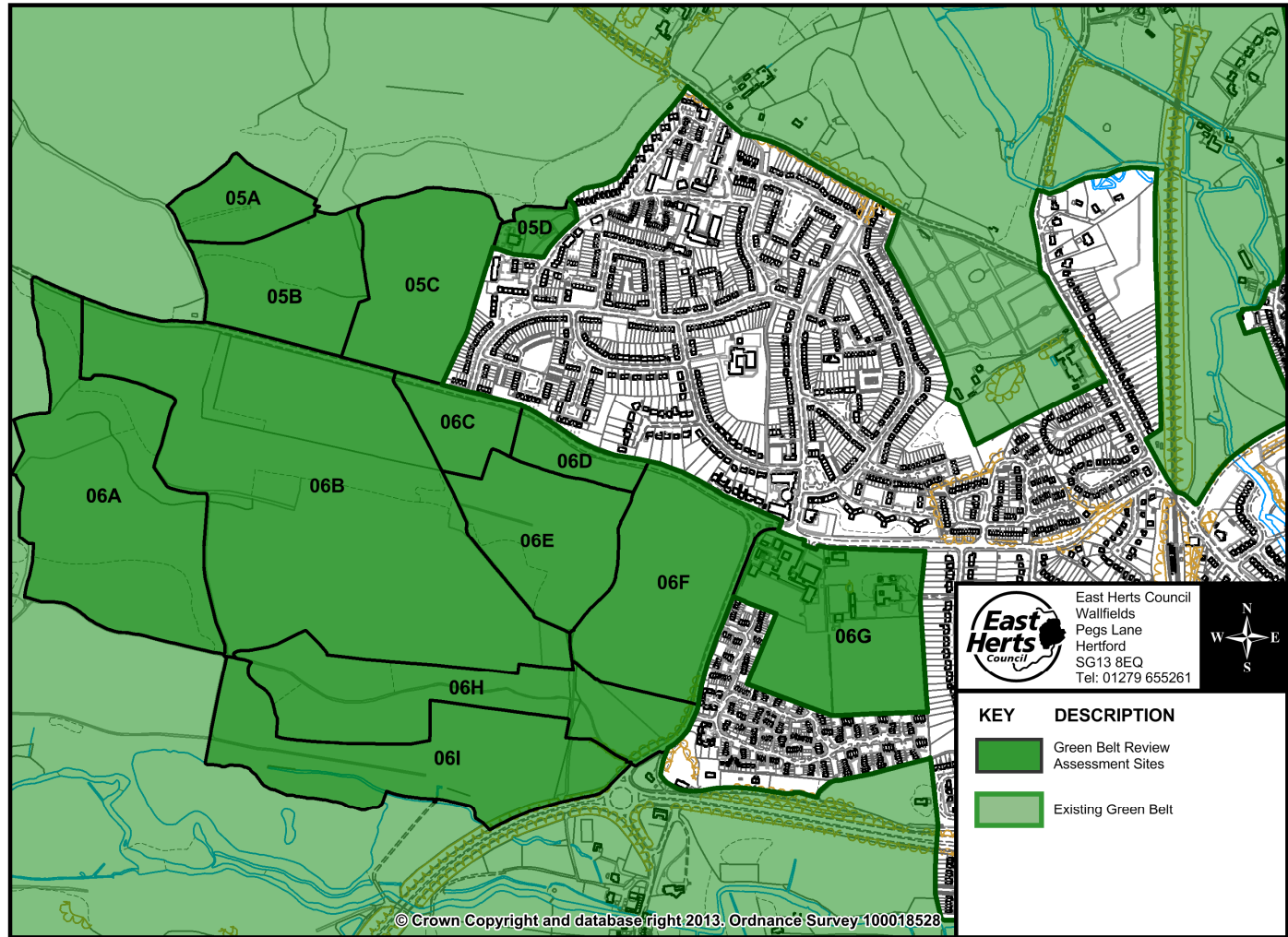
6 Detailed Site Assessment of Hertford

6.1 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 1 - Green Belt Purpose Assessment

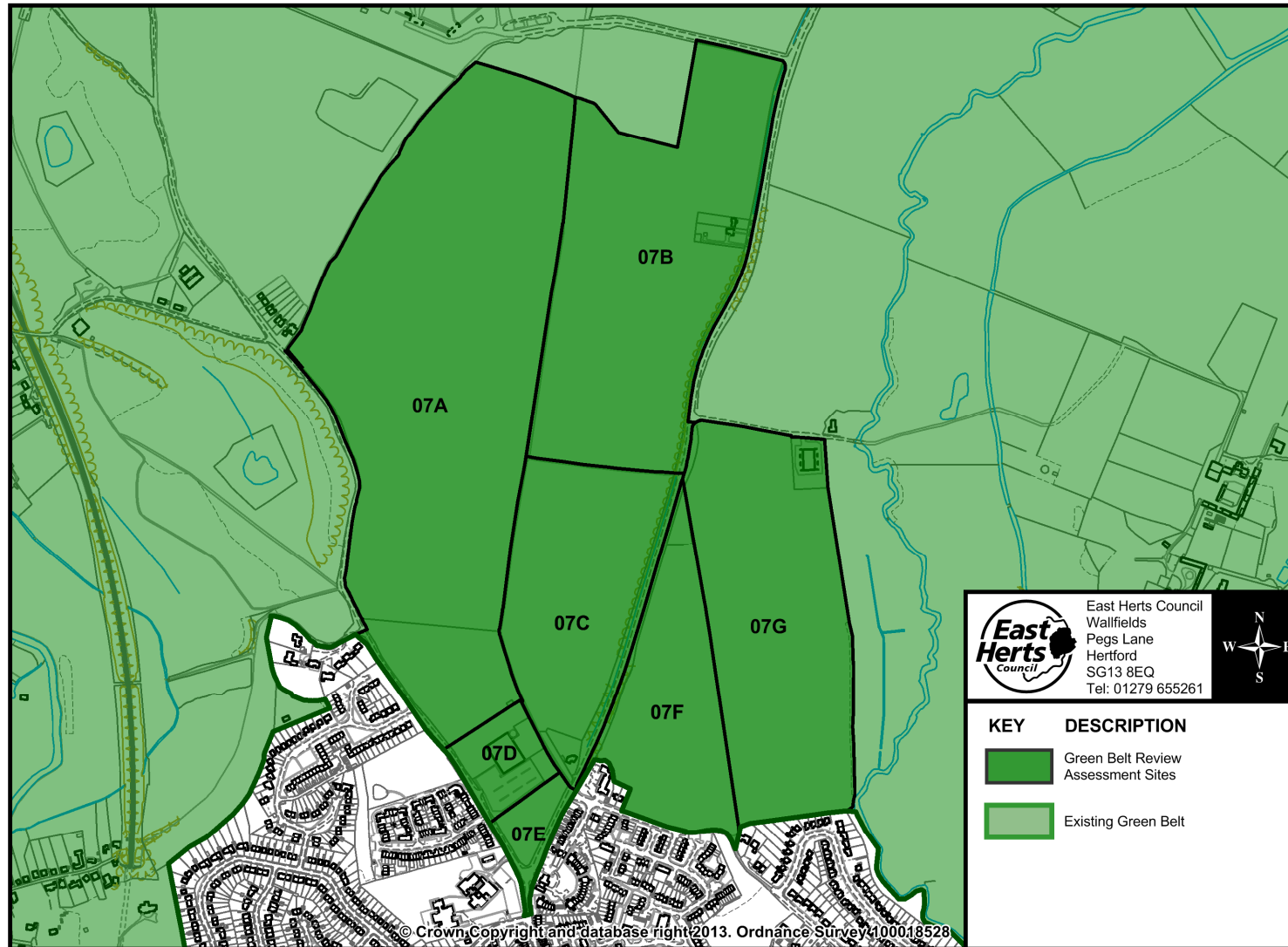
Hertford Shortlisted Areas of Search



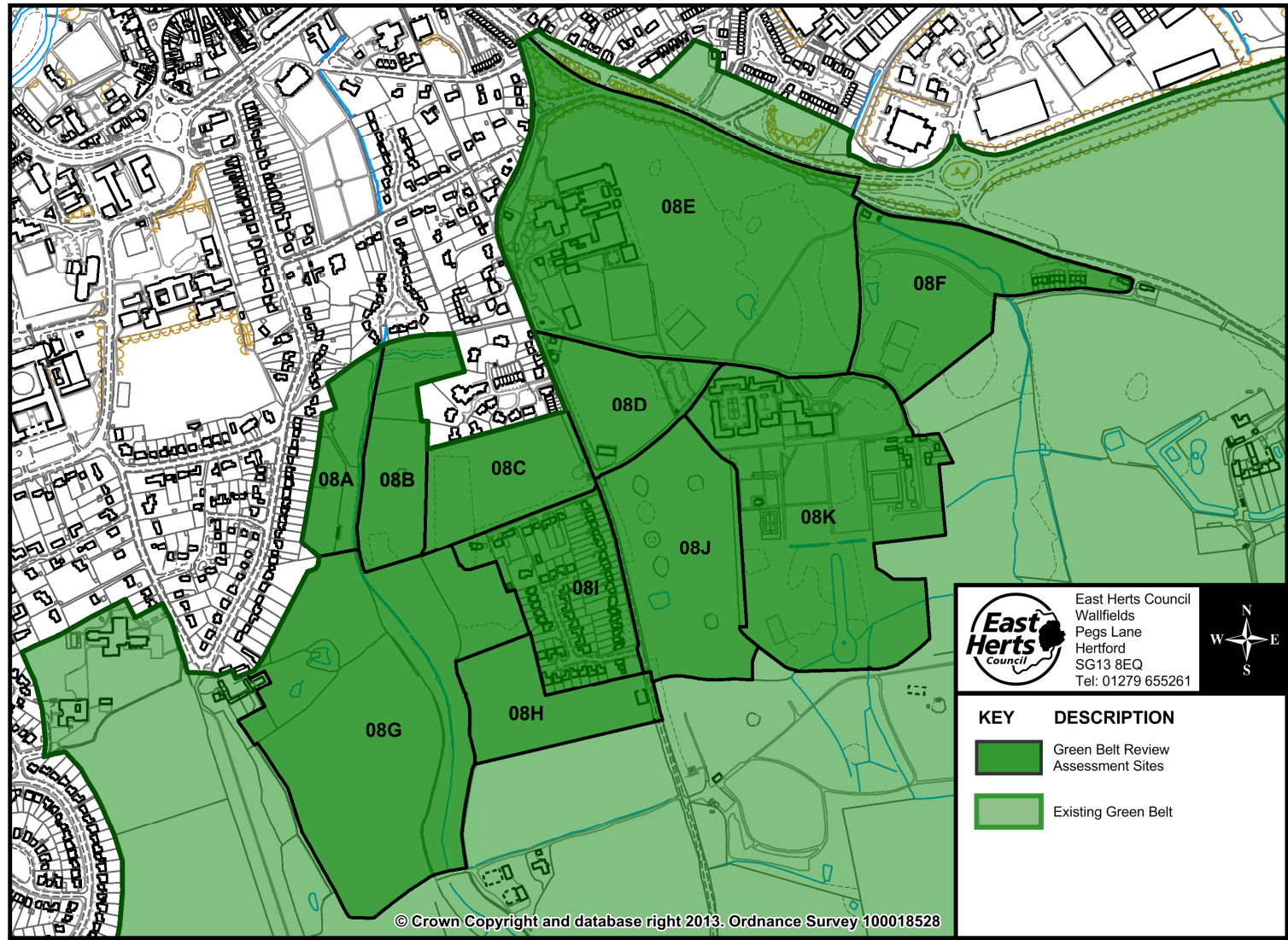
Hertford West Assessment Sites



Hertford North Assessment Sites



Hertford South Assessment Sites



Purpose 1: Check unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas

	Hertford West												
	Sub-Area A				Sub-Area B								
GBR Ref	05A	05B	05C	05D	06A	06B	06C	06D	06E	06F	06G	06H	06I
Openness	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	3	3
Impeding ribbon development	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3
Purpose Total	6	6	6	5	6	6	6	6	6	5	2	6	6

The Green Belt at Hertford West plays an important role in preventing unrestricted sprawl of the built-up area by maintaining the openness. The form of the built-up area at each Sub-Area is quite compact, so that many sites are distanced from the built-up area and most sites which abut it only do so on one side, such as Sites 05C, 06C, 06D and 06H. These sites serve to check unrestricted sprawl by maintaining the openness. However, in Area 5 (Sub-Area A) Site 05D is better connected as three sides of the site abut the built-up area rendering it somewhat encroached. The site also contains development in the form of Sele Farm Community Centre, which limits its openness. Area 6 (Sub-Area B) contains development to the north and east of the B1000/Welwyn Road and Thieves Lane respectively which contributes to a compact form and maintains the openness of the majority of the sites. However Site 06F is better connected to the built-up area than most sites, with two sides abutting it. Site 06G fulfils the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl the least, as it is surrounded on all sides but one by the built-up area and contains Sele School and Hollybush Primary School and associated development within it, thus does not maintain the openness of the Green Belt. Although the presence of both schools along the B1000/Welwyn Road also indicates ribbon development in Site 06G, it is acknowledged that the development does not extend westwards beyond the existing built-up area on the northern side of the road nor beyond development on Thieves Lane to the south of the site. Therefore the Green Belt at Site 06G is not considered to contribute to unrestricted sprawl of the built-up area further westwards. All other sites assessed immediately to the north and south of Welwyn Road, to the west of Thieves Lane and to the north of the A414 assist in checking unrestricted sprawl by impeding ribbon development along these routes.

	Hertford North							Hertford South										
	Sub-Area C							Sub-Area C										
GBR Ref	07A	07B	07C	07D	07E	07F	07G	08A	08B	08C	08D	08E	08F	08G	08H	08I	08J	08K
Openness	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3
Impeding ribbon development	3	1	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	3	1	1	3	3
Purpose Total	6	4	4	4	5	6	6	5	5	6	4	3	4	6	4	4	6	6

There is development within the Green Belt at Hertford North which limits its openness, particularly closest to the existing built-up area to the west of Wadesmill Road. Ribbon development is evident along Sacombe Road at Site 07D in the form of a horticultural nursery and along Wadesmill Road at Site 07C in the form of a dwelling, although this was present before Green Belt designation and thus the Green Belt did not serve any purpose in checking sprawl at that time. The majority of Site 07C to the north of the dwelling does serve to impede ribbon development along Wadesmill Road. Site 07B also scored poorly for ribbon development for containing Wadesmill Road Pumping Station. However, this is located relatively far from Hertford and therefore is not considered to be sprawl from the built-up area. As the site contains no other development, it is considered that it does serve to check unrestricted sprawl by impeding ribbon development along Wadesmill Road. Site 07F holds a notable role in impeding ribbon development along Wadesmill Road, as does Site 07A along Sacombe Road, although it is noted that the built-up area does extend to the southern reaches of Site 07A on the west side of Sacombe Road. In respect of openness, Site 07E is the best connected to the existing built-up area than the other sites, with two sides abutting it. The presence of the horticultural nursery in Site 07D and the dwelling in Site 07C limits the openness of the Green Belt to the south and further encroaches on Site 07E as well as the southern part of Site 07A. Although Sites 07B and 07G contain development which limits their openness, the small scale of the developments and the distance from the built-up area suggests this is not unrestricted sprawl from the built-up area.

The Green Belt at Hertford South has also not been entirely successful in checking unrestricted sprawl in terms of maintaining the openness and impeding ribbon development. Sites 08A, 08B and 08E are better connected to the built-up area than others. Although not connected to or part of the existing built-up area, Site 08I contains a developed area comprising of residential housing along Mangrove Road, Mangrove Drive and Oak Road. Although not scored as such due to its distance from the built-up area of Hertford, it is the site that maintains the openness the least in the whole area as well as contributing to ribbon development along Mangrove Road. This developed site encroaches on the openness of surrounding sites, particularly those to the west of Mangrove

Road such as Sites 08C and 08G which are situated between the existing built-up area and Site 08I. The openness of Site 08H is also somewhat encroached with two sides abutting Site 08I as well as ribbon development fronting onto Mangrove Road. To the east of Mangrove Road, Sites 08F and 08K contain development from the Balls Park estate which limits the openness of the Green Belt although the ribbon development along London Road in Site 08F is limited. Site 08E contains ribbon development along Mangrove Road in the form of Simon Balle School, which limits the openness of the Green Belt to the east of this site. Site 08D also contains ribbon development along Mangrove Road in the form of a dwelling and sports pavilions for the cricket pitch. Further south however, Site 08J prevents sprawl by impeding ribbon development. Part 1 of the Review notes that the Green Belt plays a significant contribution in preventing the unrestricted sprawl of Hertford given the considerable pressure to expand the town. Whilst this is true of the wider area, the detailed assessment shows that there are specific sites within the Green Belt that do not meet the purpose as significantly, having allowed development.

Purpose 2: Prevent neighbouring towns from merging

	Hertford West												
	Sub-Area A				Sub-Area B								
GBR Ref	05A	05B	05C	05D	06A	06B	06C	06D	06E	06F	06G	06H	06I
Distance to neighbouring town	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Distance to neighbouring village	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Purpose Total	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

The Green Belt at Hertford West does not play a strong role in prevent merging with the nearest town of Welwyn Garden City as the strategic gap between the towns is wide (over 2 km at the narrowest point). If strategic development were to take place at East of Welwyn Garden City however, then care would need to be taken that this gap would not be compromised. The Green Belt plays more of a role in preventing merging with the nearest villages where the distance from Area 5 (Sub-Area A) and Area 6 (Sub-Area B) is less than 2 kilometres to Waterford and less than 1 kilometre to Hertingfordbury respectively. However the release of Area 5 would not lessen the existing distance between the built-up area and Waterford. It is also considered that the A414/Hertingfordbury

Road provides a strong boundary that would prevent merging between Area 6 and Hertingfordbury and thus the Green Belt does not play a crucial role in preventing merging with villages.

	Hertford North							Hertford South										
	Sub-Area C							Sub-Area C										
GBR Ref	07A	07B	07C	07D	07E	07F	07G	08A	08B	08C	08D	08E	08F	08G	08H	08I	08J	08K
Distance to neighbouring town	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Distance to neighbouring village	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2
Purpose Total	4	5	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	5	3	3	3	3	3

The Green Belt at Hertford North serves some purpose in preventing merging with the nearest town of Ware. The strategic gap between the two towns is most vulnerable to the east of Hertford which is why development in this location was discounted. Although the strategic gap between Hertford North and Ware is larger, the distance is between 1 and 2 kilometres from the Green Belt sites to the east of Hertford North (Sites 07B, 07C, 07F and 07G) and Ware. Ware is located further north than Hertford so although development would not extend further eastwards than the existing built-up area, the northern growth direction of the town would encroach Ware. It is thus considered that these eastern Green Belt sites serve to prevent merging by limiting the encroachment of Ware, which could lead to subsequent merging. Site 07E is over 2 kilometres from Ware and therefore the Green Belt is not thought to prevent merging or encroachment of Ware at this site. Although the distance between Hertford North and one of the nearest villages of Waterford is fairly narrow, less than a kilometre at Site 07A, it is considered that Sacombe Road, the railway line and the environmental constraints of Waterford Heath Nature Reserve would provide strong physical barriers that would prevent merging. However, there are no evident physical barriers to the north which would prevent merging with the other nearest village of Chapmore End which is less than a kilometre from Sites 07A and 07B so in this respect the Green Belt does serve a notable purpose in preventing merging with villages. Chapmore End is a particularly small village, and as Part 1 of the Review notes, comparatively the Green Belt has a much limited contribution in preventing merging between Hertford and the nearest larger village of Watton-at-Stone given the greater distance between them.

The Green Belt at Hertford South does not serve a role in preventing merging with the nearest town to the south of Hoddesdon as the strategic gap between the two towns is wide (over 3 kilometres). The Green Belt better fulfils the purpose of preventing merging with the nearest village of Hertford Heath to the southeast, particularly at the sites to the east of Mangrove Road which are less than 1.5 kilometres away and at Site 08F where the gap is less than 1 kilometre. There are no evident physical barriers that would prevent merging, as London Road which runs between Hertford South and Hertford Heath forms the village's existing Green Belt boundary.

Purpose 3: Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

	Hertford West												
	Sub-Area A				Sub-Area B								
GBR Ref	05A	05B	05C	05D	06A	06B	06C	06D	06E	06F	06G	06H	06I
Nature conservation	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	1	3	3
Trees/hedgerows	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	2
Landscape character assessment	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Agricultural land classification	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Accessibility	2	2	1	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
Purpose Total	10	11	9	10	8	10	9	9	10	8	7	10	9

The Green Belt at Hertford West assists in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Area 5 (Sub-Area A) assists to some extent given that the Land west of Sele Farm wildlife site is contained in Site 05B which Sites 05A and 05C lie adjacent to and Site 05D lies adjacent to Long Wood wildlife site to the north which is also protected under a tree preservation order. Site 05A contains part of Archers Spring woodland which is characteristic of the countryside, and Site 05B lies adjacent to a cluster of trees on the opposite side of Welwyn Road which are protected by a tree preservation order. The whole area contains relatively low Grade 3 agricultural land with the exception of Site 05D which was classed as urban in the agricultural land classifications. Site 05D contains The Ridgeway Park which has attained Green Flag status for several years and provides access and recreation for the surrounding built-up area. However, it also contains development in the form of the Sele Farm Community Centre and therefore is the most urban in character compared to other sites in Area 5 and as such safeguards the countryside the least. There is access via public right of way to the west of Sites 05A and 05B but none to Site 05C which consequently scored the lowest. The sites in

Area 5 fall within the Bramfield Plain landscape character area which scored an amber rating in the landscape character area assessments for being of a moderate strength and condition.

Comparatively the Green Belt at Area 6 (Sub-Area B) falls within the Panshanger Parkland landscape character area which scored a green rating for being of a moderate strength but poor condition. In addition, the only site that was given an agricultural land classification was Site 06I but this was of Grade 4, which is very low. However, despite the remainder being graded as non-agricultural there are some sites, such as 06F, which are currently being used for agricultural purposes. The Green Belt in Area 6 generally has a higher nature conservation value than Area 5 as all the sites contain the Panshanger Park wildlife site, with the exception of Sites 06F and 06G. Site 06E also contains Blakemore Wood which is ancient woodland and consequently land in Sites 06B, 06C, 06D and 06F provide a buffer to this protected woodland. Sites 06B and 06H each contain a cluster of protected trees, and Site 06F is bounded by one of these clusters to the south. As noted in Part 1 of the Review, many of the trees situated within Panshanger Park are of significant historic and aesthetic value which increases their contribution to the countryside character of the park. All the sites provide access via public rights of way with the exception of Sites 06A, 06I and 06G although Site 06G provides recreational open space by means of playing fields for Sele School and Hollybush Primary School users. Site 06G assists in safeguarding the countryside the least due to its more urban character, given that it contains both schools and is encroached by the built-up area on all sides bar one.

	Hertford North							Hertford South										
	Sub-Area C							Sub-Area C										
GBR Ref	07A	07B	07C	07D	07E	07F	07G	08A	08B	08C	08D	08E	08F	08G	08H	08I	08J	08K
Nature conservation	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	2	3
Trees/hedgerows	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
Landscape character assessment	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Agricultural land classification	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1
Accessibility	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1
Purpose Total	9	9	8	8	9	10	9	6	8	7	9	9	9	8	7	9	9	9

The Green Belt at Hertford North assists in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, as there is good public access to the sites via public footpaths and restricted byways with the exception of Bengoe Nursery at Site 07D. Site 07E also contains allotments which provide recreational open space. All the sites contain land with an agricultural land classification of Grade 3, which is relatively low grade. Sites 07A and 07B scored higher than the rest of the area in terms of nature conservation value, as both lie adjacent to the ancient protected woodland and wildlife site of St Johns Wood to the north. However Site 07A also lies adjacent to Rickneys Quarry wildlife site, Waterford Heath Local Nature Reserve which is a designated wildlife site (Waterford Heath South) and Mole Wood wildlife site which is also protected woodland. In respect of vegetation, Sites 07C and 07E lie adjacent to protected trees to the south along Wadesmill Road and Site 07C also lies adjacent to a protected cluster of trees contained in the north of Site 07F. Sites 07F and 07G lie to the east of Wadesmill Road in the Lower Rib Valley which scored amber in the landscape character assessments and has a strong character, albeit in poor condition. Comparatively, sites to the west of Wadesmill Road lie in the Stoneyhills landscape which scored green for its moderate strength and poor condition.

The landscape character of Bayfordbury, Brickendonbury & Balls Parklands in which the Green Belt at Hertford South lies also scored green in the landscape character assessments, though it has a comparatively weaker landscape strength, but is in moderate condition. The Green Belt generally serves a greater purpose in safeguarding countryside from encroachment to the east of Mangrove Road. This is partly as sites to the east of Mangrove Road generally have a higher nature conservation value than those to the west as Sites 08F and 08K contain the Balls Park wildlife site and Sites 08E and 08J lie adjacent to it. To the west of Mangrove Road, only Site 08B is adjacent to a wildlife site; the Valley Close Area to the north. Sites 08A, 08B, 08C and 08H are also the only ones not to include or lie adjacent to any protected trees or vegetation, whilst all the sites to the west of Mangrove Road contain protected trees. There is limited public access to all sites, apart from to the residential area of Oak Grove and Mangrove Drive in Site 08I and Hagsdell footpath which forms part of Hertfordshire Way which runs to the north of Site 08A and 08B but which is fenced off from the sites. Sites 08D and 08E safeguard recreational open space in the form of playing pitches for Simon Balle School and Hertford Cricket Club respectively. All the sites in the area contain Grade 3 agricultural land with the exception of Site 08E which contains Simon Balle School, and Sites 08F and 08K which contain the Balls Park development and Site 08A as they were regarded as urban in the assessment.

Purpose 4: Preserve setting and special character of historic towns

	Hertford West												
	Sub-Area A				Sub-Area B								
GBR Ref	05A	05B	05C	05D	06A	06B	06C	06D	06E	06F	06G	06H	06I
Designated heritage assets	1	1	1	1	3	3	1	1	1	2	1	3	3
Conservation Area	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Purpose Total	2	2	2	2	4	4	2	2	2	3	2	4	4

The Green Belt at Hertford West fulfils little purpose in preserving the special character of Hertford. Although Sites 06A, 06B, 06H and 06I contain Panshanger Park, a registered historic park and garden, this is distanced from the historic core of the town and is therefore not considered to preserve its setting. Site 06F lies adjacent to this historic park. There are no other designated heritage assets contained within or adjacent to any of the sites in either sub-area and the town's Conservation Area is distanced far from the sites. Although removed from the historic core of the town, Part 1 of the Review highlighted that the presence of the historic Panshanger Park has contributed to the form of the town spreading westwards north of the B1000/Welwyn Road and thus the Green Belt containing the historic park in Area 6 (Sub-Area B) contributes to the setting of Hertford in this respect.

	Hertford North							Hertford South										
	Sub-Area C							Sub-Area C										
GBR Ref	07A	07B	07C	07D	07E	07F	07G	08A	08B	08C	08D	08E	08F	08G	08H	08I	08J	08K
Designated heritage assets	3	3	3	1	1	1	2	1	1	3	3	3	3	1	2	2	3	3
Conservation Area	1	1	2	2	3	1	1	3	3	3	2	3	1	3	1	2	1	1
Purpose Total	4	4	5	3	4	2	3	4	4	6	5	5	4	4	3	4	4	4

At Hertford North, the Green Belt serves a slightly stronger purpose in preserving the special character and setting of Hertford. Sites 07A, 07B and 07C collectively contain two Areas of Archaeological Significance, and there is another outside of the sites assessed that abuts Site 07B and Site 07G. However, there are no physical heritage assets or features that can be attributed to these Areas of Archaeological Significance and therefore the impact they have on the special character and setting of Hertford is limited. However, Site 07E is included in the designated Conservation Area of Hertford which Sites 07C and 07D abut. In this respect the Green Belt does play a part in preserving the setting of the historic core of the town at its northern reaches, as the allotments signify the gentle transition typical in this locale from the built-up area of Hertford to the rural by retaining the openness of the rural area beyond. However, the extent to which it does this is somewhat limited due to the encroachment of the allotments by the horticultural nursery and dwelling to the north of it. In addition, as Part 1 of the Review notes, the wider area to the west of Wadesmill Road is becoming more urbanised through mineral workings which could affect the transitional nature of the historic setting.

The Green Belt at Hertford South serves a purpose in preserving the special character and setting of Hertford. Site 08K contains the Balls Park development, of which many buildings and associated development are listed. Site 08F also contains a listed lodge and gates associated with the Balls Park development. All the sites to the east of Mangrove Road (Sites 08D, 08E, 08F, 08J and 08K) contain the associated registered historic park and garden and an Area of Archaeological Significance. This Area of Archaeological Significance lies adjacent to Site 08H and 08I and also extends further west into Site 08C. Although the heritage assets of Balls Park are not considered to have an impact on the character of the historic core of Hertford itself, historically the land ownership of the estate has constrained growth to the south of the town and therefore the Green Belt does assist in preserving the historic setting of Hertford. Sites 08A, 08B, 08C and part of 08E and 08G lie within the Conservation Area of Hertford, with Site 08I abutting it. This part of Hertford's Conservation Area ensures the gradual blend of the town into the rural area and protects the historic form of growth to the south of the town which was directly influenced by the topography and the green finger of Hagsdell, a stream and small open valley that penetrates into the built-up area of Hertford. Therefore the Green Belt within the Conservation Area is considered to assist in preserving the special character and setting of Hertford, particularly at Sites 08A, 08B and 08E, where the green finger extends furthest into the built-up area. Site 08G also contains a listed building at Dunkirks Farm but this is not considered significant to the special character or setting of Hertford.

Hertford Summary of Green Belt Purposes Served

Hertford West: Area 5 (Sub-Area A) and Area 6 (Sub-Area B)

- The Green Belt in Area 5 serves the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl of the built-up area further west by impeding ribbon development to the north of B1000/Welwyn Road and maintaining the openness. Site 05D checks unrestricted sprawl the

least in the area as it contains development and is better connected to the built-up area. The Green Belt in Area 6 serves the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl by maintaining the openness by containing development to the north and east of the B1000/Welwyn Road and Thieves Lane respectively, with the exception of Site 06G which is almost completely encroached by the existing built-up area and is the least open. Site 06F is better connected to the built-up area than the remaining sites so also serves the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl to a slightly lesser extent.

- The Green Belt does not serve the purpose of preventing merging with the nearest town of East of Welwyn Garden City, although if Green Belt to the east of Welwyn Garden City were to be released then consideration of the residual strategic gap would be necessary. Although the sub-areas are closer to the nearest villages of Waterford and Hertingfordbury, the Green Belt is not thought to prevent merging of Hertford with them as the release of Area 5 would not lessen the gap between Waterford and the built-up area of Hertford and the A414/Hertingfordbury Road is thought to provide a strong physical barrier to prevent merging of Area 6 with Hertingfordbury.
- The Green Belt in Area 5 serves the purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, though lesser so at Site 05C given the lack of access via public rights of way and at Site 05D given the urban character of the Community Centre contained within it. The Green Belt in Area 6 serves the purpose of safeguarding the countryside to a greater extent given the extent of Panshanger Park wildlife site, the presence of ancient Woodland and the greater access to the countryside with the exception of Site 06G which is much more urban in character given that it contains Sele School and Hollybush Primary School and is surrounded by the built-up area.
- The Green Belt in Sites 6A, 6B, 6H and 6I serve the purpose of preserving the setting of the historic town with the presence of the registered historic Panshanger Park, although the Green Belt in both sub-areas does not serve the purpose of preserving the special character of the town given the distance from the historic core.

Hertford North: Area 7 (Sub-Area C)

- The Green Belt serves the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl to the north of the area through maintaining the openness and generally impeding ribbon development along Sacombe Road and Wadesmill Road. The Green Belt does not serve the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl to the south, as development in the Green Belt has limited the openness in Site 07D and the south of Site 07C which has encroached on Site 07E and the south of Site 07A.
- The Green Belt does serve the purpose of preventing merging with the nearest town of Ware to an extent, in that it limits encroachment, particularly at the sites to the east of Wadesmill Road. The Green Belt does not serve the purpose of preventing merging with the nearest village of Waterford as Sacombe Road and the railway line are thought to provide strong physical barriers to prevent merging. However, it does serve the purpose of preventing merging with the village of Chapmore End to the north, as there are no strong physical barriers that can be identified as a boundary at this time. It does not serve the purpose of preventing merging between Hertford and the larger villages such as Watton-at-Stone however, given the greater distance.

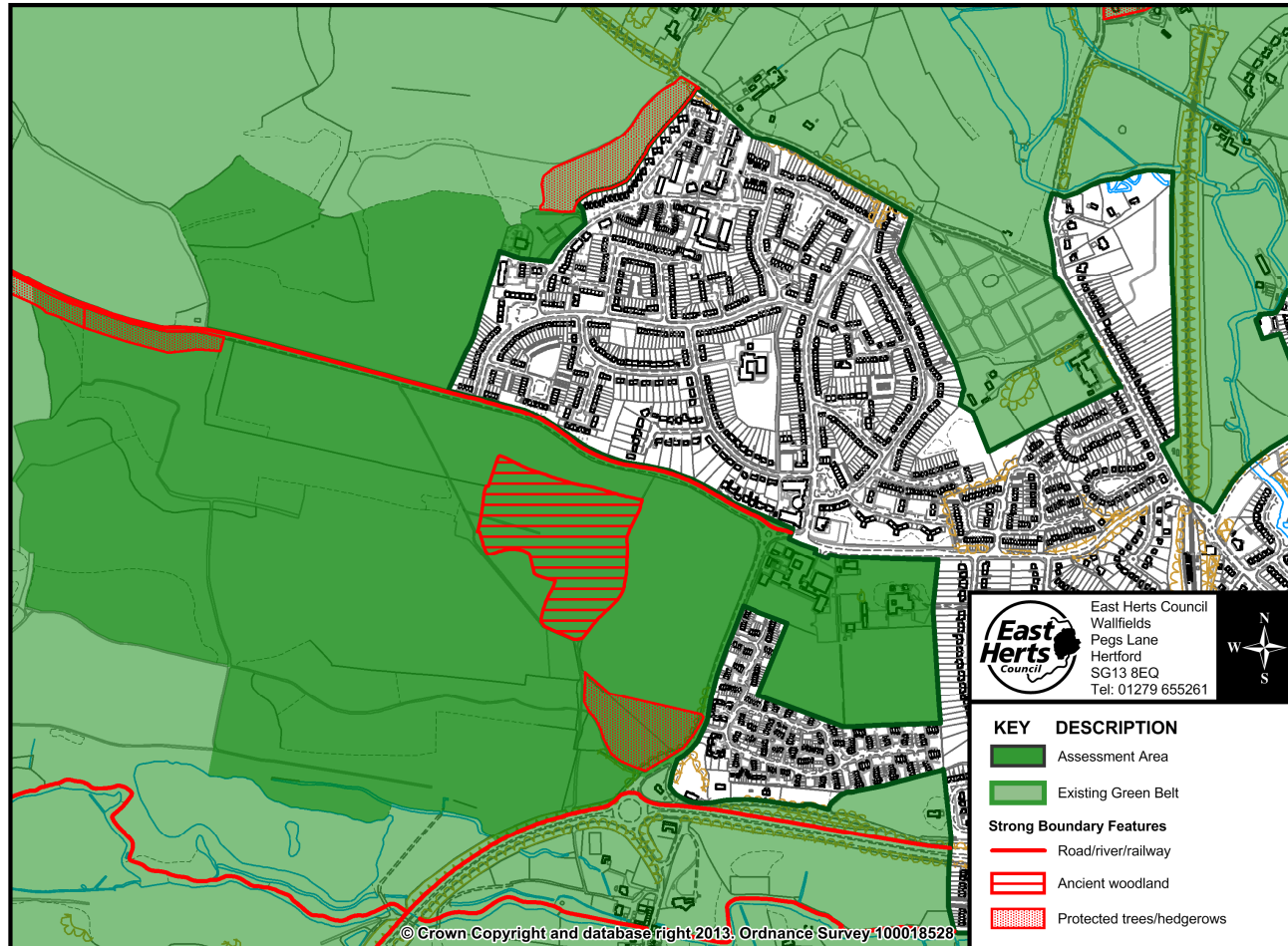
- The Green Belt serves the purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, more so to the east of Wadesmill Road due to the strong landscape character of the Lower Rib Valley and the northern parts of Sites 07A and 07B which abut a number of wildlife sites and protected woodland.
- The Green Belt at Site 07E serves some purpose in preserving the setting of the historic town of Hertford, given that the northern reaches of the Conservation Area are contained in Site 07E and the allotments contained within the site signify the gradual transition between the built-up and rural areas. The remaining Green Belt does not serve the purpose of preserving the special character or setting of the historic town of Hertford.

Hertford South: Area 8 (Sub-Area C)

- The Green Belt serves the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl to an extent. The openness of the Green Belt is limited somewhat to the east of Mangrove Road due to the Balls Park and Simon Balle School developments, although ribbon development has largely been restricted along London Road and further south of the cricket pitch on Mangrove Road where the Green Belt serves to check unrestricted sprawl. The Green Belt to the west of Mangrove Road serves the purpose less, as Site 08I has been developed which has limited the openness of Sites 08C and 08G and contributed to ribbon development along Mangrove Road.
- The Green Belt does not serve the purpose of preventing merging with the nearest town of Hoddesdon, as it is distanced far from the neighbouring town. However, the Green Belt does serve to prevent merging with Hertford Heath, particularly the sites to the east of Mangrove Road that are closest to the village, given that there are no identifiable physical strong boundaries to prevent merging.
- The Green Belt serves to safeguard the countryside from encroachment to an extent, more so to the east of Mangrove Road which is largely covered by the designated wildlife site of Balls Park with widespread protected trees and more widespread access for recreation than land to the west, although limited to members of the public.
- The Green Belt serves the purpose of preserving the special character and setting of Hertford at Sites 08A and 08B which are contained within the Conservation Area of the town and preserve the historic form of the green finger of Hagsdell into the built-up area. Sites 08E and those within the Balls Park estate also contribute to preserving the historic setting of the town that was historically constrained due to land ownership.

6.2 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Hertford West

Map showing strong boundaries at Hertford West Sub-Area A and Sub-Area B

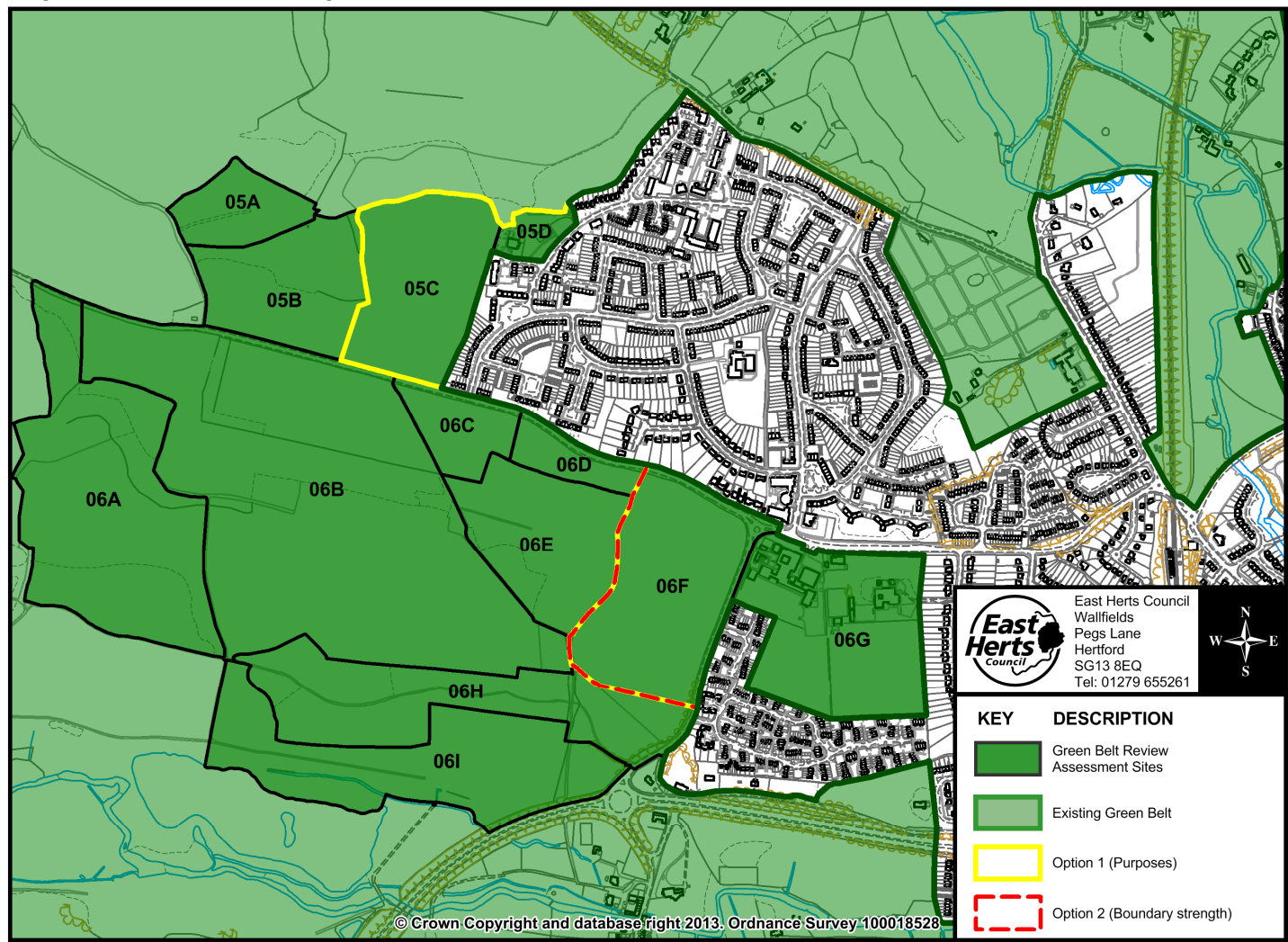


As a secondary distributor road the B1000/Welwyn Road presents a strong boundary within the area of search. The main distributor road of the A414/Hertingfordbury Road presents an even stronger boundary to the south of the area of search. The River Mimram also presents a strong boundary to the south. Long Wood to the north of Sub-Area A is protected and therefore thought to be a strong boundary feature. Within Sub-Area B, the eastern edge of Lady Hughe's Wood is protected and therefore presents a strong boundary feature. Along the southern edge of the B1000/Welwyn Road, there are two protected tree belts which strengthen the B1000/Welwyn Road as a boundary. Blakemore Wood within Sub-Area B is ancient woodland and therefore regarded as a strong boundary. Despite its more minor status that renders it as a weak boundary in the Review criteria, Thieves Lane presents a fairly

substantial road that could be used as a boundary feature, particularly given its continuity in comparison to some of the woodland markers.

Existing boundary strength	Existing boundary description
Sub-Area A: Weak	The boundary of Sub-Area A is formed of the residential curtilages of Bentley Road and Perrett Gardens, which are considered to be weak, as well as the northern road edge of Perrett Road and The Ridgeway. The roads clearly define part of the residential development further east and would therefore be regarded as strong in the context of this review. However, development has occurred in the Green Belt adjacent in the form of the Community Centre and Ridgeway Local Park, therefore the boundary is considered to be weak in this instance.
Sub-Area B: Strong	The boundary of Sub-Area B follows the northern verge of the B1000/Welwyn Road and the residential curtilages of Elizabeth Close and part of Calton Court, before cutting southwards and bordering the southern edge of the B1000/Welwyn Road and the residential curtilages of Forwich Rise, Halleys Ridge, Ladywood Road and Turpins Lodge which surround the school. The boundary borders the eastern verge of Thieves Lane and the private road that leads into The Dell property before heading east along the residential curtilages of properties on Hertingfordbury Road. The boundary is considered to be strong along the B1000/Welwyn Road. Although Thieves Lane is a relatively minor road, it provides a clearly defined boundary to the residential development further east and thus is considered to be strong. Therefore the boundaries at Sub-Area B are considered to be strong. The boundary is considered to be weak further east of the sub-area where it borders residential curtilages.

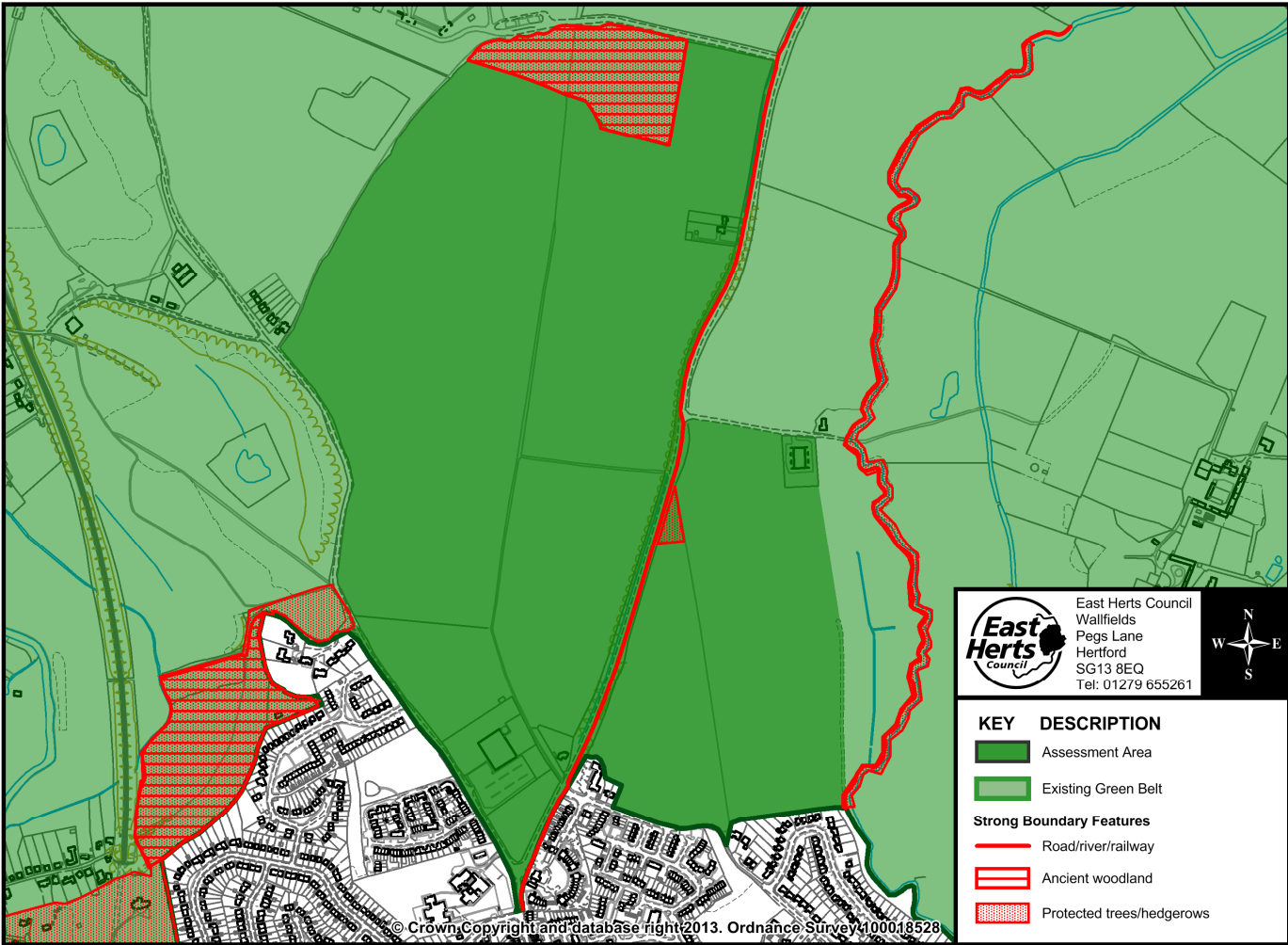
6.3 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for Hertford West
Map of recommended options for Hertford West Sub-Area A and Sub-Area B



	Recommendation	Justification
Option 1 (Purposes)	Sub-Area A: Release Sites 05C and 05D	<p>Site 05D contains development in the form of Sele Farm Community Centre and Ridgeway Local Park, so demonstrates that it has not fulfilled the purpose of checking sprawl from the built-up area. Although it provides access to recreational facilities for members of the public, it is not thought to safeguard the countryside as strongly as the other sites due to being fairly well connected to the built-up area and more urban in character. It is therefore considered that this site should be released and that the recreational open space it provides can continue to be protected under an open spaces policy in the forthcoming District Plan. It is also suggested that Site 05C be released. This site contributes less than Sites 05A and 05B in safeguarding the countryside as it has limited public access. Although release of the site would increase sprawl of the built-up area further westwards this is in keeping with the existing form of the built-up area and is not considered to risk merging with nearby settlements. Although Site 05B is similar in character to Site 05C, it better serves to safeguard the countryside, particularly as it contains the Land west of Sele Farm wildlife site. Even if only the southern part of Site 05B were to be released (to exclude the wildlife site) alongside Site 05C, this would encroach on the openness of the wildlife site and increase westwards sprawl considerably further.</p> <p>In terms of boundaries, the release of Site 05D would have a stronger boundary to the north of Long Wood which is protected by a tree preservation order. There are no clearly identifiable strong western boundaries apart from the ridgeline between Sites 05B and 05C strengthened by the steep gradient down to the Land west of Sele Farm wildlife site. As the existing boundary is weak, release of Sites 05D and 05C allows for a stronger boundary to also be built in as part of development. The southern boundary along the B1000/Welwyn Road is regarded as strong.</p>
	Sub-Area B: Release Sites 06F and 06G	<p>Site 06G fulfils the purposes of the Green Belt the least. It is well connected to the built-up area and contains development in the form of Sele School and Hollybush School that limits its openness and renders it largely urban in character. Although it provides recreational open space for school users, this can continue to be protected under an open spaces policy in the forthcoming District Plan. In addition, it is suggested that Site 06F be released. Of the</p>

		<p>remaining sites in Area 6 it is the best connected to the built-up area and consequently is not at risk of merging with Welwyn Garden City or development to the east of it. It has a lower nature conservation value than the remaining sites as it does not contain the Panshanger Park wildlife site. Although it lies adjacent to protected and ancient woodland, buffers can be established to protect these features.</p> <p>The resultant boundary from release of these sites is generally strong for the majority but weak in parts. The eastern boundary of Blakemore Wood which is protected ancient woodland is strong. However, the small public footpath to the north of this eastern boundary and the tree lined footpath to the south are comparatively weak and would need strengthening. The new southern boundary would follow a group of protected trees within Lady Hughe's Wood which would provide a strong boundary, although the woodland would be slightly encroached between the suggested southern boundary and the existing built-up area boundary along Thieves Lane.</p>
Option 2 (Boundary strength)	<p>Sub-Area A: No release</p> <p>Sub-Area B: Sites 06F and 06G</p>	<p>There are no identifiable strong boundaries to the west that could be used. Although the protected woodland of Long Wood could be used as part of a northern boundary if Site 05D were to be released, the potential eastern boundary of the curtilage of Sele Farm Community Centre is weaker than the existing boundary of The Ridgeway. To the south, the B1000/Welwyn Road would provide a strong boundary. In order to prevent unrestricted sprawl westwards, it is suggested that land not be released until such time that a strong western boundary presents itself or can be planned through development.</p> <p>Blakemore Wood is ancient woodland which would provide a strong boundary to the west. Although there are small sections of weaker boundary to the north and south of it, these are thought to be able to be strengthened. Lady Hughe's Wood is protected by a tree preservation order so would provide a strong boundary to the south. These woodland areas would provide strong boundaries in order to limit development to the south and to the west and are stronger than the existing boundary.</p>

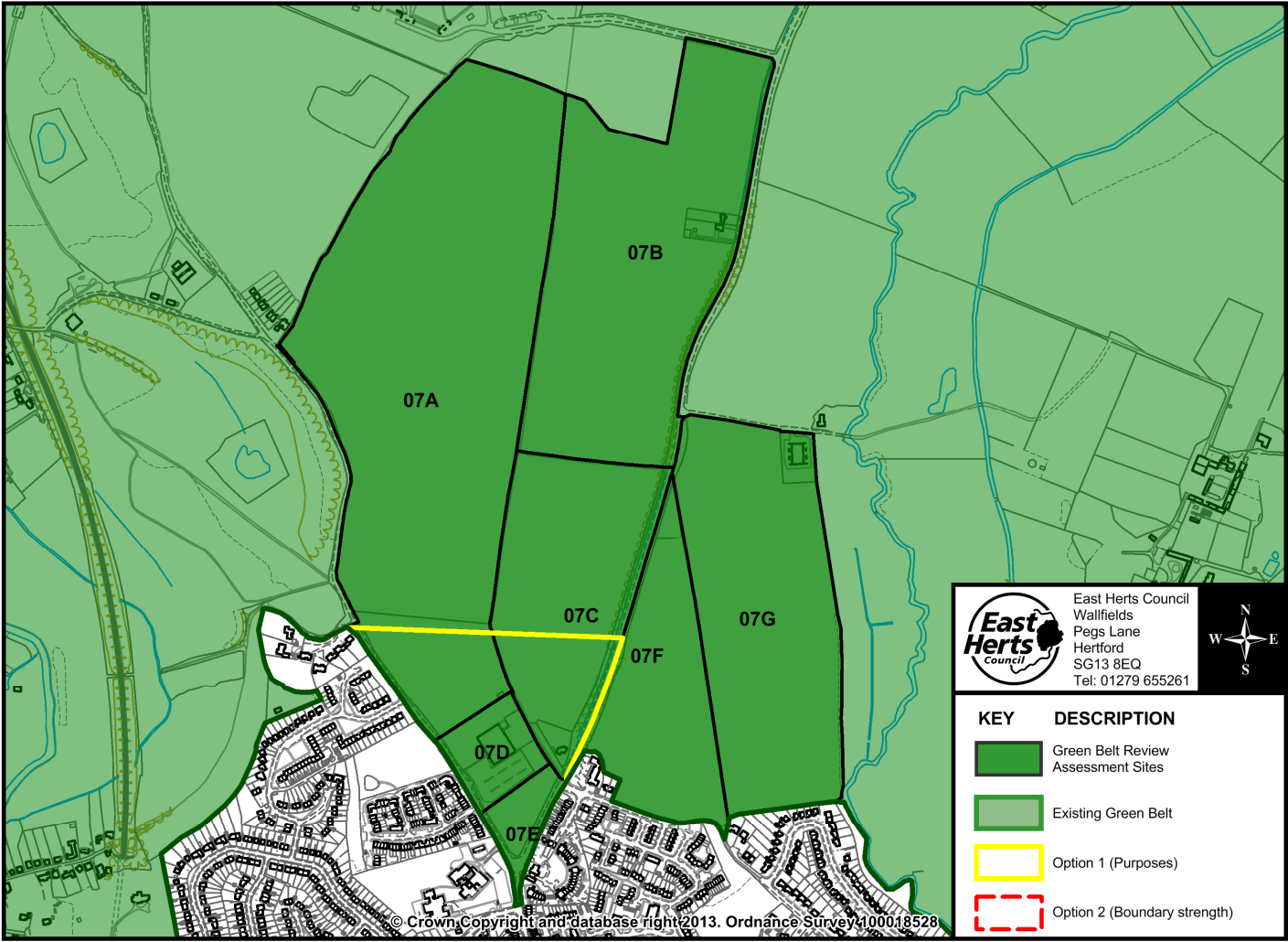
6.4 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Hertford North
Map showing strong boundaries at Hertford North Sub-Area C



The B158/Wadesmill Road presents a strong boundary as a secondary distributor road. This is strengthened in part by a small cluster of protected trees to the north of Site 07C. Although of a comparatively minor status and therefore regarded as a weaker boundary in the Review criteria, Sacombe Road is of a substantial and continuous nature that it could be used as a boundary marker. The River Rib also presents a strong boundary. North of the area of search, St John's Wood provides a strong boundary feature, being ancient woodland that is also protected by a tree preservation order. Great Mole Wood to the west of the area of search provides a strong boundary feature, as it is protected by a tree preservation order and the majority of the woodland further west is ancient woodland.

