



ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'B'

# **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
<b>Bishop's Stortford</b>	<b>Total: 4,700 or 3,900 dwellings (including 1,233 in the Built-Up Area)</b>		
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
<b>Buntingford</b>	<b>Total: 2,000 (rounded) or fewer than 2,000 (including 67 in the Built-Up Area)</b>		
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
<b>Hertford</b>	<b>Total: 1,700 (including 875 in the Built-Up Area)</b>		
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
<b>Sawbridgeworth</b>	<b>Total: 300 or 3,000 (including 111 in the Built-Up Area)</b>		
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
<b>Ware</b>	<b>Total: 350 or 1,850 or 3,150 (including 147 in the Built-Up Area)</b>		
East of Welwyn Garden City	2,000	Green Belt	GBR 15
<b>East of Welwyn Garden City</b>	<b>Total: 2,000</b>		
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
<b>North of Harlow</b>	<b>Total: 10,000 or 270</b>		
Hunsdon Area	5,000	Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt	N/A
<b>Hunsdon Area</b>	<b>Total: 5,000</b>		

Table 3.2 Villages brought forward for the Green Belt Review

Area of Search	Assumption Range	Current Green Belt Status	Green Belt Review ID
<b>Villages</b>	<b>Total: 10% additional increase in growth</b>		
High Wych	<b>18</b>	Green Belt	N/A
Thundridge	<b>19</b>	Green Belt	N/A
Wadesmill	<b>14</b>	Green Belt	N/A
Watton-at-Stone	<b>87</b>	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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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	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.
	2 – 1-2 kilometres	
	1 – Greater than 2 kilometres	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	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.
	2 – 1-2 kilometres	
	1 – Greater than 2 kilometres	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.

<b>Assessment Technique</b>	<b>Criteria and Score</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
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	3 – Presence of designated land (statutory and non-statutory) 2 – Adjacent to designated land (statutory and non-statutory) 1 – No designated land	<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	3 – Presence of ancient or other protected trees 2 – Presence of non-protected woodland, forests, trees or hedgerows 1 – No trees or hedgerows	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>
<p>Landscape Character Assessment</p>	<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 &amp; 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

<b>Strong Boundaries</b>	<b>Weak Boundaries</b>
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) Non-residential development with clearly defined physical boundaries	Residential curtilages (including back gardens) 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

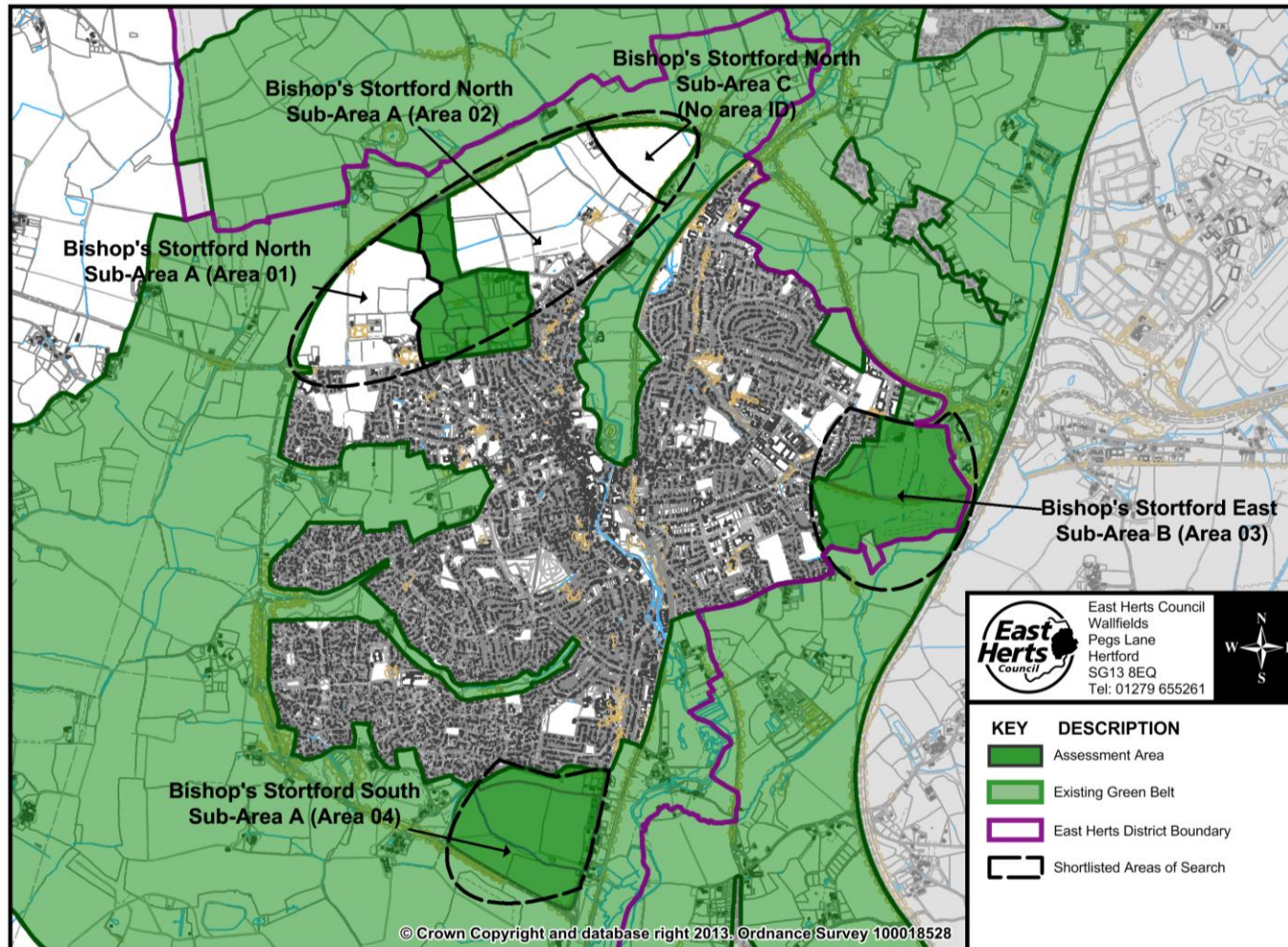
and use it to determine where development should be located after the consideration of a range of planning matters. Chapter 6 of the Strategy Supporting Document draws together these range of matters, including those related to Green Belt to justify the development strategy and settlement policies for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