Existing boundary strength	Existing boundary description
Weak	<p>The western boundary to the built-up area follows the curtilage of a property on The Orchards that then borders the western verge of Sacombe Road, the curtilage of a playing field and the curtilage of Bengoe Primary School into Bengoe Street. Although Sacombe Road is a relatively minor road, it provides a clear physical boundary to the residential development further west with the exception of the stretch abutting Bengoe Nursery and the allotments located within the Green Belt and where it abuts the curtilage of the playing fields. It is therefore considered to be strong to the north of the playing fields and weak to the south. The eastern boundary follows the eastern verge of the B158/Wadesmill Road and as it is a direct distributor road it would be considered to be a strong boundary, however the allotments lie adjacent to it therefore it is considered weak. The boundary to the north of the built-up area follows the residential curtilage of Bengoe Meadows, the minor road of Watermill Lane North, the public footpath north of Temple Court and the residential curtilages of Rib Vale. Although Watermill Lane North provides a clear physical boundary to the residential development immediately to the south, this section is not extensive and generally the boundary here is regarded as weak. Although north of the playing fields on Sacombe Road is considered strong, the majority of the boundary to the built-up area in this sub-area is considered weak.</p>

6.5 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for Hertford North
Map of recommended options for Hertford North Sub-Area C

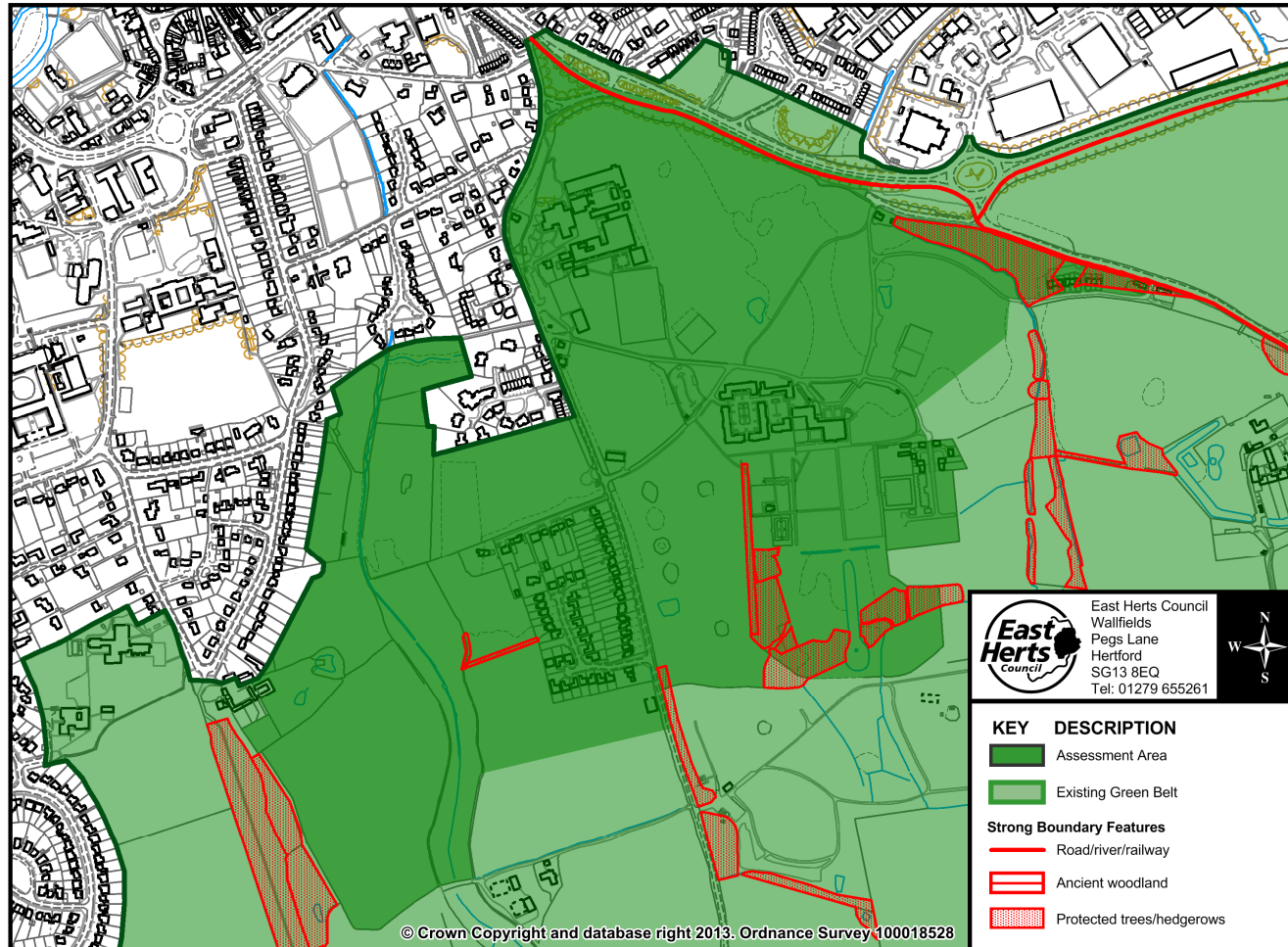


	Recommendation	Justification
Option 1 (Purposes)	Release Sites 07D, 07E in addition to part of Site 07A and part of Site 07C	<p>The Green Belt to the west of Wadesmill Road serves the purpose of preventing merging with Ware less than sites to the east which are closer to the neighbouring town. Sites furthest south, closer to the built-up area of Hertford are also least effective in preventing the northwards encroachment of Ware. Site 07D and the south of Site 07C have limited openness and demonstrate signs of sprawl from the built-up area which encroaches onto Site 07E, therefore all three sites are suggested for release (only the southern part of Site 07C). The allotments in Site 07E could still be protected by a recreational open spaces policy in the forthcoming District Plan. The northern reaches of the sites assessed lie outside of the Area of Search, but in Green Belt terms they impede unrestricted sprawl along Wadesmill Road and Sacombe Road. They also are more critical with regard to preventing merging with small villages such as Chapmore End. Sites 07A and 07B also serve an important role in safeguarding the countryside, particularly further north due to the high nature conservation value of the surrounding land that it provides a buffer for. It is suggested that the southern part of Site 07A is released as far as the northern reaches of the built-up area at The Orchard but not encroaching land further north that lies adjacent to the ancient Mole Wood and Waterford Heath Local Nature Reserve and wildlife site. This therefore releases the land within the site that holds a lesser role in safeguarding these countryside assets. It also rounds off the form of the released land better so that the southern part of Site 07A is not left encroached between the existing built-up area and land released in Site 07D. Site 07C does not hold a strong role in preventing merging, particularly further south, or safeguarding the immediate countryside, and thus it is suggested for release up to the same northern extent as Site 07A to prevent encroachment of the buffer for the ancient woodland and local nature reserve to the west of Sacombe Road. Although Site 07E contributes to preserving the historic setting of Hertford, this is mainly due to its transitional character in this area between the urban and the rural. It is therefore possible to ensure through design that new development would reflect this gradual blended change in the landscape to continue to preserve the historic setting.</p> <p>In terms of boundaries, the new suggested northern boundary is weak and would need a</p>

		strong boundary built in as part of the new development. The suggested release of the Green Belt would be further north to the west of Wadesmill Road than the existing built-up area to the east which would encroach on the Green Belt to the east somewhat. However the suggested eastern boundary of the B158/Wadesmill Road as a B class distributor road is strong and therefore likely to contain development to prevent any sprawl eastwards.
Option 2 (Boundary strength)	No release	Although the B150/Wadesmill Road and the River Rib mark strong boundaries to contain development spreading east and westwards, there are no clearly identifiable strong boundaries to the north to contain development. Although the existing boundary is generally weak along residential curtilages and would benefit from strengthening, it is stronger in parts and therefore it is suggested that the Green Belt should not be released unless a strong boundary can be identified or built in to development.

6.6 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Hertford South

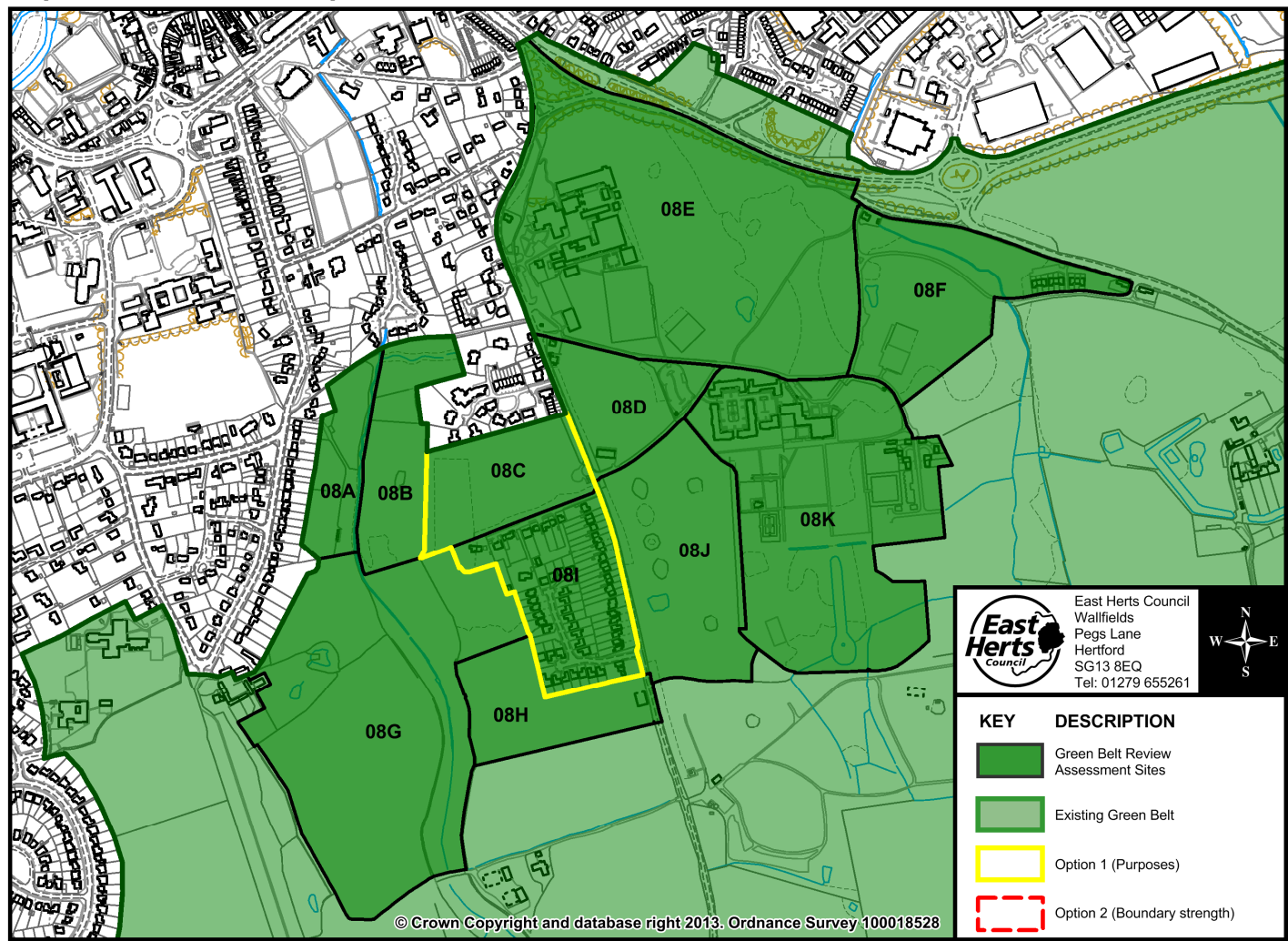
Map showing strong boundaries at Hertford South Sub-Area C



The A414/London Road and the B1197/London Road to the east of the area of search provide strong boundaries in the form of main and secondary distributor roads. They are further strengthened in places by protected tree belts. There are many protected trees within the Balls Park estate. Some of these are continuous belts which provide strong boundaries, although they are not all continuous thus not as strong as distributor roads. Similarly there are protected tree belts adjacent to the camping and caravan site which provide boundaries of similar strength. To the west of Mangrove Road, there is a small section of trees which are protected to the west and south by a tree preservation order and are therefore thought to be strong boundaries. The tree lines along Morgan's Walk and the adjacent woodland provide a strong boundary to the west of the area of search.

Existing boundary strength	Existing boundary description
Weak	<p>The boundary follows the curtilage of Morgans Primary School, along the curtilage of Dunkirks Farmhouse, the residential curtilages of Queens Road and along Hagsdell Lane public footpath. It then follows the residential curtilages of Ashbourne Gardens, the western verge of Mangrove Road and the residential curtilages of Hagsdell Road. After traversing London Road, it abuts the residential curtilages of The Heathers and Stanley Road, encompassing Ballshill Grove and cutting through two properties in Wisdom Drive. It then abuts the residential curtilages of Brookside, the adjacent stream and woodland, and the edge of London Road before continuing east along the A414. The boundary is regarded as strong where it follows London Road as this is a direct distributor road, although this only covers a very small section of the boundary in this sub-area. Mangrove Road is a relatively minor road and it does not provide a clear definitive physical boundary to residential development to the west of it, given that there is development in the Green Belt to the west in the form of Simon Balle School and Balls Park, therefore where the Green Belt boundary follows it, it is considered as weak. The residential curtilages are also considered to be weak. The majority of the boundary to the existing built-up area in this sub-area is regarded as weak.</p>

6.7 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for Hertford South
Map of recommended options for Hertford South Sub-Area C

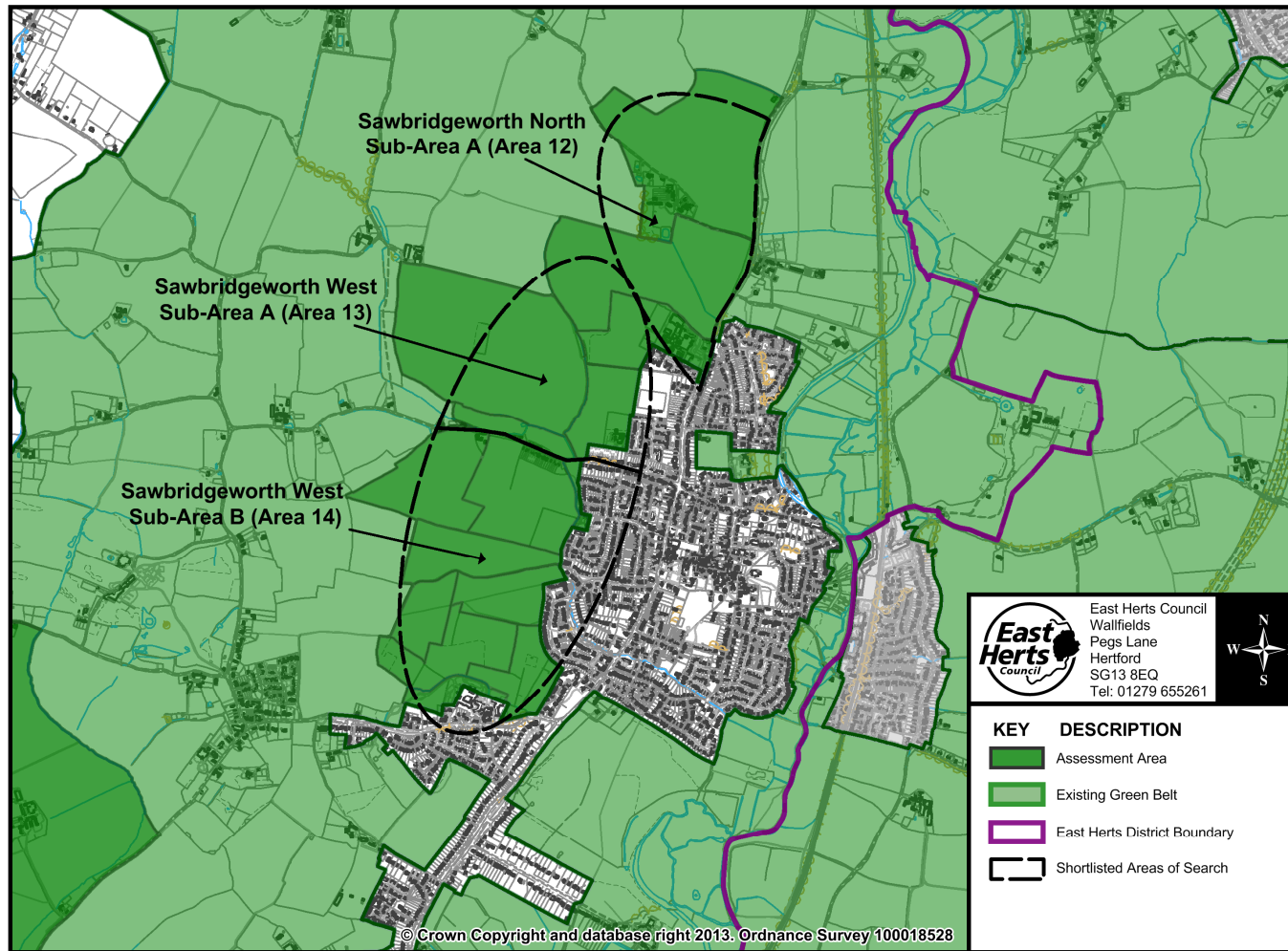


	Recommendation	Justification
Option 1 (Purposes)	Release Sites 08C and 08I	<p>Green Belt to the east of Mangrove Road is not considered suitable for release from the Green Belt as it is considered to serve a stronger role in preventing merging with the nearby village of Hertford Heath and safeguarding the countryside given the presence of the wildlife site and the historic importance of many protected trees in the registered historic park and garden of Balls Park. To the west of Mangrove Road, sites are not considered to greatly assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, nor prevent merging with neighbouring settlements. Site 08I contains a developed area comprising of residential housing which renders it the site most urban in character and the least open and as such it does not serve to check unrestricted sprawl nor safeguard the countryside from encroachment and so it is suggested for release. The site encroaches on the openness of surrounding sites, particularly Site 08C which lies along Mangrove Road between Site 08I and the built-up area. Although Site 08C lies within the Conservation Area of Hertford, it is not considered to contribute to preserving the historic setting of the southern green finger to the same extent that Sites 08A and 08B do, as these sites penetrate further into the built-up area and contain the valley of Hagsdell which shapes the topography of the area.</p> <p>In respect of boundaries, there is a cluster of trees in the west of Site 08C with a tall tree line to the far west that would form a western boundary to Site 08C and residential curtilages would form the western and southern boundary to Site 08I although it is acknowledged that these are weak. Mangrove Road would form the eastern boundary to both sites. Although this is a minor road and therefore regarded as a weak boundary in the context of the Review criteria, it is still considered stronger than the residential curtilages and tree line due to its continuous form and more permanent nature.</p>
Option 2 (Boundary strength)	No release	<p>There are no identifiable strong boundaries to the south to curtail development. There are a number of protected trees within the Balls Park estate, although due to their somewhat sporadic form they do not provide clearly identifiable strong boundary lines to prevent development southwards. There is a small line of trees protected at the south of a small woodland cluster to the west of Oak Grove which could provide part of a southern boundary, although there is no strong boundary immediately to the west. The protected tree lines along Morgan's Walk present a strong boundary to the west. The A414/London Road presents a strong boundary to the east.</p>

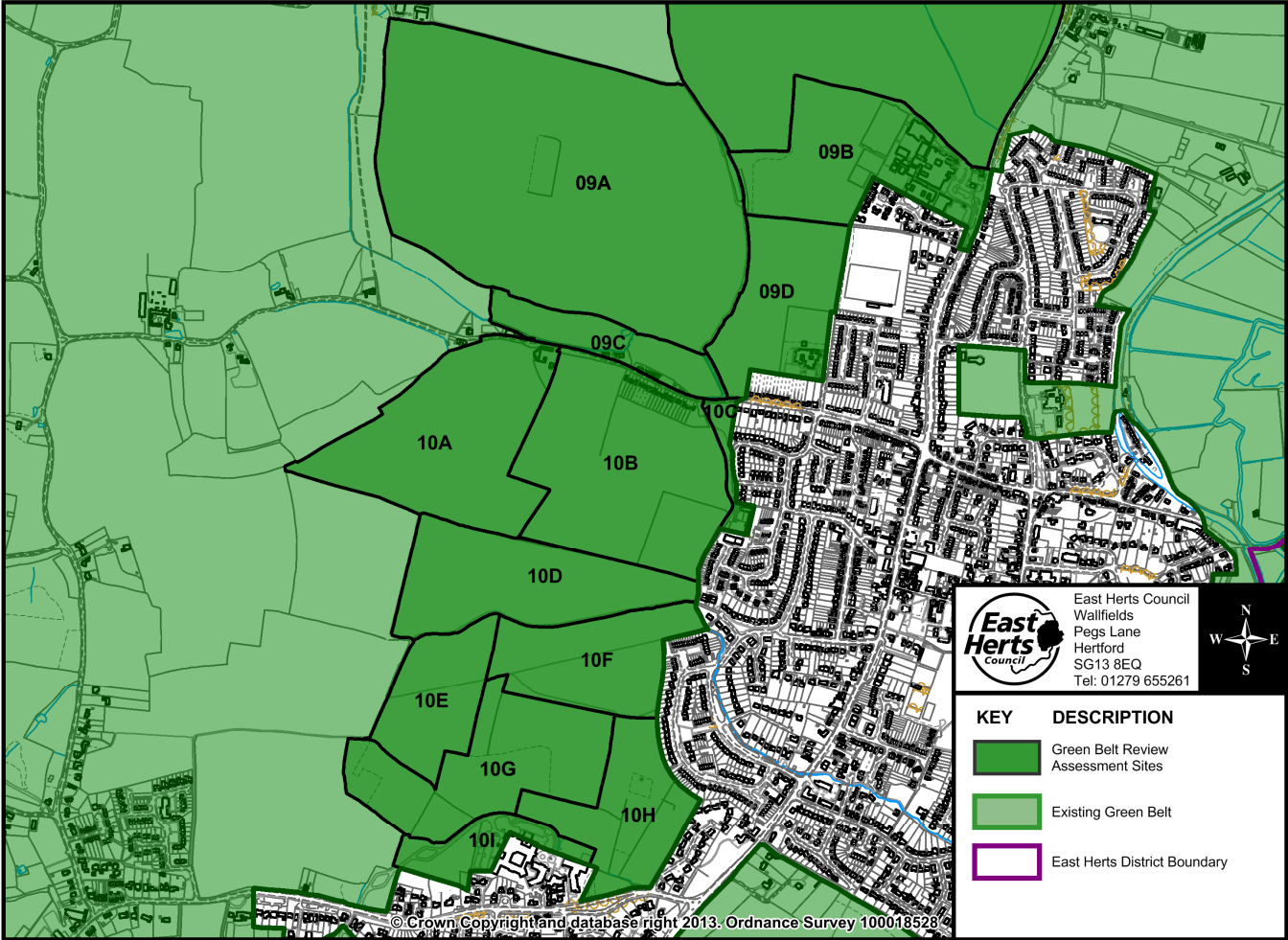
7 Detailed Site Assessment of Sawbridgeworth

7.1 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 1 - Green Belt Purpose Assessment

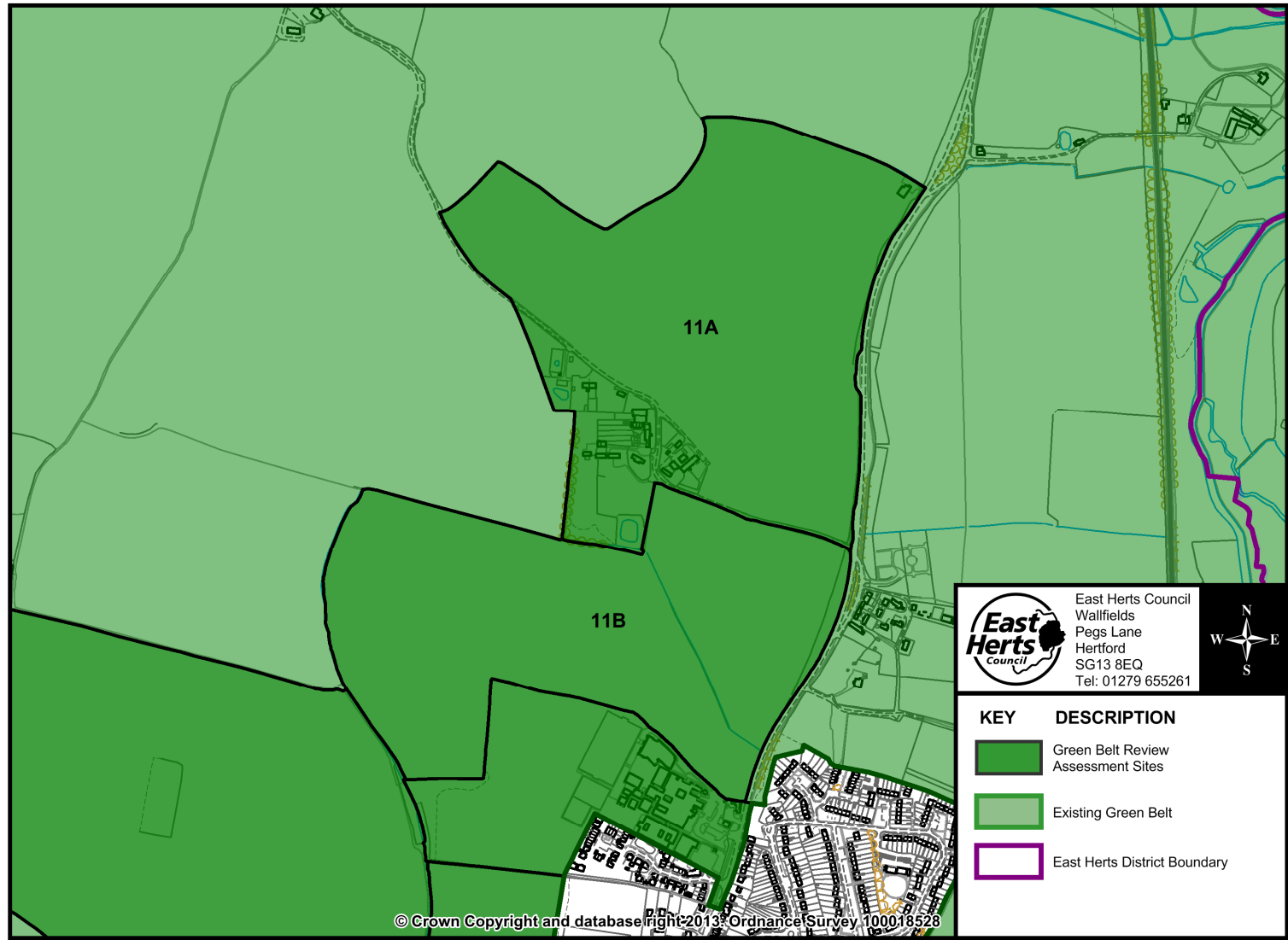
Sawbridgeworth Shortlisted Areas of Search



Sawbridgeworth West Assessment Sites



Sawbridgeworth North Assessment Sites



Purpose 1: Check unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas

	Sawbridgeworth West													Sawbridgeworth North	
	Sub-Area A				Sub-Area B									Sub-Area A	
GBR Ref	09A	09B	09C	09D	10A	10B	10C	10D	10E	10F	10G	10H	10I	11A	11B
Openness	3	2	3	2	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	3
Impeding ribbon development	3	1	1	3	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	1	3
Purpose Total	6	3	4	5	4	4	5	6	6	5	6	5	3	4	6

The Green Belt at Sawbridgeworth West assists in checking unrestricted sprawl of the built-up area of Sawbridgeworth to an extent. In Area 9 (Sub-Area A), Site 09A maintains the openness the most as it is distanced from the existing built-up area and contains no form of development. Site 09C contains some ribbon development along West Road and Site 09B contains ribbon development in the form of Leventhorpe School along Cambridge Road. Sites 09B and 09D are better connected to the existing built-up area than the other sites, and the location of Leventhorpe School and Mandeville School in each site respectively limits the openness that the Green Belt maintains. Similarly Sites 10A and 10B to the north of Area 10 (Sub-Area B) both contain ribbon development along West Road, although it is acknowledged that these were present before Green Belt designation. Although not part of the existing built-up area of the town, the form of the continuous row of houses in Site 10B has an impact on the openness of the Green Belt at the site itself as well as those surrounding it in Sites 09C and 10C. The park at Site 10C is therefore encroached by urban areas on two sides. The listed Chalks Farm buildings to the southern section of this site are set into the existing built-up area and therefore the Green Belt does not serve the purpose of maintaining the openness here. Sites 10F, 10H and 10I are better connected to the existing built-up area than the more distanced sites and therefore the Green Belt does not maintain its openness as well. Site 10I also contains some ribbon development along High Wych Road in the form of part of the Thomas Rivers Hospital, which is a sign that the Green Belt is not fully serving to check unrestricted sprawl.

The Green Belt at Sawbridgeworth North plays a significant part in checking unrestricted sprawl of the built-up area of Sawbridgeworth. Although Site 11A contains a horticultural nursery along Cambridge Road, this is at the north of the site and is significantly far from the built-up area and therefore is not thought to present a form of sprawl from the built-up area. Site 11A does contain Parsonage Farm and the Clarklands Industrial Estate which limits the openness of the Green Belt somewhat, although it

does remain largely open. The Green Belt at Site 11B also remains largely open despite some slight encroachment from the northern tip of the built-up area and Leventhorpe. However the site does not contain ribbon development along Cambridge Road.

Purpose 2: Prevent neighbouring towns from merging

	Sawbridgeworth West													Sawbridgeworth North	
	Sub-Area A				Sub-Area B									Sub-Area A	
GBR Ref	09A	09B	09C	09D	10A	10B	10C	10D	10E	10F	10G	10H	10I	11A	11B
Distance to neighbouring town	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
Distance to neighbouring village	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
Purpose Total	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	3

The Green Belt in Area 9 (Sub-Area A) serves a limited role in preventing Sawbridgeworth merging with the neighbouring towns of Bishop's Stortford or Harlow. In Area 10 (Sub-Area B), the Green Belt of sites to the north of Site 10D do not play a role in preventing merging, but below this site the strategic gap is less than 2 kilometres so its role increases. The Green Belt of sites furthest to the south of Area 10 are of greater importance in serving this purpose, although not critical as the strategic gap is still over 1 kilometre. The Green Belt also serves to prevent Sawbridgeworth merging with the nearest village of High Wych, and has a particularly critical role in Area 10 where the strategic gap would be less than 1 kilometre with the exception of Site 10C. There are not considered to be any identifiable strong physical boundaries that could prevent this merging, so the role of the Green Belt in doing so is notable. In Area 9, the Green Belt furthest west of Sites 09A and 09C serve some purpose in preventing the merging of Sawbridgeworth with the village of Allen's Green.

The Green Belt of Sawbridgeworth North is greater than 2 kilometres away from the neighbouring town of Bishop's Stortford and thus does not serve a role in preventing merging, although if development were to occur in the Bishop's Stortford South area of search then Site 11A would serve a role in preventing merging. In respect of merging with villages, both sites play a part in preventing merging with Spellbrook but Site 11A has the strongest role as the strategic gap is less than 1 kilometre. There are not

considered to be any identifiable strong physical boundaries that could prevent this merging, so the role of the Green Belt in doing so is notable.

Purpose 3: Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

	Sawbridgeworth West													Sawbridgeworth North	
	Sub-Area A				Sub-Area B									Sub-Area A	
GBR Ref	09A	09B	09C	09D	10A	10B	10C	10D	10E	10F	10G	10H	10I	11A	11B
Nature conservation	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	2	2	1	1
Trees/hedgerows	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2
Landscape character assessment	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3
Agricultural land classification	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Accessibility	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2
Purpose Total	11	12	11	12	9	9	10	9	10	10	12	10	9	11	11

Although Area 9 (Sub-Area A) is located in the Thorley Uplands which scored red in the landscape character assessments for being of good condition although moderate strength, and there is relatively good access via public rights of way and recreational facilities as part of playing fields at Leventhorpe School and Mandeville School, the area has a low nature conservation value and no protected vegetation unlike in Area 10 (Sub-Area B). Site 09D also contains development in the form of Mandeville School and Site 09B contains development in the form of Leventhorpe School and a section of Cambridge Road which are more urban in character. Area 10 is located in the High Wych Slopes which scored green in the landscape character assessments for being of poor condition and moderate strength. The sites in the northern part of Area 10 (Sites 10A, 10B, 10C and 10D) do not contain or lie adjacent to any designated land with regard to nature conservation value, although Site 10C provides recreational open space by means of a children's play area which increases the access to the countryside. To the south however, Site 10G contains the protected Rivers Nursery Orchard wildlife site and given its designation, Sites 10E, 10F, 10H and 10I which largely surround it hold a strong role in safeguarding it from encroachment. Site 10H also contains protected trees and although it does not contain a public right of way, it does contain private access for residents of Heron Close to a playing field. Site 10I has no public rights of way.

Although the southern part of Area 10 exhibits more features characteristic of the countryside than the northern part of Area 9, all sites within Sawbridgeworth West contain some Grade 2 agricultural land which is a relatively high grade and demonstrates the nature of the countryside that the Green Belt is safeguarding.

The Green Belt at Sawbridgeworth North is similar to that in Area 9, in that it is located in the Thorley Uplands which scored red in the landscape character assessments and is noted for its character of largely open monotonous flat arable farmland. It also contains Grade 2 agricultural land in both sites, which is a relatively high grade. In addition, although both sites are served by public footpaths and contain trees, there is no protected vegetation and a low nature conservation value. Therefore although there are characteristics of the countryside present, there are not as many and none more significant than those present in the southern part of Area 10 in Sawbridgeworth West.

Purpose 4: Preserve setting and special character of historic towns

	Sawbridgeworth West													Sawbridgeworth North	
	Sub-Area A				Sub-Area B									Sub-Area A	
GBR Ref	09A	09B	09C	09D	10A	10B	10C	10D	10E	10F	10G	10H	10I	11A	11B
Designated heritage assets	2	3	3	1	3	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
Conservation Area	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Purpose Total	3	4	4	2	4	3	4	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3

There are a number of listed buildings situated in and adjacent to Sawbridgeworth West. Site 09B contains the listed Bull Public House on Cambridge Road. Site 10A contains a listed barn at Claylane Farm to the south of West Road, whilst Site 09C contains a listed building to the north of West Road. Site 09A is adjacent to a listed barn at Tharbies Farm to the northwest, and Site 10C contains listed buildings at Chalks Farm. Site 10B lies adjacent to several of these listed buildings. There is also one listed building, Little Pennys, adjacent to Site 10I further south of Sawbridgeworth West. The listed Tharbies Farm lies within an Area of Archaeological Significance that Site 09A also abuts. As most of these listed buildings are or were agricultural in nature, it is not

considered that they have an impact on the special character or setting of the historic town of Sawbridgeworth, particularly given that they are far from the historic core and Conservation Area which is located more centrally in the built-up area of the town.

The Green Belt at Sawbridgeworth North contains an Area of Archaeological Significance at Parsonage Farm within Site 11A, and Site 11B is adjacent to the listed Bull Public House in Site 09B. Due to the distance from the historic core and Conservation Area of Sawbridgeworth, these are not considered to have an impact on the special character or setting of the historic town.

Sawbridgeworth Summary of Purposes Served

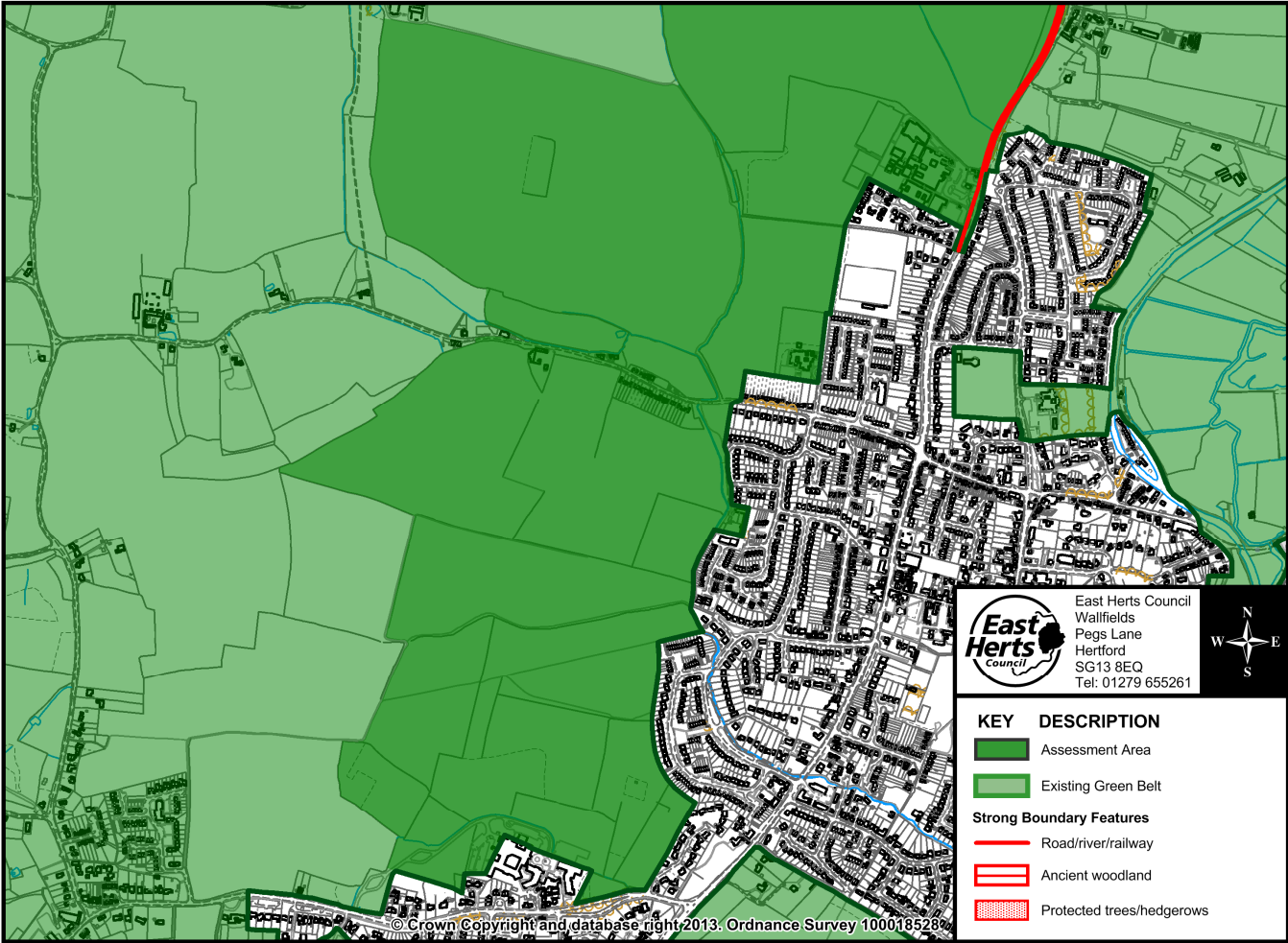
Sawbridgeworth West: Area 9 (Sub-Area A) and Area 10 (Sub-Area B)

- The Green Belt at Sawbridgeworth West partly serves the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl through maintaining the openness, although less so at sites adjacent to the built-up area which are better connected such as at Sites 09B, 09D, 10C, 10F and 10H. The Green Belt has not fulfilled the purpose in checking sprawl where there is evident ribbon development such as along High Wych Road at Site 10I and along West Road, particularly the continuous stretch at Site 10B which has had an impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- The Green Belt at Sawbridgeworth West to the south of Area 10 serves a purpose in preventing Sawbridgeworth from merging with the neighbouring town of Harlow. This includes Sites 10D, 10E, 10F, 10G, 10H and 10I. The Green Belt in Area 10 (excluding Site 10C) serves a more critical role in preventing merging with High Wych where the strategic gap is less than 1 kilometre. Sites 09A and 09C serve some purpose in preventing merging between Sawbridgeworth and Allen's Green.
- The Green Belt at Sawbridgeworth West serves the purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, particularly to the southern part of Area 10 at Site 10G which contains the protected Rivers Nursery Orchard wildlife site and Site 10G which contains protected trees. Although Area 9 and the northern part of Area 10 have less designated and protected countryside features, they fall within a landscape character that is in better condition and of highly graded agricultural land as well as providing recreational open space, so the Green Belt still serves a purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment there. The eastern part of Site 09B does not assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment due to the urban character.
- The Green Belt at Sawbridgeworth West does not serve the purpose of preserving the special character and setting of the historic town as most of the listed buildings are agricultural in nature, and all designated heritage assets adjacent to or within the sites are located far from the historic core of the town.

Sawbridgeworth North: Area 11

- The Green Belt at Sawbridgeworth North serves the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl through impeding ribbon development on Cambridge Road and largely maintaining the openness.
- The Green Belt at Sawbridgeworth North serves a partial purpose in preventing merging with neighbouring settlements. Site 11A serves a role in preventing merging with Bishop's Stortford, and a significant role in preventing merging with Spellbrook which is closer. Site 11B also serves to prevent merging with Spellbrook, although not as greatly as the strategic gap is wider.
- The Green Belt at Sawbridgeworth North serves the purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, not in terms of designated and protected countryside features but with regard to the good condition of the landscape character and the high agricultural land grading.
- The Green Belt at Sawbridgeworth North does not serve the purpose of preserving the special character and setting of the historic town as the designated heritage assets within and adjacent to the sites are located away from the historic core of the town.

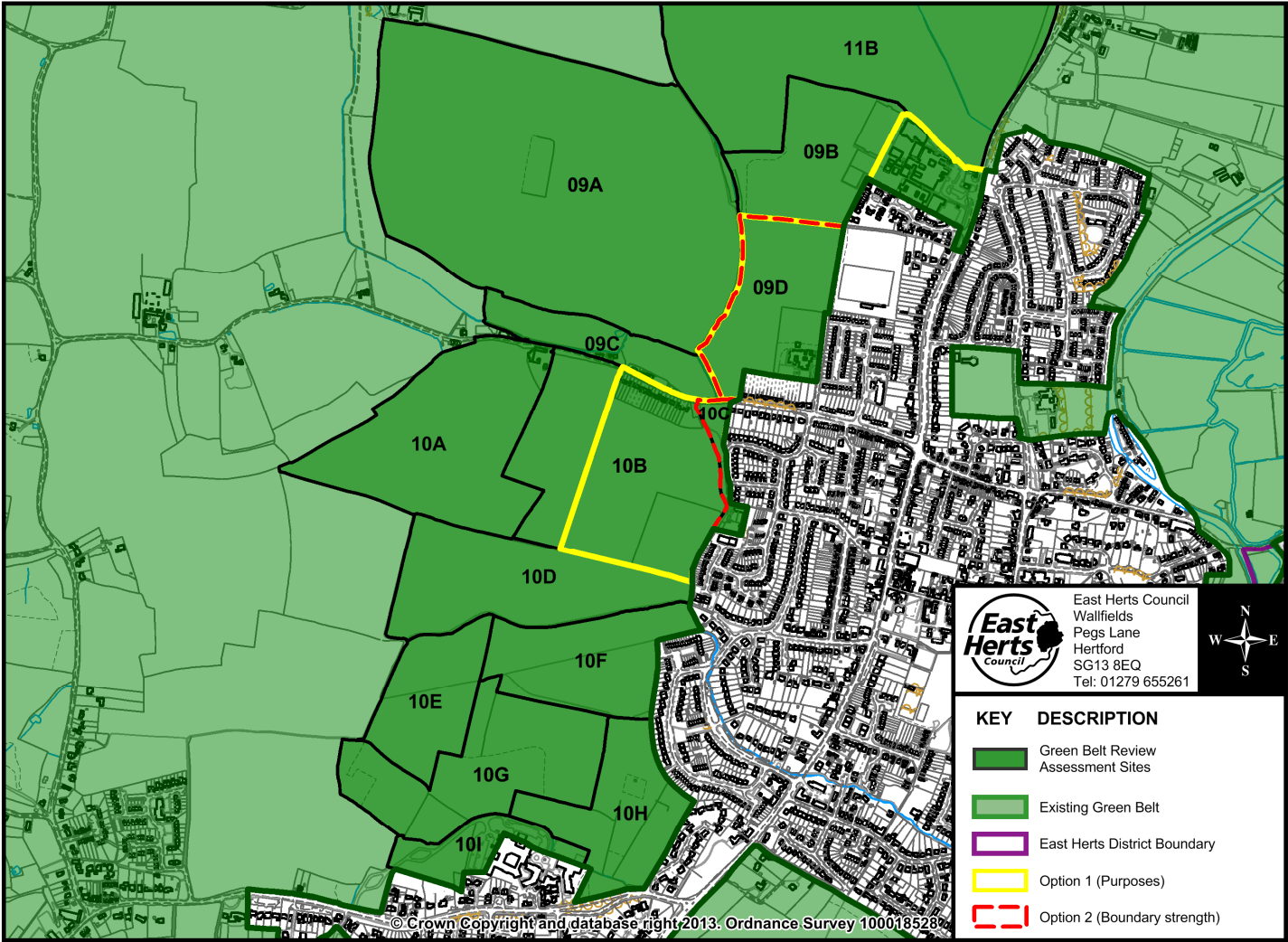
7.2 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Sawbridgeworth West
Map showing strong boundaries at Sawbridgeworth West Sub-Area A and Sub-Area B



As a main distributor road, the A1184/Cambridge Road presents a strong boundary to the north of the area of search. Although not categorised as a strong boundary in the criteria in the Review, the stream immediately to the west of the built-up area to the south of West Road was regarded as a 'strong defensible Green Belt boundary' by the Inspector of the Local Plan (2007). This is likely due to the substantial nature of the stream in this location, which has steep embankments. However, it was noted that further south there is precedence of the barrier being breached by the built-up areas extending westwards. Although it is not categorised as a strong boundary, the Inspector's comments have been taken into account in the Review to acknowledge that due to its form, the stream is a stronger boundary than others which have been categorised as weak.

Existing boundary strength	Existing boundary description
Sub-Area A: Weak	To the north of the built-up area, the boundary lies against the residential curtilages of properties in School Lane, cutting through the edges of ones on the north-eastern edge. On the eastern edge, the boundary follows a tree lined footpath to the west of Crofters football ground and residential curtilages of Crofters End, before following the residential curtilages of properties on West Road.
Sub-Area B: Weak	South of West Road, the boundary follows residential curtilages of Coney Gree and the listed Chalks Farm buildings southwards before following the stream and footpath to the west of residential curtilages of Nursery Fields and a property on Gilders. The boundary then follows the footpath to the north of the residential curtilages at North End, and lies adjacent to the curtilage of garages at Brook End and the residential curtilages of The Crest and Heron Close. To the south, the boundary cuts through the southern and western edges of a dense clump of vegetation adjacent to High Wych Road, including a cluster of protected trees, before largely following the curtilage of the Rivers Hospital though passing through it in some instances. The boundary then cuts into the residential curtilage of 66 High Wych Road and follows the edge of the curtilages of properties at Newports before bordering the northern verges of High Wych Road.

7.3 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for Sawbridgeworth West
Map of recommended options for Sawbridgeworth West Sub-Area A and Sub-Area B

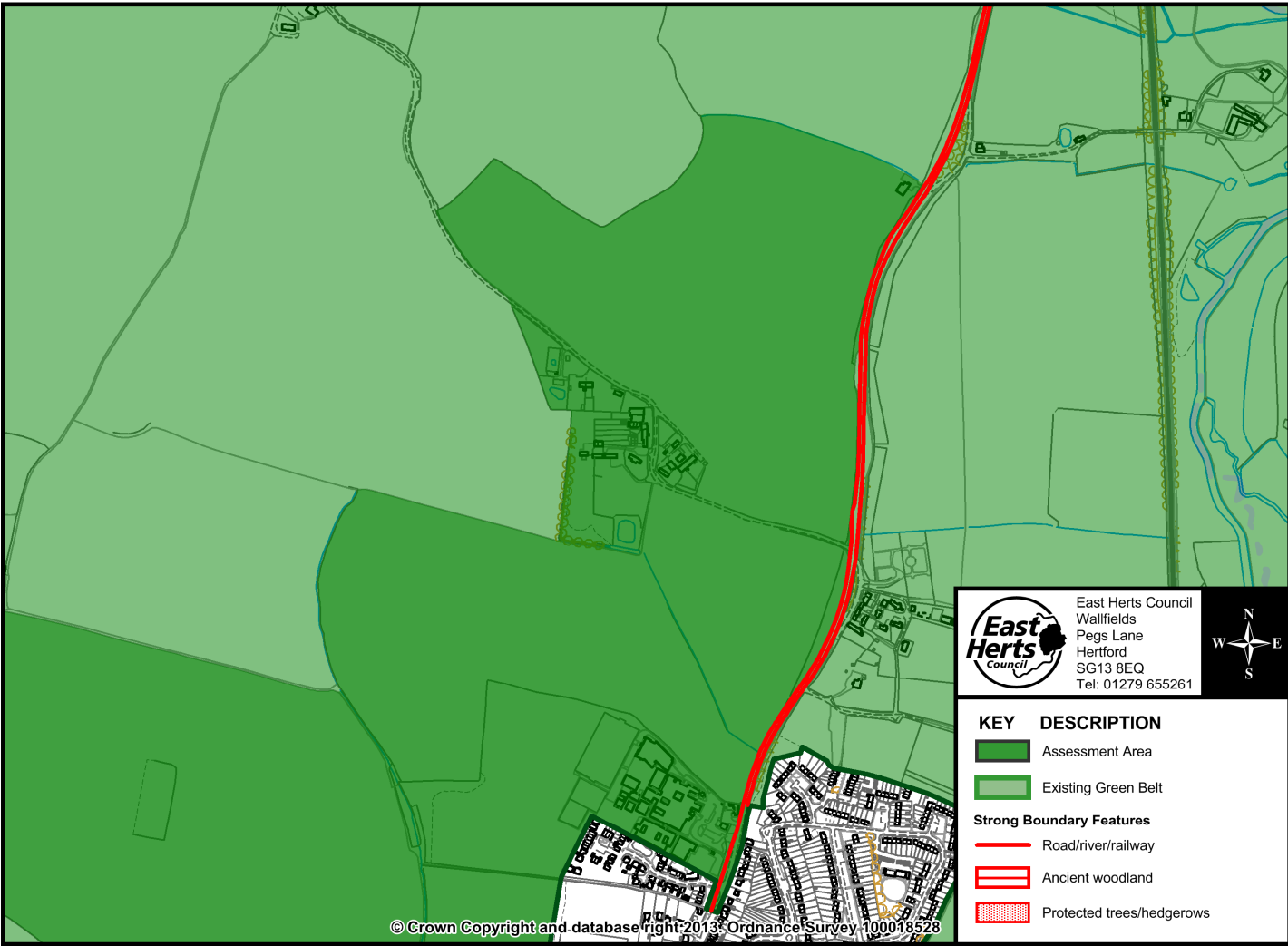


	Recommendation	Justification
Option 1 (Purposes)	Sub-Area A: Site 09D and eastern part of Site 09B	<p>The eastern part of Site 09B contains Leventhorpe School which limits the openness of the site and presents a form of sprawl that the Green Belt has not restricted. It also includes part of Cambridge Road and it is considered that the development contained within the site is more urban in character and better connected to the built-up area than other sites and consequently should be released from the Green Belt. Similarly Site 09D is also better connected to the built-up area and has its openness limited by Mandeville School located within it. These sites both serve limited purpose in preventing merging with nearby towns or villages and no purpose in preserving the special character or setting of the historic town of Sawbridgeworth. The countryside character that they serve to safeguard is weakened by the presence of the schools and the recreational open space Mandeville School provides in Site 09D can be protected under recreational open spaces policy in the District Plan. The openness that characterises the landscape is interrupted to the north of Site 09D by a fence, public footpath and hedgerow that mark the grounds of Leventhorpe School and a section of woodland to the north. The western part of Site 09B, the sports grounds of Leventhorpe School, is not considered for release as it assists in maintaining the openness of the land further north and release would risk encroachment into this land which serves a strong purpose in impeding ribbon development and preventing unrestricted sprawl of Sawbridgeworth to the north.</p>
	Sub-Area B: Site 10C and Part of Site 10B	<p>The northern and western boundary of the suggested release at Site 09B would be weak as it would follow the curtilage of the built area of Leventhorpe. However this would adjoin the existing boundary of residential curtilages at School Lane which would maintain the compact form of the built-up area. The boundaries of the suggested release at Site 09D would also be weak, although the stream to the west is stronger than the existing boundary along curtilages as it is more defensible and permanent.</p> <p>With the exception of Sites 10B and 10C, Area 10 is generally not considered to be suitable for a strategic release from the Green Belt. The sites furthest to the south serve a crucial role in preventing the merging of Sawbridgeworth with High Wych, and in impeding ribbon development along High Wych Road. Site 10G, the River Orchards Nursery, is of significant</p>

		<p>importance as a designated wildlife site, and the surrounding sites safeguard it from encroachment and act as a buffer to the existing built-up area. Comparatively, Sites 10B and 10C do not prevent merging or safeguard the countryside to such an extent as the others. Site 10A to the north serves a more important role than these two sites in preventing sprawl along West Road and merging with Allen's Green and High Wych given the extent to which it reaches to the west, which lies outside of the area of search. Site 10C is the best connected to the built-up area within Area 10 and does not assist in maintaining the openness of the land, given that the northern part of the park is encroached by the residential areas to the east and west. The southern part contains development in the form of Chalks Farm and is encroached by the built-up area and therefore does not serve the purpose of maintaining the openness and checking unrestricted sprawl. The site is not thought to safeguard the countryside from encroachment given that the Chalks Farm buildings are set into the built-up area and the park is encroached between the built-up area and development in the Green Belt. If Site 10C were to be released then the park could be protected by recreational open space policy in the District Plan. Site 10B already contains development along West Road which encroaches on the openness of the land to the south of it. The eastern part of Site 10B is more suitable for release as it is further from High Wych and thus does not serve such a strong role in preventing merging with the village.</p> <p>There is no clearly identifiable western boundary across the part of site suggested for release and thus in releasing this part of the land, the Green Belt boundary would be weaker than the existing boundary. Though there is a hedgerow further west that could be used, this would release Green Belt that serves a stronger purpose in preventing merging with High Wych and checking unrestricted sprawl by allowing further ribbon development along West Road. It would also encourage sprawl that significantly juts out from the existing built-up area, reducing the openness of the surrounding Green Belt. The hedgerow is also very sparse to the south and would be weak. The southern boundary follows a public footpath bordered by a ditch, which is a weak boundary. The northern boundary would follow West Road, which although is a minor road, is comparatively stronger than the existing boundary that follows residential curtilages.</p>
Option 2 (Boundary)	Sub-Area A: Site 9D	If there were to be a release of the Green Belt, there are no clearly identifiable strong boundaries, particularly to the west. However, the stream would provide a stronger western

strength)	Sub-Area B: Site 10C	<p>boundary than the existing one of mainly residential curtilages as it is more permanent and defensible. At this part, it is similar in nature to the section to the south of West Road that the Inspector of the Local Plan (2007) regarded as strong, with fairly steep embankments. It is also possible that a strong boundary could be built into development.</p> <p>If there were to be a release of the Green Belt, there are no clearly identifiable strong boundaries, particularly to the west. However, Site 10C is suggested for release to as the stream would provide a stronger western boundary than the existing one of mainly residential curtilages as it is more permanent and defensible, and the Inspector of the Local Plan (2007) regarded it as strong. The stream is also used to contain the built-up area further south and as such would bring the built-up area more into alignment. It is possible that a strong boundary could be built into development.</p>
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7.4 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Sawbridgeworth North
Map showing strong boundaries at Sawbridgeworth North Sub-Area A



As a main distributor road, the A1184/Cambridge Road presents a strong boundary within the area of search.

Existing boundary strength	Existing boundary description
N/A	The Green Belt boundary in this area does not abut the existing built-up area.

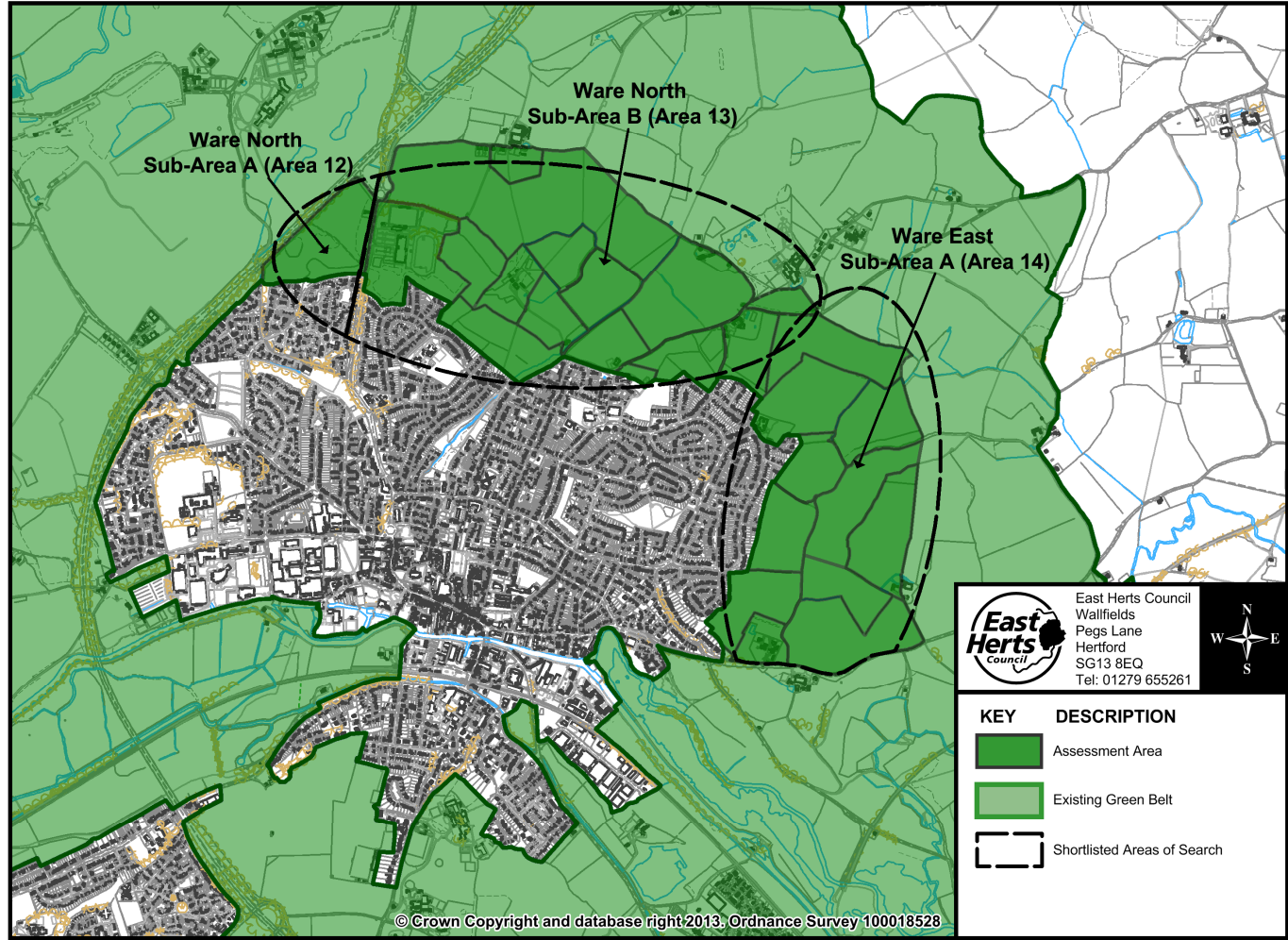
7.5 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for Sawbridgeworth North

	Recommendation	Justification
Option 1 (Purposes)	No release	Area 11 is not considered suitable for release of the Green Belt as it holds a particularly strong role in restricting urban sprawl of Sawbridgeworth by impeding ribbon development along Cambridge Road and maintaining the openness, as well as preventing merging with Spellbrook and assisting in safeguarding the countryside from development in an area of strong landscape character.
Option 2 (Boundary strength)	No release	If there were to be a release of the Green Belt, there are no clearly identifiable strong boundaries. However, it is expected that Sawbridgeworth North would only come forward as part of a large scale urban extension in Sawbridgeworth West that would likely require a bypass. Therefore there would be potential to use this bypass as a strong boundary.