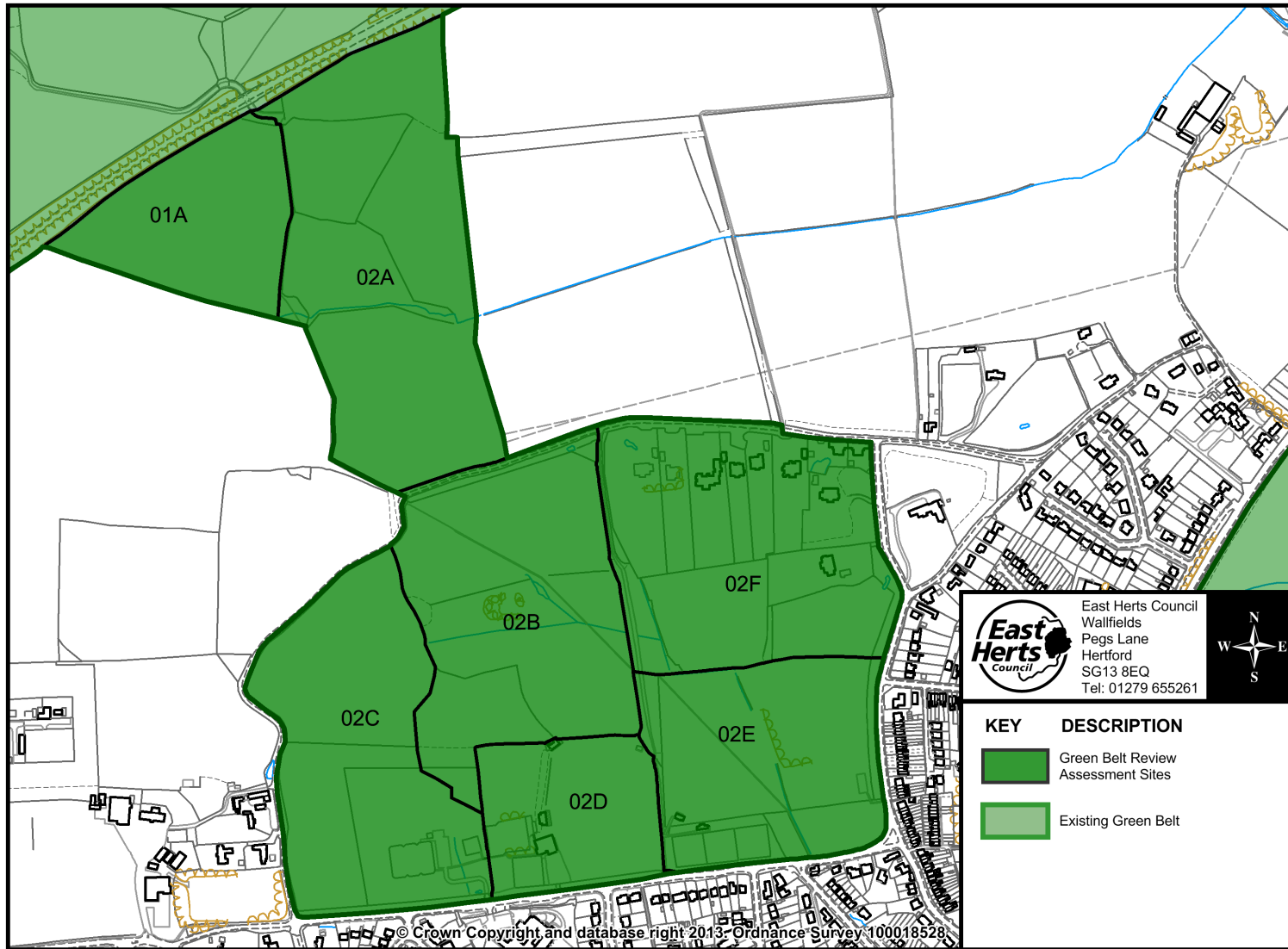
## 5 Detailed Site Assessment of Bishop's Stortford