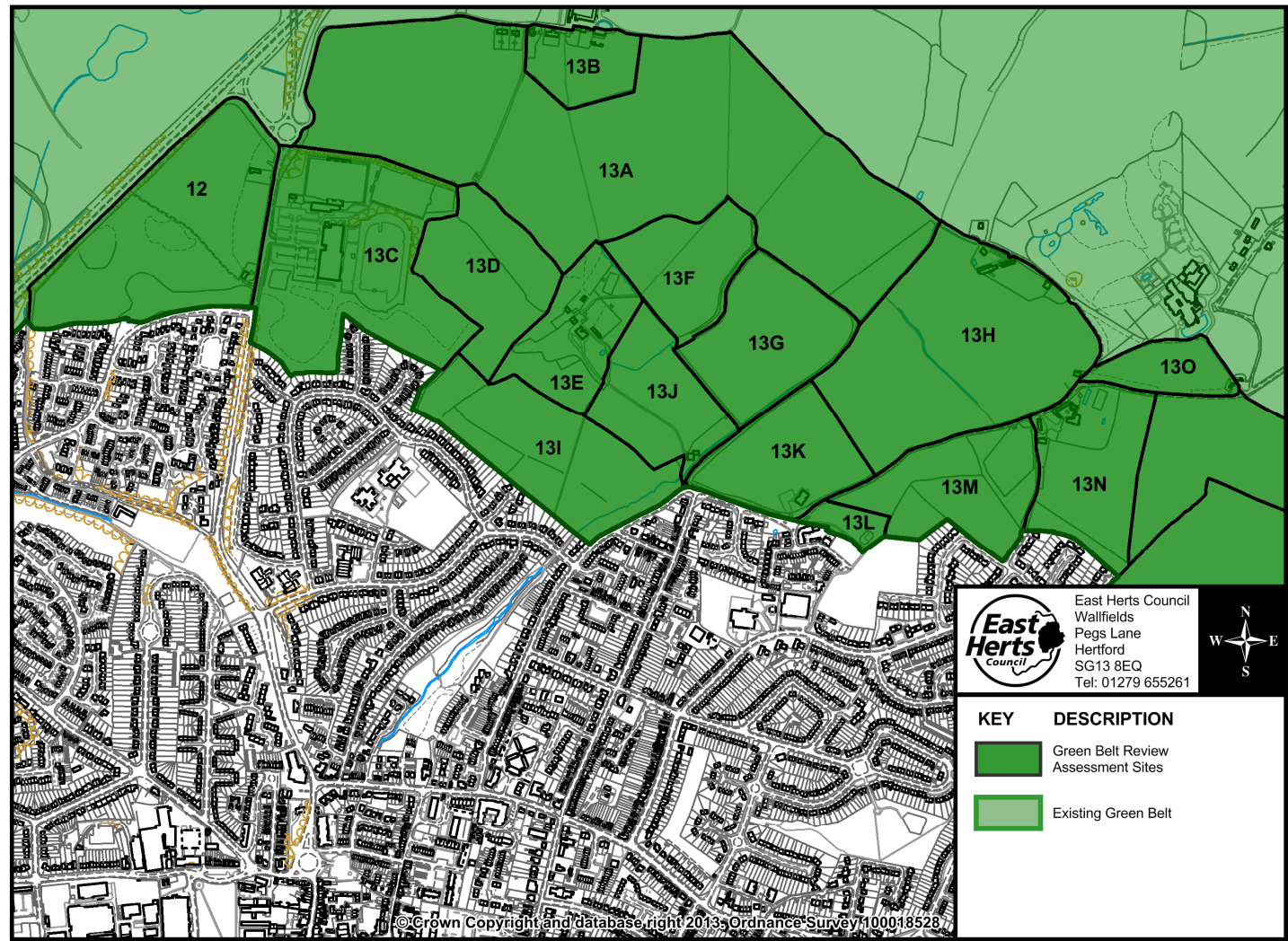
8 Detailed Site Assessment of Ware

8.1 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 1 - Green Belt Purpose Assessment

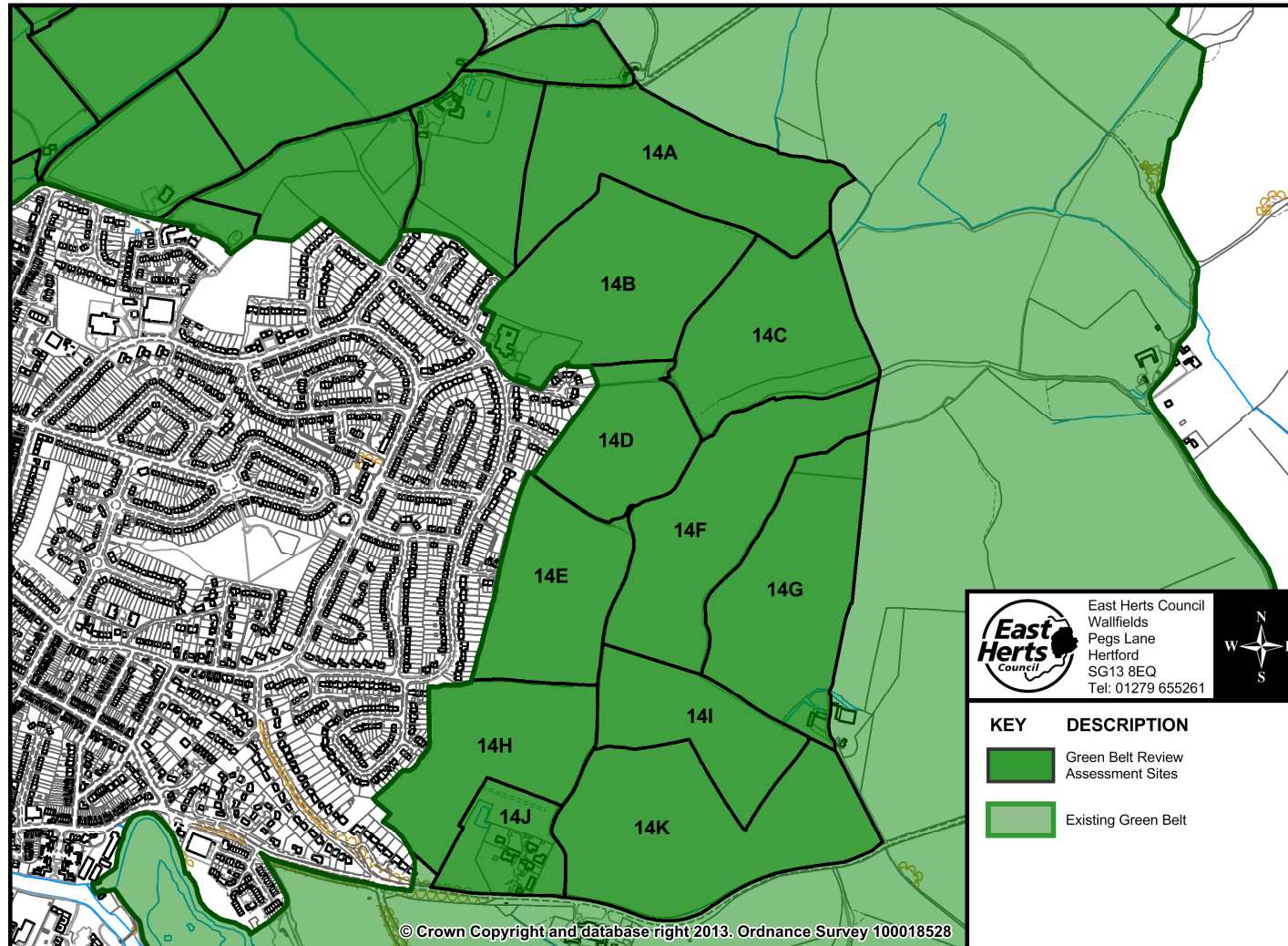
Ware Shortlisted Areas of Search



Ware North Assessment Sites



Ware East Assessment Sites



Purpose 1: Check unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas

	Ware North															
	Sub-Area A	Sub-Area B														
GBR Ref	12	13A	13B	13C	13D	13E	13F	13G	13H	13I	13J	13K	13L	13M	13N	13O
Openness	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	2	2	3	3
Impeding ribbon development	1	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	1	3	3	1	1
Purpose Total	4	6	6	3	6	6	6	6	4	4	6	4	5	5	4	4

The Green Belt at Ware North generally serves a strong role in checking unrestricted sprawl with regard to maintaining the openness. Most of the sites are not well connected to the built-up area and thus maintain the openness, with the exception of Sites 13L and 13M to the south of Fanhams Hall Road and Sites 13C and 13I towards the west of the Area 13 (Sub-Area B). Site 13I is surrounded by the built-up area on all sides bar one and thus the Green Belt here is particularly weak in serving to maintain the openness and prevent unrestricted sprawl. Site 13C also contains Wodson Park Leisure Centre and Site 13E contains the Round House and associated cottages which limits the openness of the Green Belt somewhat. Site 13A contains some dwellings, but these are not considered to greatly lessen the openness of the site and are distanced far from the town so are not thought to present sprawl from the built-up area. In respect of ribbon development, Wodson Park at Site 13C fronts onto the A1170/Ermine Street as do two buildings contained in Site 12 at Area 12 (Sub-Area A) opposite. In addition, along Fanhams Hall Road Site 13N contains development including Great Cozens, Site 13O contains part of Fanhams Hall Lodge, Site 13H contains a dwelling, and Site 13K contains a sports pavilion associated with the Ware Youth football pitches on the site. Site 12 is largely open with only one side abutting the built-up area, however its openness is somewhat lessened by being bound by the A10 to the west and the A1170 to the east.

	Ware East										
	Sub-Area A										
GBR Ref	14A	14B	14C	14D	14E	14F	14G	14H	14I	14J	14K
Openness	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
Impeding ribbon development	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3
Purpose Total	6	5	6	6	6	6	5	6	6	4	6

Similarly to Ware North, the Green Belt at Ware East generally serves a strong role in checking unrestricted sprawl for maintaining openness and also for impeding ribbon development. However, the converted Widbury House development contained in Site 14J limits the openness of the site somewhat. Site 14H is better connected to the existing built-up area and its openness is limited further given that its location is between the existing built-up area and the development in Site 14J. Part of Site 14B containing Priors Wood School is well connected to the existing built-up area. There is no ribbon development except for the converted Widbury House development on Widbury Hill, though only two sites in the whole area of search lie adjacent to a distributor road extending beyond the built-up area.

Purpose 2: Prevent neighbouring towns from merging

	Ware North															
	Sub-Area A	Sub-Area B														
GBR Ref	12	13A	13B	13C	13D	13E	13F	13G	13H	13I	13J	13K	13L	13M	13N	13O
Distance to neighbouring town	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Distance to neighbouring village	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Purpose Total	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

The Green Belt between Hertford and Ware is vital in terms of protecting the strategic gap between the two towns which is why development in this location was discounted. The direction of growth from release of Green Belt at Ware North would not encroach on this strategic gap and as such the Green Belt at Ware North is not considered to prevent merging with Hertford. Release of the Green Belt at Ware North would narrow the distances between the built-up area of Ware with other towns in the district. However, the distance would be over 10 kilometres in each case and as such the Green Belt is not considered to prevent Ware merging with any neighbouring towns. The distance to the nearest village of Thundridge is narrower, less than a kilometre at Sites 13A, 13B and 13C. Although the A10 is considered to be a strong physical barrier to development, the Green Belt at these sites is still considered to play a role in preventing merging with Ware and Thundridge particularly given that the boundary of Thundridge could change if it were to be inset from the Green Belt. The Green Belt in Area 12 (Sub-Area A) is also less than a kilometre from Thundridge, though it is considered that development would be contained between the A10 and the A1170 and therefore the Green Belt does not play such a strong role in preventing merging. The sites also play a role in preventing merging between Ware and the village of Cold Christmas, particularly to the east of Sites 13C and at Sites 13H and 13O. Although there remains a distance of over 1 kilometre between the Green Belt assessment sites and the village, there are no identifiable boundaries to prevent merging.

	Ware East										
	Sub-Area A										
GBR Ref	14A	14B	14C	14D	14E	14F	14G	14H	14I	14J	14K
Distance to neighbouring town	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
Distance to neighbouring village	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1
Purpose Total	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	3

As with Ware North, release of the Green Belt at Ware East would not encroach on the strategic gap between Ware and the nearest town of Hertford. However, given the eastern direction of development, the strategic gap would be encroached with the next closest town of Stanstead Abbots & St Margarets, particularly at the southernmost sites (Sites 14I, 14J and 14K) although the distance between them would still be over 1 kilometre. The B1004/Widbury Hill is considered to be a strong physical barrier to prevent further sprawl southwards and merging though, therefore the Green Belt in Area 14 is not thought to play a vital role in

preventing merging with Stanstead Abbots. With regard to merging with villages, the northernmost sites (Sites 14A, 14B and 14C) are less than 2 kilometres in distance from Thundridge and Cold Christmas and therefore do play some role in preventing merging, although less than Areas 12 and 13. The Green Belt of some of the easternmost sites of Ware East (Sites 14A, 14C, 14F and 14G) also lie within 2 kilometres of the village of Wareside. There is no evident strong physical barrier present to prevent merging with Wareside and thus the Green Belt is considered to play a role in preventing merging in this regard.

Purpose 3: Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

	Ware North															
	Sub-Area A	Sub-Area B														
GBR Ref	12	13A	13B	13C	13D	13E	13F	13G	13H	13I	13J	13K	13L	13M	13N	13O
Nature conservation	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	3
Trees/hedgerows	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
Landscape character assessment	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Agricultural land classification	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	3
Accessibility	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	1	2	2	1
Purpose Total	9	11	11	11	10	10	11	11	12	9	11	12	10	11	12	13

The Green Belt in both Area 12 (Sub-Area A) and Area 13 (Sub-Area B) assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Although Area 12 scores lower than Area 13, as the site has a low nature conservation value, relatively low Grade 3 agricultural land and no public access or designated recreational open space, it does assist in contributing to the countryside as the area lies within the Ware Parklands landscape character area, which scored amber for being of a strong character though poor condition. In addition, the site is within 1 kilometre of two small Sites of Special Scientific Interest at Downfield Pit, Westmill. The entire area is also protected by a tree preservation order to protect the historic trees associated with the registered historic Poles Park of Hanbury Manor, part of which covers the entire site and thus the Green Belt does assist in safeguarding the countryside in this respect.

The Green Belt in Area 13 lies within the Wareside – Braughing Uplands landscape character area which scored red for being of moderate strength but good condition. The area also contains relatively high Grade 2 agricultural land in every site apart from Site 13I which was classed as urban in the agricultural land classification assessment. The majority of the sites can be accessed by the public, though there are no public rights of way at Sites 13D, 13E and 13O which is part of the Fanhams Hall Hotel grounds, nor at Site 13L, although a Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP) is expected on this site as part of the Former Trinity Centre development to the south. There are also no public rights of way at Site 13C, although the Wodson Park Leisure Centre provides designated recreational open space. Site 13K is accessible by public rights of way as well as providing recreational open space in form of playing pitches for the Ware Youth Football Club. The area has a low nature conservation value, with the exception of Site 13O to the far east which contains part of Fanhams Hall Meadow wildlife site and some protected trees and Sites 13H and 13N which lie adjacent to it. Site 13C also lies adjacent to the protected trees at Site 12.

	Ware East										
	Sub-Area A										
GBR Ref	14A	14B	14C	14D	14E	14F	14G	14H	14I	14J	14K
Nature conservation	2	1	3	3	2	3	1	1	1	1	1
Trees/hedgerows	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	2	3	2
Landscape character assessment	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Agricultural land classification	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Accessibility	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Purpose Total	11	11	14	14	12	14	11	12	11	12	11

The Green Belt at Ware East assists in safeguarding the countryside to a similar, although slightly greater, extent than Area 13 in Ware North does. The Green Belt in Ware East is in the same landscape character area of Wareside – Braughing Uplands that scored red in the landscape character area assessments. All the sites also contain relatively high Grade 2 agricultural land and there is access to the majority of sites via public rights of way, with the exception of Site 14A and 14B, although the latter does provide recreational open space in the form of playing fields at Priors Wood School. Site 14D also provides a small recreation ground in the north part of the site. The Green Belt at Ware East has a higher nature conservation value than Ware North as the Wood Lane wildlife site stretches across the central part of the area in Sites 14C, 14D and 14F and lies adjacent to Site 14D. All

these sites therefore act to safeguard the wildlife site from encroachment. There are also more protected trees than at Ware North. A greater band of woodland overlapping the Wood Lane wildlife site contained in Sites 14C and 14F and adjacent to Site 14D is protected by a tree preservation order. Sites 14H and 14K lie adjacent to many of the protected trees that line the border of Site 14J, and Site 14H contains a protected solitary oak tree in the southern part of the site.

Purpose 4: Preserve setting and special character of historic towns

	Ware North															
	Sub-Area A	Sub-Area B														
GBR Ref	12	13A	13B	13C	13D	13E	13F	13G	13H	13I	13J	13K	13L	13M	13N	13O
Designated heritage assets	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	3	3
Conservation Area	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Purpose Total	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	4	4

The Green Belt in Ware North contains a number of listed buildings and registered historic park and gardens. Area 12 (Sub-Area A) contains part of the registered historic Poles Park of Hanbury Manor which Site 13C lies adjacent to. This lies far from the historic core of Ware and thus the Green Belt is not thought to preserve the special character or setting of the historic town. To the east of Area 13 (Sub-Area B) lies the listed building of Fanhams Hall and listed garden features which Site 13O and 13N lie adjacent to. Site 13O contains part of the registered historic garden of Fanhams Hall which Sites 13H and 13N abut, and also the Fanhams Hall lodge which is listed. Site 13H contains the listed building of Little Fanhams and Site 13N contains the listed building of Great Cozens. The Round House is a listed building centrally located in Ware North in Site 13E, surrounded by 13A, 13E, 13F, and 13I. Site 13B to the north is adjacent to the listed old farmhouse and Roseberry Cottages at Moles Farm. These designated heritage assets are listed, relatively far from the historic core of Ware, and thus are not thought to contribute to the setting or special character of Ware. The Green Belt at Ware North is located relatively far from the Conservation Area of Ware.

	Ware East										
	Sub-Area A										
GBR Ref	14A	14B	14C	14D	14E	14F	14G	14H	14I	14J	14K
Designated heritage assets	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	2	1	2
Conservation Area	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Purpose Total	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	2	3	2	3

The Green Belt at Ware East contains less designated heritage assets than Ware North. Site 14A is adjacent to the registered historic garden of Fanhams Hall and listed Fanhams Hall Lodge building, which as previously noted, is thought to be too far from the historic core of Ware to contribute to the setting or special character of Ware. Site 14G contains a listed barn of Priorswood Cottage in the southern part of the site and Sites 14J and 14K lie adjacent to an Area of Archaeological Significance further south around the listed barn at Widbury Hill Farm. However these designated heritage assets are again thought to be located too far from the historic core of Ware to contribute to the setting or special character of the historic town. The Green Belt at Ware East is located relatively far from the Conservation Area of Ware.

Ware Summary of Purposes Served

Ware North Area 12 (Sub-Area A) and Area 13 (Sub-Area B)

- The Green Belt at Ware North serves a role in checking unrestricted sprawl, given the largely open nature of the land. In Area 13 (Sub-Area B), Site 13I is an exception to this as it is well connected to the existing built-up area and thus does not serve to maintain the openness. The Green Belt at Area 12 (Sub-Area A) serves a lesser role in checking unrestricted sprawl as its openness is limited due to being bounded by the A10 and A1170 and it is considered that sprawl could be restricted by these roads. Where the sites abut distributor roads that extend beyond the built-up area, the Green Belt has not served to check sprawl fully as there are small signs of ribbon development along the A1170/Ermine Street and Fanhams Hall Road, although some of this is related to recreational use of the land.
- The Green Belt at Ware North is not considered to serve the purpose of preventing merging with nearby towns. The Green Belt is thought to play a part in preventing merging with the village of Thundridge, particularly in Area 12 (Sub-Area A) and more so in the northernmost sites of Area 13 (Sub-Area B) at Sites 13A, 13B and 13C.

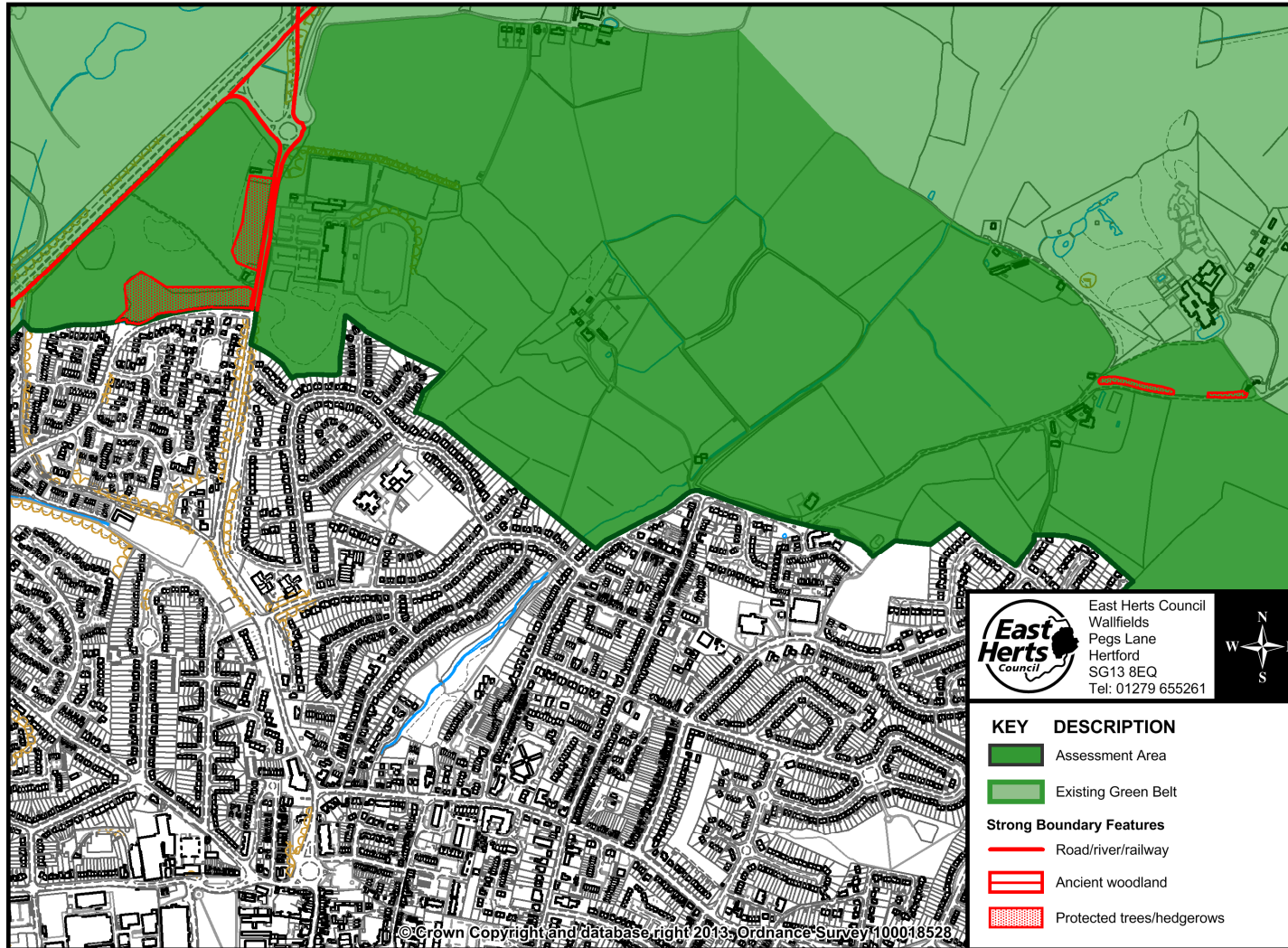
- The Green Belt in both areas serves to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Area 12 (Sub-Area A) assists in safeguarding the countryside as the entire area is designated by a tree preservation order to preserve historic trees within the registered historic Poles Park. Area 13 (Sub-Area B) assists in safeguarding the countryside owing to a having a moderate strength landscape character in good condition, a relatively high agricultural land grading and generally good public accessibility and recreational opportunities. Although there is a relatively low nature conservation value, Sites 13O and the surrounding Sites 13H and 13N assist in safeguarding the Fanhams Hall Meadow wildlife site from encroachment. Site 13I fulfils the purpose of safeguarding the countryside the least, as it is more urban in character demonstrated by being classed as urban in the agricultural land classifications.
- The Green Belt at Ware North in both Area 12 (Sub-Area A) and Area 13 (Sub-Area B) does not serve a role in preserving the setting and special character of the historic town of Ware. Although the Green Belt at Ware North contains a number of designated heritage assets, particularly to the east with the registered historic garden of Fanhams Hall and associated listed buildings, these are considered to be too far from the historic core to contribute to the setting or special character of the historic town.

Ware East Area 14 (Sub-Area A)

- The Green Belt at Ware East serves a role in checking unrestricted sprawl, given the largely open nature of the land and little ribbon development. Site 14J is an exception to the openness, as it contains Widbury House development which is also ribbon development and impacts on the openness of Site 14H, which is already slightly better connected to the existing built-up area. Priors Wood School contained within Site 14B is also well connected to the existing built-up area.
- The Green Belt at Ware East is not considered to serve the purpose of preventing merging with Stanstead Abbots, given that the B1004/Widbury Hill would act as a barrier to prevent sprawl further south. The Green Belt is considered to assist in preventing merging with Thundridge at the northernmost sites (Sites 14A, 14B and 14C) and more so with Wadesmill at the easternmost sites (Sites 14A, 14C, 14F and 14G) where there is no potential boundary to contain development.
- The Green Belt serves the purpose of assisting in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment to a slightly greater extent than Area 13 of Ware North. It shares a similar character to Area 13 of Ware North with regard to landscape character and agricultural grading, but has a slightly increased nature conservation value at Sites 14A, 14C and 14D and a greater presence of protected trees, particularly in Site 14J.
- The Green Belt at Ware East does not serve a role in preserving the setting and special character of the historic town of Ware. Although the Green Belt at Ware East contains few designated heritage assets, these are considered to be too far from the historic core to contribute to the setting or special character of the historic town.

8.2 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Ware North

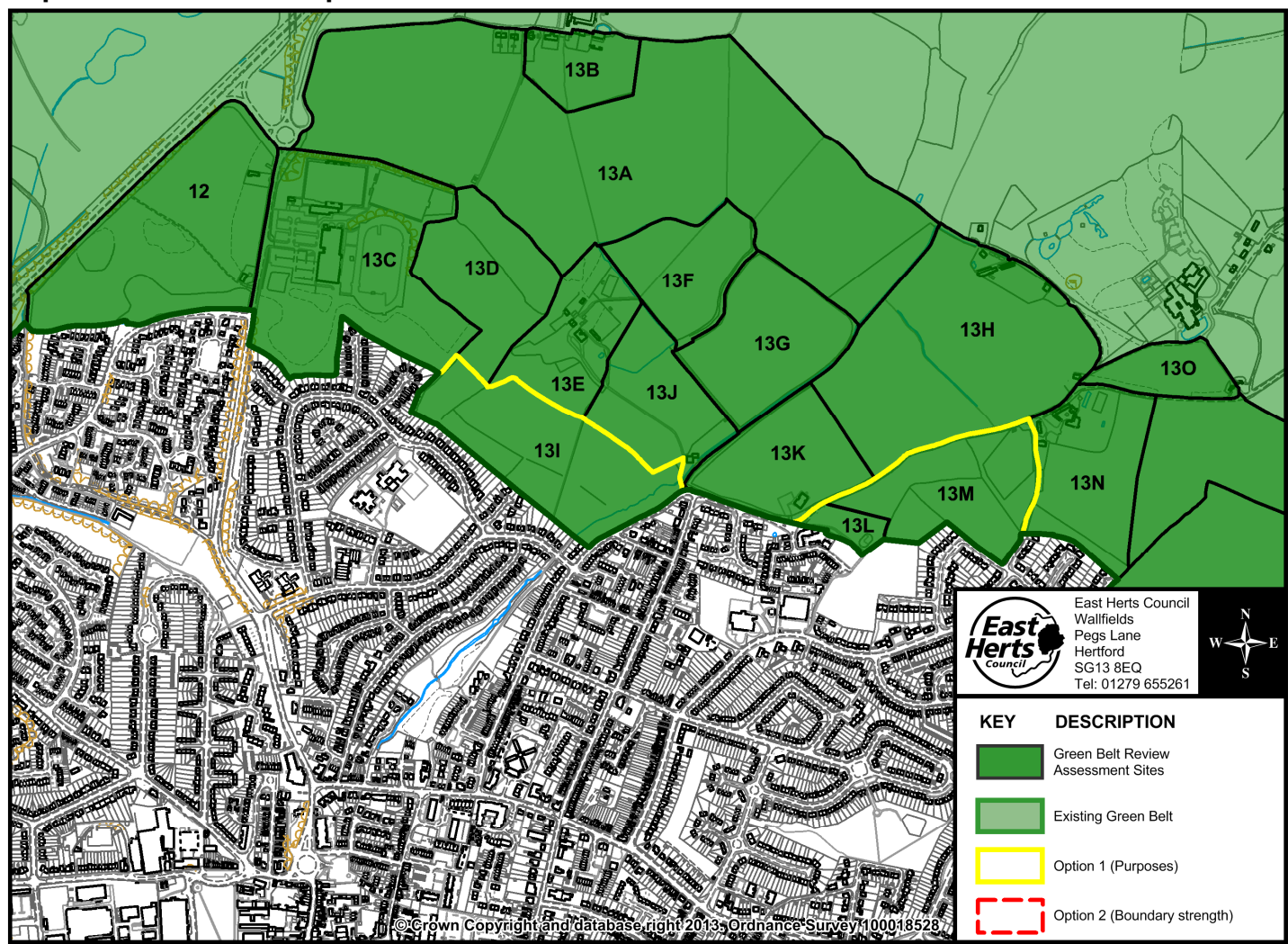
Map showing strong boundaries at Ware North Sub-Area A and Ware North Sub-Area B



As main distributor roads, the A1170 and the A10 provide strong boundaries. Site 130 contains two protected tree belts to the south which present small sections of strong boundaries. There are two sections of woodland within Sub-Area A which are protected by a tree preservation order that present a strong boundary to the south and strengthen the A1170 to the east.

Existing boundary strength	Existing boundary description
Sub-Area A: Weak	The Green Belt boundary at Sub-Area A follows the residential curtilages at The Larches which is regarded as a weak boundary, then borders Quincey Road up to Ermine Street. Quincey Street is a minor road, and although it has provided a clear physical boundary to contain residential development immediately to the south, residential development to the northern/western side has occurred and therefore it is still regarded as a weak boundary.
Sub-Area B: Weak	The Green Belt boundary at Sub-Area B follows residential curtilages of properties at The Crest, Heath Drive, Salmons Close, Chiltern Close and Horrocks Close until it reaches High Oak Road and the stretch of Fanhams Hall Road up to Lady Margaret Gardens. Whilst the residential curtilages are weak, these two relatively minor roads provide a clearly defined physical boundary to development further south. High Oak Road has been encroached upon to the western side however and Fanhams Hall Road does not continue to wrap around the existing built-up area to the east, therefore both roads are still considered weak. The boundary is then weak as it passes through the curtilage and properties of St Johns Court, following a fenced and hedged field boundary until it meets the residential curtilages of Linwood Road. The boundary then follows the minor roads of Linwood Road and Elder Road, cutting through a residential curtilage of a property in Elder Road and following a thick tree line. The boundary in this sub-area is considered weak as the majority is formed of residential curtilages, it follows minor roads and there is a lack of physical boundaries in some places.

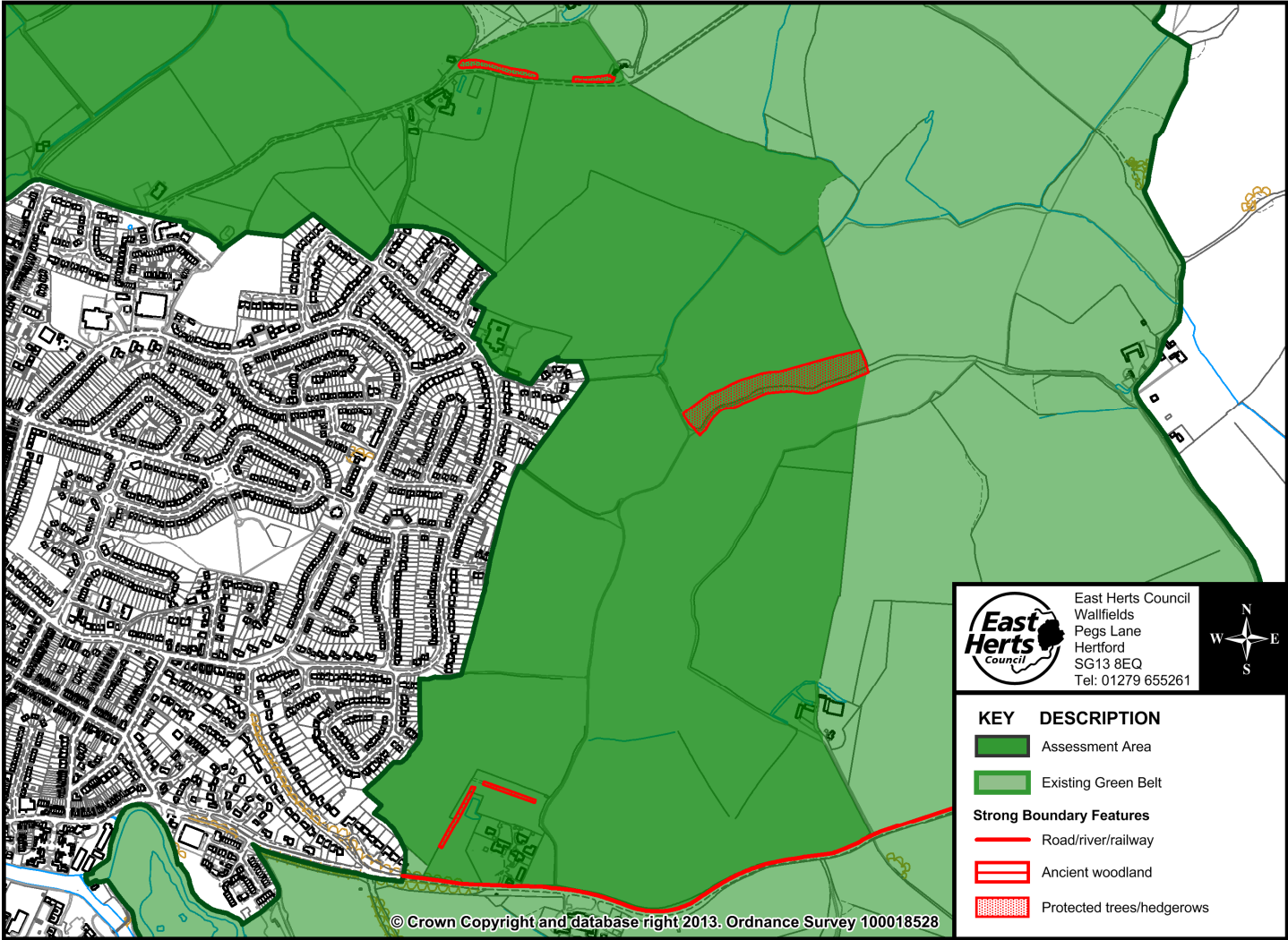
8.3 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for Ware North
Map of recommended options for Ware North Sub-Area A and Sub-Area B



	Recommendation	Justification
Option 1 (Purposes)	Sub-Area A: No release	The site is not considered suitable for a release from the Green Belt, largely due to its role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, given that the site is part of the registered historic Poles Park and contains a blanket tree preservation order on the trees contained within it due to their historic importance. The Green Belt is also considered to serve a purpose in preventing merging with Thundridge.
	Sub-Area B: Release Sites 13I, 13M and 13L	<p>Site 13I is considered to serve the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl the least, as it is the best connected to the existing built-up area as it encroached on all but one side. It meets the purpose of safeguarding the countryside the least as the nature conservation value is low and it does not present any of the significant landscape features which characterise the Braughing Uplands landscape character area. The site was also regarded as urban in the agricultural landscape character classifications, suggesting it is weaker in terms of countryside character. Although the site is considered to assist in preventing merging with Thundridge, given its location to the south of the area of search it is one of the sites thought to hold the least significance in this respect. The site is not considered to fulfil the purpose of preserving the special character and setting of the historic town of Ware.</p> <p>If further release was needed, part of Site 13M would be the next preferred site along with Site 13L. Although Site 13M does assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment and in impeding ribbon development along Fanhams Hall Road, it is better connected to the built-up area than any other site (with the exception of Site 13I). Releasing part of Site 13M up to the hedgerow that adjoins the residential curtilages of Elder Row, in conjunction with releasing Site 13L, would 'round off' the built form of Ware so that it was more compact. Retaining Site 13L as Green Belt in this circumstance would serve little purpose; as it is acknowledged that Site 13L is to be a NEAP, this could be protected under a recreational open spaces policy in the District Plan. Similarly to Site 13I, it is thought to hold comparatively less role in preventing merging with Thundridge given its location to the south of the area of search, and it is not considered to fulfil the purpose of preserving the special character and setting of the historic town of Ware.</p>

		In respect of boundaries, Site 13l is bounded by a tree line to the north which is a weak boundary. High Oak Road marks the eastern boundary, which although as a minor road is weak, is comparatively stronger than the tree line.
Option 2 (Boundary strength)	Sub-Area A: Release Site 12	If there were to be a release of the Green Belt with regard to boundary strength alone, it is considered that the whole of Area 12 would be released. The site boundaries of the A10, and the A1170 are much stronger boundaries than the existing of a more minor road and residential curtilages.
	Sub-Area B: No release	If there were to be a release of the Green Belt, there are no clearly identifiable strong boundaries. However, it is possible that a strong boundary could be built into development.

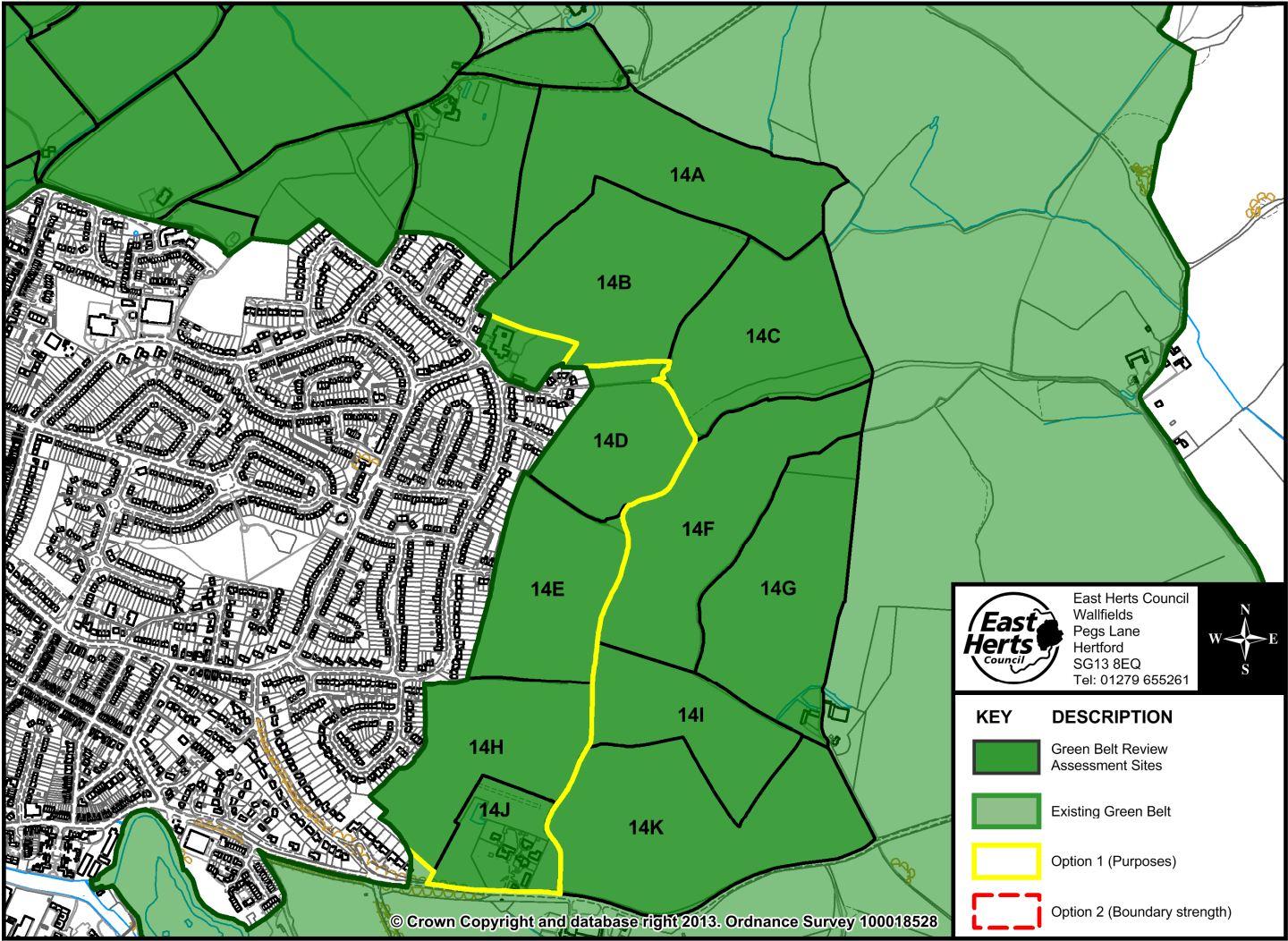
8.4 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Ware East
Map showing strong boundaries at Ware East Sub-Area A



The B1004/Widbury Hill provides a strong boundary to the south of the area of search. There is a thick tree belt adjacent to part of Wood Lane which provides a strong boundary feature, although it is less continuous than the road to the south. The tree lined curtilage around the former Widbury House to the south of the area of search is partly protected by a tree preservation order and therefore these sections are thought to provide strong boundaries.

Existing boundary strength	Existing boundary description
Weak	<p>The Green Belt boundary follows a hedgerow adjacent to Ash Road, abutting the curtilage of an electricity sub-station and a property in Cozens Road, then following Cozens Road and Beacons Road. These minor roads are regarded as weak, even more so because the Priors Wood School is located in the Green Belt adjacent. The boundary then abuts the curtilage of Beacons Road, Elms Road, Cozens Road, The Vineyard and Barleys Pond Road, as well as a small section of woodland adjacent to Barley Ponds Road. As it meets the boundary of a residential curtilage on Little Widbury Lane, it loses any physical marker as it draws outwards into the field then arches down across the B1004/Widbury Hill, cutting through a property and residential curtilage on Little Widbury Lane. It then follows the southern edge of and B1004/Widbury Hill eastwards. The boundary is considered weak as the majority is formed of residential curtilages, and it follows minor roads and there is a lack of physical boundaries in some places.</p>

8.5 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for Ware East
Map of recommended options for Ware East Sub-Area A

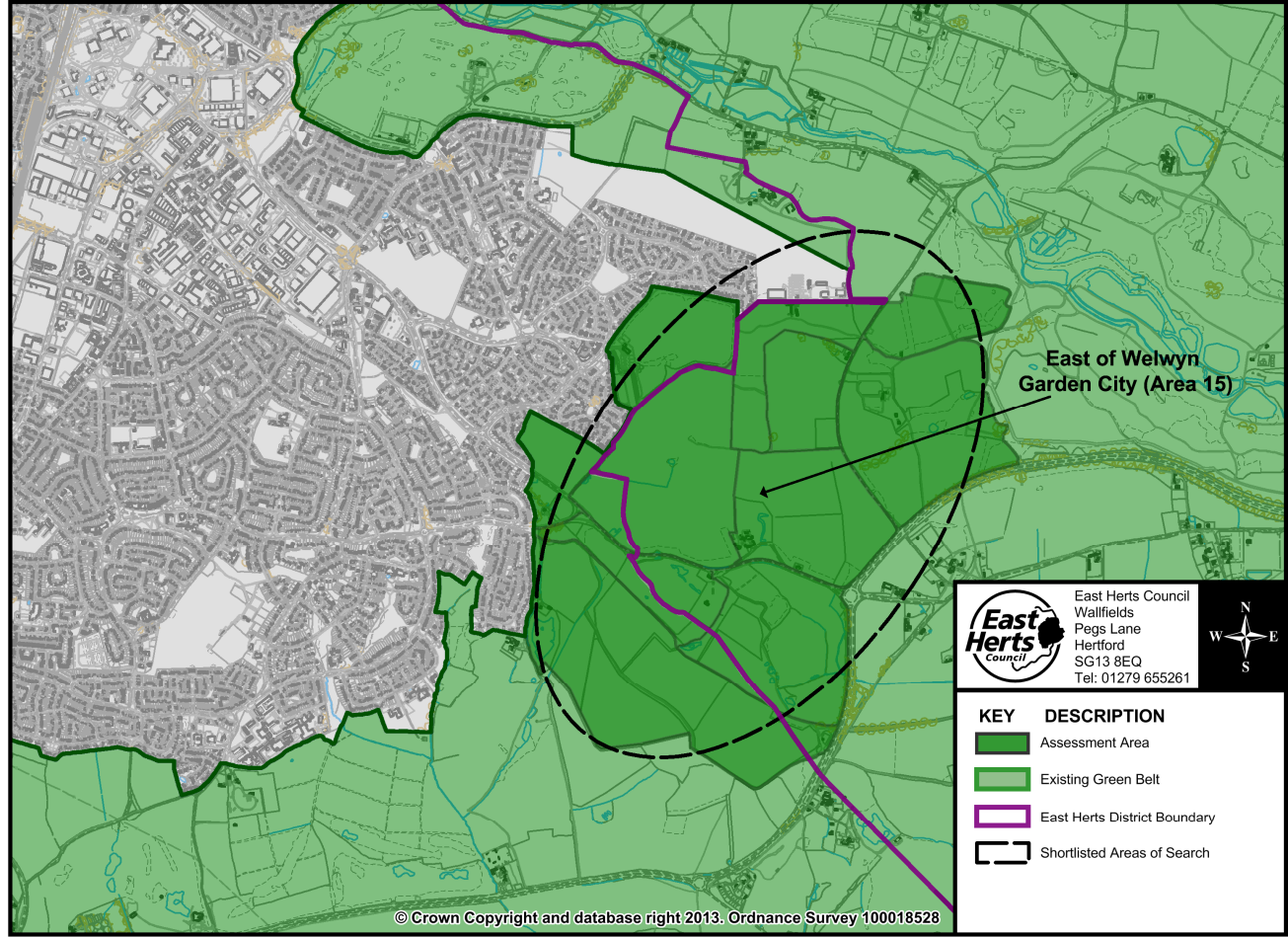


	Recommendation	Justification
Option 1 (Purposes)	Release Sites 14D, 14E, 14H, 14J and part of Site 14B	<p>The area serves an important role in preventing the unrestricted sprawl of Ware in retaining the openness, particularly given that the urban form of Ware on the eastern side is relatively compact. The eastern boundary of the suggested release would follow Wood Lane public footpath and therefore maintain a compact form that would not encroach on remaining Green Belt further east. Site 14J contains development which limits its openness and encroaches Site 14H, which is better connected to the existing built-up area than other sites, so these fulfil the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl to a lesser extent. Although it is acknowledged that the area of search fulfils a purpose in preventing merging with villages and of safeguarding the countryside, these western sites are preferable for release as they serve less of a purpose in preventing merging with Wareside and Thundridge due to being distanced further away. They are also of a lower nature conservation value, although Site 14D contains a tiny section of the Wood Lane wildlife site but it is thought this can be factored into any development. Site 14B is not preferred for total release as it would encroach into the remaining Green Belt, and as it reaches further north and east than the other sites, it serves a slightly stronger role in preventing merging with the villages. Priorswood School contained within Site 14B is encroached by the built-up area and therefore not thought to contribute to the openness or safeguarding the countryside, and its playing field could be protected under a recreational open spaces policy in the District Plan.</p> <p>To the north and west, the suggested boundary along a tree line and Wood Lane public footpath would be weak. The B1004/Widbury Hill to the south would be a strong boundary in Green Belt terms.</p>
Option 2 (Boundary strength)	No release	<p>If there were to be a release of the Green Belt, there are no clearly identifiable strong boundaries apart from the B1004/Widbury Hill to the south. Wood Lane provides a fairly continuous eastern boundary but this would need to be strengthened if it were to be used as a Green Belt boundary. It is possible that a strong boundary could be built into development.</p>

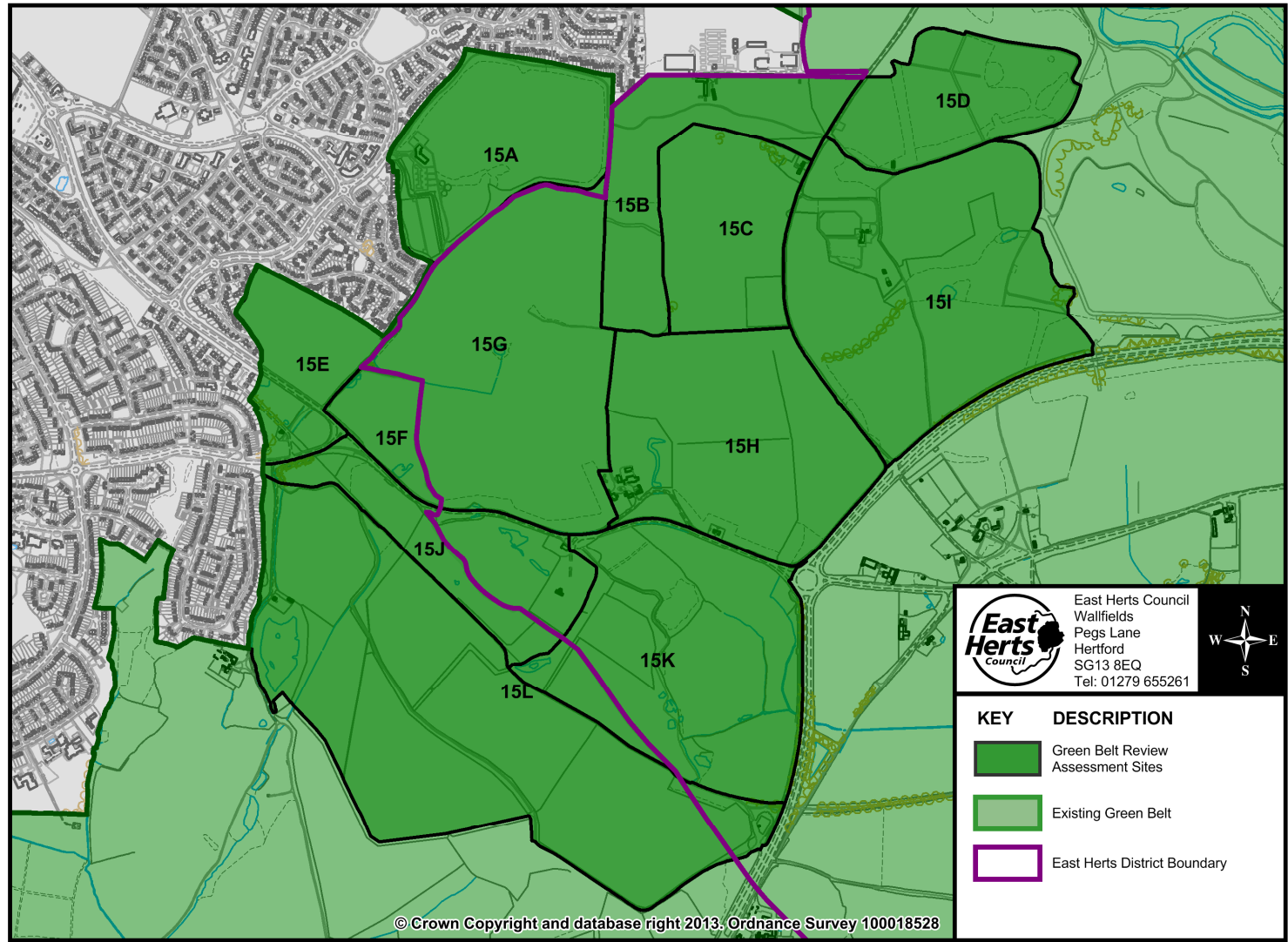
9 Detailed Site Assessment of land East of Welwyn Garden City

9.1 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 1 - Green Belt Purpose Assessment

East of Welwyn Garden City Shortlisted Area of Search



East of Welwyn Garden City Assessment Sites



Purpose 1: Check unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas

East of Welwyn Garden City												
GBR Ref	15A	15B	15C	15D	15E	15F	15G	15H	15I	15J	15K	15L
Openness	2	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Impeding ribbon development	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	3	3
Purpose Total	5	6	6	6	4	6	6	4	6	6	6	6

The Green Belt generally serves a strong role in checking unrestricted sprawl with regard to maintaining the openness, although it is better connected to the built-up area of Welwyn Garden City at Site 15A and more so at Site 15E where it is surrounded by the built-up area at all but one side. There are signs of ribbon development at Site 15H of Birchall Farm and two dwellings along the B195/Cole Green Lane, although it is acknowledged that this was present before the Green Belt designation. Site 15J also contains temporary development along the same route to facilitate inert waste recycling and soil washing in conjunction with the restoration of historic landfill, and is proposed as a waste site allocation in Hertfordshire County Council's emerging Waste Site Allocations Local Development Document.

Purpose 2: Prevent neighbouring towns from merging

East of Welwyn Garden City												
GBR Ref	15A	15B	15C	15D	15E	15F	15G	15H	15I	15J	15K	15L
Distance to neighbouring towns	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Distance to neighbouring villages	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3
Purpose Total	3	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4

The Green Belt is not thought to play a strong role in preventing merging with the nearest town of Hertford, as it is located over 2 kilometres away. However it does play a role, particularly at the eastern sites given that there is no strong boundary to restrict development. The Green Belt would also play a stronger part if Hertford West was also released from the Green Belt, so the residual strategic gap would need consideration. In respect of villages, Cole Green is located less than 1 kilometre away from the majority of the sites assessed, excluding Sites 15A, 15E and 15F, with Labby Green, Letty Green and Birch Green also in close proximity. Therefore the Green Belt is thought to play a role in preventing merging with the villages, although it is acknowledged that the A414 is a strong physical barrier which could contain development and prevent merging and therefore the Green Belt is not thought to contribute as significantly in this regard.

Purpose 3: Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

East of Welwyn Garden City												
GBR Ref	15A	15B	15C	15D	15E	15F	15G	15H	15I	15J	15K	15L
Nature conservation	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	2
Trees/hedgerows	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	2
Landscape character assessment	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Agricultural land classification	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1
Accessibility	3	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2
Purpose Total	9	11	9	10	10	9	9	9	10	9	10	8

The Green Belt in this area of search assists in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. It has a high nature conservation value and several areas of protected vegetation. Site 15B contains the Henry and Birchall Woods wildlife site and ancient woodland, which Site 15A abuts, and Site 15B also contains a small protected area of woodland to the far east. Sites 15D and part of 15I contain part of the Panshanger Park wildlife site as well as strips of protected woodland to the far west. Sites 15E and 15J contain the Rolls Wood wildlife site, of which part in Site 15E is designated ancient woodland. Site 15F contains the Blackthorn Wood wildlife site. Site 15J contains Land southwest of Birchall Lane/Cole Green Tip wildlife site and Site 15K contains Greater Captain's Wood and Holwell Park Wood wildlife site, of which parts are designated ancient woodland. Sites 15C, 15G and 15H do

not contain any designated nature protection sites or protected trees, although they are all adjacent to both features. All the sites are located in the Welwyn Fringes landscape character area with the exceptions of Sites 15D and 15I which are within the Panshanger Parkland landscape character area. Both areas scored green in the landscape character area assessments for being of moderate character strength but poor condition. There is generally good public access via public rights of way to all the sites, with the exception of Sites 15D and 15I. Site 15A also provides recreational open space in the form of Moneyhole Lane Park. The land in the area of search is not of particularly good agricultural quality. Sites 15A, 15E, 15F, 15J and 15L were assessed as non-agricultural. The remaining sites contain Grade 3 agricultural land, though the majority of Sites 15D and 15G are assessed as non-agricultural, although it is acknowledged that Site 15G is in agricultural use.

Purpose 4: Preserve setting and special character of historic towns

East of Welwyn Garden City												
GBR Ref	15A	15B	15C	15D	15E	15F	15G	15H	15I	15J	15K	15L
Designated heritage assets	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
Conservation Area	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Purpose Total	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3

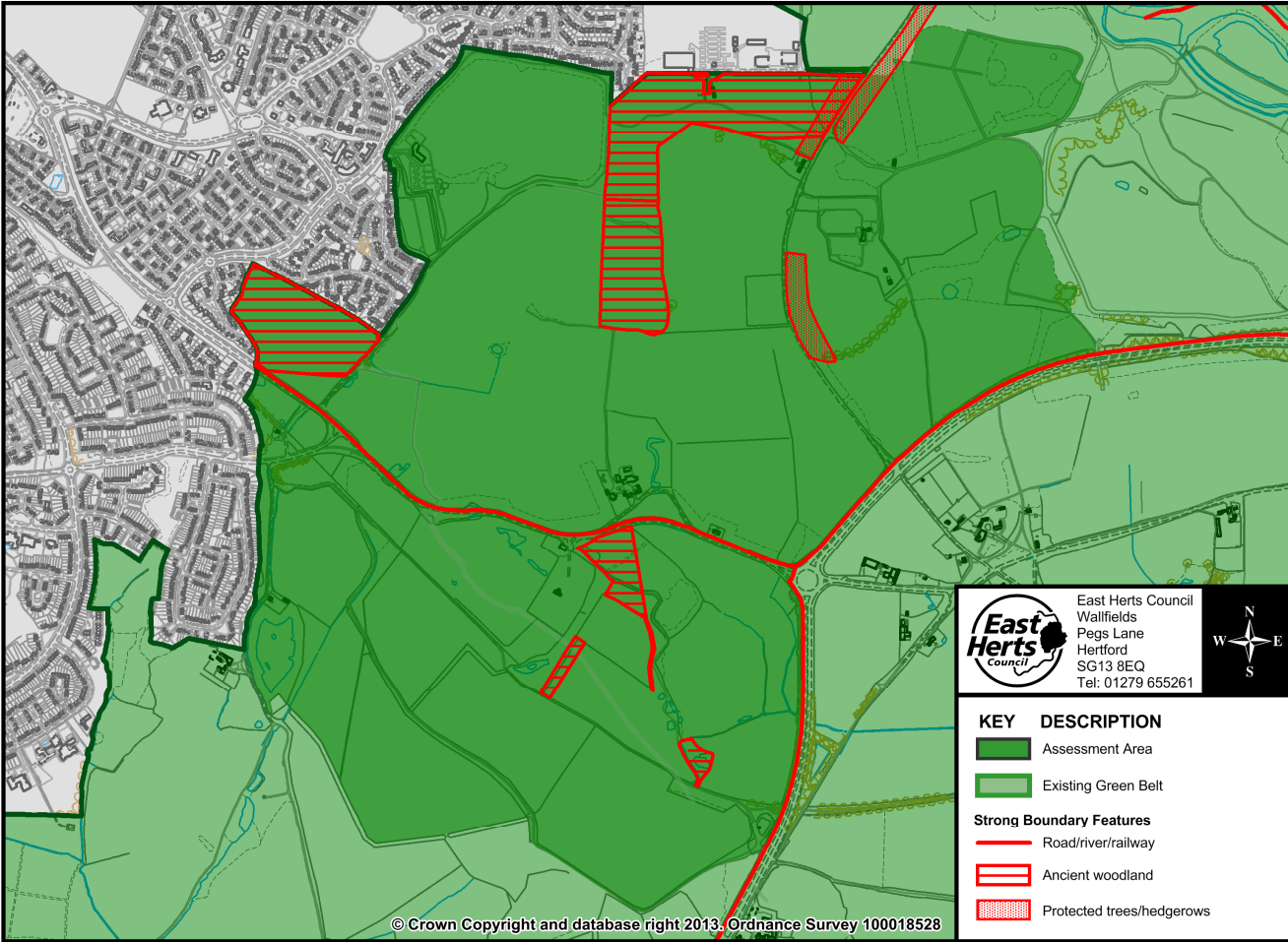
Although none of the sites lie within or in close proximity to the Conservation Area of Welwyn Garden City, there are numerous designated heritage assets contained within and surrounding the area of search. The sites to the east of Bocket Hill (Sites 15D and 15I) are located within the registered historic Panshanger Park with Sites 15B, 15C and 15H adjacent to it. Site 15I contains the listed keeper's cottage of Panshanger House and listed nursery gardens wall. Site 15G also contains listed buildings in the form of Birchall Farmhouse and the associated barn and stables. There are numerous Areas of Archaeological Significance across the area of search. The largest lies within Sites 15C, 15G, 15H, the southern part of Site 15B, a western section of Site 15I and a very small eastern part of Site 15K, as well as some adjoining land to the south-east of the A414 near Cole Green. There are smaller Areas of Archaeological Significance contained within Site 15A, Site 15D, and one overlapping the south-eastern corner of Site 15I. There is also one contained within Sites 15E, 15F and part of 15J. The only site that does not contain a designated heritage asset is Site 15L. However, this site does lie adjacent to the largest Area of Archaeological Significance within the area of search to the north. Although the Green Belt of the area of search contains numerous heritage assets and contributes to preserving the

registered historic Panshanger Park, it is not thought to contribute towards preserving the special character of the town itself as it is some distance from the historic core of the town. Welwyn Garden City is not as old as the historic towns in East Herts. However, it is historically important for being one of the first garden cities to be developed in the 1920s. A key feature of garden cities was that they were surrounded by a rural countryside belt. In this sense, the Green Belt does assist in preserving the historic setting of Welwyn Garden City, although the original countryside belt has since been encroached upon. It is acknowledged however that if the sites assessed were released, the town would still retain a rural belt around it.

East of Welwyn Garden City Summary of Purposes Served

- The Green Belt serves the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl from built-up areas, as it is largely open and shows little sign of ribbon development with the exception of three dwellings in Site 15H and temporary development of a waste recycling site in Site 15J. The Green Belt is better connected to the built-up area at Sites 15A and 15E.
- The Green Belt serves the purpose of preventing merging with the neighbouring town of Hertford, particularly the eastern sites. Its role in preventing merging would increase if there was a release of Green Belt at Hertford West and therefore consideration would need to be given to the extent of any release and resultant strategic gap. Although the area of search is close to the nearest villages of Cole Green, Labby Green, Letty Green and Birch Green, the A414 is thought to provide a strong physical barrier that could prevent such merging and as such the Green Belt is not thought to play a strong role in this respect.
- The Green Belt serves the purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, particularly given the numerous sections of ancient and protected woodland, some of which are also wildlife sites. The Green Belt east of Panshanger Lane holds a strong role in safeguarding Panshanger Park wildlife site from encroachment.
- The Green Belt serves the purpose of preserving the historic setting of Welwyn Garden City, given its historic form of a garden city nature. However, it is acknowledged that if any sites assessed were released, the town would still retain a rural belt around it. The Green Belt is not thought to serve the purpose of preserving the special character of Welwyn Garden City given its distance from the Conservation Area and historic core of the town.

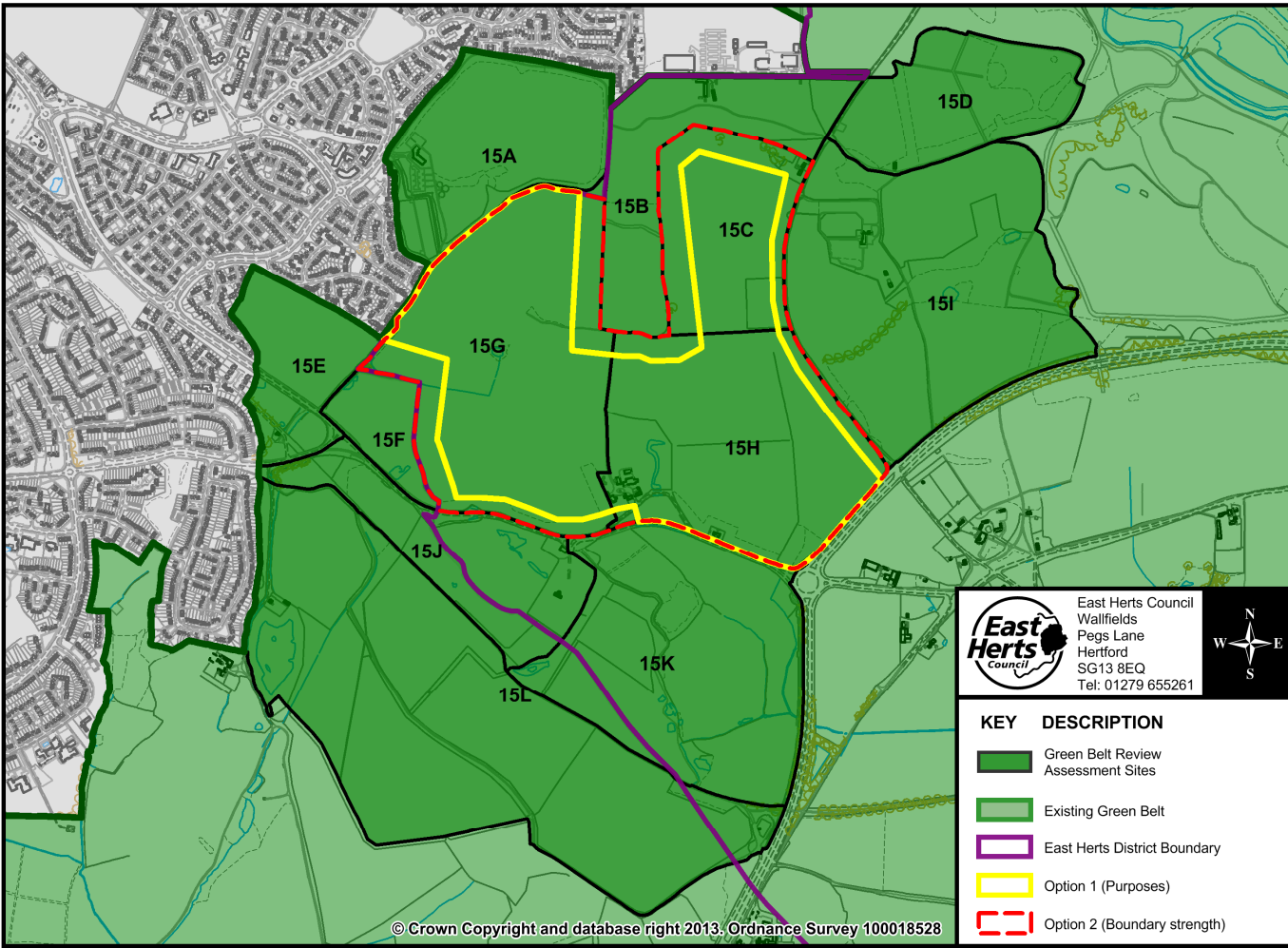
9.2 Detail Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for East of Welwyn Garden City
Map showing strong boundaries at East of Welwyn Garden City



The main distributor road of the A414 and the secondary distributor road of the B195/Birchall Lane/Cole Green Lane mark strong boundaries within this area of search. In addition, the ancient woodland of Henry Wood and Birchall Wood to the north provide a strong boundary. The eastern edge of Henry Wood is further strengthened by a tree preservation order. Although the lane between the B1000 and the A414 is a minor road and consequently a weak boundary, it is strengthened somewhat by protected tree belts along it. South of the B195, there are sections of ancient woodland within Great Captain's and Holwellpark Wood. These mark strong boundary features, although are not as continuous as the roads and therefore are not as defensible a boundary as the roads. Rolls Wood to the west of the area of search is also ancient woodland and provides a strong boundary.

Existing boundary strength	Existing boundary description
Weak	<p>To the north, the Green Belt boundary to the existing built-up area follows the northern edge of Henry Woods adjacent to Panshanger Lane and across the woodland south of Panshanger aerodrome. It follows the curtilages of properties and the car park of Martlesham, then the residential curtilages of Stirling Way, Somerham, Leysdown, Hunsdon, Wyton and Sylvan Way. It follows the line of vegetation south of the residential curtilages of Sylvan Way southwards across the road that leads to the Pavilion, down to and along the physical built curtilages of Russett House and the residential curtilages of properties on Russett Wood, Dale Wood, Sylvandale, The Holt and Hurst Close, before following the southern edge of the road of Sylvandale and then the residential curtilages of properties at Birchall Wood. South of Black Fan Road, the boundary follows the residential curtilages of Holwell Hyde and then follows no physical features until it reaches the residential curtilages of Thistle Grove, before following the line of woodland to the east of Thistle Grove and following the western edge of Holwell Hyde Lane southwards, when it heads eastwards along the residential curtilages of the southernmost properties at Thistle Grove.</p>

9.3 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for East of Welwyn Garden City
Map of recommended options for East of Welwyn Garden City



Although the assessment takes into account Green Belt within the Welwyn Hatfield District, East Herts Council can only amend Green Belt within East Herts District. Therefore the suggested options made in the Review only address changes to East Herts Green Belt.

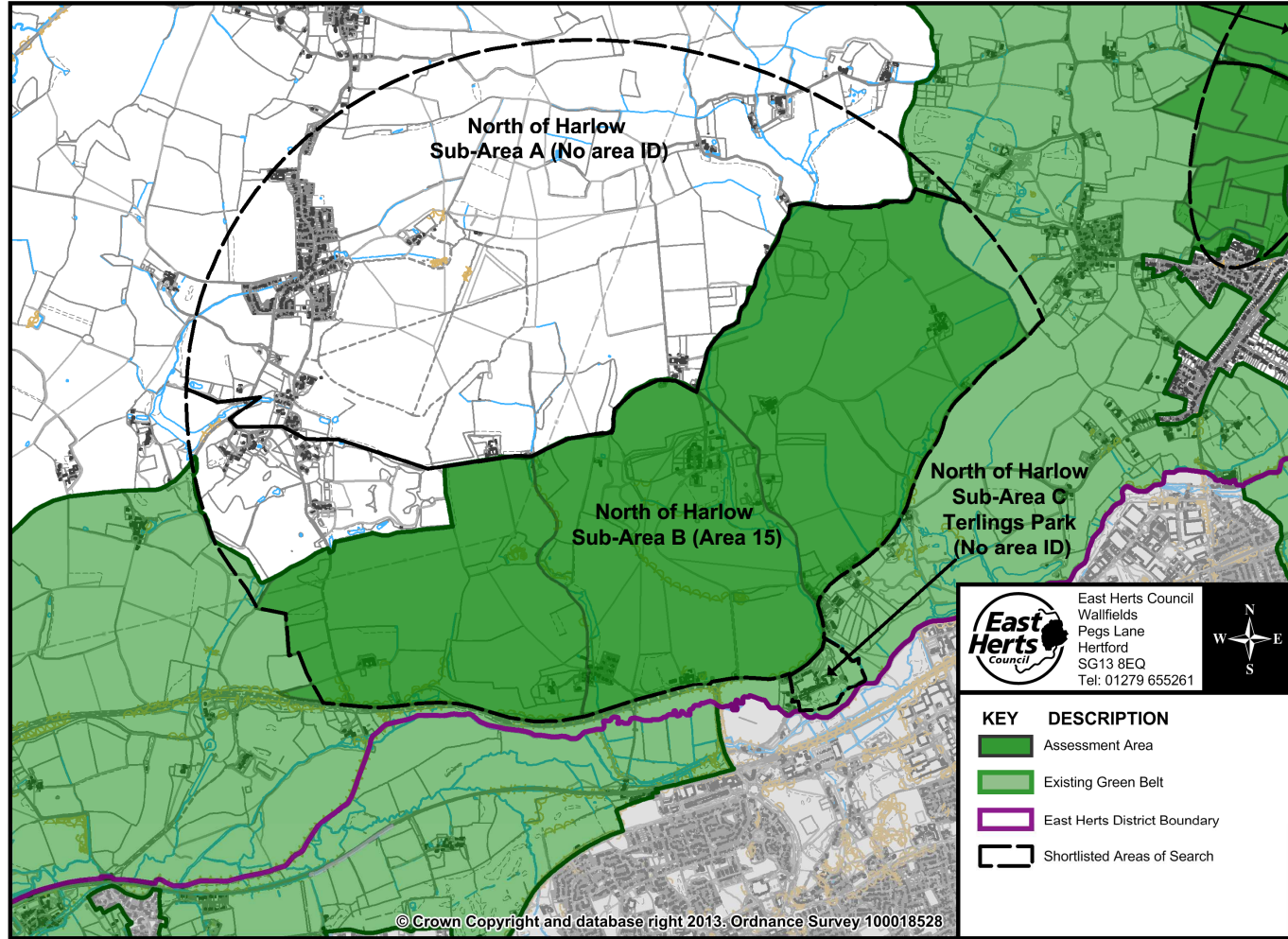
It should be noted that there remains a small section of Green Belt between the part of Site 15G suggested for release and the settlement boundary of Welwyn Garden City that remains in Welwyn Hatfield District. Any release of Green Belt land would require joint working and discussion between Welwyn Hatfield District Council and East Herts Council.

	Recommendation	Justification
Option 1 (Purposes)	Release of part of Site 15C, part of Site 15G and part of Site 15H	Parts within Sites 15C, 15G and 15H are considered to fulfil the Green Belt purposes the least. Although the Green Belt in Area 15 is considered to safeguard the countryside, these sites do so the least as they do not contain any wildlife sites, protected trees or ancient woodland. However, Henry Wood and Birchall Wood to the north, Blackthorn Wood to the west and Cole Green Tip and Holwellpark Wood to the south are designated wildlife sites. To mitigate the impact on these sites a landscape buffer is recommended and allowing for this buffer, Option 1 recommends release. Sites 15D and 15I to the other side of Panshanger Lane contain part of the Panshanger Park wildlife site and therefore no Green Belt release is recommended. To the south of the B195/Blackfan Road the land merges into Welwyn Hatfield Borough. Therefore further work with Welwyn Hatfield Borough would be required if development were to be brought forward in this location.
Option 2 (Boundary strength)	Release of Sites 15C, 15G and 15H	The boundary assessment states that the existing boundary is weak, based largely on the curtilages of existing properties. The review identifies potential strong boundaries along the edges of the B195/Blackfan Road/Birchall Lane and the A414, to the south and the south-east. The edges of the ancient woodland blocks of Henry Wood and Birchall Wood provide a strong boundary to the north. Although Panshanger Lane is a more minor road, it is strengthened by the protected tree belt along the road in Site 15I. Therefore release of Sites 15C, 15G and 15H would provide a stronger boundary than the existing Green Belt boundary. There are no clear boundaries to the south of the B195/Blackfan Road/Birchall Lane.

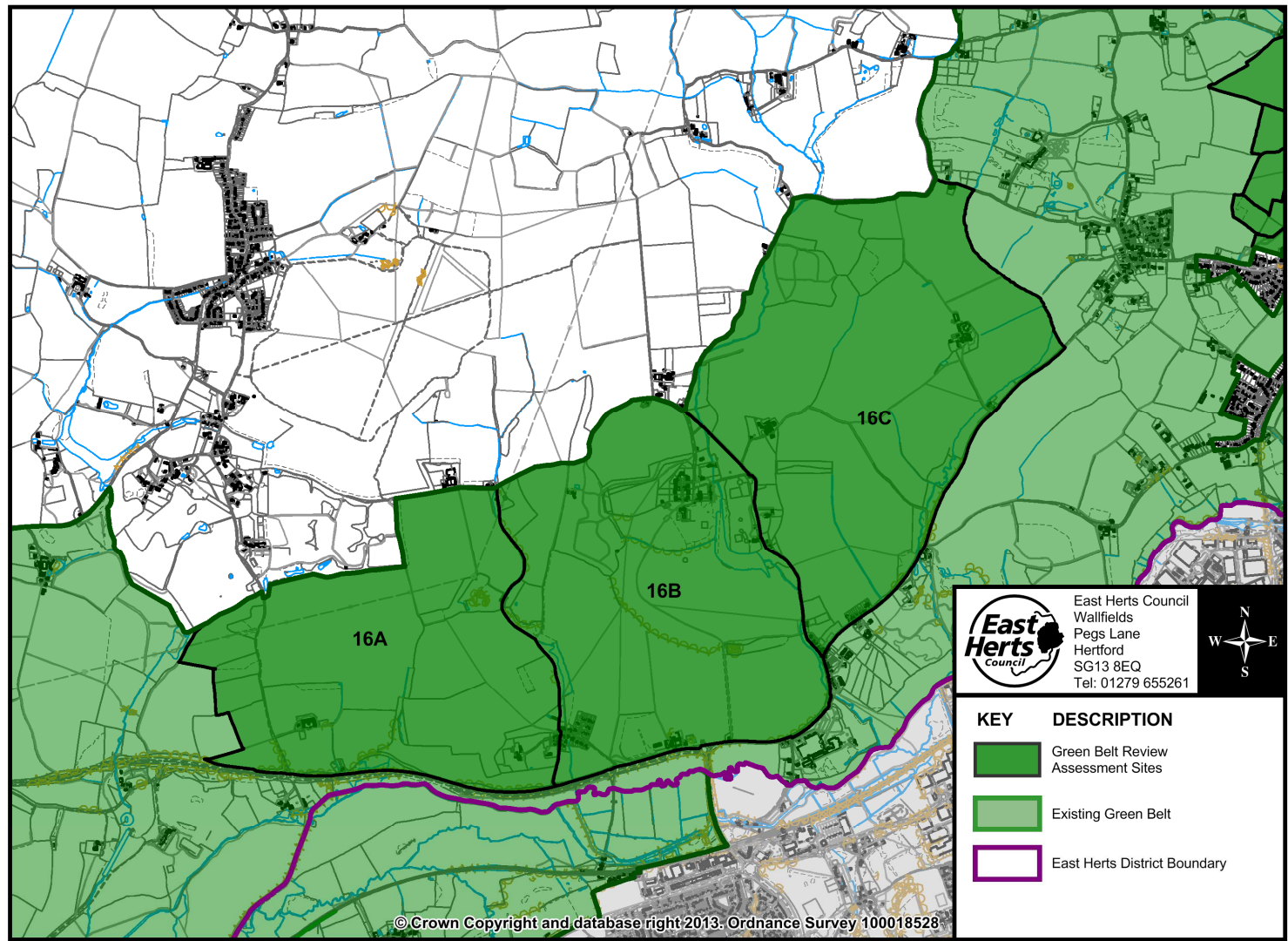
10 Detailed Site Assessment of land North of Harlow

10.1 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 1 - Green Belt Purpose Assessment

North of Harlow Shortlisted Areas of Search



North of Harlow Assessment Sites



The North of Harlow area of search has been subdivided into much larger assessment sites than other areas of search. Due to the large scale of this urban extension, assessment at a more detailed scale is considered unnecessary at this time until the level of development to be accommodated is known. Assessment of these larger sites against the Part 2 criteria allow for a more detailed evaluation than the strategic Green Belt Review of Part 1. A further Green Belt Review will be undertaken at a more detailed scale for North of Harlow if it is taken forward as part of the District Plan strategy.

Purpose 1: Check unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas

	North of Harlow		
	Sub-Area B		
GBR Ref	16A	16B	16C
Openness	3	3	3
Impeding ribbon development	3	3	3
Purpose Total	6	6	6

The Green Belt at North of Harlow in Area 16 (Sub-Area B) scores highly in maintaining the openness of the land and impeding ribbon development. This is to be expected given that none of the sites lie adjacent to the built-up area of Harlow or to a road that radiates out from the built-up area where ribbon development would be regarded as sprawl from Harlow. There is development within the individual sites assessed, namely the villages of Eastwick at Sites 16A and 16B and part of Gilston at Site 16C, as well as the Gilston Park house and estate in Site 16B and a number of agricultural farm buildings. There is also some development along the roads contained within the sites. However, all these forms of development are not considered to be sprawl from the built-up area of Harlow, as none of them are well connected to the built-up area of Harlow, or form ribbon development along roads that radiate away from the built-up area. Thus the Green Belt of the sub-areas is thought to assist in checking unrestricted sprawl from large built-up areas, although not as strongly as Sub-Area C which lies immediately adjacent to the settlement of Harlow.

Purpose 2: Prevent neighbouring towns from merging

	North of Harlow		
	Sub-Area B		
GBR Ref	16A	16B	16C
Distance to neighbouring towns	1	2	3
Distance to neighbouring villages	1	1	3
Purpose Total	4	5	6

As North of Harlow is presented as an urban extension to Harlow, albeit physically removed, the distance has been measured between the areas assessed to the neighbouring town of Sawbridgeworth, rather than to Harlow itself. Sites 16A is over 2 kilometres away from the built-up area of Sawbridgeworth and Site 16B is over a kilometre away and over two kilometres at the western part, therefore the Green Belt at these sites is not considered to play a strong role in preventing merging in this regard. Site 16C is less than one kilometre from the built-up area and therefore plays a significant role in preventing neighbouring towns from merging. As the western part is over a kilometre away in places, the most easterly part of the site is most critical in this respect. The strategic gap could be further encroached dependent on the extent of any release to the west of Sawbridgeworth so this would also need to be considered in any release. With regard to merging with villages, Eastwick is contained within Sites 16A and 16B and Gilston is partly contained within Site 16C. Therefore release of these sites would result in the direct merging with Eastwick and Gilston. The next nearest village of High Wych is critically close to Site 16C, particularly at the eastern part. There are no identifiable strong barriers to contain development and therefore the Green Belt in all of these sites is thought to prevent merging with villages.

Purpose 3: Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

	North of Harlow		
	Sub-Area B		
GBR Ref	16A	16B	16C
Nature conservation	3	3	3
Trees/hedgerows	2	3	3
Landscape character assessment	2	2	2
Agricultural land classification	3	3	3
Accessibility	2	2	2
Purpose Total	12	13	13

The Green Belt at Area 16 (Sub-Area B) presents numerous characteristics of the countryside which demonstrate that it assists in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The area has a high nature conservation value due to a number of local wildlife sites and proximity to a SSSI. Site 16A contains two wildlife sites; Eastwick Mead and the field west of Eastwick Hall Lane, adjacent to Site 16B. Site 16A also lies adjacent to Lord's Wood wildlife site and ancient woodland to the west and is in close proximity to the Hunsdon Mead SSSI to the south. It does not contain any protected or ancient woodland within the site. Site 16B contains the Gilston Park Lake wildlife site as well as two wildlife sites adjacent to Site 16A; pasture by Eastwick Hall Lane and pasture north of Eastwick. Site 16B also lies adjacent to the St Mary's Churchyard and Cottages at Gilston Park wildlife sites to the north. Site 16C contains part of the Cottages at Gilston Park wildlife site, as well as Fox Earths wildlife site and the ancient woodland of Golden Grove and Sayes Coppice which are wildlife sites. Site 16B contains a large section of the ancient Gibsons Shaw woodland and ancient Home Wood. Sites 16B, 16C and most of 16A lie within the Stanstead & Pishiobury Parklands landscape character area, which was assessed as being of moderate strength and condition in the landscape character area assessments. A small southern part of Site 16A lies within the Stort Valley landscape area, which was also assessed as being of moderate strength and condition. The southern parts of all the sites contain the rising Stort Valley slopes which Part 1 of the Review notes makes the countryside highly visible. Each site in Area 16 contains a mixture of agricultural land classifications, but all contain Grade 2 which is relatively high grade. There is good accessibility to all the sites via public rights of way.

Purpose 4: Preserve setting and special character of historic towns

	North of Harlow		
	Sub-Area B		
GBR Ref	16A	16B	16C
Designated heritage assets	3	3	3
Conservation Area	1	1	1
Purpose Total	4	4	4

The Green Belt at Area 16 (Sub-Area B) contains a number of designated heritage assets. Site 16A contains a number of Areas of Archaeological Significance, including those around the Scheduled Monument of the moated site south of Eastwick Hall Farm, the listed buildings at Brickhouse Farm and Eastwick Manor and the listed buildings on Church Lane in Eastwick. It also lies adjacent to the Area of Archaeological Significance around Hunsdon House to the north. Site 16B contains Areas of Archaeological Significance, including those around the Scheduled Monuments of The Mount and another moated site on Eastwick Hall Lane, as well as around the listed buildings at Gilston Park, St Mary's Parish Church and in the village of Eastwick. The site also contains additional listed buildings including the keeper's cottage in Home Wood and others related to Gilston Park, and is adjacent to the listed buildings of Church Cottages at the corner with Penny Lane and those in the village of Gilston. Site 16B contains four Areas of Archaeological Significance, and listed buildings at The Old Rectory, High Gilston, Channocks Farm and within the village of Gilston. Although the Green Belt assists in safeguarding these designated heritage assets, the area is distanced far from Harlow and its conservation areas, in particular Old Harlow, and thus is not considered to preserve the character of the town. Harlow is a New Town and as such the form of Harlow is largely attributed to Sir Frederick Gibberd's ideals of urban design and network of green wedges, the character of which the Green Belt is not considered to preserve. However, as identified in Part 1 of the Review, the southward facing slopes of the Stort Valley contained within all the assessment sites contribute to preserving the setting of Harlow.

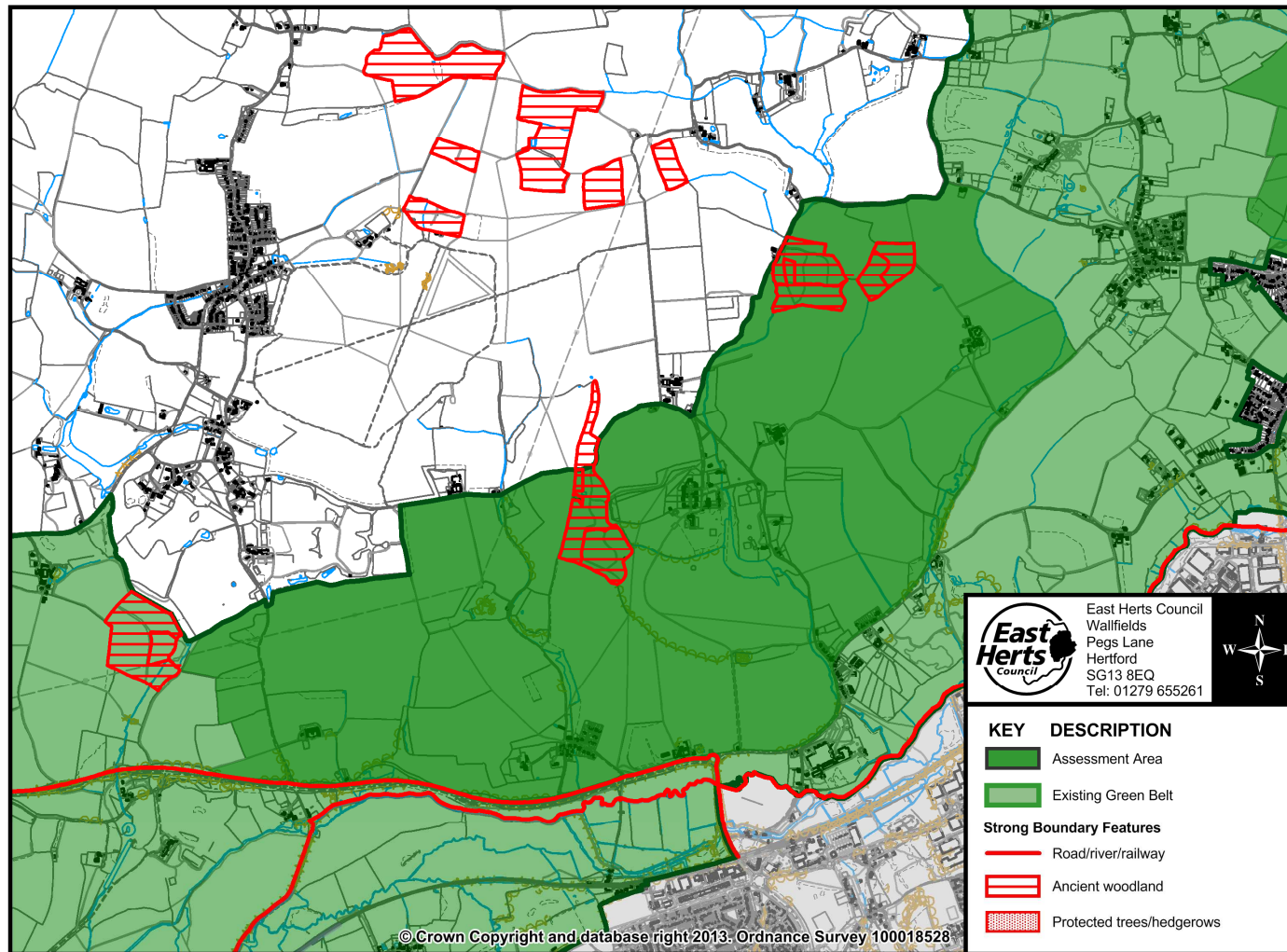
North of Harlow Summary of Purposes Served (Sub-Area B and Terlings Park in Sub-Area C)

- The Green Belt serves the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl from the built-up area of Harlow, as it maintains the openness, particularly given its distance from the town.
- The Green Belt serves the purpose of preventing merging with the neighbouring town of Sawbridgeworth at Sites 16B and 16C, particularly to the eastern part of Site 16C. If land were released to the west of Sawbridgeworth then the Green Belt furthest east would be even more critical in preventing merging given that the strategic gap would be reduced further.

- The Green Belt serves the purpose of assisting in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment particularly due to the presence of the high nature conservation value, protected ancient woodland and high grade agricultural land.
- The Green Belt containing the southward facing slopes of the Stort Valley does serve a purpose in preserving the setting of Harlow, although it does not serve the purpose of preserving the character of Harlow.

10.2 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for North of Harlow

Map showing strong boundaries at North of Harlow Sub-Area B and Sub-Area C (Terlings Park only)



The A414 and the River Stort present strong, defensible boundaries to the south of the area of search. Although not continuous, there are many sections of ancient woodland that present strong boundary markers; Lord's Wood to the west, Home Wood and Gibsons Shaw centrally located within Sub-Area B, Golden Grove and Sayes Coppice to the east, in addition to a number of ancient woodland blocks to the north; Marshland Wood, Eastwick Wood, Black Hut Wood, Lawns Wood, Queens Wood, Battles Wood and Maplecroft Wood.

Existing boundary strength	Existing boundary description
N/A	The sub-areas shortlisted for assessment do not incorporate the Green Belt that lies immediately adjacent to the built-up area of Harlow.

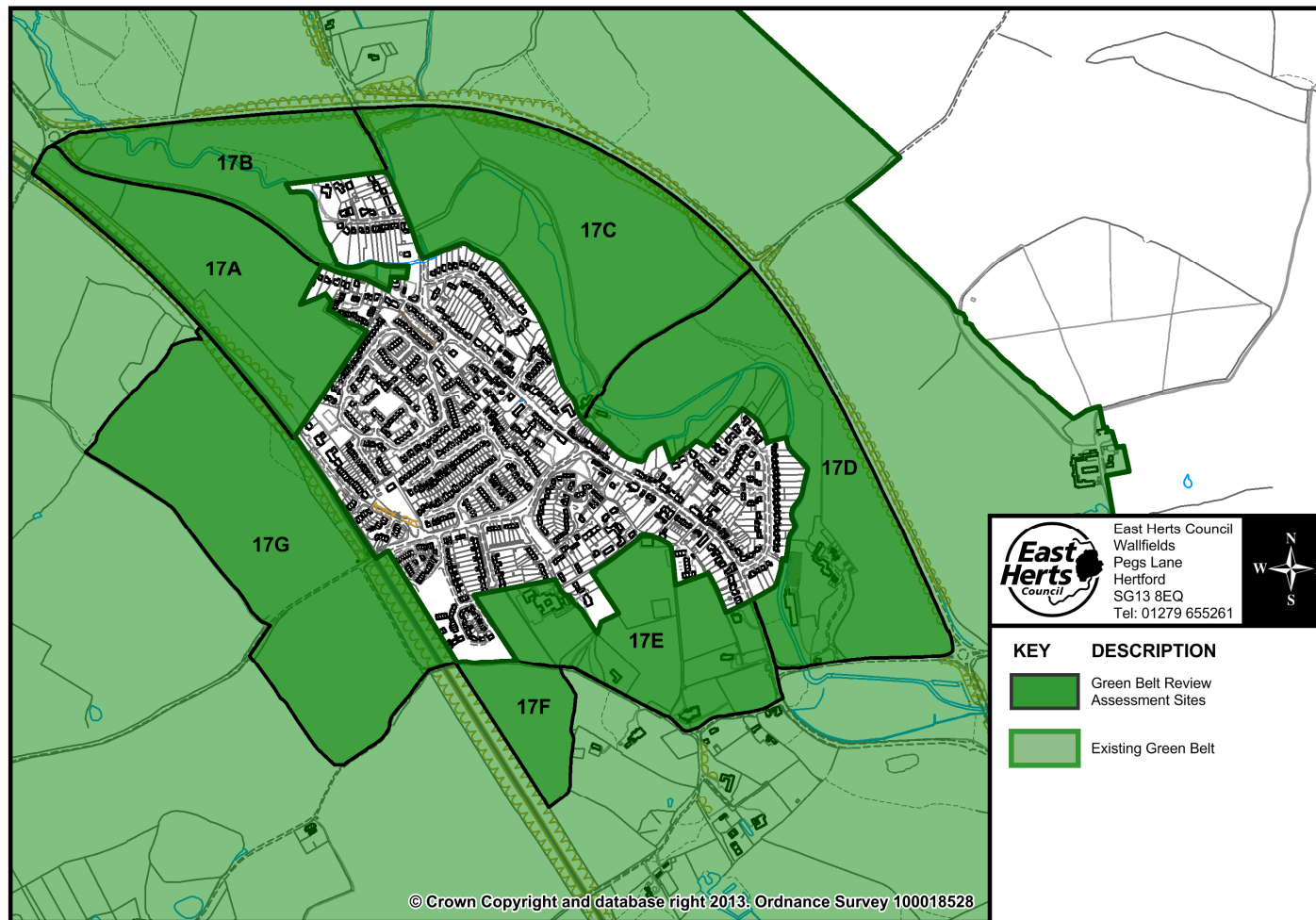
10.3 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Option for North of Harlow

	Recommendation	Justification
Option Sub-Area B: Dependent on scale and form of development.		<p>The scale and form of development is uncertain for North of Harlow. Although an assumption was made as to the scale, owing to the significant number of dwellings, a small change in this figure could have a large impact on the form and consequent amount of Green Belt that would need to be considered for release. If this area is chosen for development, once the scale and form of development is better known, another Green Belt Review will be undertaken to assess the area in greater detail. This Review shows that the Green Belt does meet most of the purposes at the higher level assessed.</p> <p>If the Green Belt were to be released to accommodate development, the location of the inner boundary to development would be dependent on the scale and form that development would take. If development were to be of the assumed scale being tested, compensatory Green Belt may need to be sought to the north of the development. There is no identifiable continuous strong boundary to the north, although there are a number of sections of ancient woodland which provide strong boundaries individually but would need links between them established and strengthened if they were to be used as a Green Belt boundary. Development is not proposed within Sub-Area C (except at Terlings Park) and thus the Green Belt is expected to be retained in this location. The A414/Eastwick Road could provide development north of Harlow with a strong inner boundary to the south. Green Belt boundaries could also be built in to the form of the development.</p>

11 Detailed Site Assessment of Villages: Watton-at-Stone

11.1 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 1 - Green Belt Purpose Assessment

Watton-at-Stone Assessment Sites



Purpose 1: Check unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas

	Watton-at-Stone						
GBR Ref	17A	17B	17C	17D	17E	17F	17G
Openness	2	2	3	2	2	3	3
Impeding ribbon development	3	3	3	3	1	3	3
Purpose Total	5	5	6	5	3	6	6

The Green Belt at Watton-at-Stone largely serves the purpose of preventing unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas, particularly in respect of impeding ribbon development where only Site 17E contains two dwellings along the High Street. Although the Green Belt serves the purpose of maintaining the openness, this is lesser so at Sites 17A, 17B, 17D and 17E where the built-up area juts into the Green Belt limiting its openness. In particular, there are two sections within Site 17E that are encroached by the built-up area; the school and the cricket ground. In addition, the section to the southeast of Site 17B is also greatly encroached by the built-up area. These sections are considered not to serve the purpose of preventing unrestricted sprawl of the village. Development within Site 17E in the form of a school and nursery, the rectory, St Andrew and St Mary's Church, the recreation field pavilion, tennis courts, a playground, the allotments and two dwellings limits the openness of the area which shows the site has not been as effective in checking unrestricted sprawl. Part of the north-western corner of Site 17E that contains designated open space around the school has also been granted planning permission for an Early Years Centre and GP surgery, demonstrating that it has not been effective in preventing sprawl from the built-up area. Site 17C also contains development in the form of a light industrial unit to the south of the site and Site 17D contains residential development at Watton House, development associated with Watton Nursery (a horticultural nursery) and an electricity substation further north which limits the openness of the Green Belt. Site 17G is considered to serve a strong purpose in checking unrestricted sprawl of the village, given that development so far has been contained to the east of the railway line and there is a lack of strong boundaries further west to contain development and prevent sprawl westwards. Similarly Sites 17E and 17F serve this purpose in a similar manner in that there are no strong boundaries further south that could be used to prevent sprawl southwards.

Purpose 2: Prevent neighbouring towns from merging

	Watton-at-Stone						
GBR Ref	17A	17B	17C	17D	17E	17F	17G
Distance to neighbouring town	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Distance to neighbouring village	3	3	1	1	2	2	2
Purpose Total	4	4	2	2	3	3	3

The Green Belt at Watton-at-Stone serves little purpose in preventing merging with the nearest neighbouring towns of Stevenage, Hertford and Welwyn Garden City given the distance from these towns. Despite this, it is important to retain strategic gaps as Part 1 of the Review notes that the village marks a key feature of the A602 corridor midway between Hertford and Stevenage, so care would be needed to ensure that the wider strategic gap between the towns was not weakened. However, the Green Belt being assessed is fairly close to the built-up area and is not thought to play a strong role in this regard. In respect of villages, the Green Belt to the north of Watton-at-Stone at Sites 17A and 17B serve a strong purpose in preventing merging with the nearest village of Hook's Cross, less than 1 kilometre away, although the A602 could provide a strong barrier to prevent sprawl. The eastern sites of Sites 17C and 17D serve little purpose in preventing merging with the nearest villages of Hebing's End and Dane End. To the south, Sites 17E and 17F serve some purpose in preventing merging of Watton-at-Stone with Stapleford as does Site 17G to the west in preventing merging with Datchworth.

Purpose 3: Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

	Watton-at-Stone						
GBR Ref	17A	17B	17C	17D	17E	17F	17G
Nature conservation	1	2	3	3	3	1	1
Trees/hedgerows	2	2	3	3	3	2	2
Landscape character assessment	3	3	3	3	3	2	2
Agricultural land classification	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Accessibility	1	1	2	2	3	2	2
Purpose Total	9	10	13	13	14	9	9

The Green Belt at Watton-at-Stone serves the purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, particularly to the east and south. The Green Belt of sites to the east and south hold a high nature conservation value. To the south, Site 17E contains two wildlife sites; Watton-at-Stone Churchyard and Pasture north-west of the Churchyard at Watton-at-Stone. To the east, Site 17C contains the River Beane by Watton Common wildlife site and is adjacent to Blackditch Wood wildlife site, whilst Site 17D contains The Grove wildlife site and is adjacent to Watton Springs wildlife site to the south. Site 17B is adjacent to The Rookery wildlife site to the north, whilst Sites 17A, 17F and 17G do not hold a high nature conservation value. All the sites contain trees and hedgerows which demonstrate a countryside character, with Sites 17C, 17D and 17E containing protected trees and Site 17B located adjacent to some of those protected in Site 17C. The sites to the north and east of the village lie within the Woodhall Park and Watton-at-Stone landscape character area, which scored red in the Landscape Character Area Assessment (2007) for being of a strong character and condition. Those to the south and west lie within the Bramfield – Datchworth Sloping Farmland landscape character area which scored amber for being of a moderate strength of character and condition. The most western section of Site 17A is covered by this landscape character area. The majority of Site 17E also lies within this landscape character area, with only a small section to the east lying within the Woodhall Park and Watton-at-Stone landscape character area. All sites contained Grade 3 land as assessed in the agricultural land classifications, although the majority of Site 17B was classed as non-agricultural, as was the northwest section of Site 17C and the easternmost section of Site 17A suggesting that these northernmost sites hold a lesser countryside value and thus the Green Belt does not assist in serving the purpose as strongly in this location. The accessibility of Sites 17A and 17B is also poor, with no public rights of way. The remaining sites have access via public rights of way, and Site 17E to the south also provides recreational open space and facilities in the form of the school playing grounds, cricket ground, recreational playground, allotments and tennis courts.

Purpose 4: Preserve setting and special character of historic towns

	Watton-at-Stone						
GBR Ref	17A	17B	17C	17D	17E	17F	17G
Designated heritage assets	3	3	3	3	3	2	3
Conservation Area	1	2	1	3	3	2	1
Purpose Total	4	5	4	6	6	4	4

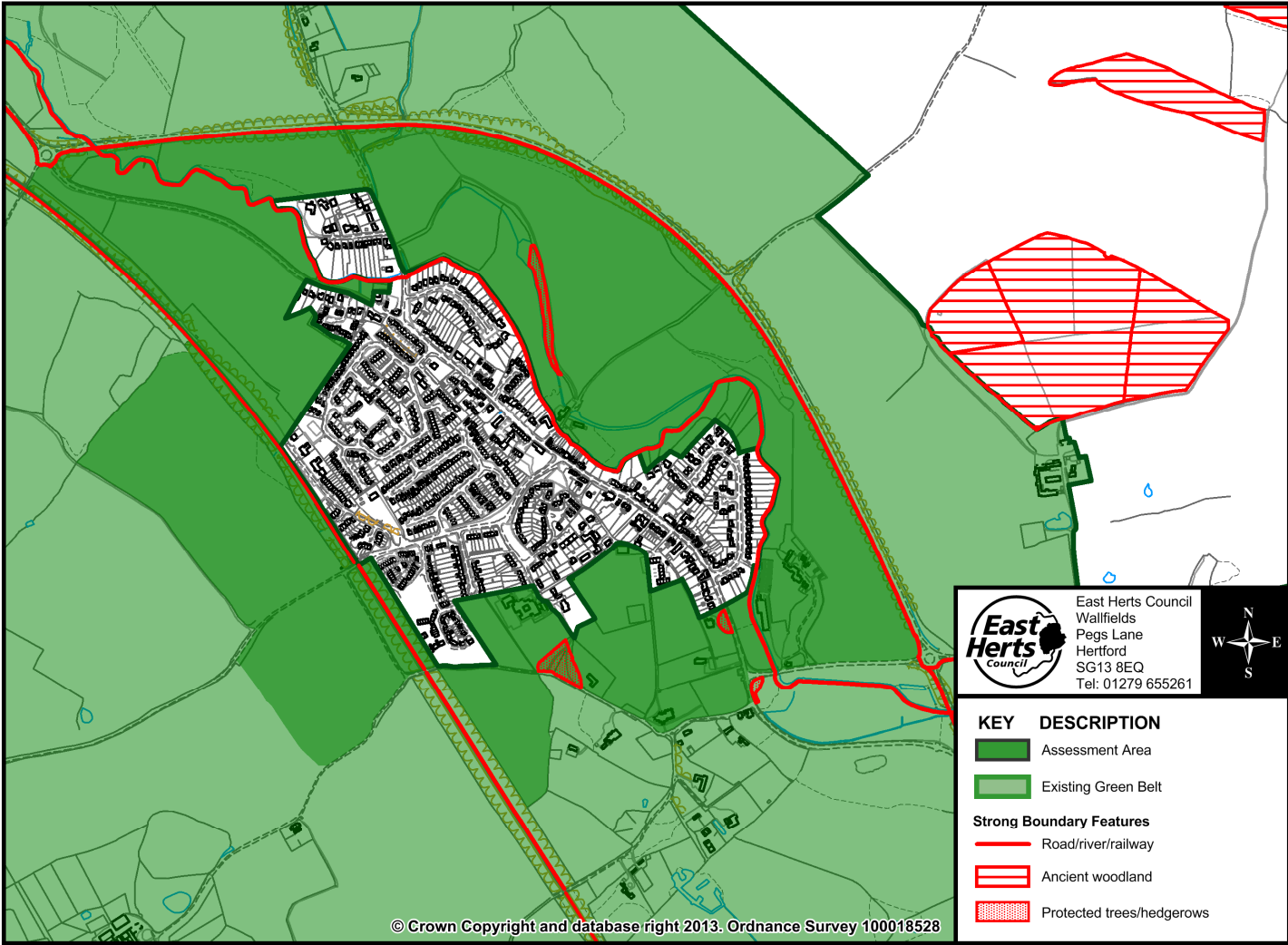
The Green Belt at Watton-at-Stone does little in preserving the setting and special character of historic towns, given the distance from the nearest ones. However, it does contribute to preserving the setting and special character of the village itself, particularly to the south of the village. To the south, Sites 17D and 17E contain part of the Conservation Area of the village, with Site 17D also containing part of two Areas of Archaeological Significance and Site 17E containing the listed church of St Andrew's and St Mary's

and part of one Area of Archaeological Significance. They are also both adjacent to the registered historic park of Woodhall Park. These sites lie within the Conservation Area of the village and retain the open nature and form of the historic area to the south of the village, and as such they are thought to contribute to the special character and setting of the historic village. Site 17F lies adjacent to the Conservation Area and thus is considered to contribute to preserving the setting of the village. The site also lies adjacent to two Areas of Archaeological Significance and the remaining sites all contain at least part of an Area of Archaeological Significance, but with no identifiable related features on the ground they are not considered to contribute to the setting or special character of the historic village in respect of those designated heritage assets. Site 17C contains a listed bridge across the River Beane but this is not considered to contribute to the setting or special character of Watton-at-Stone given the distance from its historic core. The south-eastern part of Site 17B lies adjacent to the village's Conservation Area. However, it is buffered somewhat by development in the form of a telephone exchange and two new dwellings, and as such it is not thought to assist in preserving the historic setting of the village.

Watton-at-Stone Summary of Purposes Served

- The Green Belt does check unrestricted sprawl of the built-up area of Watton-at-Stone in some areas, particularly at Site 17G where it lies west of the strong boundary of the railway line with no further identifiable strong boundaries to restrict sprawl westwards. The sections encroached by the built-up area at the southeast of Site 17B and at the school and the cricket ground in Site 17E serve this purpose the least. Site 17D also does not fulfil this purpose fully, as its openness is encroached by development contained within the site.
- The Green Belt assessment sites do not assist in preventing the merging of towns, nor of the merging of Watton-at-Stone with neighbouring towns. The Green Belt does assist in preventing the merging of Watton-at-Stone with Hook's Cross at Sites 17A and 17B, and to a slightly lesser extent with Sites 17E and 17F with Stapleford and Site 17G with Datchworth.
- The Green Belt assists in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, particularly to the east and south of the village at Sites 17C, 17D and 17E due to a high nature conservation value, protected trees and good accessibility to the sites. The remaining western and northern sites assist in safeguarding the countryside to a lesser extent.
- The Green Belt does not serve the purpose of preserving the setting and special character of historic towns. However, it does serve the purpose of preserving the special character and setting of Watton-at-Stone at Sites 17D and 17E which are partly located within the Conservation Area. Site 17F also assists in preserving the setting of the historic village, given its proximity to the Conservation Area. Site 17B is not considered to preserve the setting of the historic village despite its proximity to the Conservation Area, given the buffer of new development.

11.2 Boundary Assessment of Watton-at-Stone
Map showing strong boundaries at Watton-at-Stone



The railway line to the west of the village and the A602 to the east provide strong boundaries. The River Beane also provides a strong eastern boundary, although this has been compromised to the north. Three small pockets of protected woodland to the south of the village could be used as strong boundary markers, though are not continuous enough to prevent southwards sprawl. There is a small tree belt to the east of the river which could provide a strong boundary marker. Blocks of woodland much further east also provide strong boundary markers, though these are located a significant distance from the village.

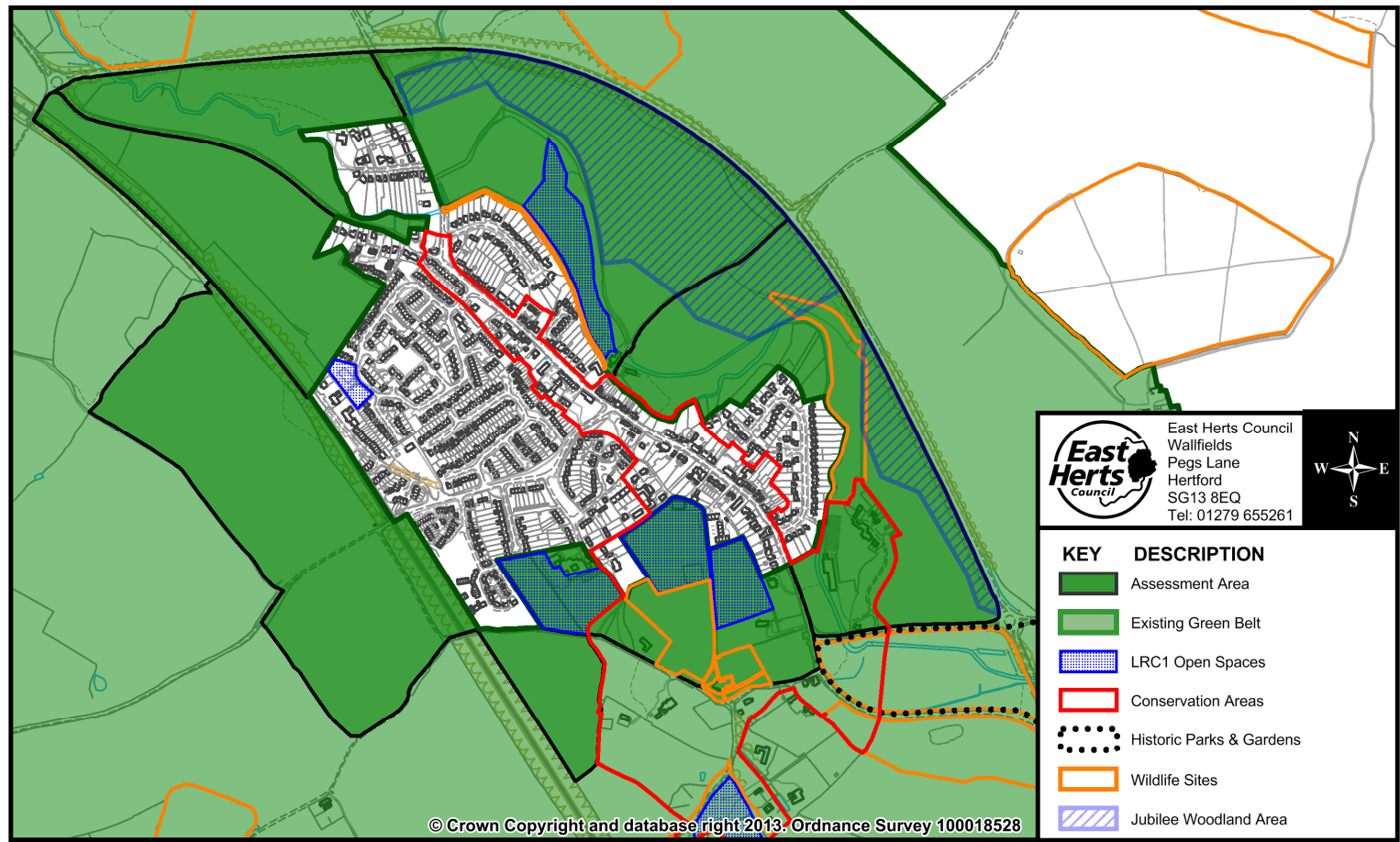
Existing boundary strength	Existing boundary description
North-western: Weak	The boundary follows no identifiable markers, cutting through a section of woodland before following the treeline marking the residential curtilages of Great Innings North. It then follows no identifiable boundary as it cuts through the back gardens of properties at Motts Close, then following residential curtilages of properties on the High Street before following the line of the High Street itself. As it crosses over the High Street, it crosses through the curtilage of the telephone exchange before following it until it reaches the River Beane. It follows the River Beane northwards before travelling through a section of woodland with no identifiable marker, then follows the residential curtilage of properties on Beane Road and Walkern Road. Although the boundary is strong where it follows the River Beane, the majority is regarded as weak.
Eastern: Strong	The boundary follows Walkern Road southwards, then the River Beane before cutting across the curtilages of properties on the High Street, Whitehouse Close, Rivershill and rejoining the River Beane until it reaches the electricity substation at Rivershill. The boundary is deemed to be strong as the majority on the eastern edge follows the river which is regarded as a strong boundary.
Southern: Weak	From the electricity substation, the boundary follows residential curtilages along Rivershill, the High Street and Glebe Court, then following the road of School Lane and residential curtilages around Glebe House. The boundary then heads northwards along Rectory Lane, then follows residential curtilages of properties on Rectory Lane and Glebe Close before following the road of Clappers Lane and a hedgerow southwards and westwards. The boundary is weak to the south as it largely follows residential curtilages and a minor road.
Western: Strong	From the south, the boundary follows a thick tree line adjacent to the railway line northwards before joining the railway line after passing Station Road. Working railways are considered to be strong boundaries, therefore the western boundary is considered to be strong. Although treelines are not strong boundaries, in this case they reinforce the railway line which lies immediately west of it and thus the whole boundary is considered to be strong.

11.3 Detailed Site Assessment – Suitability for Development

The need for a review of the Green Belt at Watton-at-Stone results from the need to accommodate development within the District. The assessment of Watton-at-Stone thus far has considered release of the Green Belt in terms of the Green Belt purposes and boundary strength alone. However, in order to ensure land is not released unnecessarily and given that the purpose of the Review is to determine if Watton-at-Stone's housing needs can be accommodated within the Green Belt, the suitability of the land for development must also be considered. This tier of assessment has already been undertaken for the urban extensions, where areas of search around the town boundaries have been discounted where appropriate due to specific constraints. However there has been no such assessment for specific sites around the village boundaries, therefore it is necessary for an additional level of assessment in this Review for Watton-at-Stone to assess the suitability of the Green Belt land for development.