### 5.1 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 1 - Green Belt Purpose Assessment

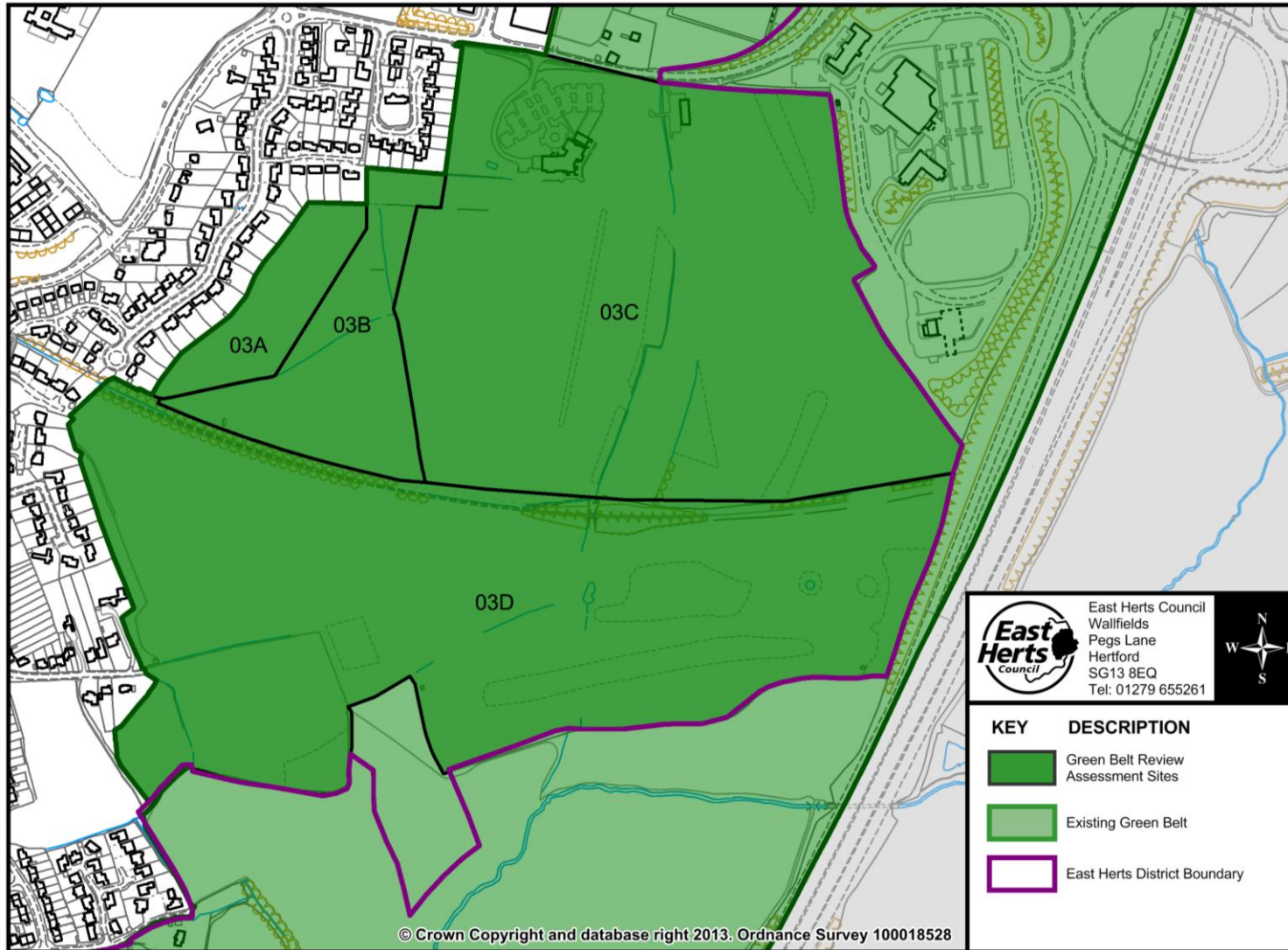
#### Bishop's Stortford Shortlisted Areas of Search



**Bishop's Stortford North Assessment Sites**

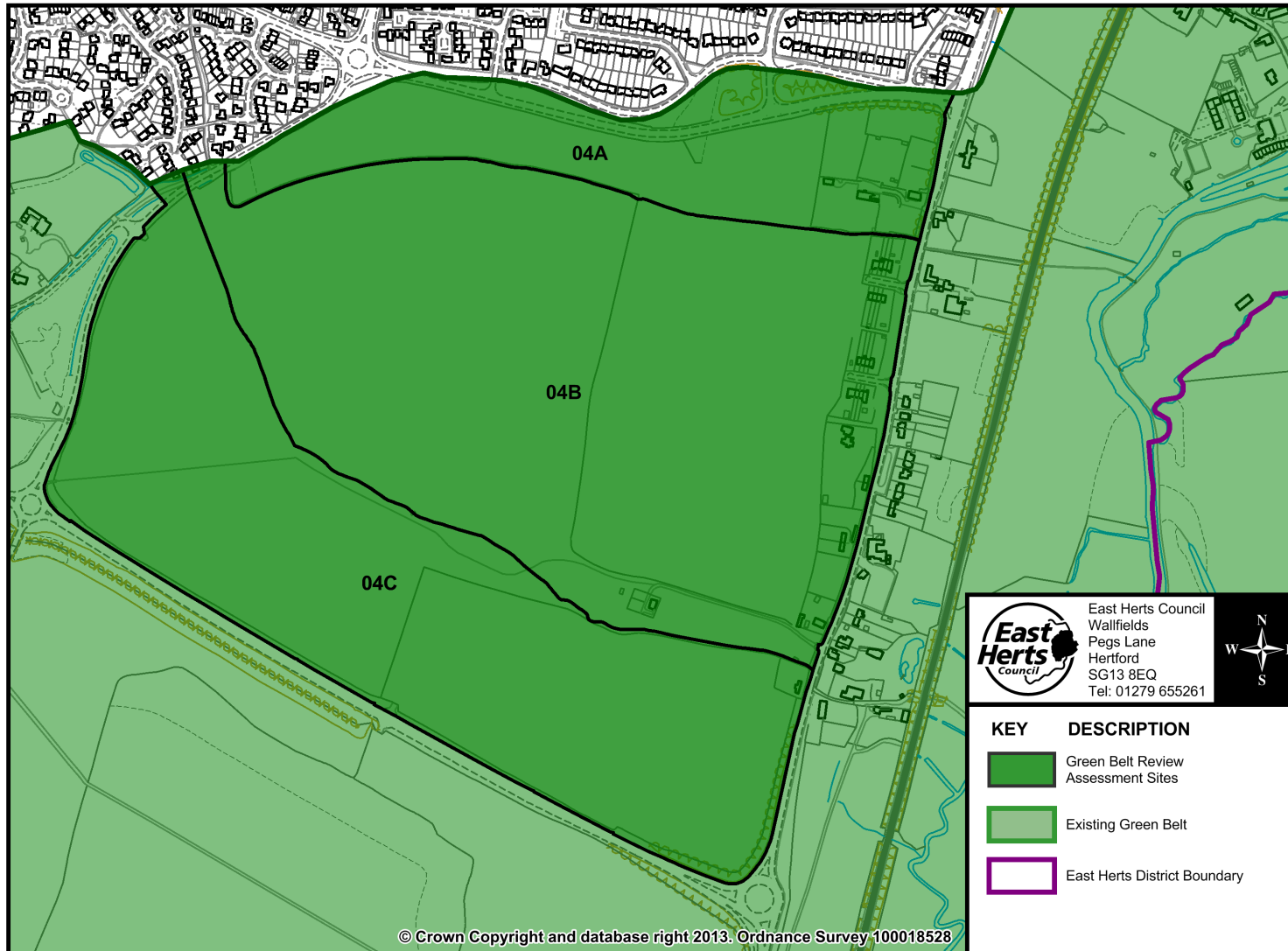


**Bishop's Stortford East Assessment Sites**





**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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>

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 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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