The detailed Green Belt assessment so far has considered numerous constraints in the context of the Green Belt purposes, including nature conservation designations and designated heritage assets. There were no designations of national or international importance identified through this assessment. Therefore to assess the suitability of the sites, two types of constraint are focused on; local policy constraints (as defined in the Local Plan 2007) and physical constraints.

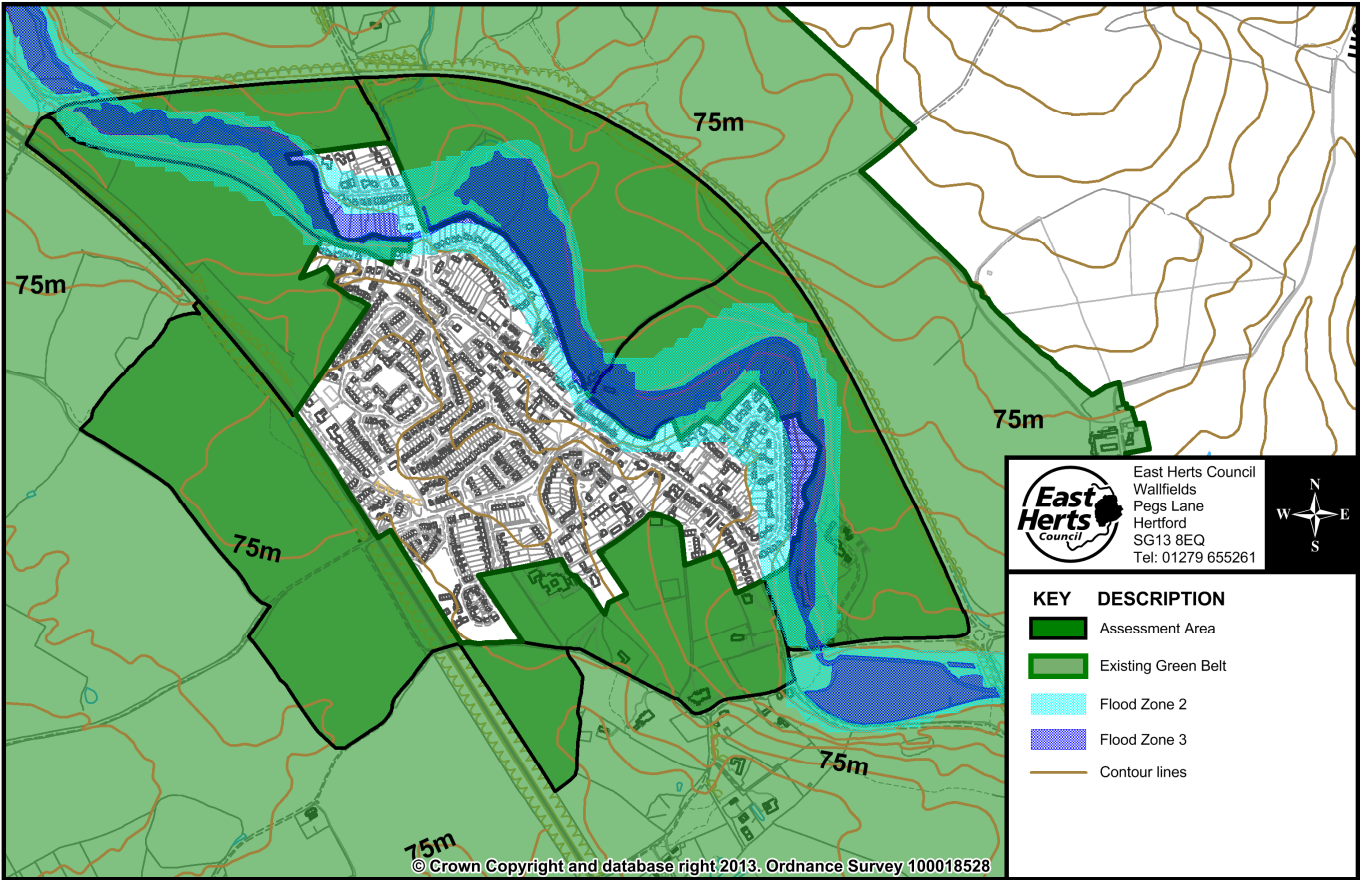
Map of local policy constraints and proposed Jubilee woodland at Watton-at-Stone



The map of the local policy constraints shows that the south of the village is very constrained by wildlife sites, Conservation Area designation, proximity to the registered historic Woodhall Park and a number of designated open spaces. Sites to the east of the village are also constrained by Conservation Area designation, wildlife sites and designated open space. In addition, much of the remaining land at the eastern sites is unsuitable as woodland is being

planted in commemoration of the Diamond Jubilee. The areas to be planted as woodland and woodland glades are identified on the map. Sites to the north and west of the village have few policy constraints, although there is a wildlife site adjacent to the northwest of Site 17B.

Map showing physical constraints to development at Watton-at-Stone

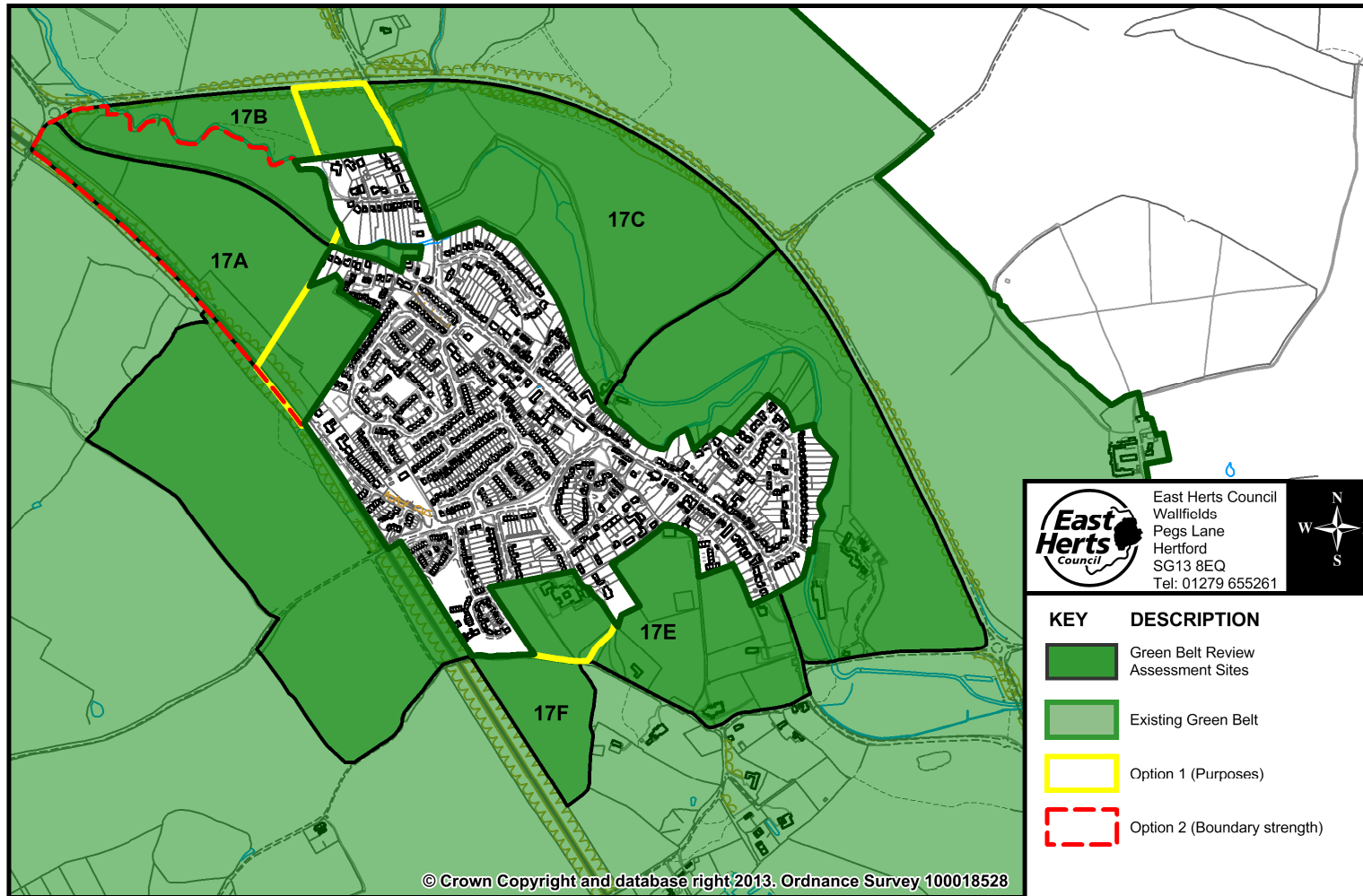


The map of the physical constraints identifies Flood Zones 2 and 3, where development is discouraged due to the flood risk. This renders the western section of Site 17B largely unsuitable for development, as well as sections of the eastern sites closest to the village. The contours of the land are also identified. The topography of the land closest to the village in Site 17A slopes fairly steeply down to the village. This could reduce the development potential at this area, in respect of what could be physically achievable and also ensuring the character of the village is not compromised.

This assessment of the Green Belt sites for their suitability for development, classes the following areas as potentially suitable for development; Site

17A, the eastern part of Site 17B, Site 17F and Site 17G. Although there are parts of Sites 17C and 17D that are not constrained, these are removed from the built-up area of the village and therefore are not considered appropriate for release from the Green Belt. There are not considered to be any showstoppers that would affect the achievability of these sites, although this would be dependent on the scale of Green Belt release. The north-eastern part of Site 17B is the only known available site at the present time, although it is acknowledged that other sites may be promoted during the Plan period.

11.4 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for Watton-at-Stone Map of recommended options for Watton-at-Stone



	Recommendation	Justification
Option 1 (Purposes)	Release part of Site 17A, two parts of Site 17B and part of Site 17E	<p>The sites recommended for release in Option 1 do not serve strong purposes in checking unrestricted sprawl. The south-eastern part of Site 17B and the north-western part of Site 17E which are suggested for release are encroached by the built-up area on all sides bar one. The openness of Site 17E is further limited by the school development contained within it, and it has been granted permission for an Early Years Centre and GP surgery which are further signs that it has not checked unrestricted sprawl. The south-western part of Site 17A suggested for release is only encroached by the built-up area on two sides, but is also bound by the railway line to the west which limits its openness. The northern part of Site 17B serves the purpose better than the others, though the A602 is considered to be a strong barrier to prevent sprawl further north. As such, although the northern sites are thought to play a role in preventing merging with Hook's Cross, the A602 is considered to be a strong barrier to prevent such merging, as is the railway line to prevent merging with Datchworth. As there are no strong boundaries further west, Site 17G serves to play a strong role in preventing unrestricted sprawl further westwards which is why it is not recommended for release, despite not serving the other purposes strongly. The sites suggested for release in Option 1 are not considered to assist strongly in safeguarding the countryside, unlike sites further south and to the east of the village. Most of the southern and south-western sites also serve a strong role in preserving the special character and setting of the historic village, which the Option 1 sites do not. Remaining sections within the southern and western sites that fulfilled these purposes slightly better were not regarded as suitable for development.</p> <p>The part of Site 17E suggested for release dips slightly further south of the existing built-up area to follow the identifiable boundary of a track, but 'rounds off' the built-up area better so that there is no Green Belt land remaining within that section that is encroached by the built-up area. Although sections of Site 17E further east are encroached by the built-up area, they strongly serve safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, due to the good public access and recreational open space for members of the public, in addition to preserving the openness of the historic character to the south of the village and thus are not recommended for release.</p>

		<p>Release of Site 17A and the south-eastern part of Site 17B extends no further in a north-westerly direction than the existing built-up area and the northern part of Site 17B suggested for release extends no further westwards. This forms a more compact shape of the village, and ensures there is no remaining Green Belt in this northern area that is vulnerable to encroachment as a result of being surrounded on several sides by the built-up area. The suggested release maintains some distance from the village of Hook's Cross. The boundary features of the A602 and the railway line also assist in preventing sprawl further northwards or westwards respectively, though it is acknowledged that there are no other identifiable boundary markers and therefore some would have to be built in through development. Due to the physical constraints presented by the flood zones of the River Beane, releasing a greater extent of Site 17B could result in a poor urban form of the village with relatively thin strands of development along the High Street to the south of the river or along the A602 to the north of the river that would sprawl from the existing built-up area. Releasing a greater extent of Site 17A would permit further sprawl northwards although as noted in the assessment, care would need to be taken if the part of Site 17A were to be released to ensure the character of the village was not compromised as a result of developing on land of such an undulating topography.</p>
Option 2 (Boundary strength)	Release Site 17A and part of Site 17B	<p>The strongest continuous boundaries best suited to act as permanent, defensible Green Belt boundaries around Watton-at-Stone are the railway line to the west, the River Beane and the A602 to the north and east. Option 2 recommends using the railway line and the River Beane, joined by a small section of the A602, as there are no strong boundaries to the south that could be used if the A602 were used as a boundary to the east. This would strengthen the existing north-western boundary of the village.</p> <p>It is acknowledged however that the River Beane as a boundary has already been breached by a small area of development north of the river along Beane Road and to the east of Walkern Road, which somewhat weakens its use as a boundary in the recommended option. It is therefore possible that the Green Belt could be released to follow the boundaries of the River Beane, the A602 and Walkern Road, acknowledging that Walkern Road is not such a strong boundary as the others but it is an identifiable marker which could assist in containing development to the west. Similarly there could be a release using the boundaries of Walkern Road, the A602 and the railway line, though it is unlikely that this</p>

		scale of land would be needed for development, given that a larger majority of it would be suitable.
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PART 3: Major Developed Sites

Comprising Section 12

12 Major Developed Sites

12.1 Approach to Major Developed Sites

12.1.1 Previous national policy on Major Developed Sites within the Green Belt was contained in Annex C of Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts (PPG2). Green Belts contain major developed sites such as factories, power stations, water and sewage treatment works, military establishments, civil airfields, hospitals and research and education establishments. These substantial sites may be in continuing use or may be redundant, but they often pre-date Green Belt designation. Previous planning policy recognised that occasionally these locations would need to expand or alter over time in order to accommodate the changing needs of the occupier, but being within the Green Belt would prevent such alterations. Therefore the policy approach which facilitated limited infilling within a defined boundary was developed. As such, major developed site boundaries were established in Local Plans within which certain types of limited infill development would be permitted subject to a series of criteria.

12.1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework, which supersedes PPG2 does not specify nor give status to major developed sites in the same way, with the only guidance limited to one bullet point in Paragraph 89 which appears to conflict with previous bullet points which directs the type of development that is not considered inappropriate within the Green Belt. Paragraph 89, bullet point 6 states that *'a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:*

- *Limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.'*

12.1.3 At present there are ten Major Developed Sites within the Green Belt and a further four sites within the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt designated within the East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007. Five Green Belt and three Rural Area sites are schools or educational establishments. Of the remaining sites, one is a successful manufacturer, one is a large garden centre and one is a large sewage works. Three sites were former pharmaceutical research and development sites; one located within the Rural Area.

12.1.4 Given the rural nature of the District and the number of existing sites that still need flexibility to expand or alter over time, Major Developed Sites will be included within the District Plan. There are no new additional Major Developed Sites that have been identified to include in the District Plan. Instead, where the Green Belt or Rural Area

designation is to remain as in the Local Plan (2007), the existing Major Developed Sites are to also remain. The only exception to this is where a site has been redeveloped to a use that is not appropriate for Major Developed Site designation. Where developments have been approved and completed over time on existing Major Developed Sites, these will be reflected in updated minor boundary amendments as detailed in Section 6 of this Green Belt Review. The site size may reduce as a result of redevelopment of part of the site to a use that is not appropriate for Major Developed Site designation, or may increase as a result of the associated development expanding beyond the existing Major Developed Site boundary. All sites included will also be subject to minor cartographic boundary amendments as detailed in Section 6 of this Review.

12.2 Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt

12.2.1 Of the five school sites within the Green Belt, four are on the edge of towns, where gradual development of the urban edge or development of the school grounds has reduced the difference in visual terms between the built-up area and the major developed sites. There will be a need to expand these schools to accommodate demand from new residential development. However, to remove Green Belt or Major Developed Site status from these locations solely for the purpose of allowing expansion would not only set a precedent for other locations, but would also pre-empt any decisions to expand the schools. In order to ensure a consistent approach to existing Major Developed school Sites, it is recommended that it would be more appropriate to retain current designations and respond individually to specific needs on each site, based upon the specific circumstances of each site. Within Part 2 of the Review, the land surrounding Sele School in Hertford and Leventhorpe School in Sawbridgeworth were suggested for release from the Green Belt based on the extent they fulfilled the purposes of the Green Belt. If these suggestions were to be followed in the District Plan, the Major Developed Site designation of these two schools would consequently need to be removed. Simon Balle School in Hertford and Presdales School in Ware and Haileybury and Imperial College in Hertford Heath are all to be retained as Major Developed Sites, although will be subject to minor boundary amendments where appropriate.

12.2.2 Of the three former research and development sites, two are within the Green Belt; the Former University of Hertfordshire, Balls Park in Hertford and the Merck Sharpe and Dohme site, Terlings Park near Gilston. Since its designation in the Local Plan (2007), Balls Park has been redeveloped from its previous use to residential development. As such, it is considered that its designation as a Major Developed Site should be removed within the District Plan. Terlings Park has recently been granted planning permission for 200 units. However, it is not appropriate to consider removing the site from the Green Belt or removing its Major Developed Site designation until redevelopment has

been completed. Therefore it is suggested that the Green Belt and Major Developed Site designation remain for Terlings Park in the District Plan.

- 12.2.3 It is considered that the remaining Major Developed Sites within the Green Belt of Hayters in Spellbrook, Van Hage's Garden Centre in Great Amwell and Rye Meads Sewage Works in Stanstead Abbots should be retained as they remain in the same existing use. Again, they will be subject to minor boundary amendments where appropriate.

12.3 Major Developed Sites in the Rural Area

- 12.3.1 Major Developed Sites are also located within the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt, which operates a similar policy of constraint similar to the Green Belt. Consequently these Major Developed Sites are also considered in this Review, and will be subject to minor boundary amendments to address cartographic improvements as well as where developments have been approved and completed over time.

- 12.3.2 The three educational establishments located within the Rural Area beyond the Green Belt; Freman College in Buntingford, St Edmund's College and Prep School (formerly St Edmund's College and St Hugh's School) in Old Hall Green and St Elizabeth's Centre in South End, Much Hadham and are all considered to be retained as Major Developed Sites, subject to minor boundary amendments. As stated before, to remove Major Developed Site status from these locations to allow expansion would pre-empt any decisions as to the expansion of the centres. It is more appropriate to retain current designations and respond individually to specific needs on each site, based upon the specific circumstances of each site.

- 12.3.3 The former GlaxoSmithKline site in Bury Green is also located within the Rural Area. Planning permission was granted for residential development at the southern part of the Major Developed Site which is now completed. Consequently, it is considered that the Major Developed Site designation should be retained but to exclude the residential area.

PART 4: Minor Boundary Amendments

Comprising Section 13

13 Approach to Minor Boundary Amendments

13.1 Need for Review

13.1.1 It has been at least six years since the Local Plan Second Review and accompanying Proposals Map was prepared. Development has occurred since the adoption of the Local Plan which will in some locations have occurred on Green Belt land across the district. As has already been stated, the only appropriate time a Green Belt can be reviewed is as part of the preparation of a Local or District Plan. It is important to capture these alterations to the Green Belt in the up-to-date Policies Map.

13.1.2 In addition, technological improvements in digital cartography have enabled a much finer degree of accuracy than previous map editions. This is also important considering the need to make digital maps widely available on the Council's website.

13.2 Approach to Detailed Minor Boundary Amendments

13.2.1 As explained above, previous Proposals Maps were limited by the available technology, which affected the degree of accuracy of boundaries, particularly those close to the existing urban area. New Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are far more sophisticated and offer the opportunity to create new digital maps. As such, an assessment of the inner Green Belt boundary (where the Green Belt meets the built-up area, including villages) is to be undertaken, in order to assess whether the current mapped boundary still reflects the physical position on the ground and takes into account completed development where necessary. In undertaking this assessment discrepancies such as where boundaries cut halfway across buildings will be clarified. The results of the minor boundary amendment are to follow in due course.

PART 5: Long Term Needs

Comprising Section 14

14 Safeguarding Green Belt land for Longer Term Needs

14.1 Need for Longer Term Green Belt Planning

14.1.1 The NPPF makes it clear that Green Belt boundaries should be drawn having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period (Paragraphs 83 and 85). Local planning authorities should not include land which is unnecessary to keep permanently open and should satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the development plan period. To draw Green Belt boundaries too tightly would risk encroachment and a subsequent undermining of the boundary as a result of piecemeal development over time. This lack of permanence would reduce the value of local plans in making proper provision for necessary development in the future.

14.1.2 Part of this involves looking at the Green Belt boundaries in relation to potential development locations and making a judgement as to whether, if there is a need for development beyond the plan period, Green Belt boundaries could be amended to facilitate this. However, this is difficult in practice to predict with any degree of accuracy what the needs of the district will be in twenty years time. Forecasts have been prepared for possible population growth, economic and employment needs and retail floorspace to 2031, but the reports supporting these forecasts caveat that they have limited accuracy after the first five to ten years and would therefore need to be updated regularly to reflect the most up-to-date situations.

14.2 Approach to Safeguarding Land

14.2.1 The NPPF advises that authorities should where necessary, *'identify in their plan areas of 'safeguarded land' between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period'* (Paragraph 85, bullet point 3). It should be clear in the District Plan that safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time, but that permission would only be granted for permanent development following a review to the District Plan which sets out the need for development at that time.

14.2.2 Annex B of the now revoked PPG2 set out clear guidance on the approach to safeguarding land, stating that such land should comprise areas or sites which may be required to serve development needs in the longer term and be genuinely capable of development when needed. Safeguarded land should be located where sustainable development is possible, i.e. where future development would be an efficient use of land, well integrated with existing development and well related to a choice of sustainable travel options and other existing or planned infrastructure.

- 14.2.3 Safeguarded land should have a clearly defined boundary in order to ensure the permanence of the Green Belt boundary and to prevent the need for a further review of the Green Belt. It may be the case that an area might be capable in Green Belt terms of accommodating a large amount of development, but the development need at the current time would only require part of this land to come forward, leaving some available and suitable land for development at a later time. Such land would be suitable for safeguarding.
- 14.2.4 A key provision of the NPPF is the need to have a rolling five-year supply of land suitable and available for housing. Again, this is something which is more accurate within the early stages of the plan period. As the plan period progresses, a regular review of strategic options will become necessary in order to ensure the overall plan is still deliverable within current circumstances. It would be at that point that safeguarded land would be reviewed in order to see if it is needed to deliver the strategy. Safeguarded land would by its nature be preferable to other locations already discounted at the original plan stage, but as new evidence is gathered as to land availability over time, they may no longer represent the best option for development.
- 14.2.5 In the case of the District Plan preparation process, a vast amount of evidence has been gathered into the suitability of areas of search and wider locations to accommodate development for the emerging plan period. As part of finalising the development strategy an assessment will need to be made as to where development is needed in order to accommodate the development strategy for the plan period.
- 14.2.6 At this stage, as there are several unknowns with regards to the development strategy, it is not possible to assess how much of the identified land will be needed to deliver the strategy, and therefore it is not possible to identify the need for or location of safeguarded land. This will be determined in due course.

PART 6: New Green Belt

Comprising Section 15

15 Approach to New Green Belt

15.1 Principles of new Green Belt

15.1.1 The general extent of Green Belt land across the country is already established and new Green Belt should only be established in exceptional circumstances. However, the NPPF does make provision for the creation of new Green Belts such as when planning for larger scale development such as new settlements or major urban extensions as part of a new Local Plan. The NPPF contains a set of criteria for local authorities to consider when proposing new Green Belts:

Planning authorities should:

- *Demonstrate why normal planning and development management policies would not be adequate;*
- *Set out whether any major changes in circumstances have made the adoption of this exceptional measure necessary;*
- *Show what the consequences of the proposal would be for sustainable development;*
- *Demonstrate the necessity for the Green Belt and its consistency with Local Plans for adjoining areas; and*
- *Show how the Green Belt would meet the other objectives of the Framework*

(NPPF Paragraph 82).

15.1.2 When drawing up or reviewing Green Belts, local authorities should take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development and consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development to urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary or to locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary. This has important implications for East Herts. The Green Belt in East Herts wraps around the western, southern and eastern edges (almost in a U-shape) containing the main towns of Stevenage and Welwyn Garden City to the west, Hertford, Ware, Hoddesdon and Harlow to the south and south-east, Sawbridgeworth and Bishop's Stortford, leaving a large rural area covering two-thirds of the District.

15.1.3 Beyond the Green Belt towns, apart from the A10 and A120, the road network is limited and there are no railway lines or stations. There are many villages of varying size and the town of Buntingford located to the north of the district on the A10. Without a railway line, these settlements are only accessible by limited bus services or by private vehicle and as such are relatively unsustainable. The cost of installing a new railway line would be considerable and would certainly not happen within the emerging Plan period. To seek large amounts of development in this large but relatively poorly connected location would be contrary to the principles of encouraging sustainable development.

- 15.1.4 Paragraph 86 of the NPPF advises on whether a village should be within or excluded from the Green Belt. Although the paragraph refers to villages, the issues it discusses can be argued to be relevant to the entire concept of whether to expand Green Belt into new locations. The paragraph states that *'if it is necessary to prevent development in a village primarily because of the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt, the village should be included in the Green Belt. If, however, the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area or normal development management policies, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt'* (NPPF Paragraph 86).
- 15.1.5 Such a principle could be applied to the decision of creating new Green Belt as a result of major large scale development. Take for example, if a large urban extension were to occur to the east of Welwyn Garden City, within the Green Belt. Land immediately around this location is already Green Belt, already serving a purpose which would not change as a result of the urban extension. Land immediately to the west would remain a Local Wildlife Site with potential for Country Park status; and land to the north of the urban extension is already Green Belt covering land up to Stevenage. There would be no real advantage in creating new Green Belt in this location to compensate for the loss of Green Belt land. New Green Belt beyond the current boundary would need to extend north of Watton-at-Stone village and would bear no relation to the actual development several miles south of the village. New Green Belt would serve no additional purpose in terms of preventing the unrestricted sprawl of urban areas, preventing the merging of urban areas, providing additional protection to the countryside and protecting the historic setting of settlements in the area, as there is already a raft of environmental designations and Conservation Areas.
- 15.1.6 If for example, a large urban extension were to occur to the village of Watton-at-Stone, there would be a reasonable justification to extend the Green Belt to wrap around the development, with an outer boundary re-drawn to be several miles wide so as to ensure an appreciable open zone all round the built-up area concerned. The land around this development would have a greater role in contributing to the purposes of the Green Belt. The risk of coalescence between the enlarged village and the neighbouring towns of Stevenage and Hertford would be increased and there would be a greater need to protect remaining areas of the countryside from encroachment.
- 15.1.7 With both examples, there is no way of knowing at the Plan-making stage, what the final form of development might actually take and the amount of Green Belt land that would be lost as a result. The locations being considered as part of the development strategy that may necessitate compensatory or new Green Belt are North of Harlow and the larger-scale scenario being considered North of Ware and East of Ware. If either of these were to be included in the development

strategy, only when the form of these development locations was known could a decision be made in respect of compensatory or new Green Belt. The process of drawing a new outer Green Belt boundary that exceeds the amount of land potentially lost as part of the development strategy would be entirely arbitrary and would de-value the strategy.

- 15.1.8 Instead the approach recommended in this Green Belt Review is to defer the decision over compensatory or new Green Belt until the development strategy, and the form of the development locations within it, is better known. Any broad locations within the development strategy will be subject to further work, including an updated Green Belt Review and at that stage it will be clearer how much land is to be released from the Green Belt. The Review will also establish the need, location and amount of any compensatory or new Green Belt in order to deliver the development strategy.

Appendix 2: Subdivided Areas of Search

Area of Search	Sub-Divided Location	Green Belt Review Site ID
Bishop's Stortford North - Sub-Area A	Land in the northeastern corner of the field that lies west of Hoggate's Wood, bounded by Hoggate's Wood, the A120 and the Green Belt boundary across the field that is not marked by any physical feature.	01A
Bishop's Stortford North - Sub-Area B	Land between the southern edge of Hoggate's Wood and the A120 to the north, framed by the western boundary of Hoggate's Wood, and by the Green Belt boundary to the east that follows a partly treed field boundary down to the eastern edge of Hoggate's Wood.	02A
	Land framed by the southern edge of Hoggate's Wood to the north, Dane O'Coys Road to the west, the southern boundary of Ash Grove and northern boundary of the allotments and playing fields to the south, and the woodland boundary of Whitehall College to the east.	02B
	Land immediately north of the built-up area at the A1250, framed by Dane O'Coys Road to the west and treed hedgerow to the north. The eastern boundary is marked by Ash Grove, a tennis court, and a section with no clear boundaries further south.	02C
	Land immediately north of the built-up area at the A1250, framed by Ash Grove and tree line to the north and a sparsely tree lined track to the east. The western boundary is partly marked by Ash Grove, though there are no clear boundaries further south adjacent to the tennis courts.	02D
	Land immediately north of the built-up area at the A1250, framed by a tree line and track to the west, a tree line to the north Barrells Down Road to the east.	02E
	Land between Dane O'Coys Meadow and Whitehall College, framed by Dane O'Coys Road to the north, Whitehall Road and the built-up area at Barrells Down Road to the east, a tree line to the south and woodland edge to the west.	02F
Bishop's	Land between the built-up area of Manor Links	03A

Stortford East - Sub-Area B	and Cecil Close, framed by residential curtilages to the west and north, treeline to the south and partially shrubbed verge of the driving range to the east which has few physical markers.	
	The existing driving range of Bishop's Stortford Golf Club comprising of land between the built-up area of Shortcroft to the north and the disused railway to the south, framed by a partial tree line to the east and partially shrubbed verge of the driving range to the west which has few physical markers.	03B
	Land between the A1250 to the north, Birchanger Services and the verge of the M11 to the east, the disused railway to the south and partly treed driving range to the west.	03C
	Land south of the disused railway, framed by the verge of the M11 to the east, treed boundary of the golf course to the south, and treed boundary of the residential curtilages at the built-up area to the west.	03D
Bishop's Stortford South - Sub-Area A	Land between the built-up area north of Whittington Way and the Hertfordshire Way footpath running east to west across the site, framed by the Hertfordshire Way footpath to the west and Thorley Street to the east.	04A
	Land between the Hertfordshire Way footpath and the stream running north-west to east across the site, framed by the built-up area at Obrey Way to the west and Thorley Street to the east.	04B
	Land between the stream and the A1184, framed by Thorley Street to the east and the built-up area and Obrey Way to the west.	04C
Hertford West - Sub-Area A	Land containing the Archer's Spring woodland, north of the Land west of Sele Farm wildlife site and framed by a track to the west.	05A
	Land between B1000 and Archers Spring Wood to the north, framed by a high shrubbed ridgeline to the east and shrubbed public footpath to the west.	05B
	Land between B1000 and woodland to the north, framed by the built-up area of the residential curtilages of Bentley Road and Perrett Gardens to the east and the shrubbed ridgeline to the west.	05C
	Land containing the community centre and the Ridgeway Local Park, framed by the built-up area of Perrett Gardens to the South and The	05D

	Ridgeway to the east, and the curtilages of the Ridgeway Local Park to the north and community centre to the west.	
Hertford West - Sub-Area B	Land bordered by the B1000 to the north, a track through part of Evergreen Wood to the west, a track south of another part of Evergreen Wood and a track to the west.	06A
	Land bordered by the B1000 to the north, a public right of way to the east, Lady Hughe's Wood to the south and a track through part of Evergreen Wood to the west.	06B
	Land bordered by the B1000 and the built-up area of The Ridgeway to the north, a public right of way to the west, Blakemore Wood to the south and an agricultural field to the east with no clear physical boundary.	06C
	Land bordered by the built-up area to the north, a section of woodland to the west, Blakemore Wood to the south and a public right of way to the east.	06D
	Land containing Blakemore Wood with no clear physical boundaries further than the woodland edge aside from a small bit of woodland and the public right of way to the west.	06E
	Land bordered by the built-up area to the north, a public right of way and Blakemore Wood to the west, Lady Hughe's Wood to the south and Thieves Lane and the built-up area to the east.	06F
	Land bordered by Thieves Lane to the west and the built-up area of Welwyn Road to the north, and residential curtilages to the east and south and partly to the west.	06G
	Land containing Lady Hughe's Wood with no clear physical boundaries further than the woodland other than a small section of track to part of the southern boundary, and Thieves Lane and the built-up area to the east.	06H
	Land bordered by Lady Hughe's Wood to the north, Thieves Lane to the east, the A414, a stream and a lake to the south, and a track to the west.	06I
Hertford North - Sub-Area C	Land between St John's Wood and Bengoe Nursery, framed by the built-up area at Sacombe Road and a public right of way to the west and a public right of way to the east.	07A
	Land bordered by the B158/Wadesmill Road to the east, a track to the south, a public right of way to the west and St John's Wood to the	07B

	north and west.	
	Land bordered by the tree line of the B158/Wadesmill Road to the east, a public right of way to the south-west and a track to the north.	07C
	Land containing the Bengoe Nursery, bordered by a tree lined public right of way to the north-east, allotments to the south-east, the built-up area at Sacombe Road to the south-west and a tree line and electricity substation to the north-west.	07D
	Land containing the Bengoe allotments, bordered by a public right of way to the north-east, the built-up area at the B158/Wadesmill Road, Bengoe Street and Wadesmill Road to the south-east, south and south-west and a sparsely treed curtilage of Bengoe Nursery to the north-west.	07E
	Land bordered by the B158/Wadesmill Road to the west, public right of way to the east and tree line, roads and residential curtilages marking the built-up area to the south.	07F
	Land bordered by the B158/Wadesmill Road and a public right of way to the west, track to the north, farm curtilage and sparse tree line to the east, and the residential curtilages marking the built-up area to the south.	07G
Hertford South - Sub-Area C	Land bordered by the built-up area of properties at Queens Road and the public footpath of Hagsdell Lane to the west and north, a tree line to the west of Hagsdell Stream to the east and a partly shrubbed fence to the south.	08A
	Land bordered by the built-up area of the public footpath of Hagsdell Lane to the north and the residential curtilages of properties at Ashbourne Gardens to the east, as well as a section of woodland to the east, a tree line to the south and a stream to the west.	08B
	Land bordered by the built-up area of properties at Ashbourne Gardens to the north, Mangrove Road to the east, a partly broken fence to the west, and the road and some residential curtilages of Mangrove Drive to the south as well as a section with no clear boundaries.	08C
	Land containing a cricket ground and associated pavilions, bordered by a lane to the north, the residential curtilage of Balls Park and a lane to the south-west and the tree line	08D

	of Mangrove Road and existing built-up area of Ashbourne Gardens to the west.	
	Land containing Simon Balle school, bordered by the A414/London Road to the north-east, a lane to the east, residential curtilage of Balls Park and cricket ground to the south, and the built-up area along Mangrove Road to the west and north.	08E
	Land containing development associated with Balls Park, bordered by London Road to the north, a lane and footpath to the east, and lanes to the south and west.	08F
	Land bordered by the built-up area of Queens Road to the north-west, a partly shrubbed fence and small woodland copse to the north, the residential curtilages of Mangrove Drive and Oak Grove to the east as well as a tree line and hedgerow, a track to the south, and woodland and the curtilage of Dunkirks Farm to the west.	08G
	Land bordered by woodland and the residential curtilages of Oak Grove to the north, a tree line along Mangrove Road to the east, a fence to the south and a tree line to the west.	08H
	Land containing the residential area of Oak Grove and Mangrove Road, bordered by Mangrove Road to the east, fenced and tree lined curtilages to the south and west, and tree line along Mangrove Drive to the north.	08I
	Land bordered by a lane to the north, a small track and tree line to the east, tree line to the south and the residential curtilages of properties at Oak Grove and Mangrove Drive to the west.	08J
	Land containing the Balls Park development, bordered by lanes to the north, residential curtilages and partial tree line to the east, tree line to the south and tree line and track to the west.	08K
Sawbridgeworth West - Sub-Area A	Land bordered by a tree line to the south and west, a public footpath to the north, and by a brook to the east which is broken to the north and adjoined by a public footpath in part.	09A
	Land containing Leventhorpe School, bordered by hedgerows to the north and south, a hedgerow and wooded public right of way to the west and the built-up area to the east that follows Cambridge Road.	09B
	Land bordered by a hedgerow to the north, a	09C

	tree lined public right of way to the east, West Road and the curtilage of the Three Horseshoes Public House to the south and a tree line to the west, partly broken for access.	
	Land containing Mandeville School, bordered by a tree lined public right of way and brook to the west, a public footpath to the north, the built-up area and a tree line adjacent to Crofters to the east, and the built-up area as well as West Road to the south.	09D
Sawbridgeworth West - Sub-Area B	Land containing Claylane Farm buildings, bordered by the northern edge of West Road to the north, hedgerow to the west, a public footpath to the south and partial hedgerow to the east.	10A
	Land containing a row of houses along West Road, bordered by the northern edge of West Road to the north, the stream to the east, a public footpath to the south and a partially hedged field boundary to the east.	10B
	Land containing Chalks Farm buildings and a recreation ground, bordered by the built-up area to the east, residential curtilage of Chalks Farm to the south, a stream to the east and northern edge of West Road to the north.	10C
	Land bordered by the built-up area to the east, a treed public footpath to the south that follows a ditch, a sparsely shrubbed field boundary to the west and a public footpath to the north with only a small section treed to the east.	10D
	Land bordered by a public footpath to the north, a hedgerow to the east and south, a track to the west of which the southern part is a public right of way.	10E
	Land bordered by a hedgerow to the west, a public footpath to the north, the built-up area to the east, and partly by a hedgerow that bounds the wildlife south to the south, as well as a section with no clear boundary though it is considered to be between the northern edge of the wildlife site and the built-up area.	10F
	Land containing the Rivers Orchard Nursery wildlife site, bordered by hedgerows to the west, north and east and a partly broken hedgerow to the south in addition to a stream that follows the access road to Thomas Rivers Hospital.	10G
	Land bordered by the built-up area to the east, the built-up area and the curtilage of the	10H

	hospital car park to the south, and a hedgerow to the east. There is no evident boundary to the north, though it is considered to be between the northern edge of the wildlife site and the built-up area.	
	Land bordered by the hospital car park to the east, the built-up area to the south, a hedgerow to the west, and a hedgerow, stream and hospital car park curtilage to the north.	10I
Sawbridgeworth North - Sub-Area A	Land containing Clarklands Industrial Estate, bordered by hedgerows to the north, the A1184/Cambridge Road to the east, Parsonage Lane and a tree lined public footpath to the south, and Parsonage Lane and partly tree lined residential curtilages to the west.	11A
	Land bordered by the A1184/Cambridge Road to the east, a low hedgerow and small copse marking Leventhorpe School to the south, a partial low shrub line to the west, and Parsonage Lane and a public footpath to the north, of which part is tree lined.	11B
Ware North - Sub-Area A	Land enclosed between the A10, the A1170 and the built-up area of Ware to the south, commonly known as Nun's Triangle.	12
Ware North - Sub-Area B	Land bordered by the access track which is a public right of way to the west, the access track, fenced paddock and public footpath to the north, a stream to the east, and hedgerow and stream to the south.	13A
	Land containing a paddock, bordered by the access track which is a public right of way to the north and a fence to the east, south and west.	13B
	Land containing Wodson Park Leisure Centre, bordered by the A1170/Ermine Street to the west, thick tree line to the north and east and the built-up area to the south.	13C
	Land bordered by a fence to the east and tree line to the south, west and north.	13D
	Land containing the Round House, bordered by a tree lined public footpath to the east, a tree line to the south, partly by a fence and partly by a tree line to the west and by a public footpath to the north.	13E
	Land bordered by a public footpath to the south-west, a tree line to the north, a stream to the east and a tree lined public footpath to the south-east.	13F

	Land bordered by public footpaths to the north-west hedgerows to the north-east, south-east and south-west.	13G
	Land bordered by a stream and public footpath to the north-west, a track adjacent to Fanhams Hall to the north-east, Fanhams Hall Road to the south-east and a sparse hedgerow to the south-west.	13H
	Land bordered by the built-up area to the south-east and south-west, the built-up area and some woodland to the north-west, and a partial hedgerow to the north-east.	13I
	Land bordered by a tree line to the north-west, a public footpath to the north-east, a tree line and track to the south-east and a hedgerow to the south-west.	13J
	Land containing Ware Youth Football Club grounds, bordered by a track and public right of way to the north, a hedgerow to the east, Fanhams Hall Road to the south-east and built-up area to the south-west.	13K
	Land bordered by the northern edge of Fanhams Hall Road to the north-west, hedgerows to the north-east and east, fence to the south-east and built-up area to the south-west.	13L
	Land bordered by the northern edge of Fanhams Hall Road to the north, a footpath and Elder Road to the east, hedgerows and the built-up area to the south and a hedgerow to the west.	13M
	Land bordered by Fanhams Hall Road to the north, a partially broken shrub line to the east, the built-up area to the south and a public footpath to the west.	13N
	Land bordered by Fanhams Hall Road to the south and roads to the north-east and north-west.	13O
Ware East - Sub-Area A	Land bordered by a tree line along Fanhams Hall Road, a hedgerow and small copse to the north, a small copse to the east, a hedgerow to the south and a fence to the west.	14A
	Land containing Priors Wood School, bordered by the built-up area to the west, a hedgerow to the north, a partial hedgerow and ditch to the east and a hedgerow to the south.	14B
	Land bordered by a footpath, partial hedgerow and ditch to the west, a hedgerow and stream to the north, a hedgerow to the east and Wood Lane public right of way to the south.	14C

	Land containing a recreation ground, bordered by the built-up area to the west, a hedgerow to the north, a footpath to the east, and a public right of way to the south including a section of Wood Lane.	14D
	Land bordered by the built-up area to the west, and public rights of way to the south, north and east; the latter being part of Wood Lane.	14E
	Land bordered by Wood Lane public right of way to the west, woodland to the north, a partial hedgerow and small area of woodland to the east and a shrubline to the south.	14F
	Land bordered partly by a partial tree line, hedgerow and track to the east, a public right of way to the south and a partial hedgerow to the west. There are no clear boundaries to the north, beyond the copse contained within the site.	14G
	Land bordered by the built-up area to the west, public rights of way to the north and east, the hedged curtilage of Widbury House and Little Widbury Lane to the south.	14H
	Land bordered by a public right of way of Wood Lane to the west, a shrubline to the north and a sparse hedgerow to the east and south.	14I
	Land containing Widbury House dwellings, bordered by hedgerows to the west and north, public right of way of Wood Lane to the east and Widbury Hill to the south.	14J
	Land bordered by the public right of way of Wood Lane to the east, a sparse hedgerow to the north, an access track to Priorswood Cottage to the east and Widbury Hill to the south.	14K
East of Welwyn Garden City	Land containing Moneyhole Lane Park, bordered by the built-up area to the west and north, woodland to the east and a thick tree line to the south.	15A
	Land containing Henry Wood and Birchall Wood, bordered partly by a tree line to the west, the built-up area to the north, partly by a road as well as an unclear boundary to the east, and partly by the residential curtilages of Old Park Cottages as well as a public right of way to the south.	15B
	Land bordered by Henry Wood and Birchall Wood to the west and north respectively, a road to the east and public footpath to the	15C

	south.	
	Land bordered by Birchall Wood to the west, no clear boundary to the north and south and a track to the east.	15D
	Land bordered by the built-up area to the west and north, Green Lane and Cole Green Lane to the east and partly by woodland to the south.	15E
	Land bordered by Cole Green Lane to the south, Green Lane to the west and no clear boundaries to the north or east.	15F
	Land bordering a track to the north, Birchall Wood, a track and the hedged curtilage of Birchall Farm to the east, Cole Green Lane to the south and woodland, the built-up area and a thick tree line to the west.	15G
	Land bordered by a public right of way to the north, a road to the east, the A414/London Road and the B195/Birchall Lane to the south and no clear boundary to the west.	15H
	Land bordered by a track to the north, partly by a track to the east, the A414/London Road to the south and no clear boundary to the west.	15I
	Land bordered by Cole Green Lane, woodland and a hedgerow to the north, Greater Captain's Wood and Howellpark Wood to the east, a track to the south and the built-up area to the west.	15J
	Land bordered by some woodland and a hedgerow to the north, the A414/London Road to the east, a track to the south and the curtilage of the neighbouring waste site to the west.	15K
	Land bordered by the built-up area to the west, a track to the north, the A414/London Road to the east and a track, tree line and curtilage of a car park to the south.	15L
North of Harlow - Sub-Area B	Land containing part of the village of Eastwick, bordered by Eastwick Hall Lane to the east, the A414/Eastwick Road to the south, field boundaries marked by hedgerows and Lord's Wood to the west and tree lines and a track which marks a public right of way to the north.	16A
	Land containing Gilston Park and part of the village of Eastwick, bordered by Eastwick Hall Lane to the west, a track of which part is a public right of way to the north, Gilston Lane and Pye Corner to the east and the A414/Eastwick Road to the south.	16B

	Land containing part of the village of Gilston, bordered by Gilston Lane and Pye Corner to the west, roads to the north, a river tributary to the east and High Wych Road to the south.	16C
	Land bordered by a roundabout and minor road to the north-west, the High Street to the north-east, the built-up area to the south-east and the railway line to the south-west.	17A
	Land bordered by the A602 to the north, Walkern Road and the built-up area to the east and the High Street to the south-west.	17B
	Land bordered by Walkern Road and the built-up area to the west, the A602 to the north and Mill Lane and the built-up area to the south.	17C
	Land bordered by Mill Lane to the north, the A602 to the east, Ware Road to the south and the High Street and the built-up area to the west.	17D
	Land bordered by the built-up area to the north, the High Street to the east, Perrywood Lane and Church Lane to the south and the built-up area to the west.	17E
	Land bordered by the built-up area and a small wooded area to the north, a thick tree line to the east, a small hedgerow to the south and a thick tree belt to the west, adjacent to the railway line.	17F
	Land bordered by a tree line and small area of woodland to the north, the railway line and built-up area to the east, Church Lane to the south, Watton Road, a public footpath and a section with no identifiable boundary to the west.	17G

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL – 3 DECEMBER 2013 EXECUTIVE – 9 DECEMBER 2013

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

DUTY TO CO-OPERATE - UPDATE REPORT

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- This report presents the notes of the latest round of Member-level meetings with adjoining Local Planning Authorities

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL, EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL: That:</u>	
(A)	the notes of recent Member-level meetings with Harlow and Uttlesford Councils, be noted.

1.0 Background

1.1 A report to the District Planning Executive Panel on 28th November 2012 (see Background Papers) explained the background to the Duty to Co-Operate and its implications for the East Herts District Plan. The report explained that the duty required the Council as Local Planning Authority to engage constructively with a range of bodies at the formative stages of plan-making. The duty also applies to other public sector bodies such as the County Council.

1.2 The report of 28th November 2012 explained that one of the most complex areas of the duty is around the issue of cross-boundary strategic priorities, in particular in relation to the issue of unmet housing need, which applies in the case of districts with little physical capacity to accommodate their housing and development needs.

- 1.3 The report sought agreement for the Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport to be authorised to represent East Herts Council in meetings with the relevant Member(s) from neighbouring local planning authorities, Hertfordshire and Essex County Councils, and other relevant bodies.
- 1.4 It was agreed that the notes of all Member-level meetings would be reported back to the District Planning Executive Panel. Member-level meetings with Welwyn Hatfield Borough, Stevenage Borough, and North Herts District were reported in the Duty to Co-Operate Update Report of 25th July 2013. The same report also included a summary of the main cross-boundary issues for each of the seven adjoining Local Planning Authorities.
- 2.0 Report
- 2.1 Further meetings have taken place with Harlow and Uttlesford Councils. The notes of both meetings are attached at **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**. Uttlesford District Council and Harlow District Council have agreed the notes of the meetings as presented here.
- 3.0 Implications/Consultations
- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

- 'The Duty to Co-Operate' and East Herts District Plan (District Planning Executive Panel, 28th November 2012)
- Duty to Co-Operate Update Report (District Planning Executive Panel, 25th July 2013)

Both reports may be accessed at:

<http://online.eastherts.gov.uk/moderngov/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=151>

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IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):	<p><i>People</i> This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are vulnerable, and delivering strong services</p> <p><i>Place</i> This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p><i>Prosperity</i> This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.</p>
Consultation:	None
Legal:	N/A
Financial:	N/A
Human Resource:	N/A
Risk Management:	Failure to comply with the Duty to Co-Operate could mean that the Council would not be able to submit the District Plan for Examination in Public.

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**East Herts District Council-Harlow Council
Meeting Notes**

Date/time: Monday 23rd September 2013, 3.30pm

Venue: Harlow Civic Centre

Attendees:

East Herts Council

Cllr Mike Carver (MC), Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport

Bryan Thomsett (BT), Planning Policy Manager

Martin Paine (MP), Senior Planning Officer

Harlow Council

Cllr Phil Waite (PW), Portfolio Holder Environment

Cllr Tony Durcan (TD), Portfolio Holder Resources & Enterprise

Graeme Bloomer (GB), Head of Regeneration

Dianne Cooper (DC), Planning & Building Control Manager

Paul MacBride (PMB), Forward Planning Manager

Meeting Notes

1. PMB explained that Harlow Council is proposing to consult on a housing target in spring 2014 with a pre-submission consultation on a draft plan late in 2014. Harlow Council's Sub-National Population Projections indicate a need for around 8,000 dwellings for the district alone, the majority of which could potentially be accommodated within Harlow's administrative area. However, in order to meet affordable housing and regeneration needs, higher figures would need to be examined in accordance with guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Consequently PW explained that Harlow Council needed to consider if some of its unmet housing needs may need to be accommodated in other districts. This would have regard to whether there were potential regeneration benefits to the town arising from large-scale development north of Harlow.
2. BT explained that East Herts Council is proposing to consult on a draft District Plan (Preferred Options) for 12 weeks starting in early 2014, dependent upon agreement by Full Council on 11th December 2013. East Herts Council has noted that the projections suggest a housing requirement towards the upper end of the region 10,000 to 17,000 dwellings. The April 2013 Office for National Statistics release suggests an East Herts figure of 750 dwellings per year, or 15,000 dwellings over 20 years, although these figures had not yet been agreed by the Council. BT explained that East Herts Council had agreed to produce a single District Plan, including allocations, policies, and strategy.
3. MC stated that an informal session with East Herts Members only on 24th October would be the first time that the draft strategy would be presented for internal discussion and initial feedback from Members.

This would provide a strong steer as to the direction in which East Herts Council would be heading with its draft Plan and development strategy.

4. MC stated that East Herts Council is very aware of the need to get a plan in place. There was considerable pressure from planning applications and appeals on undesignated sites, for example at Buntingford. However, the Council was not prepared to rush through a plan without a robust evidence base, which could be at risk of being found unsound at examination and risk wasting substantial amounts of money to no purpose.
5. MP circulated the East Herts 'stepped approach' (Version 5 October 2013) chart showing key dates and process components. The approach to objective assessment of 69 initial 'areas of search' was explained. In summer 2012 East Herts Council agreed to shortlist around a dozen locations (plus villages) for further testing and assessment. These amounted to options for around 30,000 dwellings. Options shortlisted included 10,000 dwellings north of Harlow as an urban extension to the town, and an alternative test concept of 5,000 dwellings as a stand-alone new settlement in the same broad location.
6. MC stated that through its Plan-making process to date East Herts Council had made considerable efforts to understand not only issues within East Herts district but also wider strategic issues, underpinned by a robust evidence base. BT added that it was understood from East Herts Council's own strategic employment study that the main economic function of the district was to provide housing to workers in large employment centres outside the administrative boundaries of the district. MP added that Chapter 4 of the Supporting Document to the District Plan, which addresses cross-boundary strategic issues as well as site-level issues, had been issued to Officers at all adjoining authorities in September 2012 for informal comment.
7. MP asked whether Harlow Council was expecting to receive substantial investment from developers north of Harlow directly into Harlow regeneration and infrastructure projects within the town. It was uncertain whether there would be a large amount of money left over once all the infrastructure necessary to support the development had been provided.
8. TD explained that the regeneration benefits went beyond developer contributions. Increased critical mass could benefit the town centre in terms of increased spend and also provide benefits in terms of attracting and retaining businesses. PMB stated that a study on growth and regeneration would be available shortly following consideration by Harlow Council Members. DC noted that Harlow Council has a formal resolution in support of growth to the north of the town up to 10,000 dwellings in support of these wider objectives, subject to the necessary supporting infrastructure being in place.

9. GB pointed out that the London-Stansted-Cambridge-Consortium had identified Harlow North as a potential growth area. MC stated that the relationship between the responsibilities of external bodies and the local planning authorities was getting muddled. There was understandable frustration and confusion at local level about the appropriate level at which strategic planning was being undertaken. There was also concern that the development industry was beginning to take advantage of this confusion.
10. TD stated that there were a number of important infrastructure issues which should be assessed as part of the plan-making process. One matter related to provision for hospital capacity, and whether development north of Harlow could assist in this respect. This was just one example of why it is important to have clarity from East Herts Council in respect of whether or not it was proposing to include Harlow North in its District Plan.
11. MP drew attention to the feedback to the Issues and Options consultations carried out by both Councils in 2010/2011. Amongst over 7,000 comments to the East Herts consultation was a considerable amount of opposition to Harlow North, especially through the STOP Harlow North campaign. It was clear from Harlow Council's analysis of feedback to its own consultation responses from Harlow residents were generally, but not wholly, supportive of development north of Harlow. GB stated that there was inevitably opposition to Greenfield development options, but this needed to be weighed against the need for regeneration, housing and development, and national policy requirements.
12. TD asked whether East Herts was aware of non-political constraints or concerns about large scale development north of Harlow. MP responded that the main outstanding planning concerns related to the transport network.
13. MP stated that the orientation and layout of Harlow, including the width of the Stort floodplain and the developers' proposal for a doughnut-shaped design around Gilston Park posed challenges for coherent urban design as part of an extension to Harlow. The location of the M11 distant from the area north of Harlow and existing employment areas posed challenges for transport planning which were not simple to resolve. By contrast development nearer to the M11 was more attractive to business and less complicated in terms of transport planning.
14. GB stated that urban design challenges could be overcome through new focal points at the Stort crossings, and the Stort could be integrated as a continuation of the existing Harlow Green Wedge pattern of development. GB stated that junction 7a was justified in its own right in order to support growth to the east of Harlow, including the

Enterprise Zone, irrespective of development to the north. Epping Forest District also supported Junction 7a in order to alleviate queuing from Epping to junction 7 shared with Harlow. BT acknowledged that in planning terms there appeared to be a good case for a new junction 7a. PMB stated that another consideration related to potential increase in rail capacity in the area.

15. PW stated that Harlow Council supported a new A414 Eastwick-M11 Junction 7a northern bypass proposal in order to alleviate pressure on the town. However, it was unclear how such a road could be funded. MC raised concerns that if the area north of Harlow were to be identified for growth there could be pressure from developers to increase the amount of development above 10,000 dwellings in order to help finance a northern link road. GB commented that Harlow Council had early discussions with Infrastructure UK, although these had not progressed far. There was some discussion of the role of LEPs in financing infrastructure provision, although it is uncertain whether LEPs have sufficient finance to bridge the funding gap.
16. MP stated that based on Herts County Council's interim interpretation and advice in respect of the emerging modelling results, a northern link road between the A414 Eastwick roundabout and a new junction 7a on the M11 would not in itself adequately mitigate network pressures. MP acknowledged that further modelling results were due shortly and these would be studied with interest to see whether there were other mitigation measures which could potentially work.
17. BT explained that given the complexities of site delivery, East Herts Council had requested assistance from ATLAS. ATLAS had produced a Delivery Advice Note addressing the subject of uncertainty in infrastructure delivery. The Note was available on the Council's website in relation to 3rd October Panel meeting. MP explained that East Herts Council was considering a range of policy tools and approaches to addressing uncertainty and housing need. ATLAS was also engaged to elicit further information from developers at strategic site options, and this material was all being posted on the Council's website.
18. TD asked whether East Herts Council could meet its own housing needs without Harlow North. BT replied that the Council was still considering this point.
19. TD suggested that it would be more sustainable for East Herts to pursue a concentration strategy focused on large development sites with built-in infrastructure provision. BT replied that it was necessary to look at the development needs of settlements across the district and therefore a simple concentration strategy was not realistic, although Places for People had previously leafleted residents throughout East Herts, extolling the virtues of such a concentration strategy, in terms of reducing impact on East Herts' historic towns.

20. MC stated that East Herts development needs and constraints should be viewed in relation to the broader picture for the District. He stated that East Herts Council is taking an evidence-based approach to assessment of development options. If evidence comes to light that demonstrates fundamental obstacles to deliverability, further options including new sites elsewhere in East Herts may have to return for consideration. MP stated that East Herts Council was seeking to undertake a Delivery Study in 2014, prior to examination, which would shed more light on delivery matters. All relevant parties would be invited to contribute to the study.
21. It agreed that it was not appropriate to discuss a Memorandum of Understanding between the two Councils at this stage, until it was clear what East Herts Council's position was following Full Council on 11th December 2013. It was also agreed that a follow-up meeting would be held early in 2014 to review the outcome of the East Herts policy process, and progress by both authorities.
22. It was agreed that a joint meeting note would be prepared which was agreed by all parties. This note would be reported back to East Herts Council's District Planning Executive Panel in accordance with the protocol for Duty to Co-Operate Meetings with adjoining Local Planning Authorities.

The meeting was closed at 5.30pm

These notes have been agreed by Harlow Council and East Herts Council as a true reflection of the meeting.