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)**

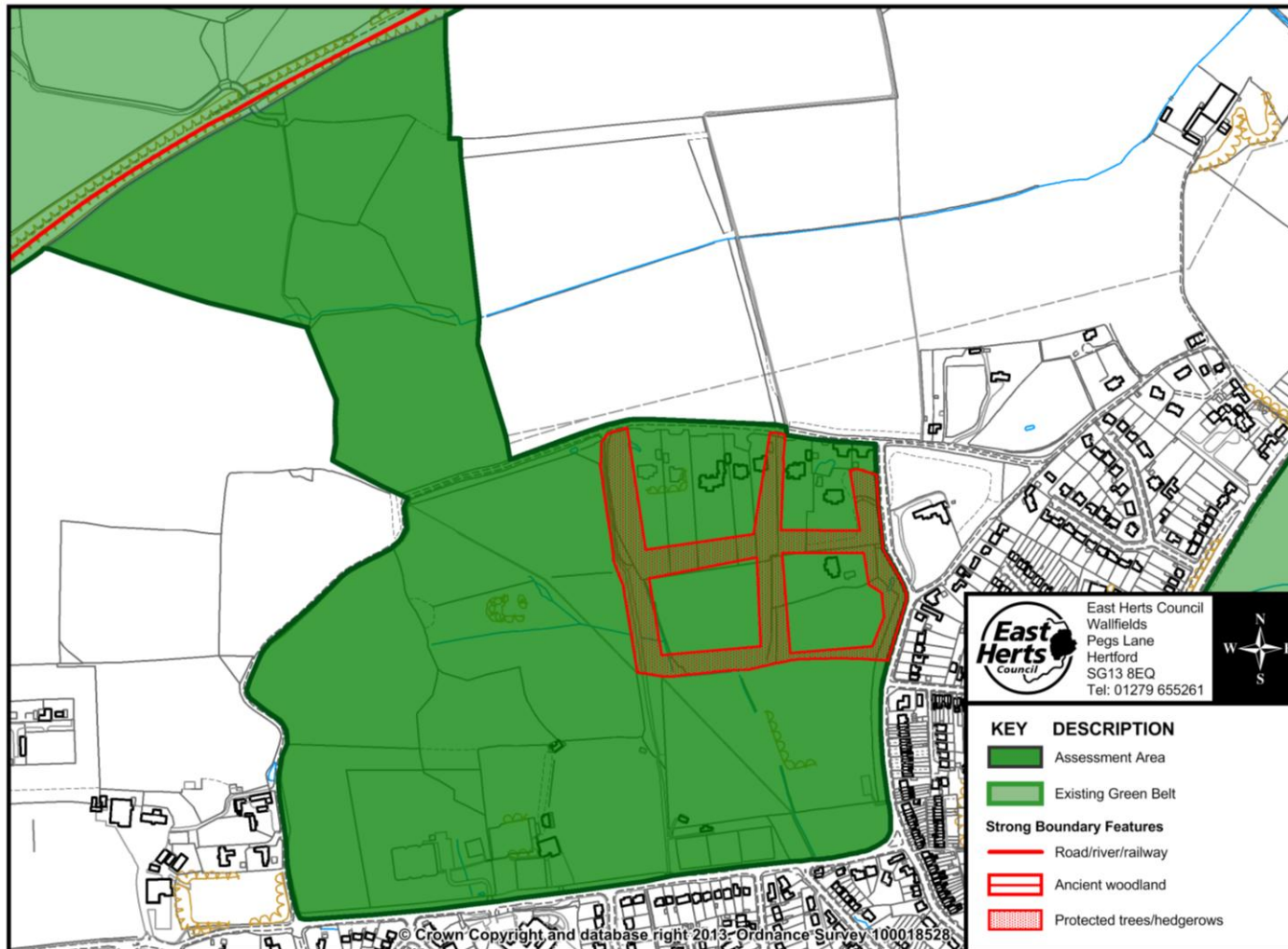
- Parts of the Green Belt in this area serve the purpose of checking unrestricted urban sprawl by maintaining the openness of the land such as Sites 03B, 03D and the southern part of Site 03C. Site 03A serves the purpose to a lesser extent, given that it is better connected to the built-up area than 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.