**East Herts District Council - Uttlesford District Council
Meeting Notes**

Date/time: Monday 28th October 2013, 10:00am
Venue: East Herts Council Office, Bishop's Stortford

Attendees:

East Herts District Council

Cllr Mike Carver (MC) Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport
Bryan Thomsett (BT) Planning Policy Manager
Claire Sime (CS) Planning Policy Team Leader

Uttlesford District Council

Jim Ketteridge (JK) Leader and Chair of Local Plan Working Group
Cllr Jackie Cheetham (JC) Deputy Leader (substituting for Cllr Susan Barber – Planning Portfolio Holder)
Andrew Taylor (AT) Assistant Director Planning and Building Control
Melanie Jones (MJ) Principal Planning Officer

Meeting Notes:

East Herts Timetable

1. MC outlined the following schedule of proposed meetings leading up to Full Council hopefully agreeing the draft District Plan (Preferred Options) for consultation early next year:

Date	Meeting	Meeting Type	Content
Monday 18 th November 2013	District Planning Executive Panel	Public	Update Report Older People's Study Draft District Plan – Topic-Based Policies
Monday 9 th December 2013	Executive	Public	As above
Wednesday 11 th December 2013	Full Council	Public	As above
Thursday 28 th November 2013	Member Event	Private	Presentation of the draft development strategy and settlement policies
Tuesday 3 rd December 2013	District Planning Executive Panel	Public	Duty to Co-Operate Update Report Transport Update Green Belt Review Chapter 6 – Supporting Document Local Development Scheme

Date	Meeting	Meeting Type	Content
Monday 9 th December 2013	Executive	Public	As above
Wednesday 11 th December 2013	Full Council	Public	As above
Thursday 9 th January 2013	Member Briefing	Private	Final preparation for Panel on 16 th January 2013
Thursday 16 th January 2014	District Planning Executive Panel	Public	Infrastructure Topic Paper Sustainability Appraisal Draft District Plan – Development Strategy and Settlement Policies
Tuesday 21 st January 2014	Special Executive	Public	As above
Thursday 29 th January 2014	Full Council	Public	As above

2. Public consultation (x12 weeks) is anticipated to run mid-February - mid-May 2014.
3. MC outlined that Member engagement in the process was critical and referred to a recent briefing session which was attended by 27 Members. The day was structured around two main parts. The morning consisted of presentations and context-setting, and the afternoon consisted of discussion of the emerging draft strategy and the way forward. The day was facilitated by PAS with support from ATLAS and Officers.
4. BT agreed to forward to Uttlesford the PAS and ATLAS presentations
5. BT explained that Members have noted that the projections suggest a housing requirement towards the upper end of the region 10,000 to 17,000 dwellings. The Household Interim Projections 2011-2021 (published March 2013) suggest an East Herts figure of 750 dwellings per year, or 15,000 dwellings over 20 years.
6. BT confirmed that the Council is not seeking to reduce this figure but acknowledged that there could be potential delivery issues. A dispersed strategy is anticipated seeking to meet housing market area needs in the district's 5 main settlements and rural area, including the identification of larger villages to accommodate some growth as well as considering other potential locations adjacent to our neighbours.
7. The Council will be arguing that a 5% buffer is appropriate on the basis of long term delivery trends.

8. BT confirmed that the Council will be seeking to consume its own housing requirements. AT similarly confirmed that they would not be seeking to locate any of their housing requirements in East Herts.

Bishop's Stortford North Planning Application

9. It is anticipated that the outline application (up to 2,200 dwellings) will be considered by the Development Management Committee on the 14th November. MC spoke about the work being undertaken on a Neighbourhood Plan covering the BSN area.
10. JK anticipated that ECC would be seeking highway contributions from BSN.

Uttlesford Timetable

11. AT outlined the timetable for Uttlesford. On 1st November the Local Plan Working Group is meeting to consider a number of options for delivering the additional numbers of housing required (2,680 homes). The recommendation is that:
 - a. 170 homes be delivered in Saffron Walden
 - b. 400 homes be delivered on the western edge of Dunmow
 - c. 100 homes be delivered at Helena Romanes School in Greater Dunmow
 - d. 2,100 homes to be delivered at Elsenham (with potential for further expansion)
12. Subject to agreement by Cabinet an eight week public consultation period is anticipated over Christmas. A pre-submission Plan will then be published for further consultation later in 2014 (March/April), with examination anticipated in the autumn. If the Inspector finds the Plan to be sound the Council anticipate adopting it in early 2015.
13. JK outlined that the evidence relating to the sites would need to be updated to consider impacts arising, including cumulative impacts e.g. in relation to highways and education. A key issue is the impact on Junction 8 of the M11.

Infrastructure

14. MC expressed concern about the potential impact on Bishop's Stortford and questioned what infrastructure was going to be put in place to support the strategy.
15. AT explained that primary school capacity was not an issue, but that there were concerns over secondary school provision and this required further work. It was indicated that HCC had advised that they were seeking to influence the admissions policies of the schools in Bishop's Stortford and that ECC would need to provide for pupils from Essex.

16. BT advised that the emerging East Herts District Plan would be seeking to address the secondary school issues in Bishop's Stortford through a flexible policy approach.
17. There was some discussion over the potential impact that the development in Elsenham could have on the retail offer in Bishop's Stortford. It was agreed that increased footfall was beneficial but it was acknowledged that traffic congestion in the town centre and locality was a particular issue. It is understood that a new John Lewis store will be opening in Chelmsford next year which will undoubtedly impact on shopper's choice of destination.
18. With regard to employment BT acknowledged that the location of East Herts has a significant bearing on economic development in the district. East Herts is not a self contained economy and in economic terms it plays a supporting role to the adjacent urban centres and Stansted Airport. The district's business base is made up predominantly of small and medium sized firms. It is not anticipated that the emerging draft District Plan will seek to change this role.
19. JK noted the importance of Bishop's Stortford's station to the residents of Uttlesford.

Gypsy and Travellers

20. There was some discussion over the approach to Gypsies and Travellers. Uttlesford are leading on the Essex-wide Study. A similar approach to East Herts is anticipated with site allocations to follow.

Stansted Airport

21. It was suggested a 4-Authority meeting should be organised in the New Year following the anticipated Airports Commission Interim Report in mid-December 2013.

AOB

22. It was agreed that it would be useful to arrange a further Member level meeting early next year once the draft East Herts District Plan had been published for consultation.

These notes have been agreed by Uttlesford Council and East Herts Council as a true reflection of the meeting.

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL – 3 DECEMBER 2013 EXECUTIVE – 9 DECEMBER 2013

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

DISTRICT PLAN UPDATE REPORT AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENT CHAPTER 6

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- This report presents the final chapter of the District Plan Supporting Document, Chapter 6: Conclusions
- It explains the revised scope of Chapter 6, and how the conclusions of the overall strategy selection process will be presented in the Strategy Report at the next meeting on 16th January 2014.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL AND EXECUTIVE: That:</u>	
(A)	the revised approach to presentation of the strategy for the District Plan, set out at Essential Reference Paper 'B', be supported; and
(B)	Essential Reference Paper 'C', containing District Plan Supporting Document Chapter 6: Conclusions, be supported.
<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL: That:</u>	
(A)	the revised approach to presentation of the strategy for the District Plan, set out at Essential Reference Paper 'B', be agreed; and
(B)	Essential Reference Paper 'C', containing District Plan Supporting Document Chapter 6: Conclusions, be agreed.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The District Plan Update Report on 3rd October 2013 explained that Chapter 6 of the Supporting Document will perform the central function of striking an appropriate balance between all the various constraints and requirements, based on earlier work in the Supporting Document and supplemented by other evidence as necessary.
- 1.2 The District Plan Update Report on 18th November 2013 explained that given the large amount of work to consider, and the need for Members to have an opportunity to properly scrutinise the draft development strategy and settlement policies, the agenda items proposed for the District Planning Executive Panel on 3rd December would be split across two panel meetings, with an additional panel meeting scheduled for 16th January 2014.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 Reflecting the decision to increase the time for scrutiny of the final stages in plan preparation, the scope of Chapter 6 has been reduced. Chapter 6 as presented focuses on evaluation of the main issues as they affect each area of search. Issues relating to national policy requirements and matters of soundness do not feature in Chapter 6 as presented.
- 2.2 Further reports prior to consultation will be presented on 16th January 2014. These reports will include a Strategy Report, Infrastructure Topic Paper, and Sustainability Appraisal, all of which will contribute to the emerging development strategy.
- 2.3 The Strategy Report will present the overall conclusions for the strategy selection process. It will include assessment of matters relating to soundness and other requirements of national policy which were previously envisaged to be presented in Chapter 6 of the Supporting Document.
- 2.4 As presented, Chapter 6 does not attempt to formulate a strategy for the District Plan. This can only be achieved in the context of the national policy requirements and local policy approaches. Therefore, the title of Chapter 6 has been changed from 'Strategy' to 'Conclusions'. These are not the conclusions of the strategy selection process, but only of the Supporting Document, which forms one part of the strategy selection process.

- 2.5 Reflecting these changes, Version 6 of the Stepped Approach Diagram is attached at **Essential Reference Paper ‘B’**.
- 2.6 Supporting Document Chapter 6: Conclusions is presented at **Essential Reference Paper ‘C’**. This draws together the main findings of the work contained in Sieves 1, 2, and 3, and provides supplementary information drawn from a number of sources including the Green Belt Review, Transport and Schools updates, and also from landowner/developer information.
- 2.7 In order to assist with understanding of the process of reaching the conclusions set out in Chapter 6, a webpage has been set up which draws together the earlier chapters of the Supporting Document with an explanation of when they were submitted. A link to this is provided under ‘Background Papers’ below.
- 3.0 Implications/Consultations
- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper ‘A’**.

Background Papers

The earlier chapters of the Supporting Document, together with links to relevant reports and documents, are available at www.eastherts.gov.uk/supportingdocument

Panel reports are available on the Council’s website:

- District Plan Update Report (18th November 2013)
- District Plan Update Report (3rd October 2013)
- District Plan Update Report (25 July 2013)

<http://online.eastherts.gov.uk/moderngov/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=151>

Contact Member: Cllr Mike Carver - Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport
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Report Author: Martin Paine - Senior Planning Policy Officer
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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):	<p>People This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are vulnerable, and delivering strong services</p> <p>Place This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p>Prosperity This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.</p>
Consultation:	None
Legal:	N/A
Financial:	N/A
Human Resource:	N/A
Risk Management:	Failure to agree to progress work on the strategy selection process in accordance with the work submitted could result in the District Plan being found unsound at examination in public.

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A Stepped Approach to preparation of the District Plan – Version 6 (December 2013)

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'B'							
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7	Step 8
Explaining the nature of the task and the wider context	Understand the strategic planning issues	Developing 69 assessment areas and 21 topics, assessing each area against each criterion	Applying topic assessments and considering areas in their wider context to produce a short-list of options	Technical work to refine the short-list	Strategy formulation and Infrastructure Planning	Direct Member-level engagement	Draft District Plan
29 March 2012 Supporting Document Ch 1: Background and Approach Introduction District Plan Progress So Far Scope Planning Policy and the Planning System Localism and Neighbourhood Planning A Stepped Approach Consultation Refining the Approach Delivery Infrastructure Planning Sustainability Appraisal.	29 March 2012 Supporting Document Ch 2: Issues Housing Economy Education Transport Water Telecoms, Gas and Electricity Natural and Historic Environment Green Belt Community and Leisure Natural Resources Environmental Quality	29 March 2012 26 July 2012 Supporting Document Ch 3: Assessment Criteria <u>Part 1:</u> Land Availability Employment Potential Primary Schools Secondary/Middle Schools Highways Infrastructure Vehicular Access Access to Bus Services Access to Rail Services Waste Water Impacts Flood Risk Designated Wildlife Sites Historic Assets Landscape Character Green Belt Strategic Gaps Boundary Limits Community Facilities Minerals and Waste Agricultural Land Environmental Stewardship Noise Impacts <u>Part 2:</u> Application of the criteria from Part 1 to the 69 areas of search, to produce a 'Traffic Light' rating (Appendix A)	26 July 2012 Supporting Document Ch 4: Places Sieve 1: Area Assessments Evaluation of 69 separate areas using the criteria established in Chapter 3, and using the traffic light assessments. Local-area consideration of revised scale assumptions against initial test assumptions. Sieve 2: Settlement Evaluations Consider impact of combinations of possible growth areas on existing settlements and the wider area. Evaluation of whether/how growth could fit within this wider context. Settlement-level consideration of revised scale assumptions. Based on Sieve 1 results plus Documents and Feedback (Appendix B)	28 November 2012 Supporting Document Ch 5: Options Refinement Sieve 3a: Economic Development Sieve 3b: Urban Form 3rd October 2013 District-Wide Green Belt Review Part 1 Landowner/developer questionnaires and ATLAS meeting notes Schools update 18th November 2013 Green Belt Review Part 2: Detailed Site Assessments and Boundary Review Transport Update	3 December 2013 Supporting Document Ch 6: Conclusions Executive Member-level meetings: all adjoining Districts (December 2012-December 2013) Duty to Co-Operate report 16 January 2014 Strategy Report Sustainability Appraisal Infrastructure Topic Paper (overview of key positions and outstanding issues)	Informal Member discussion group on draft Topic-Based policies 14 th April 2013 Natural Environment, Landscape, Heritage 15 th May 2013 Climate Change, Water, Environmental Quality 14 th June 2013 Design, Transport 12 th July 2013 Economy, Retail and Town Centres 16 th September 2013 Housing, Community Infrastructure 3 rd October 2013 Delivery, Development Management, Review of amendments	18 November 2013 Draft District Plan Topic-Based policies 16 January 2014 Draft District Plan Development strategy policies Site and location specific policies Site allocations Infrastructure policies Policies map 21 January 2014 Special Executive 29 January 2014 Full Council (to approve draft plan for consultation)
Member Comments April 2012		Member Comments April 2012	Member Comments August 2012	Member Workshops 8 th November 2012 17 th January 2013	Member Briefing Events (Strategy formulation) 24 October & 28 November 2013 9 January 2014		Public Consultation on draft District Plan including all supporting evidence

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Chapter 6

Conclusions

Chapter 6 Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1** This final chapter presents the conclusions of the Supporting Document. This section begins with an overview of the evidence base and the procedure in the Supporting Document to date, and concludes with an explanation of the assessment methodology in Chapter 6 and how this relates to other parts of the process for formulation of the draft District plan.

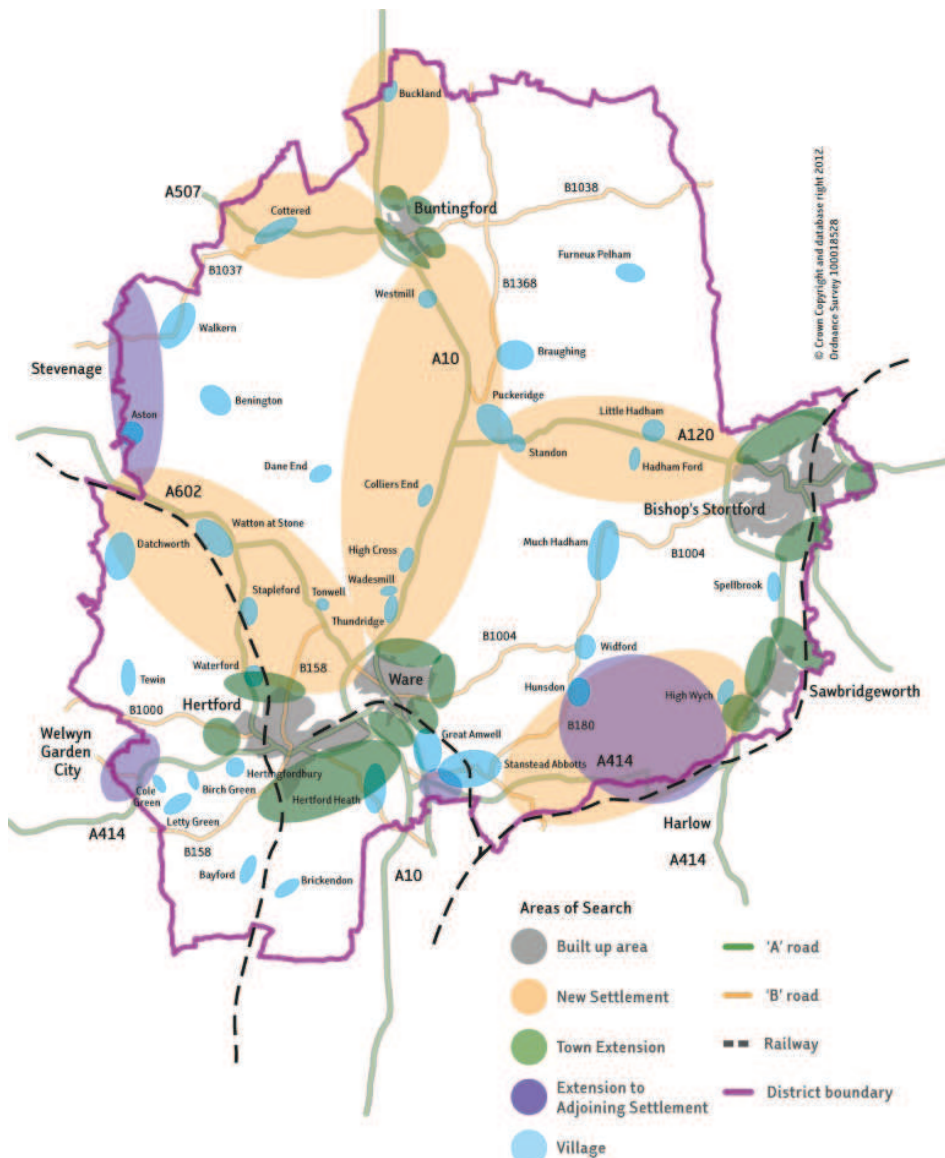
Evidence base

- 6.1.2** The evidence base for Chapter 6 is as follows:
- Sieve 1: Area Assessments
 - Sieve 2: Settlement Evaluations
 - Sieve 3: Options Refinement
 - Developer Questionnaires and ATLAS developer information
 - Green Belt Review
 - Transport Briefing Note
 - Schools Briefing Note
 - Infrastructure information
- 6.1.3** Following a review of the main issues in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 established 21 topics supported by clear assessment criteria to form a consistent framework for assessment, and identified 69 'areas of search' for testing, as shown in Figure 1. Informed by this framework, Chapter 4 then assessed each of the 69 areas in Sieve 1, and looked at wider strategic context in Sieve 2. A number of options dropped out from further consideration after Sieve 2, and these are shown in Table 6.1 below. Chapter 5 then refined the options in Sieve 3, with Sieve 3a assessing the remaining areas in terms of economic development, and Sieve 3b looking at urban form. Although this supplied further important evidence, no further options dropped out at Sieve 3.
- 6.1.4** Further information was collected from questionnaires issued to landowners and developers at the shortlisted areas of search in summer 2012. The Homes and Communities Agency's specialist planning team (ATLAS) were requested to pursue follow-up questions at the larger and more complicated options. All the landowner and developer information, including the questionnaires and the information submitted in response to ATLAS are available on the Council's website at www.eastherts.gov.uk/developerinfo.
- 6.1.5** The Green Belt Review was presented to the District Planning Executive Panel in two parts. Part 1 was presented to the Panel on 3rd October 2013 and Parts 2-6 were presented on 3rd December 2013.

6.1.6

Hertfordshire County Council is the responsible body for education and transport. The Schools Update was presented to the District Planning Executive Panel on 3rd October 2013 and the Transport Briefing Note was presented on 3rd December 2013. Information on other infrastructure areas has been drawn on, and this will be presented all together in an Infrastructure Topic Paper at the District Planning Executive Panel on 16th January 2014.

Figure 6.1 Original 69 areas of search, March 2012



6.1.7

See Supporting Document Chapter 4: Places, presented to the District Planning Executive Panel on 29th March 2012.

Chapter 6 . Conclusions

4

Table 6.1 Results after Sieve 1 and Sieve 2

No.	Area	Location Test Figure	Carried forward?
1	Bishop's Stortford Built-Up Area	1,233	Yes
2	Bishop's Stortford North	2,500	Yes
3	Bishop's Stortford East	150	Yes
4	Bishop's Stortford South (Sub-area A only)	800	Yes
5	Buntingford Built-Up Area	67	Yes
6	Spread of development within areas 6B & C, 7A, 8B and 9, at various levels between 500 and 2,000 dwellings.	Up to 2,000	Yes
7			
8			
9			
10	Hertford Built-Up Area	875	Yes
11	Hertford West (sub-areas A and B)	600	Yes
12	Hertford North (sub-area C only)	100	Yes
13	Hertford South (sub-area C only)	100	Yes
14	Sawbridgeworth Built-Up Area	111	Yes
15	Sawbridgeworth South	0	No
16	Sawbridgeworth West	200 or 3,000	Yes
17	Sawbridgeworth North	0	No
18	Ware Built-Up Area	147	Yes
19	Ware North (A and B). Development options at different scales in 19B	200 or 1,700	Yes
20	Ware East (sub-area A only)	1,300	Yes
21	Ware South-East	0	No
22	Ware South-west	0	No

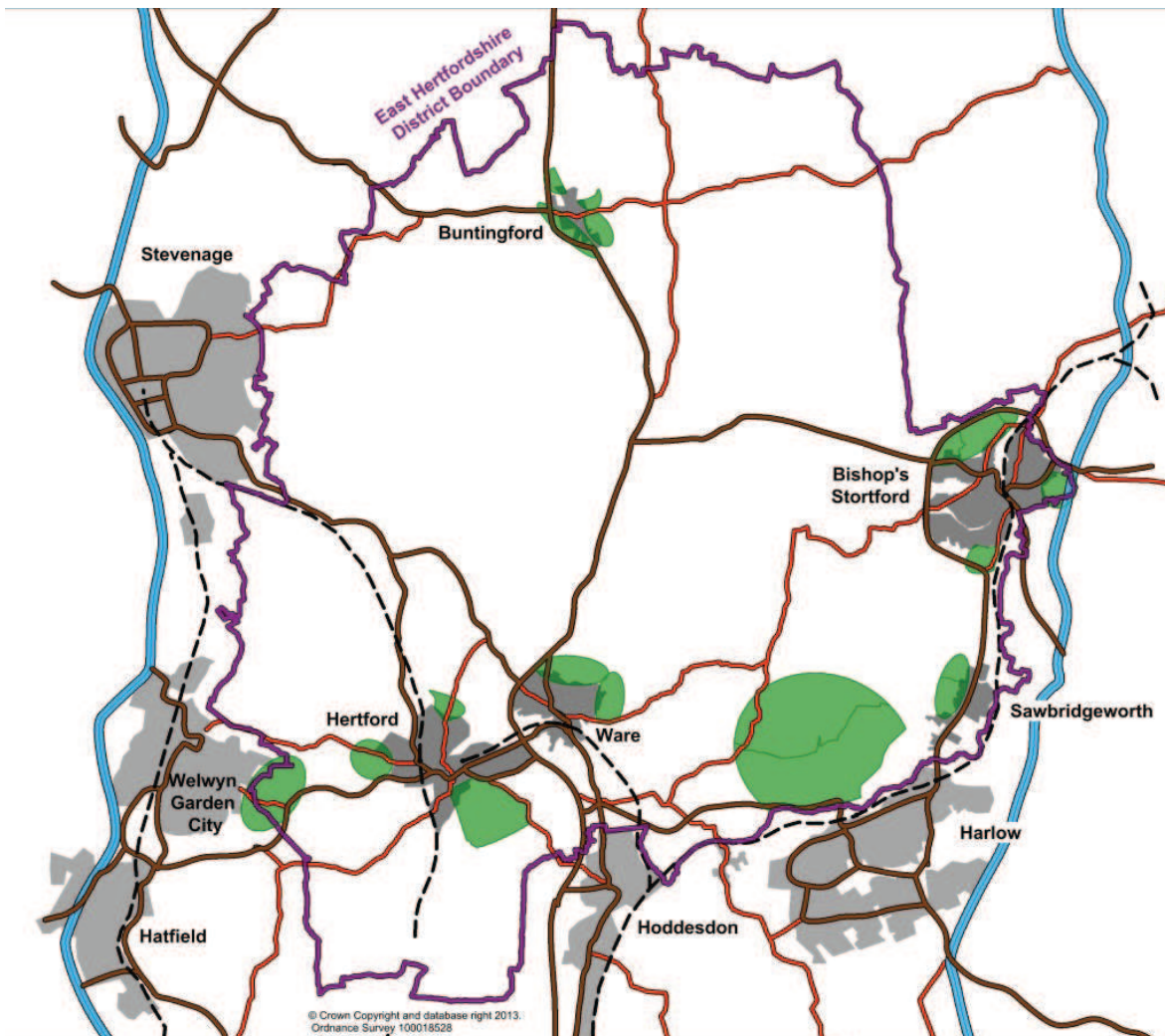
No.	Area	Location Test Figure	Carried forward?
23	Aston	23	Yes
24	Bayford	7	Yes
25	Benington	0	No
26	Birch Green	9	Yes
27	Braughing	34	Yes
28	Brickendon	0	Yes
29	Buckland	7	Yes
30	Cole Green	2	Yes
31	Colliers End	5	Yes
32	Cottered	19	Yes
33	Dane End	26	Yes
34	Datchworth	0	No
35	Furneux Pelham	13	Yes
36	Great Amwell	0	No
37	Hadham Ford	11	Yes
38	Hertford Heath	0	No
39	Hertingfordbury	8	Yes
40	High Cross	15	Yes
41	High Wych	18	Yes
42	Hunsdon	37	Yes
43	Letty Green	8	Yes
44	Little Hadham	13	Yes
45	Much Hadham	52	Yes
46	Puckeridge	86	Yes
47	Spellbrook	7	Yes

Chapter 6 . Conclusions

No.	Area	Location Test Figure	Carried forward?
48	Standon	56	Yes
49	Stanstead Abbots & St Margarets	177	Yes
50	Stapleford	0	No
51	Tewin	31	Yes
52	Thundridge	19	Yes
53	Tonwell	0	No
54	Wadesmill	14	Yes
55	Walkern	51	Yes
56	Waterford	0	No
57	Watton at Stone	87	Yes
58	Westmill	9	Yes
59	Widford	18	Yes
60	East of Stevenage	0	No
61	East of Welwyn Garden City	2000	Yes
62	North of Harlow – 10,000 split across 62A, 62 and 62B	10,000	Yes
63	North of Hoddesdon	0	No
64	New settlement - A10 Corridor North	0	No
65	New settlement - A10 Corridor South	0	No
66	New settlement - A120 Corridor	0	No
67	New settlement - A507 Corridor	0	No
68	New settlement - A602 Corridor	0	No
69	New settlement - Hunsdon Area (same area as 62) – geographical options in Area 62A or 62B	5000	Yes

- 6.1.8** Options not carried forward will be the subject of the Sustainability Appraisal looking at alternatives to the draft District Plan. Justification of the Council's reasons for rejection of options is provided in Chapter 4: Places. A summary of the reasons was provided with the Report accompanying Chapter 4⁽¹⁾.
- 6.1.9** Further assessment of the remaining areas of search in relation to economic development and urban form was conducted as part of Chapter 5: Options Refinement. Although this work added significantly to understanding of the relative merits and demerits of various options, none were discounted in Chapter 5.

Figure 6.2 Shortlisted Areas of Search (excluding villages) agreed for further testing, Summer 2012



¹ See District Plan Executive Panel papers (26 July 2012) Agenda Item 9: District Plan Part 1 – Strategy Supporting Document: Chapter 4: Places and Next Steps. Essential Reference Paper C: Chapter 4 Summary
www.eastherts.gov.uk/districtplan

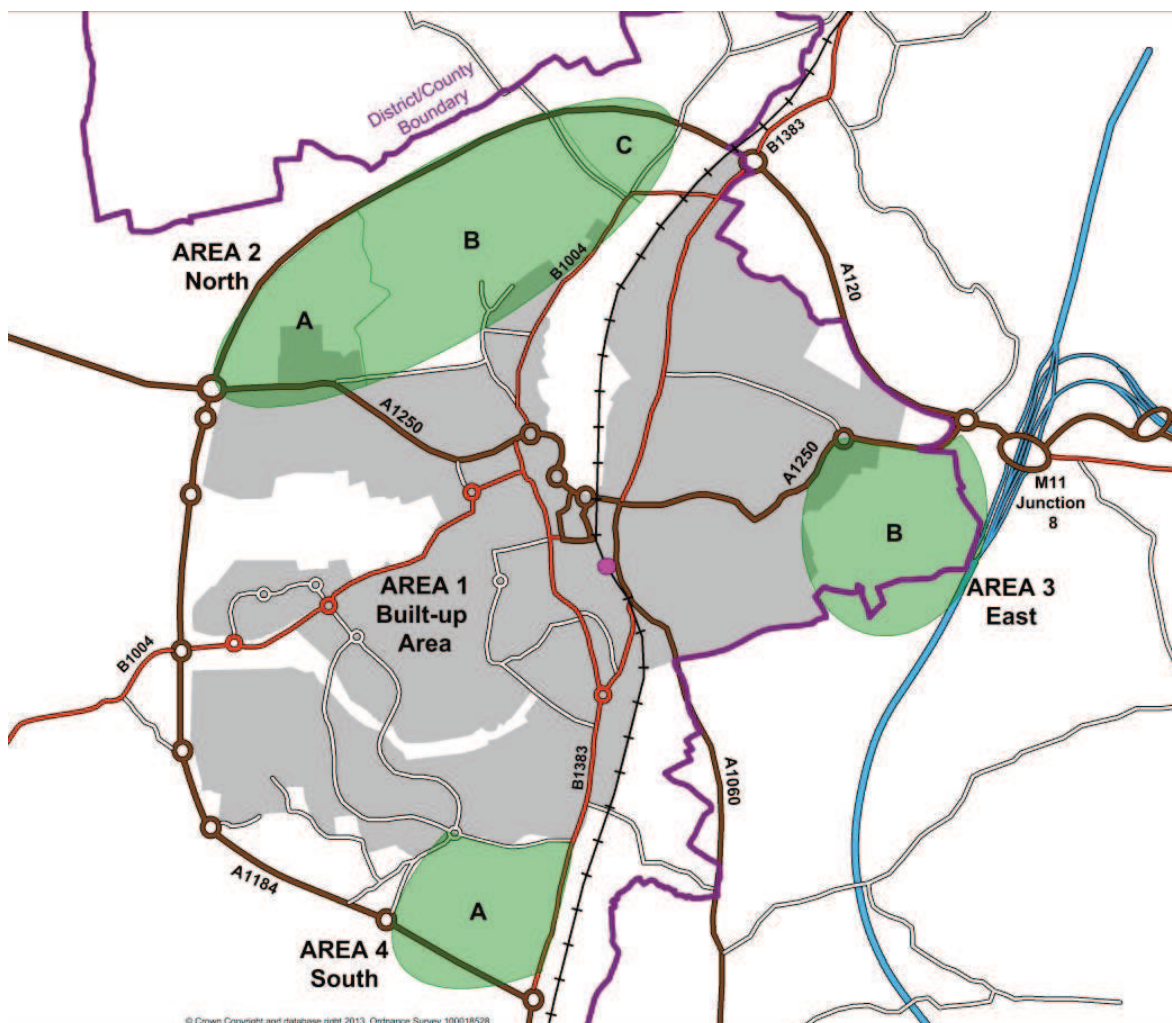
6.2 Assessment Methodology

- 6.2.1** The assessment methodology in this final chapter of the Supporting Document draws together the evidence from the process so far and reaches a balanced conclusion. Many different issues have been addressed through the Supporting Document and all the technical studies, feedback and evidence which underlie it.
- 6.2.2** The approach in this chapter is to identify the main issues arising from the evidence base at each of the remaining areas of search. For reasons of clarity other issues are not repeated in this Chapter, but are available elsewhere within the Supporting Document. Broadly, the criteria used to identify the main issues are:
- the role and function of the town
 - opportunities and constraints for future economic and retail development
 - infrastructure ‘showstoppers’ and key areas for further study
 - Green Belt
 - Known delivery opportunities and constraints
- 6.2.3** With regard to the villages, these have all been reconsidered taking account in particular of the size of the settlement and its capacity to accommodate further development. Chapter 6 seeks to refine the work previously undertaken on the villages in order to inform the final strategy.
- 6.2.4** The Supporting Document will form the basis of the local evidence gathering which will form one major component of the development strategy.
- 6.2.5** Sieve 1 and Sieve 2 applied ratings (‘Pass/Marginal Pass/Marginal Fail/Fail’) to each of the original 69 areas of search. Sieve 3 did not apply ratings to each area because of the nuances in the issues. Similarly, Chapter 6 does not apply ratings to the areas, not only because of the nuances in the issues, but also because of the need to avoid premature foreclosure of options based on local evidence alone, as some of the options may be required in order to produce a plan which meets national requirements.
- 6.2.6** The following sections discuss the proposed development strategy of each settlement and each area of search remaining. Each of the settlement strategy sections will be supplemented by proposed settlement policies within the Draft District Plan itself.

6.3 Bishop's Stortford

- 6.3.1** Assessment to date has demonstrated the important sub-regional role of Bishop's Stortford in comparison with other towns in the district owing to its proximity to the motorway network and Stansted Airport, and its thriving town centre with a good range of shops. The boundaries of the town are generally defined by the A1184/A120 bypass.

Figure 6.3 Shortlisted Areas of Search for Bishop's Stortford



- 6.3.2** The following sections consider various issues facing the town, providing an up-to-date position on evidence gathered from stakeholders and technical documents.

Education

- 6.3.3** In terms of primary and secondary education, Hertfordshire County has indicated in its submission (September 2013) that if development at all the areas of search around the town were to come forward, this would necessitate provision of an additional 8.5 forms of entry. Because the

existing primary schools are currently all full or nearing capacity, this is likely to require the construction of a number of new primary schools and provision for school sites within site allocations.

- 6.3.4** In terms of a strategy for secondary education, the County Council's submission states that: "Until there is clarity about the outcome of proposed housing development in the north of Bishops Stortford, for which planning applications are currently under consideration by East Herts District Council, it is not considered appropriate to bring forward expansion plans for the latent demand in the town. The developments currently represent the largest development in Hertfordshire and will require new school provision within them to meet the demand generated by them. Any other demand from existing communities will need to be dealt with as required but the options for doing so can only be finalised once proposals for the new development have been settled...With regard to the County Council owned site in Hadham Road, until there is clarity around the expansion potential of the existing schools, Policy BIS7 should be retained."
- 6.3.5** Given the ongoing uncertainty, there is a need for the District Plan to resolve the school sites issue.

Transport

- 6.3.6** Good access to road and rail networks is a benefit to the town but this brings its own problems because more users create more congestion. Congestion is a particular problem at Hockerill junction, and around Junction 8 of the M11, although it is not confined to these areas. The Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth Urban Transport Plan (UTP), led by Hertfordshire Council Council, is due to report in 2014, and this is expected to address the main mitigation measures required across the transport network in the study area.
- 6.3.7** Until a definitive position can be reached on whether the residual cumulative impacts of development in Bishop's Stortford would be severe in NPPF terms, this section proceeds on the basis that mitigation measures may be achievable in highways terms for the levels of development discussed.

Employment and Retail

- 6.3.8** There is potentially a clear economic development strategy for Bishop's Stortford based on its existing economic function. Economically, the town is the most important in East Herts. There is potential to expand the town's employment offer through the provision of a new business park within an urban extension, and through provision of some office or other business accommodation at one or more town centre sites.

6.3.9 Given local demand, it is not considered that a new business park within an urban extension would undermine the viability of the existing employment areas. For further information see the East Herts Strategic Economic Development Advice (DTZ, 2012) and the Bishop's Stortford Town-Wide Employment Study (DTZ, 2013).

6.3.10 The town centre offers a greater range of shops and services than other towns in the District including Hertford. It is the only town which offers the potential for an expanded town centre, by integrating the railway station through the Goods Yard and improvements at Station Road bridge. Possible expansions to town centre retail capacity could also occur at Old River Lane and the Mill Site. These opportunities could therefore form part of a retail strategy to complement the economic development strategy. For further information see the East Herts Retail and Town Centres Study (Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners, 2013).

Character

6.3.11 The historic core of the town is complemented by attractive Green Wedges including the River Stort. Southern Country Park is an important asset, and there is potential for a new Country Park incorporating Ash Grove and Hoggate's Wood to the north.

6.3.12 The construction of the Bishop's Stortford's bypass (A1184/A120) established a clear pattern of development by providing readily understandable Green Belt boundaries. This has been a major factor in the recent growth of the town, with developments at St Michael's Mead and Bishop's Park abutting the south-west distributor road and with the designation of the Areas of Special Restraint and the Special Countryside Area to the north of the town.

6.3.13 The following sections seek to further refine the work previously undertaken on the Bishop's Stortford Areas of Search in order to inform the final strategy.

Area of Search 1: Built-Up Area

6.3.14 This area had been anticipated to accommodate around 1,233 dwellings at the end of Chapter 4. This figure was based on relocation of the secondary schools to the Whittington Way site and the consequent availability of the existing school sites at London Road, Warwick Road, Beldams Lane, and Hadham Road to accommodate residential development.

6.3.15 However, since that time planning permission for the new schools to the south of the town has been dismissed on appeal, and there is ongoing uncertainty as to the future provision of additional schools capacity. Given

that it is now appearing less likely that the schools will relocate, it is considered appropriate to reduce the built-up area dwellings figure by 525 dwellings (Beldams Lane 180, Warwick Road 125, London Road 220).

- 6.3.16** The Hadham Road site is allocated for 250 dwellings in the Local Plan 2007 (Policy BIS2). The Local Plan Inspector 2007 suggested that there is no reason why the site should not come forward for housing, unless it is required for a secondary school. It is therefore proposed to continue the existing status of the Hadham Road site as an allocation for 250 dwellings, but protected by a policy stipulation that this will only come forward if sufficient secondary school capacity is provided elsewhere in the town. This would also reflect Hertfordshire County Council's submission on this matter.
- 6.3.17** At the Goods Yard, the Sieve 1 figure proposed 60 dwellings, taking account of community aspirations expressed in the 2011 Development Brief for a reduction from the Local Plan figure of 492 dwellings and providing for a better mix of uses. However, the developer questionnaire response stated that a range of 200-300 dwellings is considered viable. A figure of 200 dwellings is suggested as an appropriate balance between community aspirations and the developer position on viability. This figure is considered to be achievable in viability terms and will also enable a substantial re-balancing of the mix of development on the site, to provide scope for a substantial increase in non-residential uses.
- 6.3.18** Viability appraisal will be crucial to determination of the delivery of development at the Goods Yard. A policy for the site should require a viability appraisal to assess the figure, taking account of the community aspirations expressed in the 2011 Development Brief. The Bishop's Stortford Town-Wide Employment Study (DTZ, 2013) also drew attention to the viability issues and the need for a viable mix of development, but suggested that a small amount of B1 office space could be supported at the Goods Yard.
- 6.3.19** The impact of traffic congestion arising as a result of this development should be addressed by the traffic modelling carried out by the applicants in support of any planning application. The assessment should also test the highways impact with and without a link road through the site. It is understood that the developers of the Goods Yard are intending to include a multi-storey car park adjacent to the station. Whilst this may assist in the provision of commuter parking and assist in the viability of the development, the Council has concerns about the impact of attracting additional traffic to this site through the Hockerill junction.
- 6.3.20** It is also understood that there is likely market demand from supermarkets or other large retailers for a store at the Goods Yard. However, this would also result in significant amounts of additional car parking and pressure on Hockerill junction and town centre roads, and would be likely to put

pressure on other community aspirations including open space and employment uses. It is therefore suggested that retail should be limited to small-scale, local shops.

- 6.3.21** The Sieve 1 figure did not include dwellings at the Mill Site, because there was no indication of the intention of the occupants of the flour mill to relocate. This remains the case and therefore no figure has been provided at the Mill. However, the Mill Site remains a location of potential strategic importance to the town, and therefore a site-specific planning policy based around the aspirations contained in the July 2011 Development Brief is appropriate. This policy would apply in the event that the flour mill owners wished to relocate during the plan period.
- 6.3.22** Commitments amount to 207 dwellings as of March 2013, including 48 at small sites, and 159 on allocated or large sites. This includes 97 dwellings with outline permission at Old River Lane. There are 247 dwellings at SLAA sites within the town.
- 6.3.23** The revised figure for Area of Search 1 therefore is 904 dwellings (Hadham Road 250, Goods Yard 200, SLAA 247, commitments 207).

Area of Search 2: Bishop's Stortford North

- 6.3.24** In the Local Plan 2007 this area is inset from the Green Belt but outside the settlement area. It has been designated as safeguarded land for future development, since the late 1980s. Applications for outline permission for urban extensions for 2,600 dwellings have been received by the Council.
- 6.3.25** As noted above, Bishop's Stortford is the most attractive location in the District for economic development. Bishop's Stortford North provides the potential for a new B1 business park of 5-6 hectares, with direct access off a new roundabout at the A120 and onto the M11. This would be in addition to the small-scale employment opportunities proposed by the applicants within the two neighbourhood centres.
- 6.3.26** Hertfordshire County Council's Transport Briefing Note is supplemented by its response to the planning applications. The County Council's recommendation is that permission be granted with conditions. According to the submission, the County Council has lifted its objection to a direct access/new roundabout onto the A120, and that with the proposed mitigation measures the impacts on the A120 are likely to be acceptable. However, it does state that in order to combat increase in traffic congestion improved bus services and other sustainable transport initiatives will be needed, to encourage a change in travel behaviour.

- 6.3.27** Essex County Council has also recently completed a Local Plan Highway Impact Assessment (October 2013). This raises concerns about the impacts of growth on roads in the vicinity of Junction 8 of the M11. However, it is understood that these concerns may be allayed by the provision of appropriate mitigation measures. This will need further assessment.
- 6.3.28** The environmental impacts of development north of Bishop's Stortford may be adequately mitigated in planning terms. Locally, the Green Wedge, maintaining its existing Green Belt status, will preserve the features of Ash Grove and Hoggate's Wood. A suitable Green Infrastructure framework may retain and emphasise the woodland and hedgerows, and provide a suitable sustainable drainage strategy.
- 6.3.29** In terms of the overall level of development, the area was originally proposed for 2,500 dwellings, including 700 in Sub-Area A West of Hoggate's Wood, 1,400 in Sub-Area B between Hoggate's Wood and Farnham Road. The applicants for ASR1-4 have stated that in light of their masterplanning work submitted with the planning application this figure should be reviewed. There are no apparent grounds to disagree with this request. It is therefore proposed that the figure for Sub-Area B be revised to 1,500 dwellings, making the overall figure for Bishop's Stortford North 2,600 dwellings. It should also be noted however, that should a new secondary school be required at Bishop's Stortford North, this would require a reduction in the amount of housing provided.

Area of Search 3: East (sub-area B only)

- 6.3.30** The land is owned by the Golf Club, working with a housing developer. Responding to the questionnaire in summer 2012, the developer explained that there are two proposed sites: Manor Links and the Practise Ground site. The developer submission confirms that a figure of around 150 dwellings is achievable early in the plan period. The developer submission addressed the issue of vehicular access and the Council is not aware of any reasons to doubt the information supplied.
- 6.3.31** Although Greenfield land, there are no known immediate environmental or other constraints, although detailed assessment would need to be carried out to support any future planning application, taking account of nearby locally designated wildlife sites.
- 6.3.32** The Transport Briefing Note (November 2013) indicates little impact on the highway network arising from this proposal.
- 6.3.33** The Green Belt review indicates weak potential boundaries around the area in question. It points to the Golf Course to the west providing a buffer with Stansted Airport and the lack of countryside features. Therefore,

although different from Bishop's Stortford North and South in terms of boundary features, Green Belt release here could be justified by the exceptional circumstances of housing need.

- 6.3.34** The area is insufficiently large to host significant infrastructure such as schools, and therefore additional capacity would need to be found off-site at other locations within the town. The size of the area also means that it offers no potential for an employment area or neighbourhood centre. However, local infrastructure such as play areas and amenity space should be accommodated.

Area of Search 4: South (sub-area A only)

- 6.3.35** Chapter 4 set out the basis for this figure. The total area is around 50 hectares, but around 17 hectares would be needed if a secondary school were provided, leaving 33 hectares. Multiplied by 25 dwellings per hectare, that would yield 1,250 dwellings for the whole area, or 825 for 33 hectares. This lower figure was rounded to 800 dwellings in Chapter 4.
- 6.3.36** ATLAS followed up the capacity issues with the developers. This broadly confirms a range of figures between 800 and 1,300 dwellings, although the developers point out that this is only a starting point, and a final figure could only be derived through a masterplanning exercise. In response to a question from ATLAS, the developers stated that they are comfortable with simultaneous development to the north and south. There is no evidence to suggest that the local property market would not support the level of demand necessary to build at these levels.
- 6.3.37** Uncertainty about the location of a future secondary school within the town would necessitate a flexible approach to any planning framework for this area. Should it not be possible to meet secondary school capacity requirements at either Hadham Road or at Bishop's Stortford North, then this area could provide a secondary school to address existing deficits as well as to provide for new development. However, it may be that the issues are not resolved and therefore, should this area come forward, a policy would need to provide the flexibility to accommodate alternative development mixes at the location whilst ensuring that local control is retained.
- 6.3.38** The Council rejected the proposals for a secondary school at this location within the context of the Local Plan 2007. The Planning Inspector and Secretary of State agreed that Hertfordshire County Council had not sufficiently explored alternative options for school expansion to justify the very special circumstances to allow development to take place in the Green Belt.

- 6.3.39** In terms of Green Belt purposes, the Green Belt Review (2013) recommends that the area should not be released because it serves an important role in safeguarding countryside from encroachment. In terms of boundaries, the only potential strong boundaries, were the site to be released, would be at St. James' Way/A1184 and London Road.
- 6.3.40** The Transport Briefing Note sets out the main considerations for the site. Based on the transport modelling undertaken, it appears that this scale of development in the area could require significant upgrades to the A120 bypass. The developers have stated that their transport consultants have considered the issues of traffic generation associated with housing development or a mix of school plus housing (see response to ATLAS). This work would need to be subject to further scrutiny if this area were to be brought forward as part of the District Plan.
- 6.3.41** In terms of employment potential, the Bishop's Stortford Town-Wide Employment Study suggests that, although less attractive than other options such as at Bishop's Stortford North due to greater distance from the M11 along the A120/A1184 bypass, this area could nevertheless be a viable location for a local business park as part of a mixed-use scheme. This scale of development would also warrant the inclusion of a neighbourhood centre containing local shops and facilities.
- 6.3.42** Given the need to maintain flexibility, and the uncertainty about the requirement for and scale of a neighbourhood centre, secondary school, and employment area, a revised figure of 1,000 dwellings is proposed. However, this may need to be reduced if a secondary school is required.

Conclusions and Next Steps

- 6.3.43** From the work undertaken through the Supporting Document, the basis for a suitable development strategy for Bishop's Stortford is relatively clear, given its advantages in terms of retail and town centre expansion capacity, employment potential given its proximity to the M11 and the airport, and the boundary line of the A120/A1184. These factors provide the framework for a development strategy.
- 6.3.44** Identified development options of 3,750 dwellings (2,600 + 150 + 1,000), as detailed above, in addition to urban capacity and known commitments (904) would total 4,654 dwellings. It is expected that windfall developments will also occur within the Plan period, which would increase this total. Whether all of these options will be required will be the subject of the Strategy Report.
- 6.3.45** Hertfordshire County Council's advice in relation to transport indicates that there are no apparent 'showstopper' issues at present. However, further testing and assessing will be needed once a draft District Plan has been

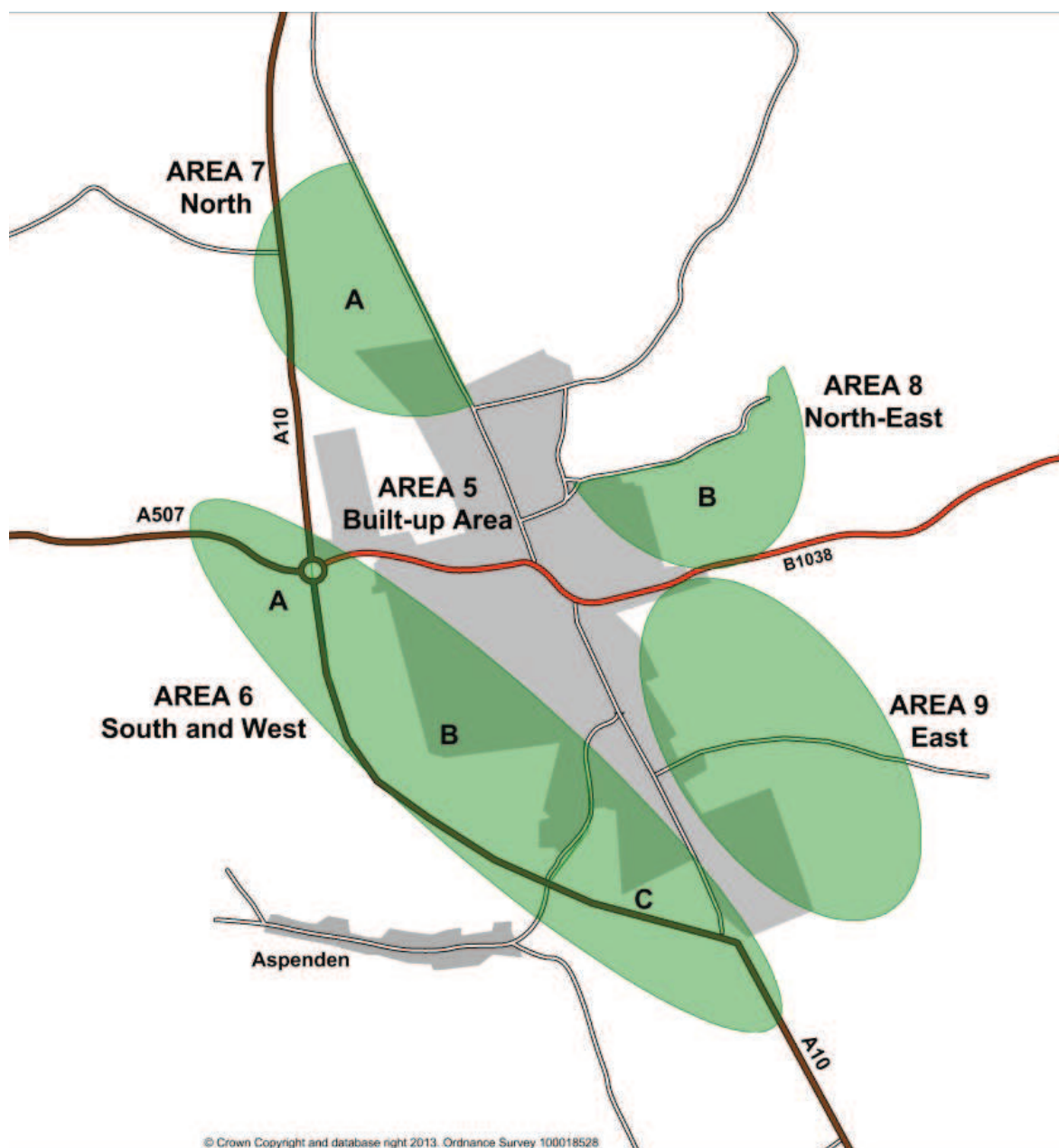
published for consultation, prior to examination in public. The strategy for the town will need to provide flexibility to enable the secondary schools issue to be resolved and a viable school site identified.

- 6.3.46** The Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth Urban Transport Plan (UTP) will follow publication of the draft District Plan, and will provide further evidence in respect of possible mitigation measures to address the cumulative impacts of development. It will look at the cumulative impact of traffic entering the town from Hertfordshire and Essex; and it will further assess the options for Park and Ride facilities for the town, taking account of planned development at sites across the area and beyond. Working with East Herts Council's Environmental Health department, and taking account of transport modelling and transport mitigation measures, the UTP will also address the issue of air quality at the Hockerill Air Quality Management Area.
- 6.3.47** Finally, the District Plan will need to provide a framework for a strategy for the provision of secondary education in the town. This will need to take account of the available options. Given the ongoing uncertainty, the Local Planning Authority needs to provide flexibility and avoid prematurely closing off potential solutions. The options remaining through the District Plan process are in potential urban extensions to the north and south of the town, and at Hadham Road.

6.4 Buntingford

6.4.1 Buntingford plays a vital role as a small market town and rural service centre serving both the town and an extensive rural hinterland. Buntingford is unusual in the East Herts context, in that it is not located close to other towns, does not benefit from a train station and is not surrounded by Green Belt.

Figure 6.4 Shortlisted Areas of Search for Buntingford



6.4.2 The following sections consider various issues facing the town, providing an up-to-date position on evidence gathered from stakeholders and technical documents.

Education

- 6.4.3** Buntingford has a three-tier education system with a mixture of first, primary and middle schools for primary aged children, with middle schools and upper schools providing for secondary aged children. There is some current and potential additional capacity available in the first school tier. However, there are issues over the capacity of provision at middle and upper level. Forecasts indicate a shortfall in capacity at middle and upper levels, but part of this could be addressed by changing intake catchments, such as reducing intake from Stevenage and Royston. Future growth of the town will require additional provision across all tiers of education within Buntingford.
- 6.4.4** At primary level, if Layston First School expanded by one form of entry (1FE) and Millfield First School expanded by 0.5FE this would equate to approximately 750 new dwellings in the town. This would depend upon the provision of new buildings within the existing land at Layston School, and the provision of new buildings and playing fields. This would require the land adjacent to the school to be allocated for school use in the District Plan or the use of a detached playing field, which for primary school children is not the preferred situation.
- 6.4.5** Current analysis of pupils attending the middle schools confirms that around 1FE of pupils in each year group live in either Royston or Stevenage school planning areas and the Royston/Stevenage schools are their closest.
- 6.4.6** At middle level, Edwinstree Middle School has the potential to expand by 1.3FE, which equates to 650 dwellings. However, there is a current deficit of 0.5FE, which equates to approximately 250 dwellings. If the school were to expand by 1.3 forms to a full 5FE school this would only leave in theory, a 'spare capacity' of 400 dwellings. The expansion of Edwinstree School would however, require major improvements to the school; through new buildings, the use of adjacent playing fields and/or an all-weather pitch/MUGA, a new/improved access and 'park and stride' facility. If the 1FE of pupils from other towns were discounted, there would be a current 'spare capacity' of 0.5FE, which would equate to 250 dwellings before expansion in the form of new buildings is required.
- 6.4.7** Also at middle level, the Ralph Sadlier Middle School, in nearby Puckeridge is included within the Buntingford School Planning Area. Whilst it is not ideal to transport a large number of children out of the town to attend middle school, there is the potential for Ralph Sadlier School to expand by two forms of entry which could accommodate approximately 1,000 dwellings. In order to expand the school, new buildings would be required plus highway improvements.

- 6.4.8** At upper level, Freman College has a current deficit of 2FE. However, this shortfall is due to the current admissions policy which accepts pupils from Stevenage and Royston, where there is current and forecast capacity. An analysis of historic inflows confirms an average of 2FE of pupils flow into Buntingford from other areas for a place at Freman College. Whilst many of these pupils currently attend the feeder middle schools, if the local pupil numbers in Buntingford and Puckeridge were to increase, these schools would draw from an ever decreasing catchment area because they both allocate (currently) in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council's admissions rules i.e. those who live nearest to the school. There will however, be ongoing sibling connections for a number of years.
- 6.4.9** With future allocations to middle and upper schools in Buntingford likely to be dependent upon the level of demand from the local community, analysis of current pre-school aged children suggests there are sufficient current places available in the first and middle schools to enable this trend to continue. There are also sufficient places available in Stevenage and Royston to cater for those pupils who live in these areas who may not gain a Buntingford school place in later years. Growth beyond the emerging Plan period will require significant improvements to all educational facilities in the town.

Transport

- 6.4.10** Information received from the Highway Authority, Hertfordshire County Council, explains how assessments on highway infrastructure in the town have been undertaken. Buntingford is beyond the modelling area for the majority of models undertaken throughout the district, and there are limitations to their assessments as a result of the uncertainty surrounding the delivery of an A120 bypass around Little Hadham. A Little Hadham bypass could help to alleviate movements around Buntingford to the east of the town, but during any construction phase, there could be major impacts on roads through the town on an east-west direction.
- 6.4.11** Diamond Modelling undertaken indicates that development of around 500 dwellings could be accommodated within the existing highway network, with some local improvements required to ease the flow of some junctions. The use of local roads as means of access was suggested in preference to new access from the A10. Diamond Modelling undertaken for the Harlow Stansted Gateway Transport Area included scenarios that tested 1,500 and 2,000 dwellings in the Buntingford area. The Highway Authority have stated that further work will be required to determine the possible impacts of this higher level of development, mitigation measures will need to be considered and a masterplan approach used to determine and manage impacts.

- 6.4.12** In terms of the passenger transport network, as has already been mentioned, Buntingford does not have a railway line or station and is highly dependent upon private vehicles. There are some bus routes through the town to neighbouring settlements, though these routes would not serve development to the north of the town. Development in the town would make these services more viable but it is unlikely to justify new or altered routes.

Other Infrastructure

- 6.4.13** Buntingford is served by a sewerage treatment works to the south of the town, which functions on a gravity- fed system. Correspondence with Thames Water indicates that any development outside the current built-up area will require new connections to the treatment works and an upgrade to the works themselves.
- 6.4.14** In terms of sewage treatment, Buntingford Sewage Treatment Works (STW) has seen a reduction in foul flows in recent years but these have now started to increase again as a result of some small housing developments being completed. Some spare capacity exists for further development to commence. However, an upgrade to the STW will be required to cater for flows from all the developments proposed. The extent of the upgrades cannot, at this time be detailed but Thames Water are carrying out investigations and modelling work to enable the upgrades to be scoped. All developments in the area will therefore need to contribute towards future upgrade works.
- 6.4.15** In terms of Sewerage Network, Thames Water are undertaking scenario planning to identify the extent of capacity deficiencies that may exist and possible solutions that may be needed as a result of potential development. A hydraulic model of the catchment is to be built and work on this has recently commenced. It is acknowledged that to upgrade the sewers within the main High Street would be disruptive to the community and this will be avoided if at all possible. Depending on the exact location of any chosen development site, new connections directly to the STW following the line of the bypass are most likely. Alternative options could be to provide local tank sewers to balance the flows.

Employment and Retail

- 6.4.16** Buntingford has four employment areas of which three are operational. The findings of the 2012 revised employment study indicate the need to retain designated employment land in Buntingford because it provides a valuable local resource for businesses serving the town and the wider rural area, and is a valuable source of local employment. Investment in these employment areas would help to ensure premises are fit for purpose.

- 6.4.17** As a smaller centre, Buntingford provides essential services and convenience goods shopping to its catchment population, but has a limited comparison shopping offer. Much expenditure available in the town is spent in neighbouring larger towns. There are two small supermarkets but the majority of units in the High Street are small independent stores, which following a historic market town characteristic, are residential properties with a retail unit on the ground floor. As such, there is limited capacity to expand or alter the town centre unless there is a considerable change in this market town character.

Character

- 6.4.18** The town runs along a north-south axis within the valley of the River Rib, following the Roman Ermine Street corridor. Its river valley setting means that some parts of the town are subject to the risk of flooding from the river. Within the 20th Century, development spread eastwards and westwards up the valley sides. There are few designated environmental assets around the town but there are many historic assets throughout the town including a Conservation Area that covers much of the northern half of the town and one which covers the nearby village of Aspenden.
- 6.4.19** Despite its rural setting, Buntingford has a lack of accessible natural green space (ANG) and open space, including woodland and space for children and young people. The East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan (GIP) suggests that this should be alleviated through creating better public access to the countryside resource that surrounds the settlement. There is a lack of cycle routes and rights of way to the north and south east of the settlement. The GIP suggests that if growth was considered to the settlement edge, rights of way / green corridors should be created to ensure these new homes have sustainable access. ANG and open space for children and young people will also need to be provided alongside any new residential areas. There is also a need to ensure that needs for indoor sports facilities are met through new developments.
- 6.4.20** The following sections seek to further refine the work previously undertaken on the Buntingford Areas of Search in order to inform the final strategy.

Area of Search 5: Built-Up Area

- 6.4.21** At the end of Chapter 4, it was estimated that the built-up area of Buntingford would yield approximately 67 dwellings on identified SLAA sites and on other sites with permissions. This figure has been updated since with identified SLAA sites, as of March 2013 potentially yielding an estimated 13 dwellings, which along with other permissions yielding 148 dwellings would total 161 dwellings. There have been a number of completions since then, with the latest position as of November 2013 being 13 dwellings at SLAA sites, and 34 commitments, totalling 47.

- 6.4.22** The former Sainsbury's distribution depot land was discounted in Chapter 4 as there was an application to redevelop the depot for continued employment use as a new distribution centre. The application was approved and it was assumed the land would be put back to employment use. However, soon after permission was granted there was a change in ownership to a house-builder, who has submitted an application for a residential-led scheme of 328 dwellings with some small business units and a 65 bed care home. The principle of development is already established on the former distribution depot land. It is a previously developed site within the defined town boundary, and therefore, the principle of development is considered acceptable.
- 6.4.23** It was previously estimated that the site would contain approximately 10 hectares of developable land, which at 25 dwellings per hectare would yield 250 dwellings. The submitted scheme has a developable area of 8.75ha, which with 328 proposed dwellings would equal a density of 37dph. A compromise of 300 dwellings is therefore considered a reasonable level of development.
- 6.4.24** Access to the site is very good, with almost direct access to the A10/London Road junction. However, the site is further away from the town centre than other locations under consideration, though a bus route runs along London Road to Baldock Road. The Chapter 4 assessment rated the site as having a good access to bus services, but connections to nearby rail services are relatively poor, as is the case for the town as a whole.
- 6.4.25** It is essential that all developments contribute towards the provision of necessary infrastructure. Indications are that this level of development could be accommodated within the existing education infrastructure, and improvements could be made to the waste water treatment facility and connections to it from within the built-up area.
- 6.4.26** Small sites and permissions are set out in the housing trajectory in the latest Annual Monitoring Report. However, it is anticipated that further windfall opportunities are likely to become available in the urban area during the Plan period.

Area of Search 6a: Buntingford South and West:

- 6.4.27** This area of search to the west of the A10 was discounted at the end of Chapter 4 as being unsuitable for residential development for a number of reasons. However, the location to the north of the existing Buntingford Business Park makes an ideal location for future employment uses. As such, an area of 3 hectares is proposed to be allocated in the District Plan for employment uses.

Area of Search 6b: Buntingford South and West

- 6.4.28** At the end of Chapter 4, this area scored a 'marginal pass', as there are a number of issues that would need to be resolved in order to facilitate development. The A10 acts as a clear western boundary to development. On a map, this area seems the obvious location for infilling. However, there are a number of physical constraints which would limit and dictate development within this gap, not least the requirement to provide a buffer between new development and the A10, the sewage treatment works and Watermill Industrial Estate.
- 6.4.29** Access is also a considerable barrier. The existing residential service roads have a threshold of 300 dwellings before they reach capacity. Luynes Rise currently serves over 200 properties plus a community centre. Monks Walk currently serves 350 properties (with two points of access). Development in this area would require several points of access, however, two potential access points to the north of the site have been prejudiced by recent planning permissions, existing estate roads are close to or over capacity, and access from the A10 bypass would not normally be acceptable to the Highway Authority.
- 6.4.30** Information submitted by the land promoter to the Call for Sites process suggests that access from the A10 could be achieved to serve a development of approximately 500 dwellings, which would include land at Aspenden Bridge (currently subject to an application for 56 dwellings). Access would only be by a single point of access from the A10 with a possible link road to the south of the site past the sewage works. As such, there would be few links to the existing built fabric of the town, with residents of this estate effectively bypassing the town itself rather than being an integrated element. Information from the Highway Authority suggests that access directly from the A10 would not be supported in any location to the west of Buntingford.
- 6.4.31** Given these access issues and the requirement to build a new sewer to serve the development, taken in combination with other options around the town, this area would be considered the least suitable location and should therefore not be an option for development within this Plan period.

Area of Search 7: North (sub-area A only)

- 6.4.32** At the end of Chapter 4, development to the north of the town was considered a reasonable option for development provided that issues such as education and waste water infrastructure could be resolved. Development to the north would need to ensure there is a satisfactory relationship between the adjoining education and employment uses. There is a long-standing desire to provide improvements to the access to Freman College, along with enlarged playing fields, which would facilitate the expansion of the built-up part of the school grounds. Both these issues could both be resolved as part of a wider plan for development to the north of the town.

- 6.4.33** Based on an initial assumption, it was estimated that the site could yield approximately 10 hectares of developable land which would yield 250 dwellings at 25dph. There is a current application for this site (September 2013) for 180 dwellings with a care home and potential 'country hotel' at a later date. The application would provide a new link road to access Freman College, as well as provide a large area of land for playing pitches for the college. The scheme includes a care home and sheltered houses. As such, there are several benefits associated with the proposed scheme that could benefit the town as a whole. The landscape to the north of the town is considered valuable as a barrier and transition between urban and rural and in preserving the local distinctiveness of the Corneybury grounds. A balanced judgement will be necessary to determine whether the potential benefits that could be realised from the site outweigh the potential impacts on a sensitive landscape which is a key part of the character of Buntingford.
- 6.4.34** Information received from Thames Water suggests that new waste water networks would be difficult to achieve from development in this location. A gravity-fed system would be needed which, if following the most direct route, would involve digging up the High Street to upgrade existing networks. An alternative, but more costly solution would require a new pumping station and a new sewer which would run alongside the A10 bypass. Such a scheme would be more deliverable if land within the bypass was also developed as there would be two developer contributions to help facilitate the works required.
- 6.4.35** Development in this location will need to ensure that there is an appropriate transition between the existing urban area and the wider countryside to the north of the town and the important historic landscape of Corneybury to the east of Ermine Street. Given these constraints and the need to provide other land uses the figure of 180 dwellings is considered an appropriate number of dwellings to the north of the town.

Area of Search 8: North-East (sub-area B only)

- 6.4.36** Land to the north-east of Buntingford to the north of Hare Street Road was, at the end of Chapter 4 considered a reasonable option for development, gaining a 'marginal pass' for up to 300 dwellings. An application was subsequently submitted on land to the north of Hare Street Road for 160 dwellings a cemetery and allotments. This application was refused and is currently subject to appeal, being considered in a joint inquiry with a site to the south of Hare Street Road (see Area 9) scheduled for December 2013.
- 6.4.37** There are potential impacts on the landscape from development in this location as it is extending up the valley sides. There is a clear boundary to development in the form of a tree belt, however, the proposed

development extends beyond this boundary through the creation of the cemetery and allotments to the east of the tree belt into land where there is no clear boundary to development.

- 6.4.38** Being adjacent to Layston First School this land is ideally located to provide for the expansion of the school. Although there is capacity in the short to medium term within the two primary schools, it is expected that they will need to expand towards the end of the Plan period to accommodate future growth of the town. To prejudice this ability of the school to expand in the future would be short-sighted and could cause future capacity issues. Development in this location should therefore set aside land for the future use by the school.
- 6.4.39** Given the lack of open spaces and play areas in the town, development should also ensure a suitable provision of recreational land within the development. These two land use constraints combined would reduce the developable area of the land within the tree belt to less than 5 hectares, which would comfortably accommodate 125 dwellings at 25dph. However, the proposal is for 160 dwellings with a small amount of land set aside for the school.
- 6.4.40** As this proposal is subject to appeal and may, therefore, receive permission before the District Plan is adopted, it is necessary to ensure the infrastructure implications of the development, in conjunction with the other likely developments around the town, are resolved through the strategic planning function of the District Plan.

Area of Search 9: East (sub-area A only)

- 6.4.41** At the end of Chapter 4, this area of search was given a 'marginal pass' rating for up to 500 dwellings. Further work refined this number down to approximately 450 dwellings within the 18 hectares of land to the south of Hare Street Road and north of Owles Lane, defined by a newly planted tree belt, which would form a logical eastern boundary to development. As the land rises to the south-east towards Owles Lane, development which extends up this valley slope would be fairly visually prominent. Owles Lane is a very narrow access road which would be unsuitable to use to access any major development. As such, development in this area would only be served from Hare Street Road or existing residential culs-de-sac, which will have a limit to the amount of development they can serve.
- 6.4.42** If considered in isolation, this land could accommodate this scale of development, being served by several access points in a form which despite rising up the valley sides could be designed to integrate well with the existing urban form. A development of this scale could in isolation be accommodated within existing schools. However, this scale of development alongside the other proposed developments around the town would require at least 1FE expansions at all three education levels. This site alone could

however, meet more than the identified housing need for the town and its rural hinterland, but would not deliver many of the benefits that could be realised with the other developments. The cumulative impacts of such a scale of development in conjunction with other sites around the town would need further assessment.

- 6.4.43** Despite owning the whole of this land, developers have submitted an application for 100 dwellings accessed only from Snells Mead. The Council refused this application and it is now subject to a joint planning inquiry with the land to the north of Hare Street Road, scheduled for December 2013. Although the application is in outline form only, the potential layout of the proposal would prejudice future development in this location. As this proposal is subject to appeal and may, therefore, receive permission before the District Plan is adopted, it is necessary to ensure the infrastructure implications of the development, in conjunction with the other likely developments around the town, are resolved through the strategic planning function of the District Plan.

Other Development Sites

- 6.4.44** In addition to the above, there are several sites around the town subject to planning applications. There is an outline application pending a decision to the south of the town on land known as Aspenden Bridge for approximately 56 dwellings, which would be linked to land to the west of the town (area of search 6b). There are also a number of extant permissions and sites identified as part of the Strategic Land Availability Assessment, totalling approximately 75 dwellings, expected to be delivered within the pre-plan period (between 2011 and 2016).

Conclusion and Next Steps

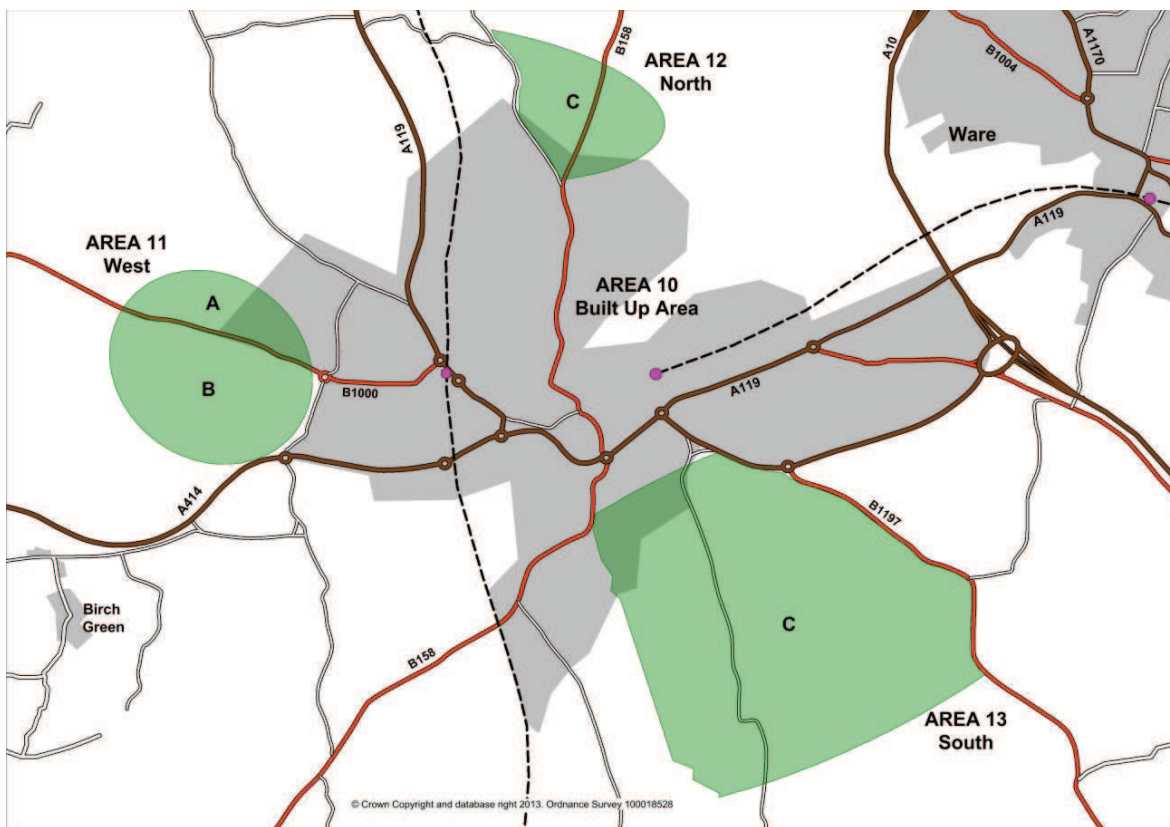
- 6.4.45** In an ideal situation, all the potential development sites around the town would be considered through the process of preparing the District Plan, where the cumulative impacts of development can be properly assessed and the necessary infrastructure planned for. Site-specific policies can be designed to ensure the delivery of necessary infrastructure, not just for each site, but for the whole town. However, because there are current applications yet to be determined and others already refused and subject to the appeal process, all made in advance of the District Plan, this makes it difficult to ensure that the cumulative impacts of development are appropriately assessed and the necessary supporting infrastructure is provided. Each development on its own would not trigger the need for major infrastructure, and as such will be determined by the Planning Inspectorate on this basis. However, through the process of preparing a strategy for the growth of the town there are issues over the cumulative impacts of development that may now not be managed appropriately.

- 6.4.46** It is important to consider when planning for Buntingford as a smaller town that it would not be ideal to have simultaneous developments being constructed at once. Many dwellings being built at once would create much needed competition and may help in bringing sale prices down if two or more developers compete for the same market. However, if sale prices fall developers could slow down or even halt delivery if the scheme becomes less viable. A reduction in viability could result in developers seeking to reduce much needed contributions towards community and utility infrastructure. It could even result in schemes being put on hold altogether while a developer waits for a better position in the local market.
- 6.4.47** Another element of constructing too many homes too quickly could be the loss of these homes to the local housing market, i.e. it may result in more properties being bought by people from outside the town, thereby not addressing the longer term needs of Buntingford itself. It is therefore essential that the phasing of delivery is given careful consideration.
- 6.4.48** Similarly, local school place provision should be designed in line with increased local demand. For example, if more school places are created now, they will be occupied by children from nearby towns, reducing the available capacity for local children when they require places.
- 6.4.49** On balance, acknowledging the brownfield nature of the former Sainsbury's Depot site, and the greater and wider potential town-wide benefits which could be released and delivered by development to the north of the town, it is considered that these two sites should be identified as the Council's preferred development locations for inclusion in the District Plan. However, the Inspector's decisions on the two appeals to the east of the town may necessitate a review of these preferences, in order to appropriately contain and manage the scale, timing and delivery of development and its supporting infrastructure in Buntingford, in a manner that is proportionate to its size and projected housing need.

6.5 Hertford

- 6.5.1** To date, assessment has demonstrated that Hertford plays a key role as a market town and rural service centre which serves both the town itself and an extensive rural hinterland. The boundaries of the town are generally not that clearly defined, and this has been confirmed through the Green Belt Review 2013.

Figure 6.5 Shortlisted Areas of Search for Hertford



- 6.5.2** The following sections consider various issues facing the town, providing an up-to-date position on evidence gathered from stakeholders and technical documents.

Education

- 6.5.3** In terms of education, development in Hertford and the remaining Areas of Search would generate the requirement for additional school places. Hertfordshire County Council has identified a need for the provision of an additional two forms of entry at primary level in Hertford to cover the plan period. Current investigations are centred on potential provision of these within the grounds of Simon Balle Secondary School but, if this scheme should not come to fruition, would need resolving elsewhere.

6.5.4 With regard to secondary provision, Hertford forms part of the combined Hertford and Ware Schools Planning Area. Largely due to single sex provision of Richard Hale (boys) in Hertford and Presdales (girls) in Ware, a significant number of pupils cross-travel between the two towns to access their schools. As such, Hertfordshire County Council is in the process of carrying out feasibility work on the expansion of existing secondary schools within the planning area. However, given the level of development under consideration for both towns, and the need to satisfy a short-fall of places in the short-term, it is unlikely that expansion of existing schools will meet demand. The provision of a new secondary school is therefore likely to be required within the plan period to meet the needs of the two towns.

6.5.5 The educational issues raised above are generic to all potential development locations for Hertford and are therefore not discussed in any further detail below.

Transport

6.5.6 Hertford benefits from good rail connections, with stations serving two different lines into London and wider locations, and is also home to a bus station providing access to a multitude of destinations near and far.

6.5.7 While its road connections are good, they suffer from congestion, especially at peak times. This is particularly true of the A414 which runs through the town and where a study led by HCC as Highway Authority is currently on-going to identify and assess possible measures to help ameliorate increased traffic movements caused by potential development both within and beyond the district boundaries. In the absence of the finalisation of this report (due to conclude in February 2014) and a definitive position on whether the residual cumulative impacts of development in Hertford would be severe in NPPF terms, this section proceeds on the basis that mitigating measures may be achievable in highways terms for the levels of delivery discussed.

Other Infrastructure

6.5.8 In terms of waste water issues, correspondence with Thames Water has indicated that there are capacity issues in locations to the north and south of the town that could have knock-on effects in existing locations and therefore may constrain development opportunities.

Employment and Retail

6.5.9 In respect of employment provision, beyond those locations previously identified for redevelopment for mixed use by the Council in the Mead Lane area, the findings of the 2012 Employment Forecasts and Strategic Economic Development Advice Report indicate the need to protect existing designated sites, albeit that some areas may require rejuvenation. It was

also recommended that consideration be given to identifying a small number of modest sites for new B1 employment in the Hertford and Ware area. However, in considering new allocations, due consideration should be given to the impact on existing employment sites.

- 6.5.10** For future retail provision, Hertford's constrained development pattern limits the potential to expand within the central core and to improve upon its secondary town centre status. The 2013 Retail and Town Centres Update Report recognises the limited prospects that Hertford would have to expand its retail role within the town centre and suggests that "release of edge of centre employment land for retail use could be considered" in the longer term to meet future demand, "for example the remainder of the McMullen's Brewery site". However, any such proposal would need to be balanced against the need for the continued use of employment land, as discussed above.

Character

- 6.5.11** Hertford's town boundaries are characterised by its four 'Green Fingers', which are areas of open undeveloped land that penetrate towards the centre of the town and are bounded on each side by radiating urban development. The Green Fingers are a valued environmental asset providing access to open space in the town and the surrounding countryside.
- 6.5.12** To the west of the town, Panshanger features the remains of an 18th and 19th century landscape park covering about 350 hectares and includes parkland, woodland and agricultural land. Following gravel extraction, the site is to be used as a country park under the Panshanger Country Park initiative which aims to improve public access and provide links towards Welwyn Garden City. Any future development to the west of the town should support this scheme.
- 6.5.13** Despite the apparent availability of open space, the 2011 East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan has identified a deficit in Accessible Natural Greenspace and sites offering space for children. Deficiencies in off-road links between the urban area and the surrounding countryside and the need to improve links between Hertford and Ware have also been highlighted in this report.
- 6.5.14** The following sections seek to further refine the work previously undertaken on the Hertford Areas of Search in order to inform the final strategy.

Area of Search 10: Hertford Built-Up Area

- 6.5.15** This area had been anticipated to accommodate around 875 dwellings at the end of Chapter 4. Further refinement has indicated that a figure of around 896 dwellings (including both urban capacity and existing commitments) could be delivered during the plan period.

- 6.5.16** The major element of the uncommitted development in the built-up area during the plan period is anticipated to be provided in the Mead Lane area (300) with the remaining dwellings forming smaller pockets within other parts of the built-up area of the town. The draft Mead Lane Urban Design Framework (UDF) sets the context for the regeneration of that area and, in respect of transport impediments, builds on the potential solutions that were first identified in the Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan. However, it is recognised that, even following the implementation of the sustainable travel initiatives encouraged in the UDF, traffic generation from the area will undoubtedly have some impact on the wider road network.
- 6.5.17** In terms of any changes to employment provision beyond those proposed in the Mead Lane area (mixed-use), given the concentration of Council offices and Police station in the Pegs Lane/Hale Road area, coupled with the existing employment facilities fronting the A414 Gascoyne Way, it is considered appropriate that a new employment area be designated in this location. As such, an area of 9.29 hectares is proposed to be allocated in the District Plan for employment, sui generis and mixed uses.
- 6.5.18** Small sites and permissions are set out in the housing trajectory in the latest Annual Monitoring Report; however, it is anticipated that further windfall opportunities are likely to become available in the urban area during the plan period.

Area of Search 11: Hertford West

- 6.5.19** The assessment process up to the end of Chapter 4 had envisaged development of around 600 dwellings to be evenly split between the two sub-areas. On the basis of information received to date for Sub-Area A it is envisaged that the previously mooted number of 300 dwellings could be achieved in this location.
- 6.5.20** However, the return of the developer questionnaires resulted in an adjustment of the capacity of Sub-Area B from 300 to 250 dwellings based on the promoters' assessment of the site taking into account various matters which include, inter alia, the protection of the wildlife site.
- 6.5.21** As there are not considered to be any major impediments to the delivery of 550 dwellings in the total search area, it is likely that delivery would occur early in the Plan period. The promoters of the sites concur with this view. The area is well located to access the town's existing retail, employment, educational and other services via sustainable travel options.
- 6.5.22** Existing roads and natural features would assist in creating definable boundaries to development. It is noted that Part 2 of the Green Belt Review suggests that the boundary extent for Sub-Area A could be drawn more tightly than the area proposed by the site promoters. However, in this respect, it should be noted that there is an extant permission for an indoor

tennis centre incorporating indoor courts, pool, gym and outdoor facilities including outdoor swimming pool, tennis courts and golf range, which would extend the development area beyond that proposed in the review. It is therefore considered that, as the precedent for the extension of the boundary has already been set via the development management process for leisure purposes, any future residential proposal should take into account the same boundary treatment.

- 6.5.23** On balance of the issues raised above it is considered appropriate that development of 550 dwellings be brought forward in this area of search, with 300 delivered in Sub-Area A and 250 in Sub-Area B.

Area of Search 12: Hertford North (Sub-Area C only)

- 6.5.24** At the end of Chapter 4 in the assessment process this area was under consideration as a marginal fail for the provision of 100 dwellings, largely due to waste water constraints. Earlier in the sieving process, highways capacity had also been raised as a concern for a higher level of development of 500 dwellings. Further investigations have since established it would be likely that the capacity of the waste water and highways infrastructure in the area could be able to support a total of 150 dwellings in this location.
- 6.5.25** In Green Belt Review terms, it has been established that the Green Belt particularly serves the purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment to the east of Wadesmill Road due to the strong landscape character of the Lower Rib Valley. This, and the closer proximity of the area to the west of the B158 Wadesmill Road to access local shops, services and primary education, would favour development in the western section of the overall Sub-Area.
- 6.5.26** A potential impediment to early delivery could involve the extraction of minerals in the area; however, locating development to the south of the Minerals Preferred Area could reduce the impact of this. The area also lacks a current definable boundary and the potential for minerals extraction in the locality could mean further uncertainty in respect of resolving this issue.
- 6.5.27** While, as noted above, the area is well placed to access local services and facilities, sustainable travel options from the area to rail services, some parts of the wider town beyond the centre, and other locations are limited.
- 6.5.28** However, balancing all of the issues raised above, it is considered that the area to the west of the B158 Wadesmill Road could be suitable for the delivery of around 150 dwellings.

Area of Search 13: Hertford South (Sub-Area C only)

- 6.5.29** While various factors, including waste water capacity, highways and passenger transport constraints, limited the amount of development that would be appropriate in the Sub-Area, the Chapter 4 assessment concluded that further investigation should be undertaken for the provision of up to 100 dwellings in the Mangrove Road area. Following the receipt of developer questionnaires, the Cricket Field site was withdrawn from further consideration as the landowner no longer wished to promote this area. Other land submissions in the area, other than the former Christ's Hospital Playing Field, would both be considered to have a significant detrimental impact on the Hertford Green Finger, with the Land East of Queens Road particularly affecting the land around the Hagsdell Stream area and Land West of Mangrove Road being distanced from local facilities and services. These proposals should therefore not be subject to further consideration.
- 6.5.30** The former Christ's Hospital Playing Field remains under consideration. The developer questionnaire response from the promoter of the site indicated that the whole 100 dwellings anticipated for the Sub-Area would be achievable in this single location. In this respect, it should be noted that this would not be intended to cover the whole site submission area, given that the western section of the site slopes down to Hagsdell Stream and has been proposed by the site promoter for communal amenity space to be associated with housing development. However, the remaining area contains an existing tree belt, which helps maintain the character of this part of this Hertford Green Finger on its western edge. If proposed development were to result in the loss of this feature, it would be of detriment to the character of the Green Finger and is therefore not recommended.
- 6.5.31** However, if development at the scale proposed by the site promoter were to be brought forward in the area not including the tree belt, it would result in a very high density development (around 50 dph). Not only would this need extremely careful planning given the site's location within the Hertford Conservation Area, but it may also appear out of context with the built form of neighbouring developments.
- 6.5.32** Whatever the density of development achieved in the area, it would consolidate the existing built form along Mangrove Road between Ashbourne Gardens and Oak Grove. The limitation of development of the site on its western side to preserve the treed area would help mitigate the impact and preserve the most visible part of this Green Finger. It would also allow the Green Finger to retain its penetration to the path at Hagsdell Lane. Part 2 of the Green Belt Review 2013 confirms this position in terms of preserving the special character and setting of Hertford in its recommendations for potential boundary alterations.
- 6.5.33** Therefore, while the site promoters have currently cited no impediment to the scale of development they propose (100 dwellings), in order to continue to protect the Green Finger's features and deliver development in character

with the neighbouring area, a lesser level of development would be more appropriate in this location. Therefore, on balance of the above issues, it is considered that the number of dwellings should be reduced to 50 to accord with the approach taken elsewhere in the District Plan of dwellings being provided at 25 dph.

Conclusion and Next Steps

- 6.5.34** Identified development options of 750 dwellings, as detailed above, in addition to urban capacity and known commitments would total approximately 1,646 dwellings. It is expected that windfall developments will also occur within the Plan period, which would increase this total. However, it is acknowledged that, due to the capacity constraints of the town that have been highlighted during the sieving process, it is inevitable that some of Hertford's projected housing need will be delivered elsewhere in the district.

6.6 Sawbridgeworth

- 6.6.1** To date, assessment has demonstrated that Sawbridgeworth plays a key role in the district as a small market town, serving both the town itself and a local rural hinterland. The location of the town between the larger settlements of Bishop's Stortford and Harlow, and its good rail connection, contributes to how the town functions; predominantly as a dormitory town, providing limited employment and retail opportunities, resulting in significant outflows of residents. This is an important factor to consider when assessing how the town develops in the future. The boundaries of the town are generally not that clearly defined, and this has been confirmed through the Green Belt Review 2013.

Figure 6.6 Shortlisted Areas of Search for Sawbridgeworth



- 6.6.2** The following sections consider various issues facing the town, providing an up-to-date position on evidence gathered from stakeholders and technical documents.

Education

- 6.6.3** In terms of education, development in Sawbridgeworth would generate the requirement for additional school places. At primary level, Hertfordshire County Council has indicated that there is little or no capacity in existing schools, and that Mandeville School is the only school with expansion potential. To facilitate expansion of the school by one form of entry (1FE), which would serve approximately 500 dwellings, land adjacent to the school would need to be allocated for school use in the District Plan to accommodate the provision of new school buildings and playing fields.
- 6.6.4** With regard to secondary provision, Sawbridgeworth falls within the Bishop's Stortford Schools Planning Area where a deficit of school places is forecast. Hertfordshire County Council has completed initial feasibility work into the expansion potential of all the schools within the planning area which indicates that expansion of existing schools alone is unlikely to meet forecast demand. The provision of a new secondary school is therefore likely to be required to meet the educational needs of the planning area within the plan period.
- 6.6.5** Notwithstanding this, the completed technical work indicated some expansion potential (up to 3FE) at Leventhorpe School, and it is noted that Part 2 of the Green Belt Review suggests that the built-up part of the school site should be released from the Green Belt. This may provide sufficient land to accommodate new school buildings although any expansion potential would need to be subject to further feasibility testing.

Transport

- 6.6.6** The A1184 which runs on a north-south axis through the town suffers from congestion, especially at peak times. Congestion is a particular problem at the junctions of London Road/Bell Street and Harlow Road/High Wych Lane and transport modelling work has indicated that mitigation measures such as signalisation may be required to ease the flow of traffic. The Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth Urban Transport Plan (UTP), led by Hertfordshire County Council, is due to report in 2014, and this is expected to address the main mitigation measures required across the transport network in the study area.
- 6.6.7** Further technical work will also need to be completed to gain a greater understanding of the cumulative impact of development at Sawbridgeworth, Bishop's Stortford, Harlow and any potential development at Lower Sheering on the local highway infrastructure, in order that appropriate mitigation measures can be implemented.

6.6.8 In terms of the passenger transport network, Sawbridgeworth has a railway station serving the line running from Cambridge to London Liverpool Street. However, the railway station is located on the north eastern fringe of the town, with relatively poor bus and pedestrian links to existing residential areas of the town.

6.6.9 The majority of bus routes that serve the town operate along the A1184 corridor with little penetration into existing residential areas. Development in the town would make these services more viable but it is unlikely to justify new or altered routes.

Other infrastructure

6.6.10 In terms of waste water issues, correspondence with Thames Water has indicated that localised sewerage network upgrades maybe required to reduce the risk of sewer flooding.

Employment and Retail

6.6.11 Sawbridgeworth is the only town in the district that doesn't have a designated employment area and the 2012 Employment Forecasts and Strategic Economic Development Advice Report considers it unlikely that anything other than very local businesses would choose to locate in the town. This reflects the less preferable location of Sawbridgeworth in employment land terms, lying between Bishop's Stortford and Harlow, which both benefit from better road access. Any new employment provision in the town should therefore focus on providing a resource for local-scale employment only.

6.6.12 As a smaller centre Sawbridgeworth performs a local function, providing essential services and convenience shopping to its catchment population. The town has a small supermarket and the majority of units in the High Street consist of small independent traders. The 2013 Retail and Town Centres Update Report recognises that there is significant leakage of expenditure for both convenience and comparison goods out of the town to neighbouring centres, but concludes that there is limited potential for further retail development in Sawbridgeworth.

6.6.13 The following sections seek to further refine the work previously undertaken on the Sawbridgeworth Areas of Search in order to inform the final strategy.

Area of Search 14: Built-Up Area

6.6.14 At the end of Chapter 4, the built-up area of Sawbridgeworth had been anticipated to accommodate around 111 dwellings. Further refinement has indicated that a figure of around 11 dwellings (including both urban capacity and existing commitments) could be delivered during the plan period.

- 6.6.15** The key reason for the reduction in this figure relates to continued uncertainty over the likelihood of the site at Sawbridgeworth Football Club, Crofters coming forward for development during the plan period. The site is an outstanding housing allocation from the 2007 Local Plan which is dependent on the Football Club relocating to an alternative site to the north of the town. The Football Club has subsequently gained planning permission for upgraded facilities, and although it is not considered that any development has taken place on the site which would prevent relocation of the existing sports facilities, this again raises doubt regarding the deliverability of the site for housing development. Given this, it is proposed to remove the housing allocation designation on the site. However, given the identified shortfall of sports pitches within the M11 corridor, it is proposed to retain the designation of 14 hectares of land to the north of Leventhorpe School for sports pitch provision.
- 6.6.16** Small sites and permissions are set out in the housing trajectory in the latest Annual Monitoring Report; however, it is anticipated that further windfall opportunities are likely to become available in the urban area during the plan period.

Areas of Search 16 and 17: West and North (sub-area A only)

- 6.6.17** The assessment process up to the end of Chapter 4 had envisaged that development of either 200 dwellings or 3,000 dwellings with a Sawbridgeworth bypass could potentially be achieved in the Areas of Search. This section addresses development at the higher scale which was taken forward on a Marginal Fail basis.
- 6.6.18** This rating in particular reflects concern regarding the impact of development on highway infrastructure in the town. The A1184 suffers from considerable congestion due to the large volume of traffic it carries between Bishop's Stortford and Harlow. Hertfordshire County Council, as highway authority, has indicated that a threshold of circa 500 dwellings within the town would trigger the need for a new bypass. The idea of a bypass to Sawbridgeworth has been suggested for numerous years; however, there is no firm proposal for delivery of a bypass, in particular with regard to the route a bypass should take and how it would be funded.
- 6.6.19** A theoretical desk-top mapping exercise suggested that a possible by-pass route would contain approximately 150ha of land to the west of Sawbridgeworth yielding 3,000 dwellings. Development of this scale would require significant additional infrastructure in addition to the bypass itself. It is therefore not considered that development alone could fund delivery of a bypass and the project has not been shortlisted as a transport priority for the period up to 2019 by the Hertfordshire Local Transport Body, which suggests external sources of funding may be difficult to source in the short term.

- 6.6.20** Notwithstanding issues surrounding the deliverability of a bypass, development of this scale is considered to be completely out of scale with the character of the existing town. It would require the release of a significant amount of Green Belt land to the west of the town, which would reduce the strategic gap between Sawbridgeworth and Harlow. Given the potential identification of land to the north of Harlow as a broad location for development, with the associated potential for significant Green Belt release, it is not considered appropriate to release Green Belt land on a similar scale to the west of Sawbridgeworth, to reduce the risk of coalescence between the settlements.
- 6.6.21** The 2012 Employment Forecasts and Strategic Economic Development Advice Report suggested that even with a bypass, Sawbridgeworth would be unlikely to increase its employment offer due to its location between the higher order settlements of Bishop's Stortford and Harlow. Therefore development of this scale would be likely to reinforce the significant amount of out-commuting that the town experiences now, making it a less sustainable location for development than others proposed in the district. Whilst the town has a railway station located on the Cambridge to London Liverpool Street line, this is located on the opposite side of the town, increasing the possibility of residents from any new development accessing the station by car, further increasing congestion at key junctions in the town.
- 6.6.22** On balance of the issues raised above, it is not considered that development of 3,000 dwellings to the west of Sawbridgeworth with the construction of a bypass could or should come forward within this Plan period.

Area of Search 16: West

- 6.6.23** At the lower end of proposals, further information from infrastructure providers has suggested that provision of in excess of 200 dwellings to the west of Sawbridgeworth could be possible, subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures to resolve identified issues with highways infrastructure, waster water infrastructure and education. Given that the housing figure to be accommodated within the built-up area of the town has been reduced due to the removal of the housing allocation designation at Sawbridgeworth Football Club, it is considered appropriate to add this number to those for the Area of Search at Sawbridgeworth West. In addition, as there are no overriding infrastructure issues which would prohibit the development of 400 dwellings, it is proposed to designate housing allocations to meet this level of development to ensure that Sawbridgeworth caters for as much of its objectively assessed housing need as possible.

- 6.6.24** To integrate new development with the existing built-up area and the town centre it is considered appropriate to locate development both to the north (sub-area A) and south (sub-area B) of West Road, and to keep it as close to the existing urban edge as possible. The problems of traffic congestion in the town are well documented, and this increases the imperative to allocate sites that are well located in relation to local facilities and to public transport routes, to enable more frequent travel by non-car modes.

Sub-Area A

- 6.6.25** There are two sites being promoted for development to the north of West Road. It is proposed that only one site, Brickwell Fields, is allocated for development. This site wraps around Mandeville School and it is proposed to use the stream running along the western boundary of the site as the new Green Belt boundary. Part 2 of the Green Belt review concludes that allowing development further to the west and north of West Road will result in unacceptable urban sprawl as the development will be located further away from the existing built-up area of the town and there are no identifiable physical boundaries to limit the extent of development.
- 6.6.26** The developer questionnaire response from the promoter of the site proposed a dwelling capacity of 175 dwellings for the site. However, being adjacent to Mandeville School, this site would need to provide land to enable expansion of the school. Hertfordshire County Council state that an additional 1.2ha of land would be needed to expand the school to 2 forms of entry (2FE). Their preference would be for land to the west of the existing school site to be allocated for this purpose, to enable an additional or alternative site access to be created.
- 6.6.27** Therefore, it is considered that the site be allocated for the development of 100 dwellings, with land provided to enable the expansion of the primary school adjacent to the site.

Sub-Area B

- 6.6.28** There are three landowners promoting development options to the south of West Road, stretching along the western boundary of Sawbridgeworth, to High Wych Road. At the end of chapter 4, it was considered that development in Sawbridgeworth would be best located off West Road as this would provide the opportunity for new development to integrate with the existing built-up area of the town, through better access to the town's schools, shops and railway station.
- 6.6.29** The site directly south of West Road, land at Chalks Farm, is being promoted for the development of 300 dwellings. Part 2 of the Green Belt review comments on how the ribbon development along West Road

encroaches on the openness of the land to the south and recommends that the Green Belt boundary be amended, releasing part of the site, to align with the existing development along West Road.

- 6.6.30** However, the developer questionnaire response from the promoter of the site indicates that the proposed site access will be located further along West Road beyond the strip of ribbon development. A secondary access point is proposed alongside the stream and children's play area at the east of the site. It is not considered that an acceptable primary access point could be provided here without significant engineering works in relation to the stream and some additional land being acquired from the children's play area. Therefore the principle of a site access further along West Road is accepted. However, the precise location of this access should be subject to further discussion to limit the impact on the openness of the countryside.
- 6.6.31** It is also noted that Part 2 of the Green Belt review concludes that there are limited identifiable physical boundaries currently in this location which could be used to determine the extent of Green Belt release so it would be necessary to design in a strong defensible Green Belt boundary through any development proposal. A significant area of open space would also be required adjacent to the boundary of the site to ensure that there is an appropriate transition between any new development and the wider countryside.
- 6.6.32** The second site being promoted in this sub-area is located between land at Chalks Farm and land at Thomas Rivers Hospital. It forms part of a much larger site which wraps around the whole of the west of Sawbridgeworth. Limited information has been provided by the site promoter regarding proposed development of the site and access to the site for small scale development could only be achieved through either of the adjacent sites to the north or south.
- 6.6.33** The part of the site located adjacent to the built-up area of the town lies within Flood Zone 3, which would prohibit any development from integrating with the existing urban edge.
- 6.6.34** The third site being promoted in this sub-area is land at Thomas Rivers Hospital. At the end of chapter 4, it was considered that there should be no development permitted south of The Crest within this sub-area. Part 2 of the Green Belt Review has reaffirmed this conclusion. It states how the Green Belt in this location particularly serves the purpose of preventing coalescence between Sawbridgeworth and Harlow and more significantly, High Wych. The role of the Green Belt in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment is also concluded to be significant due to the presence of the protected Rivers Orchard Nursery wildlife site, and it is considered that development would have a negative impact on the nature conservation value of the wildlife site.

- 6.6.35** A smaller scale of development adjacent to the built up area of the town, around Brook End, has been considered in response to queries about safeguarding the community use of the Rivers Orchard Nursery site. However, it is not considered that there are any alternative access points to this area other than using the road that serves the existing hospital. It is considered that a road cutting across the countryside to serve a smaller area of development adjacent to the existing urban edge would cause harm to the Green Belt in terms of encroaching on the countryside and it would make the remainder of the site vulnerable to pressure for further development.
- 6.6.36** Therefore, on balance of the issues raised above, it is considered that the land at Chalks Farm should be allocated for the development of 300 dwellings.

Conclusions and Next Steps

- 6.6.37** Identified development options of 400 dwellings, as detailed above, in addition to urban capacity and known commitments would arrive at a total of approximately 411 dwellings. It is expected that windfall developments will also occur within the Plan period, which would increase whichever total is ultimately decided upon.
- 6.6.38** In terms of identified highways issues, further technical work will be required to identify and cost the measures necessary to mitigate the impact of development in Sawbridgeworth on the A1184. The Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth Urban Transport Plan (UTP) will follow publication of the draft District Plan, and will provide further evidence in respect of the cumulative impacts of development along the A1184 corridor. Working with East Herts Council and taking account of transport modelling and transport mitigation measures, the UTP will also address the issue of air quality at the London Road Air Quality Management Area.

6.7 Ware

- 6.7.1** To date, assessment has demonstrated that Ware plays a key role as a market town and rural service centre serving both the town itself and rural hinterland. The presence of the River Lea, which historically influenced the town's development pattern, provides wildlife and leisure benefits south and west of the town and helps shape the edge of the settlement at these points. However, The Green Belt Review 2013 has demonstrated that the town's boundaries are generally considered weak to the north and east of the town.

Figure 6.7 Shortlisted Areas of Search for Ware



- 6.7.2** The following sections consider various issues facing the town, providing an up-to-date position on evidence gathered from stakeholders and technical documents.

Education

- 6.7.3** In respect of education, the requirement for additional school places would be generated by development brought forward in the urban area of Ware and the remaining surrounding Areas of Search. In terms of primary provision, any demand generated for places would need to be met locally. Due to the vast differences in scale of the options under consideration,

this means that various scenarios need to be taken into consideration relating to the relevant levels of demand. These are therefore discussed in further detail in relation to specific Areas of Search below.

- 6.7.4** With regard to secondary provision, in addition to the effects of varying levels of demand relating to the diverse development scenarios, it also needs to be borne in mind that Ware forms part of the combined Hertford and Ware Schools Planning Area. Largely due to single sex provision of Richard Hale (boys) in Hertford and Presdales (girls) in Ware, a significant number of pupils cross-travel between the two towns to access their schools. As such, Hertfordshire County Council is in the process of carrying out feasibility work on the expansion of existing secondary schools within the planning area. However, given the level of development under consideration for both towns, and the need to satisfy a short-fall of places in the short-term, it is unlikely that expansion of existing schools will meet demand. The provision of a new secondary school is therefore likely to be required within the plan period to meet the needs of the two towns. This is discussed further below in relation to Area of Search 19 – Ware North, and Area of Search 20 – Ware East.

Transport

- 6.7.5** Ware has good rail connections, with its station serving the Greater Anglia route from Hertford East into London. Its bus services serve the town itself, via circular routes, and also connect to wider locations. Ware has good road connections to external settlements and is also served by a western A10 bypass, which helps relieve inner routes to some extent. However, due to the constrained development pattern of the central area, including its narrow High Street with lack of rear servicing opportunities, the town centre suffers from considerable congestion, especially at peak times.

Other Infrastructure

- 6.7.6** Concerning waste water matters, correspondence with Thames Water has indicated that there are capacity issues in locations to the north of the town that would constrain development opportunities unless new infrastructure were to be provided. This issue is discussed further below in relation to Area of Search 19 – Ware North.

Employment and Retail

- 6.7.7** In respect of employment provision, the findings of the 2012 Employment Forecasts and Strategic Economic Development Advice Report indicate the need to protect existing designated sites, albeit that some areas may require rejuvenation. It was also recommended that consideration be given to identifying a small number of modest sites for new B1 employment in

the Hertford and Ware area. However, in considering new allocations, due consideration should be given to the impact on existing employment sites.

- 6.7.8** In respect of its retail role, Ware fulfils the function of a Minor Town Centre. For future retail provision, Ware's constrained development pattern limits the potential to expand within the central core and to improve upon its status. The 2013 Retail and Town Centres Update Report notes that "if the Asda commitment is implemented this will increase Ware's market share of expenditure". It also recognises that there "will be limited potential for additional convenience or comparison goods floorspace over and above this commitment. The priority in Ware should be the implementation of the Asda commitment, and the reoccupation of vacant shop units and small infill development in the town centre. If significant additional population growth is to be accommodated at Ware, there would need to be additional retail provision, which may not be capable of being accommodated within the town centre". However, any additional provision away from the central core would need to be balanced against the effects and potential harm to the viability and vitality of the town centre's retail offer.

Character

- 6.7.9** The 2011 East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan has identified poor provision in Accessible Natural Greenspace at Ware, as well space for children and young people. This should be alleviated through creating better public access to the countryside resource that surrounds the settlement, including the Lee and Rib Rivers. The river corridors have been identified as areas for improvement of both habitat and physical links between settlements. Key issues are to make improved links between Hertford and Ware and the wider countryside, while also ensuring lateral links across the District, particularly if future growth is considered to the urban fringes.
- 6.7.10** The following sections seek to further refine the work previously undertaken on the Ware Areas of Search in order to inform the final strategy.

Area of Search 18: Ware Built-Up Area

- 6.7.11** This area had been anticipated to accommodate around 147 dwellings at the end of Chapter 4. Further refinement has indicated that a figure of around 189 dwellings (including both urban capacity and existing commitments) could be delivered during the plan period. However, it should be noted that the majority of this amount relates to existing commitments, leaving only 32 dwellings identified in the SLAA without the benefit of extant permission. This figure is reflective of the fact that the town has had considerable previous success in the re-use of brownfield sites and that these opportunities have largely been exhausted. This past development, coupled with the need to protect Ware's existing employment

base, mean that it is not anticipated that the built-up area will make a significant contribution to housing supply, although it is likely that some windfall site opportunities will arise.

- 6.7.12** In educational terms, it is considered that the impact of development of around 32 dwellings would be likely to be minimal and not sufficient to generate the need for additional forms of entry in itself. However, if coupled with development either solely to the north, or to the north and east of the town in combination, any dwellings provided in the Built-Up Area would also need to be taken into account in assessing future educational provision for the town.
- 6.7.13** Small sites and permissions are set out in the current Annual Monitoring Report; however, it is anticipated that further windfall opportunities are likely to become available in the urban area during the plan period.

Area of Search 19: Ware North (Sub-Areas A and B)

Sub-Area A

- 6.7.14** The assessment process up to the end of Chapter 4 had envisaged that development of either 0 or 200 dwellings could potentially be achieved in the Sub-Area. However, recognising various constraints in the area, the area was taken forward on a Fail or Marginal Fail basis. This rating in particular reflects recognition of the likely affects on amenity of any future residents caused by the juxtaposition of the site between two busy roads; the close proximity of Wodson Park and its associated activities; the site's Registered Historic Park and Garden status; and waste water capacity constraints.
- 6.7.15** A development of this level would generate the need for educational provision. Given the limitations of site size it is unlikely that it would be possible to make provision for a new school on the site and also provide the levels of housing proposed. It would also be removed from the wider town area and sustainable journeys on foot would prove problematic given the width restrictions of the A1170 and its single narrow footpath (less than 1.5m wide in places) where, due to steep banking, there would be little capacity to extend. Primary schools in Ware are generally at capacity and, even with current planned development at St Catherine's, the expansion potential of existing school sites is very limited. This would pose a conundrum.
- 6.7.16** Secondary education could only realistically be met off-site given the size of the Sub-Area, but could be achieved anywhere within the Hertford and Ware Schools Planning Area. However, until all secondary schools in the Schools Planning Area have been assessed and HCC's feasibility work

to determine the potential of the existing secondary schools to expand has been concluded, it is not known whether any additional capacity could be achieved within existing sites.

- 6.7.17** As an alternative to residential provision, the DTZ East Hertfordshire Employment Forecasts and Strategic Economic Development Advice, November 2012 suggests “the possibility of employment space development at the intersection of the A10 and the A1170 north of Ware”. This could potentially take the form of prestigious B1 development within a parkland setting. However, any proposal for employment or mixed use development in this location would need to be balanced against the potential detrimental effect on other existing designated employment areas in the town.
- 6.7.18** Given its proximity to Sub-Area B, it would be sensible for Sub-Area A to be subject to consideration in potential combination with that larger area, in the event that significant levels of development were to be brought forward in that location. In this respect, eventual land use/s for Sub-Area A could be influenced by master-planned development proposals for the entire area and the benefits of scale could help address outstanding issues such as waste water capacity and the provision of education.

Sub-Area B

- 6.7.19** At the end of Chapter 4 the assessment process concluded that development of either 200 or up to 1,500 dwellings could potentially be achieved in this Sub-Area and was assigned a Marginal Pass or Marginal Fail rating.
- 6.7.20** At the lower end of proposals, there is relative confidence that development of around 200 dwellings could be delivered to the north of the High Oak Road/Fanhams Hall Road area. Beyond that level, development in this location could be limited by highways and waste water capacity constraints and potential impact on the town’s services and facilities.
- 6.7.21** Educational needs generated by development (at any number within the range of levels) would also have to be met. Given the position outlined above for Sub-Area A regarding the need for additional primary provision, further investigations would be necessary to examine the expansion potential of existing schools in the nearby locality (Kingshill/St. Mary’s, Tower and Priorswood) for a lower level development. For upper levels, HCC would expect the development to provide for its own school capacity (of between 2 to 3.4FE). Therefore, two new 2FE primary school sites would be required.
- 6.7.22** For secondary education at the lower range level, the need could be met anywhere within the Hertford and Ware Schools Planning Area; however, until all secondary schools in the Schools Planning Area have been

assessed and HCC's feasibility work to determine the potential of the existing secondary schools to expand has been concluded, it is not known whether any additional capacity could be accommodated within existing sites. For a proposal of between 1500 and 1700 dwellings to the north of Ware (the latter figure if Sub-Area A were also to be included) this would generate approximate need of 3.5FE of secondary school places. HCC assumes that this need could not be accommodated within the existing secondary schools in Ware and Hertford and a new school site would therefore be required to meet the need from this development. The provision of an all-through school within the development could be considered an option as a way of managing the primary and secondary pupil yield arising from this new housing.

- 6.7.23** In terms of highways issues, the Diamond modelling undertaken to date indicates that development north and east of Ware would be likely to cause problems with junction operation on the Baldock Street/High Street corridor due to limited existing capacity for further growth in the High Street environment. Ware is on the periphery of the HSGTM model and the town has consequently been modelled in limited detail; therefore only the more strategic impacts of the development can be illustrated and not the detailed local junction impacts within the town itself.
- 6.7.24** A development of 1,300 dwellings (plus 500 jobs) was modelled with the assumption that the main access would be provided via a direct link into the A1170/A10 roundabout. The results indicate that the combined effect of this (and other developments that could come forward in the Plan) would be an increase in flows in peak periods on the A10 corridor. Capacity impacts would be apparent in the southern section in the Cheshunt area, where signalised junctions already have capacity constraints. This level of development would also impact upon the M25 at junction 25.
- 6.7.25** There are also predicted to be considerable increases in flow on the A602 Westmill Road in peak periods. This single carriageway stretch of road already carries large volumes of traffic and the addition of traffic from development at this level would lead to it becoming over capacity in the PM peak.
- 6.7.26** Development of this amount would also contribute to an increase in flow on the A1170 Wadesmill Road/High Street and Viaduct Road southbound in the AM peak. This section has existing congestion issues and its constraints limit the potential for physical mitigation measures. Additional flows would exacerbate this situation. Likewise, this level of development would increase the flow of vehicles travelling on the A119 towards Hertford, which is already congested at the Hertford end. Any development proposals would need to seek to minimise the additional vehicular traffic from the development into Ware and Hertford.

- 6.7.27** In respect of waste water provision, development in the area would not be able to proceed without considerable upgrades to the sewerage system. To avoid significant on-going disruption to the town centre, an additional pumping station combined with a new sewer connecting to the east of Ware would be required.
- 6.7.28** Other services in Ware would also be impacted by the dwelling levels proposed and therefore it would be important to establish that any demand for these that could not be satisfied by existing facilities in the town would be met within the development.
- 6.7.29** All of the above necessary requirements would have cost implications and it would be important to establish if development at the upper level would be viable to proceed on its own terms.
- 6.7.30** On balance of the issues raised above it is considered that development of around 200 dwellings could, with a relative degree of certainty, be achieved in this Sub-Area. A much higher level of development towards the upper end may ultimately prove possible; however, there are many outstanding issues that have been highlighted above that would need to be resolved in this respect and it is therefore not possible at this time to offer any degree of certainty as to what level of provision above the indicated 200 dwellings should be made.
- 6.7.31** However, if development of 200 dwellings in the High Oak Road/Fanhams Hall Road area were to proceed in isolation, this could prejudice the successful master-planning of development at a larger scale in the area. In respect of any larger scale proposals, it would also be appropriate to consider development in this location in combination with Area of Search: 20 – Sub-Area A.

Area of Search 20: Ware East (Sub-Area A only)

- 6.7.32** At the end of Chapter 4 in the assessment process this area was under consideration as a Fail or Marginal Fail for the provision of either 0 or 1,300 dwellings. However, it should be noted that this location was carried forward to Sieve 3 solely on the basis that it would not be suitable in isolation but should only be considered as an option in combination with Area of Search 19: Ware North. Therefore, the following text relates to the consideration of the potential for development that would jointly cover both locations rather than Ware East Sub-Area A on its own.
- 6.7.33** The benefits of bringing both areas forward in tandem would not only relate to meeting need in the Housing Market Area, but also to the viability of providing necessary infrastructure. In particular this would concern, in terms of highways issues, the provision of a link road between the B1004 in the Widbury Hill area and the A1170 Wadesmill Road/A10 junction to

relieve traffic impact; and, in respect of waste water capacity, the construction of a new sewer connecting from the north to the east of Ware. These issues are both discussed further below.

- 6.7.34** In terms of transport, Diamond modelling work undertaken by HCC suggests that with 3000 dwellings, as with the scenario involving development to the north of the town, there would be additional traffic and stress on a number of roads in the locality, particularly the A602, A1170 north & south of Ware, A119 Ware Road & Thieves Lane, Hertford. Existing congestion problems on the Baldock Street/High Street corridor would also be exacerbated. Due to density of housing and high pedestrian usage Air Quality impacts would need to be carefully considered in urban environment. All of these issues are likely to be more severely affected by the addition of the 1,300 dwellings above the scenarios for development limited solely to the north of the town.
- 6.7.35** A large number of additional vehicles would further impact on the A10 between the A602 and the M25, as detailed above for Area of Search 19: Sub-Area B, and there would be additional increase in stress on the A120.
- 6.7.36** In terms of waste water provision, the area would be able to connect to the new sewer that would be necessitated by development within Area of Search 19. This would already be planned to run through Area of Search 20 in order to connect to existing infrastructure to the east of Ware.
- 6.7.37** In respect of education, a development of 3,000 dwellings would provide demand for 6FE of both primary and secondary school places. All identified need would be expected to be met within the development area. This need would equate to the provision of three 2FE primary schools and a new 6FE secondary school; the latter of which could also provide for expansion beyond this level to help meet the deficit in the overall Hertford and Ware Schools Planning Area.
- 6.7.38** An important issue for consideration is the impact that the upper level of development would have on the town and its services. According to the 2011 Census, Ware had 8,165 dwellings at that date. Should development at the upper end suggested for the joint area encompassing Area of Search 19: Ware North and Area of Search 20: Ware East, be brought forward, these 3,000 dwellings would represent additional development equivalent to approximately 36.7% of the existing housing stock in the town. This would undoubtedly have a considerable impact on the town's services and any new development would need to ensure that demand for these that could not be satisfied by existing facilities in the town would be met within the area.