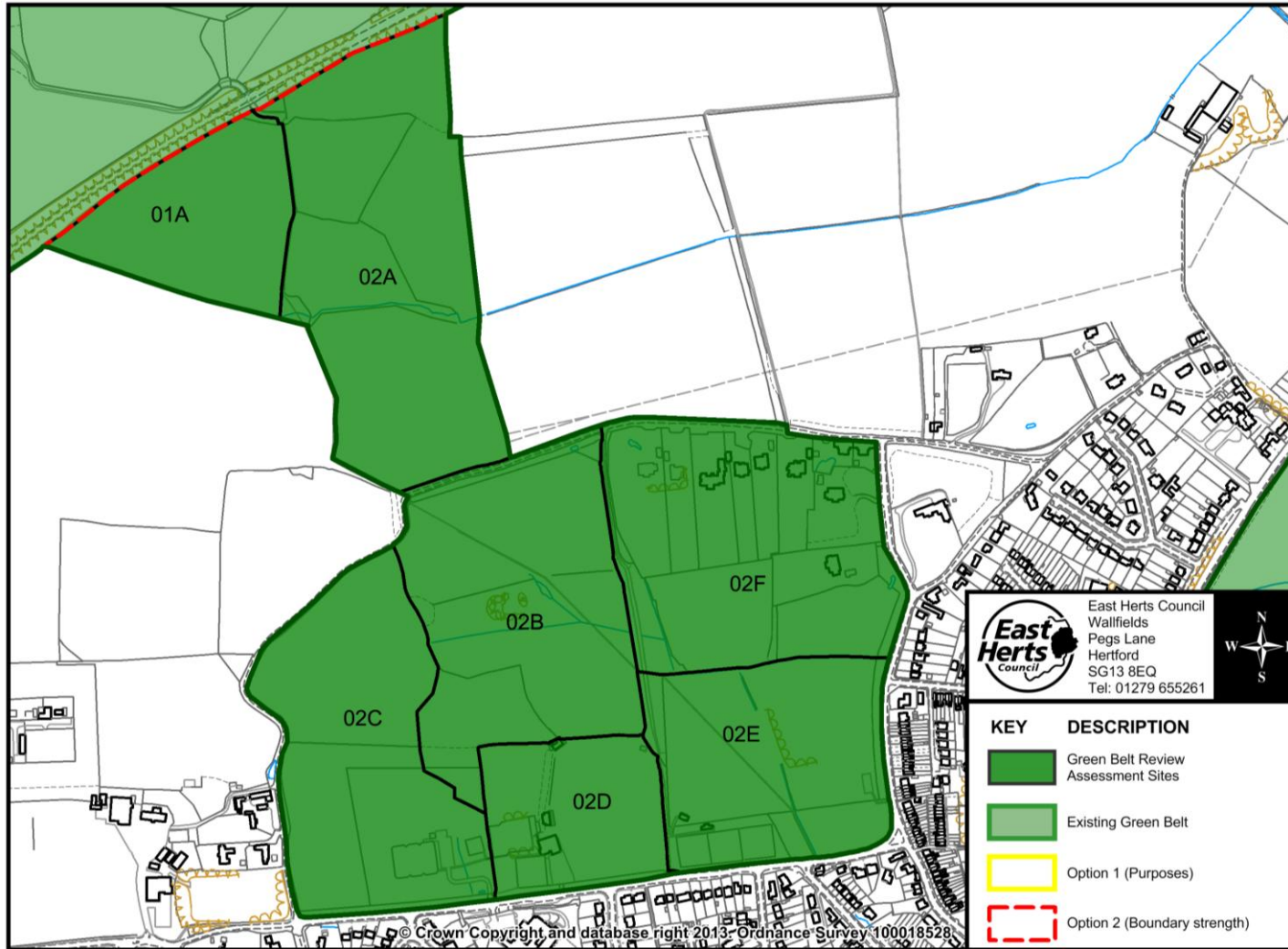
**5.2 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment of Bishop’s Stortford North Sub-Area A and Sub-Area B**  
**Map showing strong boundaries at Bishop’s Stortford North Sub-Area A and Sub-Area B**



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.

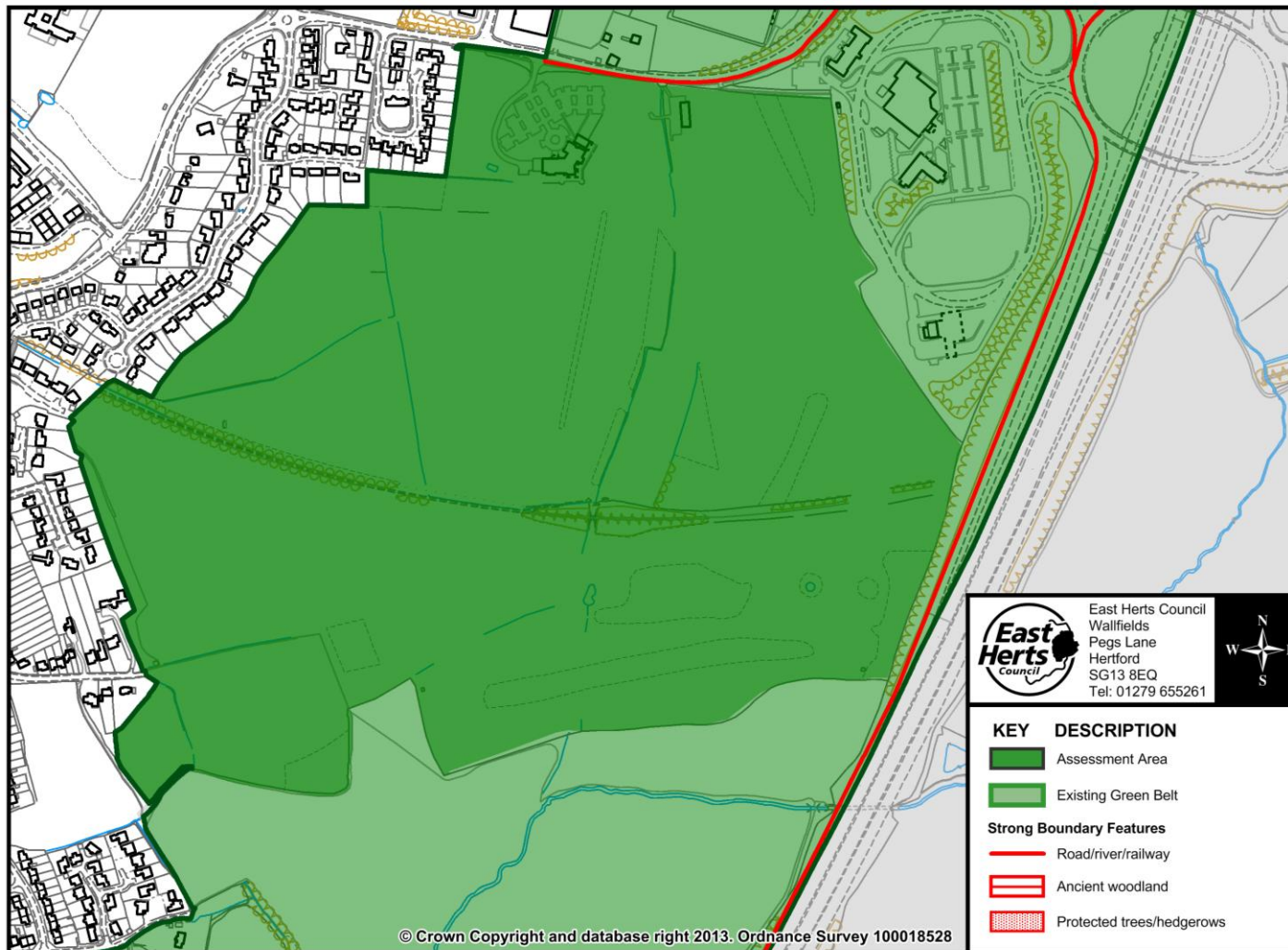


**5.3 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for Bishop’s Stortford North**  
**Map of recommended options for Bishop’s Stortford North Sub-Area A and Sub-Area B**



	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>Option 1</b>	<b>No release</b>	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.
<b>Option 2</b>	<b>Release of all sites</b>	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.

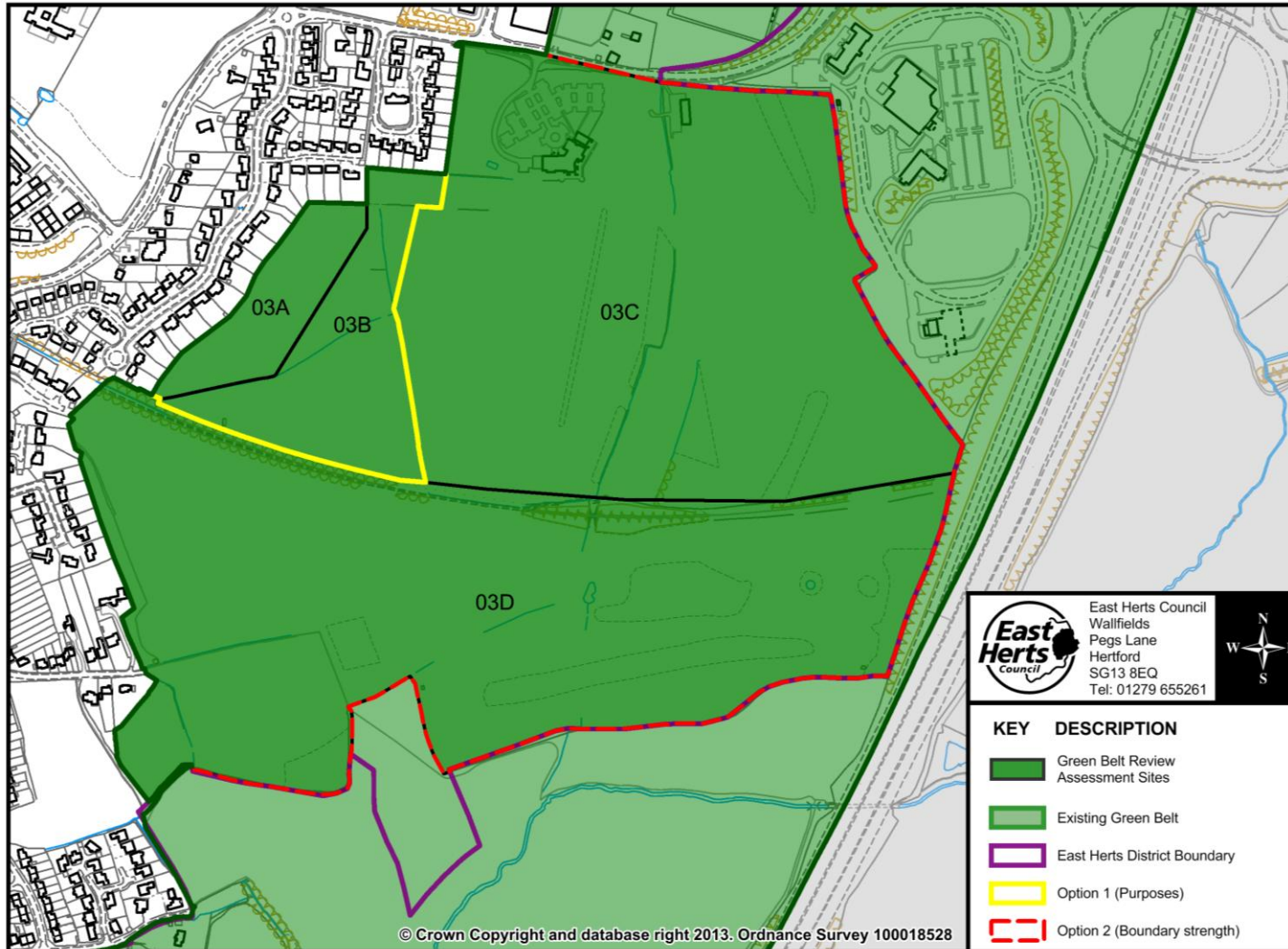
**5.4 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Bishop’s Stortford East**  
**Map showing strong boundaries at Bishop’s Stortford East Sub-Area B**



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.

<b>Existing boundary strength</b>	<b>Existing boundary description</b>
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.