Conclusions and Next Steps

- 6.7.39** Identified development options (of 200 to 3,000 dwellings) in addition to SLAA sites and known commitments would arrive at a total between approximately 232 and 3,032 dwellings, dependent on the strategy selected for the town. It is expected that windfall developments will also occur within the Plan period, which would increase whichever total is ultimately decided upon.
- 6.7.40** In terms of highways issues, further detailed modelling work will be required at a town-based, rather than at the previous strategic-based, level to fully establish the detailed impacts of the development proposals in Ware. The feasibility and cost implications of providing a link road from the east of the town to the north A1170/A10 area would also need further investigation. A more detailed understanding would also be required of the impacts that development in the north/north and east of Ware area would have on the A10 and M25 junction 25. Mitigation measures would also need to be investigated in respect of the identified A602 capacity issues. Moreover, the findings of the currently on-going A414 study would need to be factored in to any understanding of the highways situation for Ware.
- 6.7.41** The Highway Authority has identified that further work will be required to determine the possible cumulative impacts of higher levels of development and whether they would be severe. Mitigation measures will need to be considered via a masterplan approach to determine whether potential impacts could be managed.
- 6.7.42** In respect of waste water issues, further work would be required to establish the route, details of construction and cost of providing a new sewer from the north to the east of Ware.
- 6.7.43** Educational provision issues also require resolution and the conclusion of HCC's feasibility work to determine the expansion potential of the existing secondary schools in the Hertford and Ware Schools Planning Area is awaited to inform the process.
- 6.7.44** Further investigations into health and other services would also be necessary to ensure that the needs of future residents could be met.
- 6.7.45** Due to the level of uncertainty surrounding key infrastructure provision and the cumulative effects of potential development on the town discussed above, it is considered that it is not possible at this stage for specific dwelling numbers to be allocated either to the area to the North (beyond 200 dwellings) of Ware or, potentially, to the North and East of the town. Further work will be required to establish whether it will be possible to achieve development of a significant scale in this location.

- 6.7.46** However, it should be noted that, even if development at the upper end of the range proposed for Ware were to be ultimately achieved, there would remain a shortfall of dwellings for the Housing Market Area and therefore some of the objectively assessed need for the area will of necessity have to be delivered elsewhere in the district.

6.8 Villages

6.8.1 Chapter 4 presented the results of Sieves 1 and 2 and concluded whether or not a village was considered suitable for development. On the basis of the results presented it was clear that there are three fairly distinct groups of villages.

- **Group 1 Villages** – these are the larger and most sustainable villages in the district. They have a primary school and a range of other facilities. Growth in these areas will potentially help to sustain existing shops and services (including primary schools), deliver affordable housing, provide local job opportunities and deliver community benefits. At least a 10% increase in housing is considered achievable and sustainable in these settlements.
- **Group 2 Villages** – these are generally smaller villages with some services and facilities but often without a primary school. Infill development may be appropriate in these villages to support existing facilities and services.
- **Group 3 Villages** – these are generally amongst the smallest in East Herts. These villages have a poor range of services and facilities and it is often necessary for local residents to travel outside the village for most of their daily needs. These villages generally lack any food shops, have no primary school and may not have a permanent post office or a village hall or meeting place. Development in these villages, other than that appropriate in the Green Belt and Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt, would be unsustainable.

6.8.2 The following sections seek to further refine the work previously undertaken on the villages in order to inform the final strategy.

Villages scoring a pass or marginal pass at the end of Sieve 2

6.8.3 The following villages scored either a pass or marginal pass at the end of Sieve 2.

- Braughing
- Buckland
- Colliers End
- Cottered
- Hadham Ford
- High Cross
- High Wych
- Hunsdon
- Little Hadham
- Much Hadham • Puckeridge
- Standon
- Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets

- Thundridge
- Wadesmill
- Walkern
- Watton-at-Stone
- Westmill
- Widford

- 6.8.4** This group generally consists of the larger and most sustainable villages in the district. Most of these could be considered to meet the definition of a Group 1 Village. However, there are some very small villages within this list (Buckland, Colliers End, Cottered and Westmill) and these have therefore been re-visited, taking account in particular the size of the settlement and its capacity to accommodate further development.
- 6.8.5** High Wych, Thundridge, Wadesmill have also been reassessed given their Green Belt status and proximity to other potential strategic development locations.
- 6.8.6** Finally, Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets have also been reconsidered on the basis of their particular environmental constraints and education capacity issues.
- 6.8.7** It is recommended that all other villages (Braughing, Hadham Ford, High Cross, Hunsdon, Little Hadham, Much Hadham, Puckeridge, Standon, Walkern, Watton-at-Stone and Widford) be identified as Group 1 Villages.

Area of Search 29: Buckland

- 6.8.8** Buckland is a small village to the north of the district. At the end of Sieve 1 Buckland scored a marginal fail on the basis that achieving a 10% growth would be difficult due to landscape constraints. There is no shop, primary school or any other community facilities in the village. At the end of Sieve 2 Buckland scored a marginal pass on the basis that development could potentially contribute to an improved bus service provision along Route 331. However, whilst it is acknowledged that other centres may be accessible by public transport, it is concluded that given the size of the village and its lack of services and facilities, Buckland is not a sustainable location for growth. Consequently it is recommended that Buckland be identified as a Group 3 Village.

Area of Search 31: Colliers End

- 6.8.9** Colliers End is a small village located on the old A10. At the end of Sieve 1 the village scored a marginal pass, although it was acknowledged at the time that the lack of community facilities is an issue. At the end of Sieve 2 the village scored a pass on the basis that development could contribute to an improved bus service provision. The pass also reflected the fact that Colliers End forms part of a 'cluster' of settlements along the A10 (including

High Cross, Thundridge and Wadesmill) where it is possible to 'share' community facilities. Whilst access services and facilities using public transport is possible, given that Colliers End is a very small village and has no facilities within the village itself it is concluded that it is not a sustainable location for growth beyond infill development. Consequently it is recommended that Colliers End be identified as a Group 2 Village.

Area of Search 32: Cottered

- 6.8.10** Cottered is located on the A507 with reasonable access to Buntingford. At the end of Sieve 1 the village scored a marginal pass, although it was acknowledged at the time that the lack of community facilities is an issue. There was no change to the score at the end of Sieve 2. Whilst access to services and facilities using public transport is possible, given that Cottered is a relatively small village and has limited facilities within the village itself, it is concluded that it is not a sustainable location for growth beyond infill development. Consequently it is recommended that Cottered be identified as a Group 2 Village.

Area of Search 58: Westmill

- 6.8.11** Westmill is located just off the A10 with reasonable access to Buntingford. At the end of Sieve 1 the village scored a marginal fail, as there is no primary school and there is no direct bus service into the village. At the end of Sieve 2 Westmill scored a marginal pass on the basis that development could potentially contribute to an improved bus service provision along Route 331. However, given that Westmill is a small village and has limited facilities within the village itself, it is concluded that it is not a sustainable location for growth beyond infill development. Consequently it is recommended that Westmill be identified as a Group 2 Village.

Area of Search 41: High Wych

Area of Search 52: Thundridge

Area of Search 54: Wadesmill

- 6.8.12** These villages are currently washed over by the Green Belt. Previously the Council has inset villages from the Green Belt where more than infill development has been proposed. If these villages were proposed as Group 1 Villages (i.e. villages which could accommodate greater than infill development) it would follow then that they should be inset from the Green Belt. However, given the continued uncertainty in respect of land North and East of Ware and North of Harlow, and the close proximity of these villages to these locations, it is considered inappropriate to inset these villages until such time that the scale and form of development in these locations is known, so to avoid merging and weakening of strategic gaps.

This approach is confirmed in Part 2 of the Green Belt Review 2013. Consequently it is recommended that High Wych, Thundridge and Wadesmill all be identified as Group 2 Villages.

Area of Search 49: Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets

- 6.8.13** Whilst the adjacent settlements of Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets are identified in the Local Plan 2007 as locations to concentrate and direct development, more recent up-to-date assessments call into question whether or not they should continue to be identified as such. At the end of Sieve 1 the villages scored a marginal fail, on the basis of environmental constraints (including flood risk), education capacity and strategic gap issues. At the end of Sieve 2 the villages scored a marginal pass on the basis that development could potentially contribute to an improved bus service provision along Route 351.
- 6.8.14** Whilst there is land potentially available for development beyond the built-up area, in the Green Belt, given the importance of the strategic gap in this location, together with potential impacts on nearby Wildlife Sites of National and European importance, this is not considered to be a sustainable option.
- 6.8.15** Development could potentially take place within the existing built-up area; however, the local school (St Andrews C of E Primary) is full and oversubscribed and there is no capacity within the site to expand. If significant further housing is allowed then pupils would either have to travel out of the area or the school would need to relocate to a site beyond the existing built up area. However, as noted above this is not considered to be a sustainable option.
- 6.8.16** In light of the above, and despite potential improvements to the bus service, Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets are not considered a sustainable location for growth beyond infill development. Consequently it is recommended that Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets be identified as Group 2 Villages.

Villages scoring a marginal fail at the end of Sieve 2

- 6.8.17** The following villages scored a marginal fail at the end of Sieve 2:
- Aston
 - Bayford
 - Birch Green
 - Cole Green
 - Dane End • Furneux Pelham
 - Hertingfordbury
 - Letty Green
 - Spellbrook
 - Tewin

- 6.8.18** Whilst acknowledging that each of these villages have particular constraints, some limited infill development within the existing built up area of the village would not be inappropriate and could assist with meeting local needs. All of these villages are therefore considered suitable to identify as Group 2 Villages.

Villages scoring a fail at the end of Sieve 1 or 2

- 6.8.19** The following villages scored a fail at the end of Sieve 1 or 2:

- Benington
- Brickendon
- Datchworth
- Great Amwell • Hertford Heath
- Stapleford
- Tonwell
- Waterford

Area of Search 25: Benington

Area of Search 34: Datchworth

Area of Search 50: Stapleford

Area of Search 53: Tonwell

- 6.8.20** Benington, Datchworth, Stapleford and Tonwell all scored a marginal fail at the end of Sieve 1. The villages were subsequently 'down-graded' to a fail at the end of Sieve 2. However, this was on the basis that if greater weight were given to the issue of primary schools alone then the cumulative impact of a 10% growth in all of these locations would lead to particular issues around primary education capacity. If a lower than 10% increase in housing stock is considered then there is potential capacity within the local schools to accommodate a limited amount of development. In light of this and acknowledging that each of these villages has access to a range of other services and facilities, it is recommended that they are all identified as Group 2 Villages.

Area of Search 38: Hertford Heath

- 6.8.21** Hertford Heath scored a fail at the end of Sieve 1 on the basis that it is located in the strategic gap between Hertford and Hoddesdon, on environmental grounds and due to education capacity issues. Substantial development would clearly be inappropriate on these grounds. However, on the basis that Hertford Heath is currently inset from the Green Belt, it is considered appropriate to identify Hertford Heath as a Group 2 Village

where some limited infill development could take place within the existing built up area, although it is acknowledged that there will be few opportunities.

- Area of Search 28: Brickendon
- Area of Search 36: Great Amwell
- Area of Search 56: Waterford

6.8.22 All of these villages scored a fail at the end of Sieve 1. The conclusions have been revisited and are considered to be correct; development in any of these villages would be inappropriate and as such they should be identified as Group 3 Villages.

Conclusion

6.8.23 The District Plan will classify the villages into the three groups set out above (i.e. Group 1, Group 2 and Group 3 Villages) reflecting their relative sustainability. This will be an important element of the overall development strategy, helping to direct housing to the most sustainable locations and control the level of windfall development that takes place in the least sustainable areas of the district, whilst enabling the potential recycling of land and delivering new homes to meet local housing needs.

6.9 East of Welwyn Garden City

Area of Search 61: East of Welwyn Garden City

- 6.9.1** To date, work has demonstrated that there could be many advantages to development at this area of search. The area is flat and well-screened. There are strong potential boundaries, and the potential for a robust buffer at a new Panshanger Country Park. This has been confirmed by the Green Belt Review 2013 as reported in this section. The test assumption for this area was 2,000 dwellings.

Figure 6.8 Shortlisted Area of Search for Land to the East of Welwyn Garden City



- 6.9.2** There are good connections to a major town (Welwyn Garden City) and the area is approximately equidistant between railway stations at Hertford North and at Welwyn Garden City, both 3-4kms away with the potential for a bus link between the two. There is good access to the A414, and Hatfield Business Park is nearby.

Duty to Co-Operate

- 6.9.3** The area adjoins Welwyn Hatfield Borough to the south, although there is a wedge of land south of the B195/Birchall Lane which also lies within East Herts District.

6.9.4 Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council identified the area as an area for Potential Expansion in its Core Strategy consultation in November 2012m, and stated that it would support East Herts Council, should the latter seek to bring forward development in this area.

6.9.5 In the same document the Borough Council discounted the Lafarge land within its administrative area. However, it is understood that another Core Strategy consultation in 2014, and at the present time it is not known whether there are any proposals to reconsider inclusion of the Lafarge land. If the Borough Council decides to bring forward adjoining land within its administrative area then this is likely to give rise to the need for further joint working.

Green Belt

6.9.6 The Green Belt Review 2013 recommends release of the area north of the B195 Birchall Lane and west of Panshanger Lane, subject to the provision of a landscape buffer to protect the adjacent ancient woodland. Boundaries running along the roads are likely to be stronger in Green Belt terms than the existing boundaries along the edge of the residential built-up area of Welwyn Garden City. South of the B195 within the area of search there no clear boundaries before the administrative boundary with Welwyn Hatfield is reached. The Green Belt Review therefore recommends a further cross-boundary Green Belt Review with Welwyn Hatfield District in this area.

Landscape and Urban Form

6.9.7 Sieve 3b concluded that development east of Welwyn Garden City could provide a coherent urban form. Key factors include the firm edges provided by the proposed Panshanger Country Park, the internal structure provided by the woodland blocks and Moneyhole Park, and the strengths of Welwyn Garden City in terms of its past and current function and capacity. The area is largely flat and is screened from the wider area. The provision of a new Panshanger Country Park on the other side of the lane could provide an accessible piece of strategic Green Infrastructure which enhances the setting of both Hertford and Welwyn Garden City.

Designated Wildlife Sites

6.9.8 There are no internationally or nationally designated wildlife sites in the area. The nearest SSSI is at Tewinbury to the north and would not be impacted by development in this area. However, it may be that traffic here could add to the cumulative volume of traffic on the A10, and the impact on Broxbourne Hoddesdonpark Woods Special Area of Conservation where it passes within 200 metres of the A10 would need further consideration.

- 6.9.9** There are a number of areas of locally-designated areas of woodland, including Blackthorn Wood, Henry Wood, Birchall Wood. These areas could be accommodated with the designation of an appropriate landscape buffer. Panshanger Park wildlife site is located on the opposite side of Panshanger Lane and could be accommodated through a suitable development buffer along Panshanger Lane. South of Blackfan Road lies Great Captain's Wood. The treatment of this area would need to be subject to further discussion with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, if this area were to be brought forward for further development.

Economy and Retail

- 6.9.10** East Herts Council's Strategic Economic Development Advice (DTZ, 2012) states that: "The site proposed is located on the dual A414 which provides direct access from Hertford and Ware to the A1(M)."
- 6.9.11** *"Given the wide range of employment opportunities in Welwyn Hatfield, and more generally in the A1(M) corridor, new residents would have access to jobs, but would probably be very reliant on car transport to access jobs, other than in town centre locations, with additional traffic volumes focused on the A414, probably with the majority of outward journeys being to the west."*
- 6.9.12** *"If this option were to be taken forward, consideration might be given to a modest employment land allocation as part of the scheme, which would in some way compensate for difficulties in identifying a site for modern B1 development in a high visibility, high accessibility location in Hertford and Ware."*
- 6.9.13** The Retail and Town Centres Study Update (November 2013) does not directly address retail opportunities within this area of search. However, it does note that: *"The larger growth options may generate the need for a limited amount of retail floorspace or a local centre within the growth location areas, particularly where they are less well connected to existing centres. Any planning applications submitted that include an element of retail floorspace would need to assess the appropriate scale of floorspace in the context of the needs of the new population (and adjoining areas) and the potential impact on the vitality and viability of existing centres."* (Page 21). The study notes that Welwyn Garden City is one of the main shopping centres in the sub-region.

Transport

- 6.9.14** Paragraph 5.3 of the Transport Update (November 2013) states that *"there is a risk that no viable solutions may be found in relation to online improvements on the A414 in Hertford (through the A414 corridor study) or on the A10 (Broxbourne Transport Study) and that the improvements identified as part of the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan modelling and design"*

work may be insufficient to accommodate large scale development for both districts in the south east Welwyn Garden area. The A414 study is due to report in mid February 2014, however, it is not clear when Welwyn Hatfield and Broxbourne will have obtained the required evidence for the transport impacts associated with East Herts sites in their areas.”

- 6.9.15** Table 2 (Transport Evidence for Individual Sites) states that Diamond work (based on 2,000 dwellings in East Herts) *“suggests additional traffic & stress on B195 Birchall Lane / Black Fan Road & Cole Green Lane which are likely to become highly congested. Also additional traffic and stress on A414 & A1M junctions 3-4. Access to the development should be considered via local road network than A414 primary route.”*
- 6.9.16** In terms of likely mitigation measures, the same table states that *“potential capacity improvements identified for A414 and A1m junctions plus Mundells gyratory and Birchall Lane / A414 junction as part of Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan work. Capacity improvements also likely to be required for B195 corridor. Detailed modelling work has not yet been undertaken of this area.”*

Education

- 6.9.17** Development in this location will need to provide for its own school capacity including the provision of a 2FE primary school site, with capacity to expand to 3FE, together with a new secondary school site. The County Council's schools response (September 2013) draws attention to the possibility of a larger urban extension including some land in Welwyn Hatfield Borough's administrative area. At the present time the prospects for such a development are unknown, although should Welwyn Hatfield Council decide to bring forward this land then a joined-up approach to provision of additional schools capacity would be required.

Delivery

- 6.9.18** Lafarge Tarmac controls the majority of the land in this area of search, including the part nearest the existing built-up area. Lafarge's landholdings extend south of Birchall Lane (B195) into Welwyn Hatfield District. Lafarge Tarmac is promoting a joined-up approach to cross-boundary planning involving an urban extension on its land on either side of the administrative boundary. The area to the north of Birchall Lane it describes as 'Land at Birchall Farm' and to the south is 'Land at Cole Green'.
- 6.9.19** In a document submitted in response to a meeting with ATLAS (see www.eastherts.gov.uk/developinfo, dated September 2013), Lafarge proposes a small new neighbourhood centre of approximately 2.02 hectares at Birchall Farm, co-located with the proposed primary and secondary schools.

- 6.9.20** The same document includes a plan for the sequencing of mineral removal in stages. The document states that “The sequence of mineral removal at Birchall Farm will be campaigned out within years 1-5 of the EHDC plan period in combination with a sequence of land restoration to development platforms.
- 6.9.21** *“Following the completion of mineral removal construction will commence on unworked land beginning in 2020. Access for construction traffic and land restoration will be provided. Moving around the site to reflect the sequence of land restoration, housing development will be brought forward during the medium term of the plan period. Completion of Birchall Farm is estimated after 8.5 years.”*
- 6.9.22** The remainder of the land within the area of search is owned by the Gasgoyne Cecil (Hatfield) Estate. This includes land fronting Panshanger Lane and, to the south of the B195 Birchall Lane, between Great Captain’s Wood and the A414.
- 6.9.23** The notes of a meeting with ATLAS in October 2013 confirm the size of the three parcels adjoining the Lafarge Tarmac land as being (north to south) approx. 14ha, 8ha and 4.5ha. The sites may actually be able to accommodate a greater number of houses than currently set out, subject to further testing and evolution of a wider masterplan. According to the meeting notes, Hatfield Estates are keen to work with Lafarge Tarmac and both Councils to evolve a comprehensive masterplan that includes these land parcels to the west of the A414.
- 6.9.24** East Herts Council concludes from the review of delivery information that the area is capable of delivering around 1,700 dwellings within East Herts, taking into account land owned by Lafarge Tarmac and also by the Hatfield Estate. Given the need for prior mineral extraction, the commencement of residential development is unlikely to be achievable until after 2021. However, this figure would be dependent on masterplanning work including assessment of the mix of uses.

Conclusions and Next Steps

- 6.9.25** From the work undertaken through the Supporting Document, it is clear that there are many reasons to consider bringing forward this area for development. Development appears to be deliverable to a realistic timescale in the later part of the plan period. The minerals and site phasing issue appears to be clear, although further joint discussions with Hertfordshire County Council as the Minerals Planning Authority will be needed.
- 6.9.26** If the option for development west of Hertford (Area of Search 11) is brought forward as well as development in this area, then there would still be a robust Green Belt buffer preventing coalescence between Welwyn Garden

City and Hertford. The provision of an open-access pedestrian and cycle link through a new Panshanger Country Park would provide a good link for pedestrians and cyclists between the two towns, complementing the Cole Green Way cycle route further to the south.

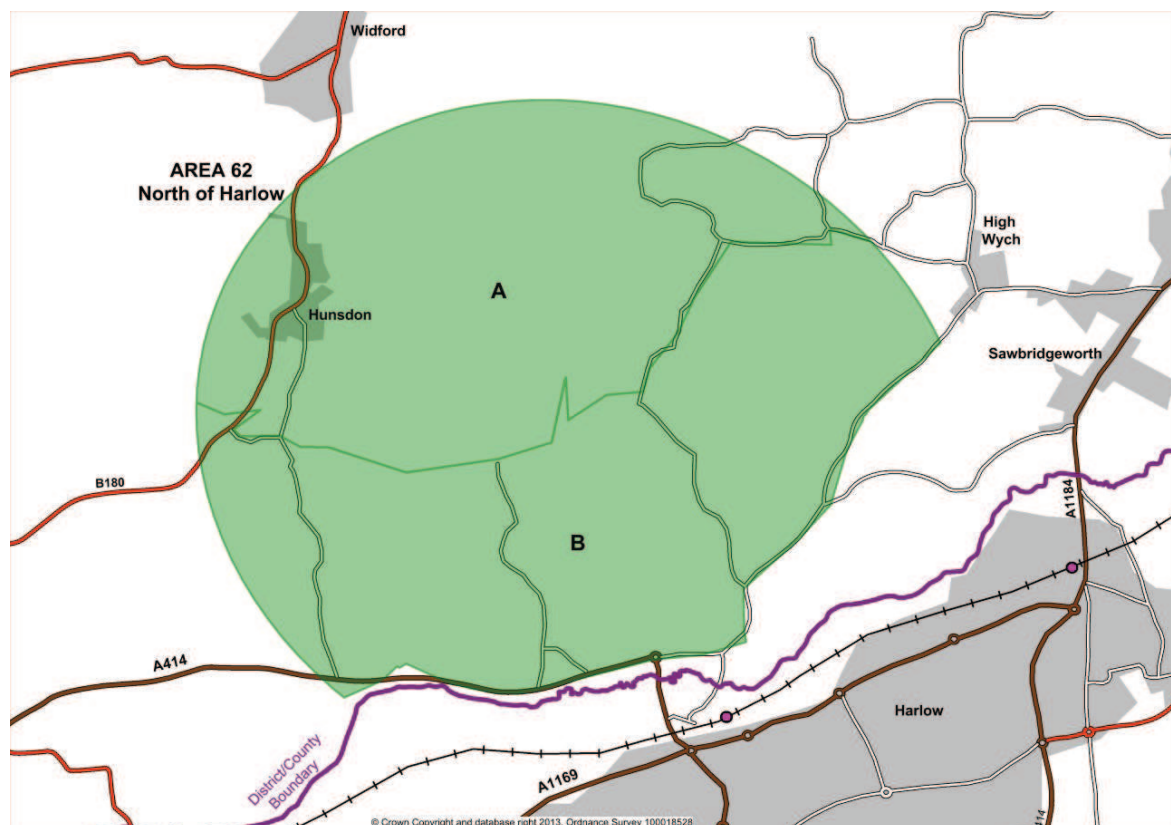
- 6.9.27** If development is brought forward in this area as part of the District Plan, Policy would need to take account of proposals nearby within Welwyn Hatfield Borough. If the Borough Council's Core Strategy ultimately decides to bring forward the nearby Lafarge Tarmac land within its administrative area, then it would be sensible to consider a joint planning framework for a comprehensive planning approach to the area. Further discussions with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council will be needed in relation to the issue of unmet housing need.
- 6.9.28** The main concern with development in this area relates to transport. Hertfordshire County Council's Transport Update (November 2013) underlines concerns about the capacity of the A414. A significant amount of further transport work is likely to be needed, including the Highways Agency in relation to the impact on the A1(M) junction 4, as well as the County Council. If this area is brought forward, it will be necessary to work closely with the developers' transport consultants to assess and scrutinise a range of mitigation measures.

6.10 North of Harlow

Area of Search 62: North of Harlow

- 6.10.1** The assessment in Chapters 4 and 5 drew attention to the different conclusions that may be drawn depending on the issues under consideration. For example, consideration of the sub-regional economy weighs in favour of a strategic scheme in this area, but consideration of local landscape weighs against it. Chapter 6 focuses on the main remaining issues for weighing in the planning balance.

Figure 6.9 Shortlisted Area of Search for Land to the North of Harlow



- 6.10.2** Two alternative test concepts for development at different scales in broadly the same area were put forward as part of the original 69 areas of search. The concept of a detached new settlement separated from Harlow in the Hunsdon Area was dismissed in Sieve 3. However, given the distance across the Stort Valley, it could be that even development directly abutting the Eastwick/A414 roundabout would effectively form a new settlement, rather than an urban extension to Harlow. To avoid confusion Area 69 has been merged with area 62 to enable testing of development at an upper level of 10,000 dwellings and a lower level of 5,000 dwellings.

Duty to Co-Operate

- 6.10.3** The Duty to Co-Operate is an important consideration in relation to this area of search. Harlow Council is seeking to grow the town to achieve increased critical mass to support regeneration. Harlow Council supports growth to the north to support these objectives, provided that growth is underpinned by the necessary supporting infrastructure. Further consideration of the regeneration issue is provided in the regeneration section below.
- 6.10.4** Sieve 2 suggested that Harlow Council could potentially meet its own projected housing needs within its administrative boundaries to the east. At a recent Member-level meeting, Harlow Council acknowledged this point, but stated that it may wish to seek higher levels of development in

order to achieve affordable housing (Duty to Co-Operate Update Report, District Planning Executive Panel 3rd December 2013). However, Harlow Council appreciates that this area lies within East Herts District and that should development in this area come forward it is anticipated to contribute to meeting East Herts' own housing needs.

- 6.10.5** The various potential growth options for Harlow were considered through the Harlow Options Appraisal (2010), the findings of which were guided by the East of England Plan. In the absence of the regional plan the only mechanism for determining strategic cross-boundary housing considerations is the Duty to Co-Operate. Land to the south and west of Harlow lies within the administrative area of Epping Forest District. Epping Forest District Council is currently testing options in this area, and there are planning applications submitted for up to 2,500 dwellings at Latton Priory and further applications at Sumners.
- 6.10.6** The Strategy Report will give further consideration to the application of the Duty to Co-Operate in the sub-region.

Green Belt

- 6.10.7** The Green Belt Review 2013 states that the Green Belt north of Harlow serves the purposes of checking the unrestricted sprawl from the built-up area of Harlow, prevents merging with Sawbridgeworth particularly at the eastern end, and safeguards the countryside from encroachment. It helps to preserve the setting of Harlow, particularly to the south of area of search 62 around the Stort Valley slopes.
- 6.10.8** The boundary review notes that the A414 and the River Stort present strong, defensible boundaries to the south of the area of search. There is no identifiable continuous strong boundary to the north, although there are a number of sections of ancient woodland which provide strong boundaries individually but would need links between them established if they were to be used as a Green Belt boundary.
- 6.10.9** If parts of the Green Belt in this location were to be released to accommodate development, East Herts Council would seek to redefine the boundary. The location of the inner boundary to development would be dependent on the scale and form that development would take. Even if the principle of development were to be agreed, the scale and form of development in this area is uncertain, given the lack of strong boundary features and many other factors. Although an assumption was made as to the scale, owing to the significant number of dwellings, a small change in this figure could have a large impact on the form and consequent amount of Green Belt that would need to be considered for release.
- 6.10.10** The Strategy Report will give further consideration of mechanisms for addressing future Green Belt issues.

Landscape and Urban Form

- 6.10.11** Sieve 3b suggested that development of significantly more than 10,000 dwellings is unlikely to be feasible given the extent of land availability and the potential for coherent urban form. It was also suggested that development of fewer than 5,000 dwellings would result in incoherent urban form, isolated from Harlow across the Stort Valley. Fewer than 5,000 dwellings would provide insufficient critical mass to support the necessary on-site infrastructure and facilities, for example in relation to schools and retail facilities, and would therefore be less sustainable as people would have to travel out of the site. Added to this is smaller-scale developments would be unlikely to be able to fund the very considerable infrastructure costs, for example to bridge the valley and provide the wide range of other infrastructure.
- 6.10.12** North of Harlow was divided into three sub-areas based on the Landscape Character Areas for the Hunsdon Plateau (Sub-Area A) and the Stanstead and Pishiobury Parklands (Sub-Area B) and the River Stort (Sub-Area C). In view of national requirements including the Duty to Co-Operate, landscape concerns, although significant, are not considered sufficient to reject options at Sub-Areas A and B north of the Stort at this stage.
- 6.10.13** Sub-Area C in the Stort Valley was discounted at Sieve 1, recognising the very significant landscape and environmental functions of the Stort Valley. The exception to development in the Stort Valley was the proposal for development at Terlings Park. Outline permission was granted in March 2013 subject to a Section 106 agreement, and a reserved matters planning application for 200 dwellings at Terlings Park was granted planning approval at Development Management Committee on 6th November 2013. This development will therefore be taken out of the strategy selection process and added to the list of commitments. It is anticipated that development will start soon after discharge of the conditions.

Designated Wildlife Sites

- 6.10.14** Internationally designated wildlife sites at Epping Forest, Hoddesdonpark Woods and the Lea Valley could be impacted from additional traffic, although this matter needs further work. The A414 crosses within 200 metres of the Lea Valley Special Area of Conservation (SAC). There may also be impacts on other internationally designated sites including Epping Forest SAC and Broxbourne Hoddesdonpark Woods. The Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report (2012) suggested that criteria-based policies could be used to ensure that environmental impacts are satisfactorily resolved before development comes forward.
- 6.10.15** There is an SSSI (national designation) at Hunsdon Meads. There are a number of locally designated wildlife sites. There are no grounds for discounting development in this area because of impact on national and

local wildlife sites. Sensitive design is likely to be able to mitigate the impacts through a Green Infrastructure Strategy. Further information on this is contained within Chapter 4.

Economy and Retail

- 6.10.16** East Herts Council's Strategic Economic Development Advice (DTZ, 2012) suggested that the distance of the area from the M11 makes it relatively unattractive as a location for a strategic-scale business park. Even if a new northern bypass linking to a new junction 7a could be provided, the area would still be distant. In addition, a strategic business park could undermine the efforts of Harlow Council to promote the Enterprise Zone, which would have far better access to the M11 at a new Junction 7a.
- 6.10.17** The advice also considers the link between residential growth and employment: *"It is certainly the case that population growth associated with new housing growth, boosts in particular the local service sector, since a significant proportion of household income is spent locally, and population growth is accompanied by a growing requirement for schools, medical services, and increased spend in local shops and with local service providers etc which result in job growth in the locality."*
- 6.10.18** *"...Substantial residential developments are only likely to have relatively modest local retail centres catering for the needs of the new neighbourhood.... DTZ would anticipate that any retail development as part of new residential neighbourhoods would be subject to an impact assessment to ensure that the scale of the retail provision is appropriate to the location and scale of the neighbourhood, and does not damage existing retail centres."*
- 6.10.19** The Retail and Town Centres Update (November 2013) states that *"The potential residential development at Harlow North, comprising 10,000 new homes, could generate a requirement for around 3,000 sq.m net convenience goods floorspace, 1,500 sq.m net comparison goods floorspace and 1,900 sq.m net of non-retail service uses by 2031. This is based on the assumption that the development would seek to include retail provision to meet the day to day needs of local residents. This would absorb some of the retail capacity in other parts of the District. If taken forward it would be appropriate to direct some of the floorspace requirements for the rest of District to the Harlow North development."*
- 6.10.20** *"If the residual floorspace requirements for East Herts cannot be accommodated within the main centres above, there may be scope to provide a larger centre within the growth location at Harlow North."*

Regeneration

- 6.10.21** Harlow Council has recently restated its position in relation to increased critical mass and growth to the north as achieving transformational growth of the town (Harlow Future Prospects Study – Linking Regeneration & Growth, Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners, August 2013). East Herts Council’s Strategic Economic Development Advice (2012) stated that:
- 6.10.22** *“It is worth considering whether a new development in this location would contribute to the regeneration of Harlow. While DTZ would expect that initially a relatively low proportion of new residents would work in Harlow, it is quite probable that over time the proportion would increase, as households mature, and become disenchanted with commuting, or family commitments increase; and as residents find out about local jobs that can utilise their skills and talents.”*
- 6.10.23** *“The residents of new development in this location would be likely to contain a high proportion of graduates and those with high level skills. This would help knowledge intensive businesses in Harlow to recruit; and would help to attract other knowledge based employers to the town. A new community developed in an attractive setting could be significant in changing perceptions of Harlow as a place to live; even though the developers would market the development to purchasers as being a new community in East Hertfordshire, not as an urban extension to Harlow.”*
- 6.10.24** *“DTZ conclude that, from a regeneration perspective, residential development to the north of Harlow could help realise the aspirations Harlow Council have to foster the growth of knowledge based industries in Harlow, and be part of the process of changing the perceptions and reality of Harlow which have held back economic development for many years.” (Paragraphs 7.31-7.33)*

Transport

- 6.10.25** Transport issues are addressed in Hertfordshire County Council’s Transport Update Report (November 2013). From this it is clear that there are significant issues to be resolved in terms of the impact on the highway network. Transport modelling demonstrates that the provision of a northern bypass linking to a new junction 7a on the M11 in itself would not be sufficient to satisfactorily mitigate the impacts of development. The main issue appears to be related to the connections into and within Harlow. The modelling work has looked at a number of scenarios including the emerging proposals by the landowners/developers to upgrade the A414 and put in a second Stort Crossing which at the lower end of the range (5000) indicates that impacts would be reduced.
- 6.10.26** The Transport Update shows that although a high level of additional traffic arising from this option is predicted, further work is necessary to understand whether the transport impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated. Based upon the information presented, at present it is not possible to discount this area

of search on transport grounds. However, if at any stage impacts are considered severe and incapable of being mitigated then development would not be acceptable.

Education

- 6.10.27** Hertfordshire County Council's schools response (September 2013) states that: *"The large scale proposed development for 10,000 dwellings at Harlow North would be expected to provide its own school infrastructure within the development, with provision for 20 f.e. of secondary school capacity. It is likely that 3 x 7 f.e. secondary schools would be needed. These could be provided as 2 x 7 f.e. schools with a reserve site to be developed as and when the additional demand arises from the development."*
- 6.10.28** If this option were to be brought forward, it would need to be fully self-contained in terms of educational provision, since this is essential to the creation of a sustainable community. The area does present the opportunity to provide schools sites to achieve this objective. Places for People's submission states that they will provide new primary schools and a secondary school and have budgeted £84 million for education.

Delivery

- 6.10.29** In terms of delivery issues, information submitted by the developers is available at www.eastherts.gov.uk/developerinfo. All the information submitted has been reviewed. Three main issues for this stage in District Plan preparation relate to
- feasibility of technical solutions;
 - deliverability in financial and land terms; and
 - overall development trajectory.
- 6.10.30** ATLAS queries all three of these areas in response to the developers' questionnaire response in summer 2012.
- 6.10.31** Places for People's submission explains that it is a 'not for dividend' organisation which reinvests surpluses in the community in which they work, and are therefore different from conventional market housebuilders. The developers' expected level of return is a crucial factor on a proposal of this size with significant infrastructure costs, including their proposals for new bridges and a new sewage treatment works. In their submissions Places for People stated that their proposals can work without public subsidy despite the significant infrastructure costs. This includes significant and potentially costly commitment to very high standards of sustainability and open space provision. Viability aspects in this respect would need independent verification through further work.

- 6.10.32** However, Hertfordshire County Council's Transport Update Report shows that there remains considerable uncertainty around whether there is a deliverable transport infrastructure solution for strategic scale development in this location. The developer's transport consultants emphasise the need to assess a wide range of smaller as well as larger mitigation measures in and around Harlow. The amount of technical work which remains to be undertaken is considerable.
- 6.10.33** The developer proposes to dual/upgrade the current A414 link after the construction of around 2,000 dwellings, and by 5,000 dwellings it proposes that a second (new) Stort crossing would be put in place. However, it would be very risky to allow development to commence north of Harlow in the absence of a robust delivery plan for large-scale and long-term development. This could result in an incomplete development with significant adverse impacts on the local transport network in and around Harlow.
- 6.10.34** For these reasons East Herts Council concludes that starting any development north of the Stort before completion of a robust delivery plan and policy framework for the full extent of the development would involve significant risk of incomplete, unsustainable development which falls far short of the aspirations set out by the developers in their proposals. It is essential that the detailed feasibility and testing work should be completed in a robust manner before any development is commenced. A longer time frame would enable sufficient scrutiny and engagement not only by the authorities but also by local communities.
- 6.10.35** In relation to build-out rates, Places for People stated that it can deliver 8,500 units over a 15-year period from first residential occupancy in late 2016 to 2031, with a build-out rate starting at 250 dwellings per annum rising to 650 dwellings per annum . East Herts Council has reviewed the evidence submitted by Places for People, and does not share the optimism expressed by the developers in terms of build-out rates. Even the most rapid build rates in the country have not been sustained without substantial public sector investment across this time frame.
- 6.10.36** Whilst Places for People is the major developer interest in the area, there are others to the east and west which have also continued to express an interest in forming part of a strategic development north of Harlow. The full extent of any possible development area is unclear at this stage, and whether or not it would include some of the land submitted for consideration by these developers.

Conclusions and Next Steps

- 6.10.37** A coherent strategy for development to the north of Harlow may be possible, although it is not without complications given the distance of the area from the M11 and the separation of the area from Harlow across the Stort valley. The main thrust of such a strategy would need to be sub-regional and have strong links to regeneration aspirations for Harlow.
- 6.10.38** Such a strategy would be complicated by local factors and deliverability. Larger-scale development in this area of search would be likely to have negative impacts on the countryside. North of the Stort, the area does not provide strong boundaries in Green Belt terms.
- 6.10.39** From the work undertaken through the Supporting Document, it is clear that there remains considerable uncertainty around the achievability and deliverability of comprehensively planned sustainable large-scale development to the north of Harlow. This will require significant further work. The main areas of focus going forward would need to be:
- **Transport:** mitigation measures, involving a combination of larger and smaller measures. Looking at the impact on the local and wider strategic network. Assessment of the cumulative impact of development in the wider Harlow area and at Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth.
 - **Financial Viability:** feasibility of delivering essential infrastructure and sustainability features, taking account of the whole 'basket' of costs and the developers' expected returns. It is expected that any definition of 'competitive returns' would reflect any policy and infrastructure requirements.
 - **Green Belt Review:** dependent on the scale and form of development as to what features could form new inner Green Belt boundaries. This is in turn dependent on the transport and financial viability assessments, and on masterplanning.
- 6.10.40** Given the strategic scale of this option, there is also the need to take account of development in other authorities, which will impact on the transport findings, viability and impact on internationally designated habitats.
- 6.10.41** Work undertaken in this Chapter reconfirms the importance of this area in terms of Harlow Council's regeneration and growth aspirations. The Duty to Co-Operate will be a major consideration and this will be addressed through the Strategy Report.

- 6.10.42** The Council would need to benefit from a considerable amount of further input from the developers and their consultant teams into the transport and viability assessments in particular, to help provide a robust evidence base to make a final decision in respect of development at this scale.
- 6.10.43** Balancing all these considerations to produce a sound strategy is a challenging task for any Local Planning Authority. East Herts Council is working with a range of partners to ensure that a robust position is identified.

6.11 Next Steps: Strategy Report

- 6.11.1** The Supporting Document comprises one important component of the information needed to underpin the strategy selection process for the District Plan including the choice of locations for future development. The Supporting Document presents the majority of the evidence. However, whilst the material presented to date is necessary to strategy selection, it is not in itself sufficient.
- 6.11.2** The other main component of the development strategy is the requirements of national policy, set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). These requirements relate in particular to:
- Objective assessment of housing needs
 - The requirement to deliver a five-year housing land supply
 - Legal requirements under the Duty to Co-Operate
 - The requirement to meet housing needs within each housing market area
 - Soundness requirements for a plan which is justified, effective, and positively prepared.
- 6.11.3** A Strategy Report will be prepared for the District Planning Executive Panel on 16th January 2014 which will draw together the evidence from the Supporting Document with the national requirements of the NPPF, taking account of alternatives suggested through the Sustainability Appraisal. The Strategy Report will also address the various policy tools and options which are available in putting together the District Plan in a way which will integrate the local evidence base with national requirements.
- 6.11.4** All Local Planning Authorities must submit their draft plans to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination in Public before they can be adopted as part of the statutory development plan. The Planning Inspectorate issues reports and letters on submitted plans, which although no longer binding on Local Planning Authorities, carry significant weight as material considerations. Local Planning Authorities which choose not to accept Planning Inspectorate findings and recommendations are at significant risk of legal challenge.
- 6.11.5** The Council has carefully studied the reports and letters of the Planning Inspectorate, and the recent draft Planning Guidance. Two reports have been presented to the District Planning Executive Panel on this matter:
- 25th July 2013: District Plan Update Report. Essential Reference Paper E – Review of Planning Inspectorate Reports and Letters
 - 3rd October 2013: District Plan Update Report. Essential Reference Paper E: ATLAS Strategic Sites Deliverability Advice Note.

- 6.11.6** From this work, the Council has a robust basis on which to understand the national requirements. The Planning Inspectorate will not find sound plans which do not meet strict housing requirements. This means that the Council has to exercise caution before rejecting options which may be needed in order to meet soundness requirements. The Supporting Document cannot by itself balance evidence and requirements to produce a sound development strategy. The Strategy Report will undertake this difficult final task.
- 6.11.7** The Strategy Report will balance local evidence with the requirements of the national Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly in relation to the five-year housing land supply, and the requirement to meet housing needs within the housing market area. The Strategy Report will integrate the strategic framework set out in the Supporting Document with these national requirements.

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL – 3 DECEMBER 2013 EXECUTIVE – 9 DECEMBER 2013

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (LDS) VERSION 5 (DECEMBER 2013)

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- This report presents Version 5 of the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS): the schedule and work programme that sets out when and how the Council will prepare its Development Plan Documents (DPDs), namely the District Plan. It replaces Version 4 of the LDS (August 2012).

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISTRICT PLANNING EXECUTIVE PANEL AND EXECUTIVE: That:</u>	
(A)	the Local Development Scheme (LDS) Version 5 – December 2013, attached at Essential Reference Paper 'B', be supported, to take effect from 12 December 2013.
<u>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL: That:</u>	
(A)	the Local Development Scheme (LDS) Version 5 – December 2013 be agreed, to take effect from 12 December 2013.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) requires Councils to prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme (LDS).

1.2 The LDS is a work programme that provides information about the

Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that East Herts Council will produce, namely the District Plan. The LDS sets out the subject and geographical area that each DPD (in this case the District Plan) will cover and the timetable for their preparation and revision.

1.3 Having an up to date LDS is fundamental in enabling the Council to prepare the replacement of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 and progress the District Plan through to adoption. It is important that members of the public and other interested parties know the Council's timetable for producing the District Plan and how and when they can get involved.

1.4 Version 4 of the LDS was presented to Members at the District Planning Executive Panel on 26 July 2012, and was subsequently adopted at Full Council on 7 August 2012. This report presents Version 5 of the LDS which reflects the most up-to-date position.

2.0 Report

2.1 Version 4 set out a challenging timetable for preparation of the District Plan. Whilst the Council was confident at the time that such a timetable was realistic, it was dependent on three key areas of work being finalised, namely schools planning, highways assessment and viability assessment. As has been reported to previous District Planning Executive Panels, work on all of these areas has taken much longer than anticipated hence the need to update the timetable in the LDS.

2.2. In addition to the above, the decision to combine Part 1- Strategy and Part 2 – Site Allocations and Policies into a single District Plan also necessitates further amendment to the LDS.

2.3 Version 5 of the LDS is attached at **Essential Reference Paper 'B'** to this report and includes revisions, in particular to Section 3 – East Herts Development Plan Documents, Section 4 – Schedule, and Section 5 – Risk Assessment, to reflect the consolidation of Part 1- Strategy and Part 2 – Site Allocations and Policies into a single District Plan and to update the timetable for preparation of the Plan.

2.4 Public consultation on the draft District Plan is now anticipated to take place from February 2014, following agreement at the District Planning Executive Panel on 16 January, Executive on 22 January and Full Council on 29 January 2014. Submission to the

Secretary of State and Examination in Public are now expected to start in July 2015 with adoption of the final plan by East Herts Council expected by February 2016.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

- Report to LDF Executive Panel – 26 July 2012, Agenda Item 5: Local Development Scheme (LDS) Version 4 (August 2012)

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):	<p>People This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are vulnerable, and delivering strong services</p> <p>Place This priority focuses on sustainability, the built environment and ensuring our towns and villages are safe and clean.</p> <p>Prosperity This priority focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our unique mix of rural and urban communities, promoting sustainable, economic opportunities and delivering cost effective services.</p>
Consultation:	N/A
Legal:	Section 111 of the Localism Act 2011 requires local planning authorities to publish an up-to-date timetable for the preparation of the District Plan.
Financial:	No direct financial impacts arising from this report. However, in terms of risk management, significant financial costs could arise as a result of delay to the preparation of the District Plan and/or failure to produce a plan that is found 'sound' at examination.
Human Resource:	N/A
Risk Management:	The District Plan must be prepared in accordance with the LDS. Thus, it is essential that the LDS accurately reflects the timetable for District Plan preparation. The District Plan could otherwise be found 'unsound' at examination.

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District Plan

Shaping Now, Shaping the Future

Local Development Scheme (LDS)

Version 5 - December 2013

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1. About the Local Development Scheme

What is the Local Development Scheme?

The Local Development Scheme or LDS is a work programme that provides information about the Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that East Herts Council will produce. The LDS sets out the subject and geographical area that each DPD will cover and the timetable for their preparation and revision.

Why do we need a LDS?

DPDs are important planning documents because they affect how land is used. It is therefore appropriate that residents, stakeholders and the community are fully aware of how and when they will be produced. The LDS provides information and certainty: it sets out which DPDs East Herts Council will produce, and more importantly, the anticipated timescale for their preparation. Whilst consultations will continue to be advertised and stakeholders notified accordingly, by knowing in advance when consultations are likely to happen, everyone with an interest in the future of East Herts can make sure they do not miss their opportunity to have their say.

Has the Council not already published an LDS?

The current LDS dates from 2012 and is now out of date. DPDs must be prepared in accordance with the published LDS. It is therefore crucial that the Council reviews the LDS and publishes a more accurate timetable to reflect the current and anticipated work programme.

Will the LDS be reviewed again?

It is intended that the LDS will be reviewed at least annually in conjunction with the preparation of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) to ensure that it is kept up-to-date. However, it is not expected that significant revisions would be made each year. The Council will also publish up-to-date information on the progress in preparing DPDs on the Council's website at www.eastherts.gov.uk/lds.

2. Quick Guide to the Planning System

What is the Development Plan?

The Development Plan is the name for the collection of local development documents (LDD) or planning policy documents that shape development and manage land use in a particular area. It is a legal requirement to produce and keep an up-to-date Development Plan. It contains the policies and proposals against which planning applications are determined. Importantly, the Development Plan must be consistent with Government planning guidance as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (www.communities.gov.uk). As shown in Figure 1, in non-unitary areas such as East Herts, the responsibility for preparing the Development Plan is split between the three tiers of local government.

What is Hertfordshire County Council's plan-making role?

The County Council covering the whole of Hertfordshire is responsible for producing minerals and waste plans. These are specific topic-based Development Plan Documents (DPD) that relate to minerals extraction and dealing with waste development including the use of land for landfill and incineration. More information about minerals and waste planning can be found at: <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/envplan/>.

What is East Herts District Council's plan-making role?

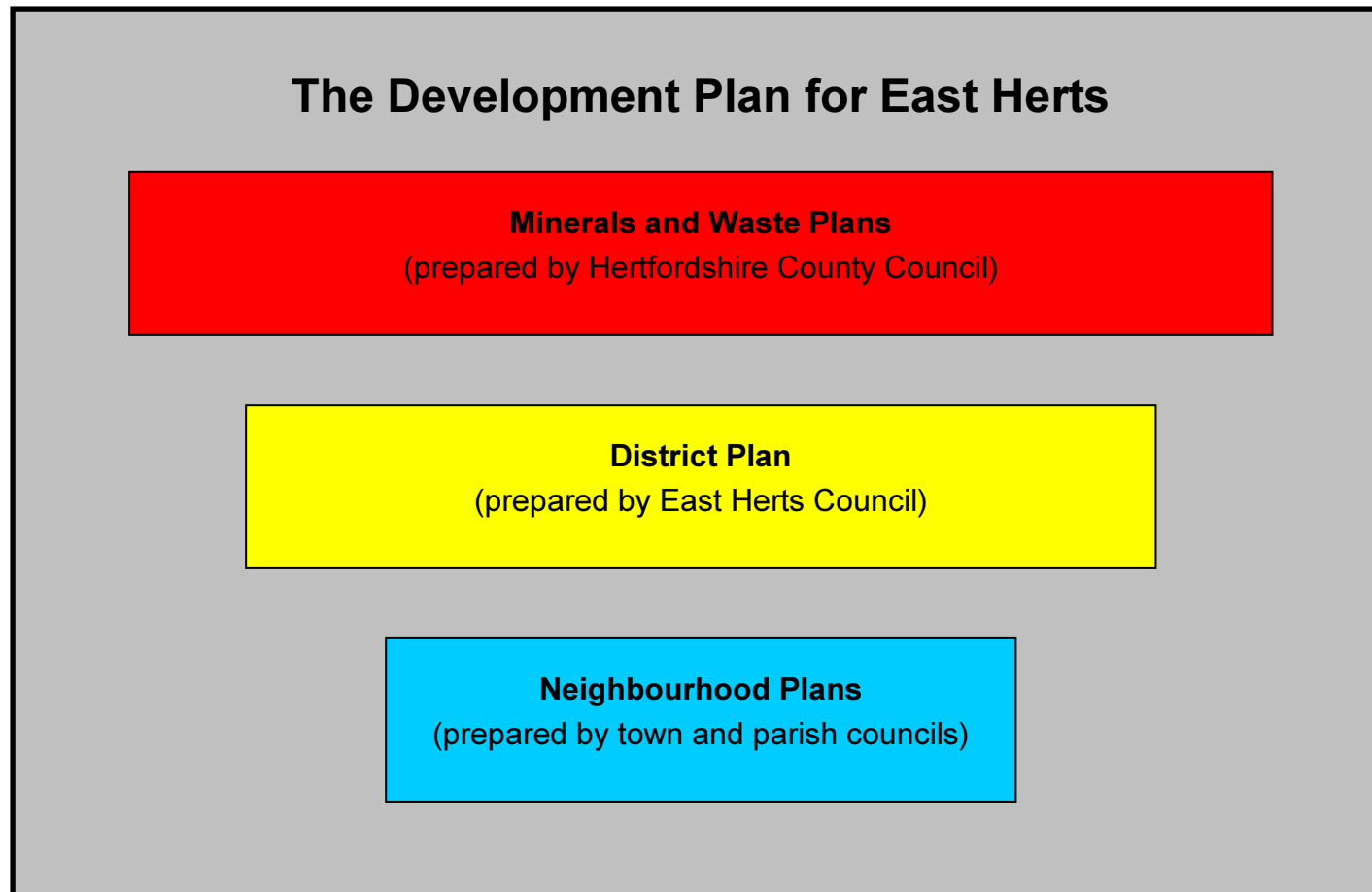
The District Plan DPDs cover all other aspects of development and land-use including housing, employment, retail, leisure, recreation and community. It is these documents that will be used to determine the vast majority of planning applications. They will set out the principles for development, as well as detailed policies in respect of design and amenity, varying in size from householder extensions to large-scale housing development. Importantly, the District Plan sets the strategic context for any Neighbourhood Plans. More information about the East Herts District Plan can be found at: www.eastherts.gov.uk/districtplan.

What is the plan-making role of Town and Parish Councils within East Herts?

Town and Parish councils can produce a Neighbourhood Plan for their area, identifying where the community thinks new development should be built. Neighbourhood Plans can then be adopted by East Herts Council and used alongside the District Plan to determine planning applications. However, unlike county and district planning functions, Neighbourhood Plans are not compulsory and where a Neighbourhood Plan is not produced, the District Plan will continue to form the basis of planning decisions. More information about Neighbourhood Plans can be found at: www.eastherts.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplans.

Figure 1: The Development Plan

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)



3. East Herts Development Plan Documents

Which DPDs will East Herts Council produce?

East Herts Council will prepare the following local development document as a DPD which will apply across the whole of East Herts district. It is proposed to refer to the DPD as the District Plan which is a much more user-friendly and easily understood term. In the event that further DPD's are required then the LDS will be updated as appropriate.

- *East Herts District Plan*: Strategic planning policy document that will establish the vision for East Herts to 2031. The District Plan will also allocate and designate land for development and land use as well as setting out both strategic and detailed policies for determining planning applications covering topics such as design, amenity and changes of use.

How will the DPD be produced?

The production of a DPD is not a one-off event. There are various stages of preparation and consultation. This enables the Council to fine-tune its plans and policies in response to comments from stakeholders and the community. It is anticipated that the following stages of plan preparation will be undertaken:

- *Awareness Raising* – The preliminary stage of preparation including initial background work and community and stakeholder engagement
- *Issues and Options* – Public consultation setting out the issues facing East Herts and presenting a series of options to deal with those issues within the document
- *Preferred Strategy / Allocations & Policies* – Public consultation on the draft version of the document
- *Pre-submission* – Opportunity for stakeholders and the community to say whether they think the plan and its preparation is 'sound' and fit for purpose
- *Submission & Examination* – Document is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination to check that all legal requirements have been met and that it is consistent with national planning policy
- *Adoption* – Document is formally agreed by the Council and can then be used to shape the future of East Herts by guiding development proposals and assess planning applications.

When will the Policies Map be revised?

The Policies Map (formerly Proposals Map) illustrates geographically how and where the policies in the District Plan apply across the district. The adopted Proposals Map (which has been renamed the Policies Map in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) will be revised at the same time as the District Plan is adopted.

4. Schedule

The following schedule sets out the timetable for the preparation of the East Herts DPDs:

Year	2008												2009											
Month	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
District Plan																								

Year	2010												2011											
Month	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
District Plan																								

Year	2012												2013											
Month	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
District Plan																								

Year	2014												2015											
Month	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
District Plan																			*	*				

Year	2016												2017											
Month	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
District Plan																								

Key to Stages

	Awareness Raising		Issues & Options		Preferred Strategy / Allocations & Policies		Public Consultation
	Pre-Submission		Submission & Examination		Adoption	*	Examination

5. Risk Assessment

In order to progress DPDs in an efficient and timely manner it is important to identify any risks and any mitigation measures that can be applied to ensure that the preparation of the DPDs runs in accordance with the timetable in this LDS.

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation and Risk Management
District Plan preparation delayed	4	3	Good implementation of project management procedures. Corporate and team prioritisation of DPD work and de-prioritisation of other planning policy work. Delay by partners/infrastructure providers in providing timely information and support. Nature and scale of response to Preferred Strategy/Allocations & Policies consultation, currently unknown but may have impact on overall project timetable.
District Plan found unsound at examination	5	2	Ensuring DPD produced in accordance with regulations and tests of soundness including duty to co-operate and NPPF. Early liaison with PINS to ensure that any potential issues are identified and rectified before examination.
Council fail to agree District Plan for consultation / submission / adoption	5	1	Ensuring Member engagement throughout the preparation process so that Members understand and agree to both the preparation process and proposals.
Legal Challenge to District Plan mounted	3	1	Financial cost and delays to DPD adoption. Ensure DPD produced in accordance with regulations, tests of soundness and based on objective analysis of planning issues.
Legal Challenge to District Plan successful	5	1	

Risk Ratings

Rating the potential impact if the risk did arise.	Rating the likelihood of the event happening without controls being in place
5 Catastrophic impact	5 Very probable in the near future
4 Major impact with long term implications	4 Very probable in the medium term
3 Major short term impact	3 Probable (more than 30% likely)
2 Moderate long term impact	2 Moderately likely (between 10% and 30% chance)
1 Moderate short term impact	1 Unlikely (less than 10% chance)
0 Little impact	0 Remote possibility (less than 1% chance)

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation and Risk Management
Community and Stakeholder Support	2	1	Ensuring community and stakeholder engagement throughout the preparation process so that it is understood that proposals must be based on objective analysis of planning issues. Need to ensure adequate resources available to maintain sufficient and appropriate engagement.
Change in staff resources	3	1	Delays caused by recruitment time lag. Managed through team building and personal development including PDRs.
Loss of staff resources	4	1	Impact to work programme if staff not replaced. Ensure corporate agreement to prioritisation of DPD production and adequate resources.
Further reduction of budgets	4	3	Ensure value for money. Robust financial medium-term service planning.
Delays to preparation of technical evidence	4	1	Good implementation of project management procedures and understanding of relationship of study to DPD preparation.

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6. Project Profiles

DPD Title:	East Herts District Plan
Role and Subject	Sets out the vision, objectives and spatial development strategy for the district to 2031 including the strategic policies and any strategic allocations. Key diagram illustrates the strategy. Identifies specific allocations and policies relating to development and the use of land.
Conformity	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), County Minerals Plan, County Waste Plan
Local Plan Saved Policies to be Replaced	To be determined.
Geographical Coverage	District-wide
Key Public Consultation	Issues and Options: September - November 2010 Preferred Strategy : February 2014 – April 2014 Pre-submission: February 2015 – March 2015
Staff Management	Planning Policy Manager and Planning Policy Team
Corporate Management	Executive Member for Strategic Planning and Transport, District Planning Executive Panel, Executive, Full Council
Internal Resources	Support from Development Control, Community Projects, Economic Development, Housing Services, Internal Customer Services including DTP and printing, Communications.