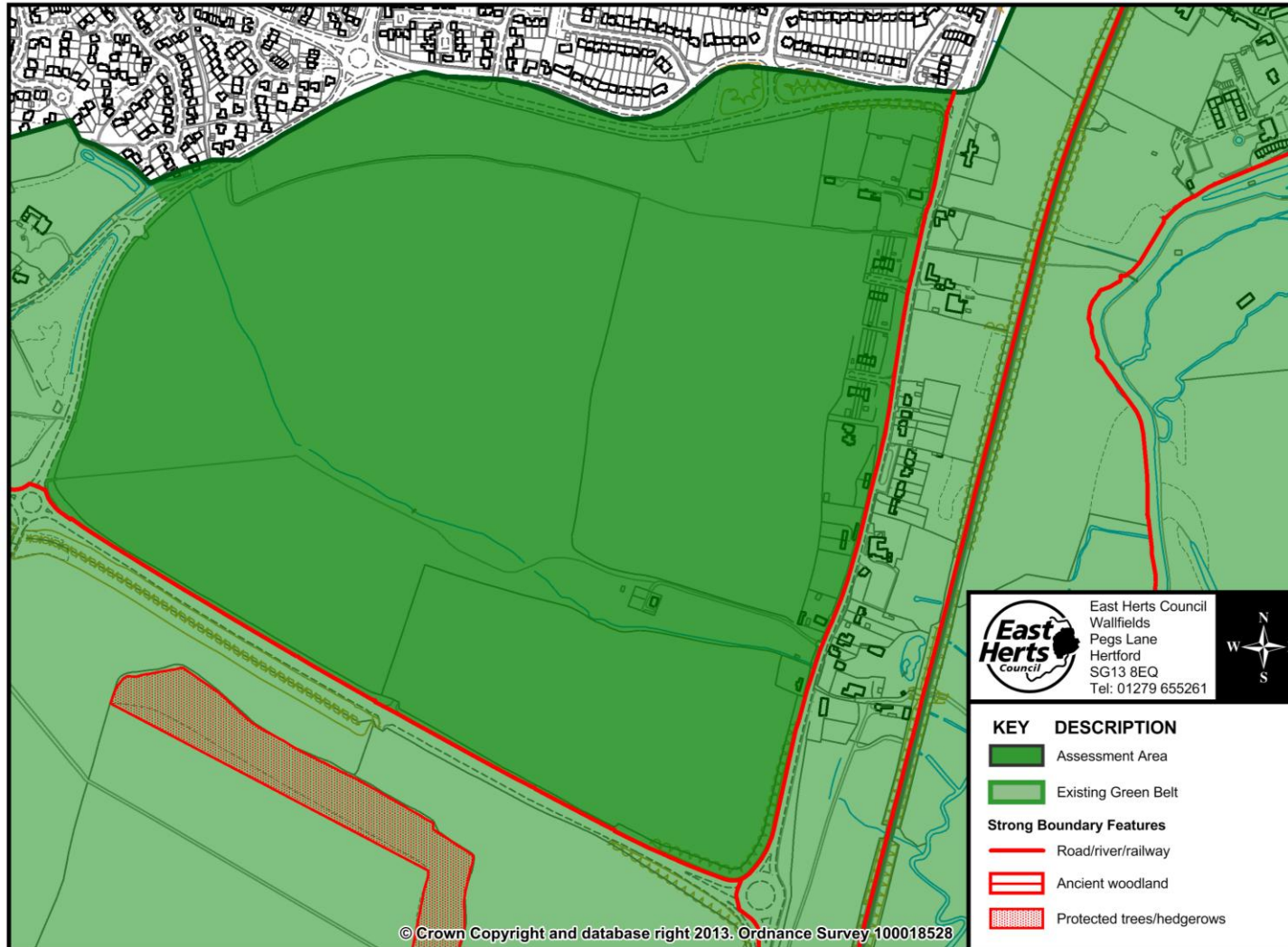
5.5 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for Bishop’s Stortford East  
 Map of recommended options for Bishop’s Stortford East Sub-Area B



	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>Option 1 (Purposes)</b>	<b>Release of Sites 03A and 03B</b>	<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>
<b>Option 2 (Boundary strength)</b>	<b>Release of Sites 03A, 03B, 03C and 03D</b>	<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>



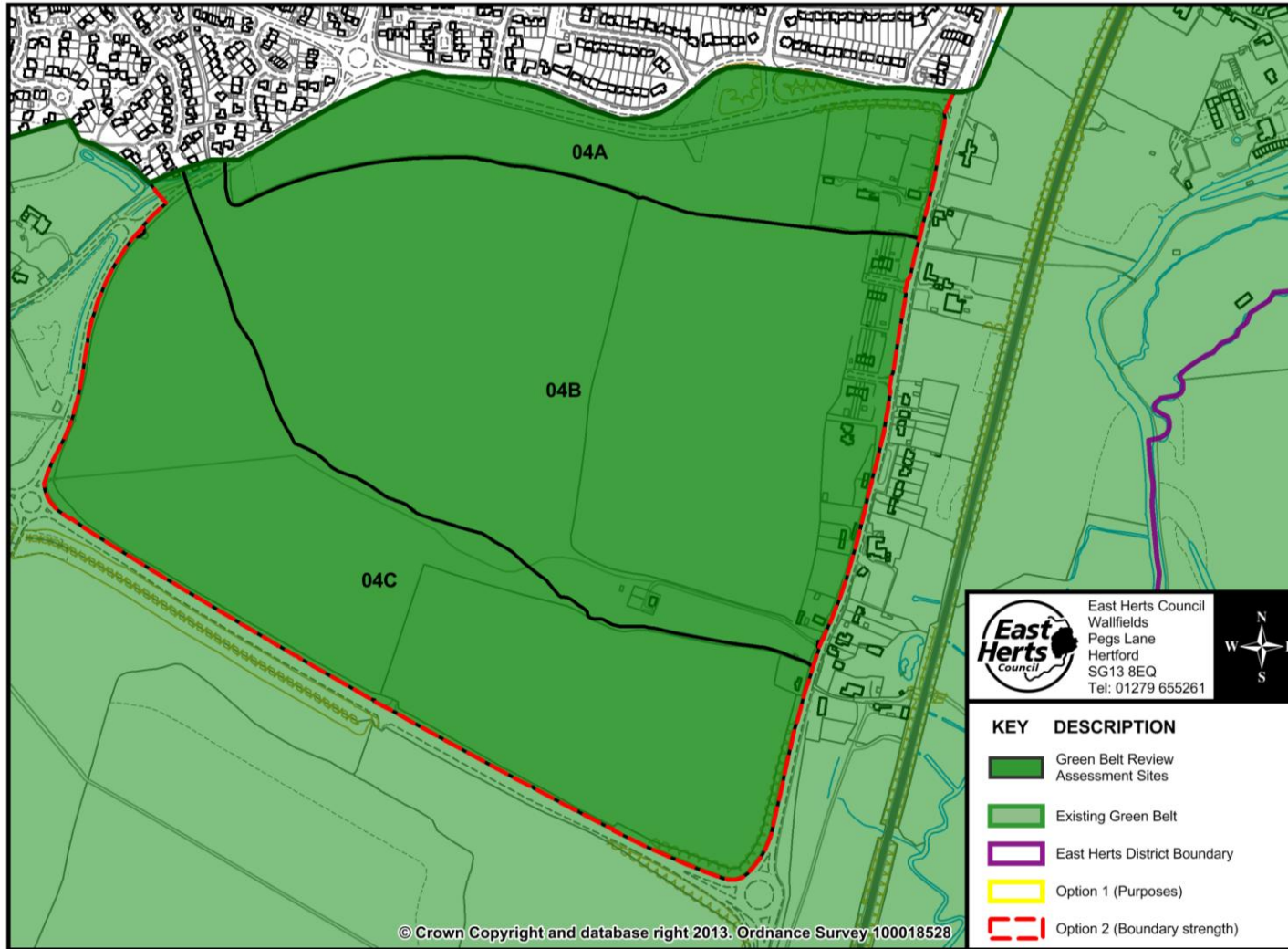
**5.6 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Bishop’s Stortford South  
Map showing strong boundaries at Bishop’s Stortford South Sub-Area A**



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

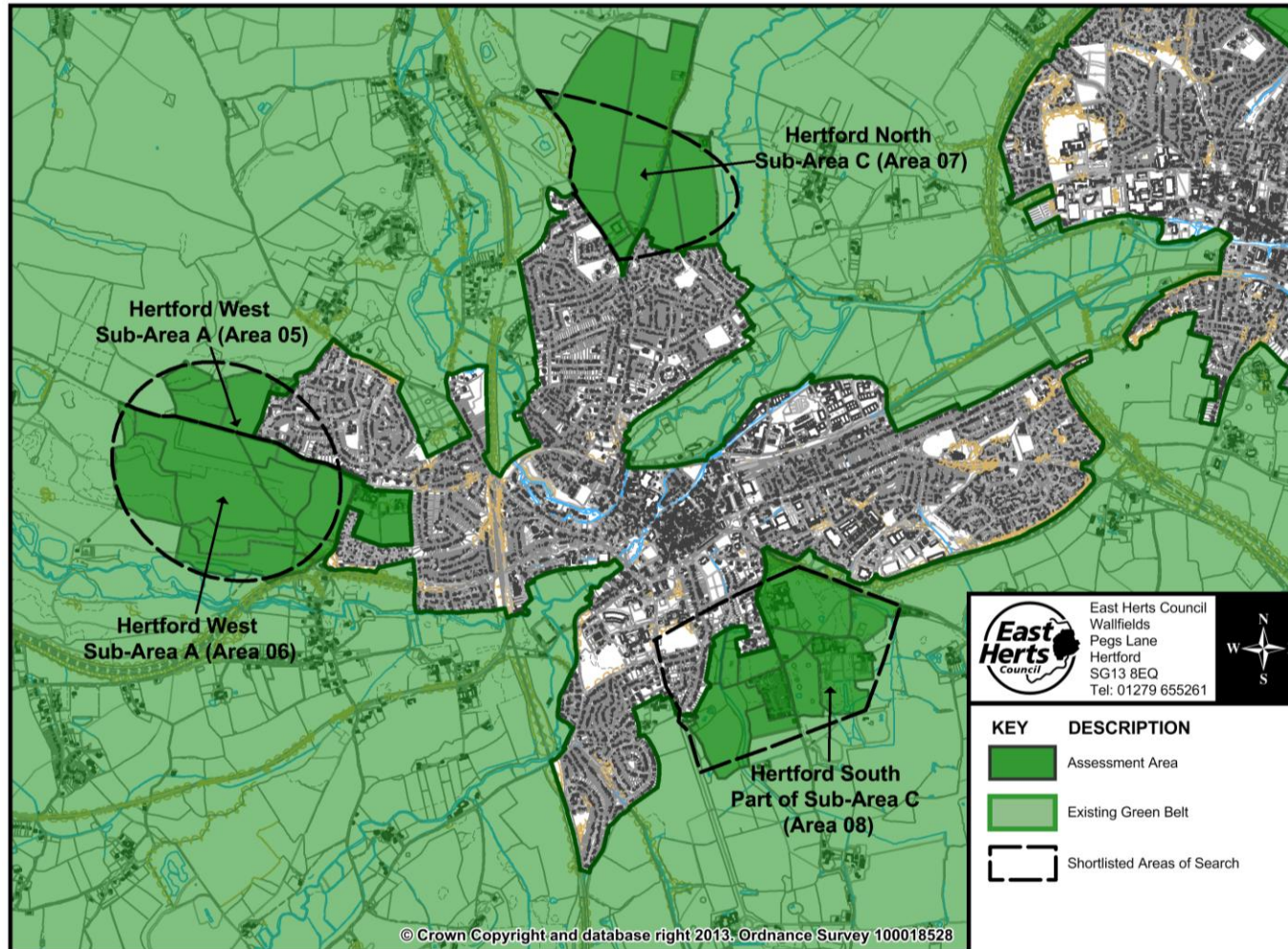


	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>Option 1 (Purposes)</b>	<b>No release</b>	The Green Belt serves an important role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment in this area, as well as maintaining the openness and checking unrestricted sprawl. Although 04A is slightly better connected 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.
<b>Option 2 (Boundary strength)</b>	<b>Release of Sites 04A, 04B and 04C</b>	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.

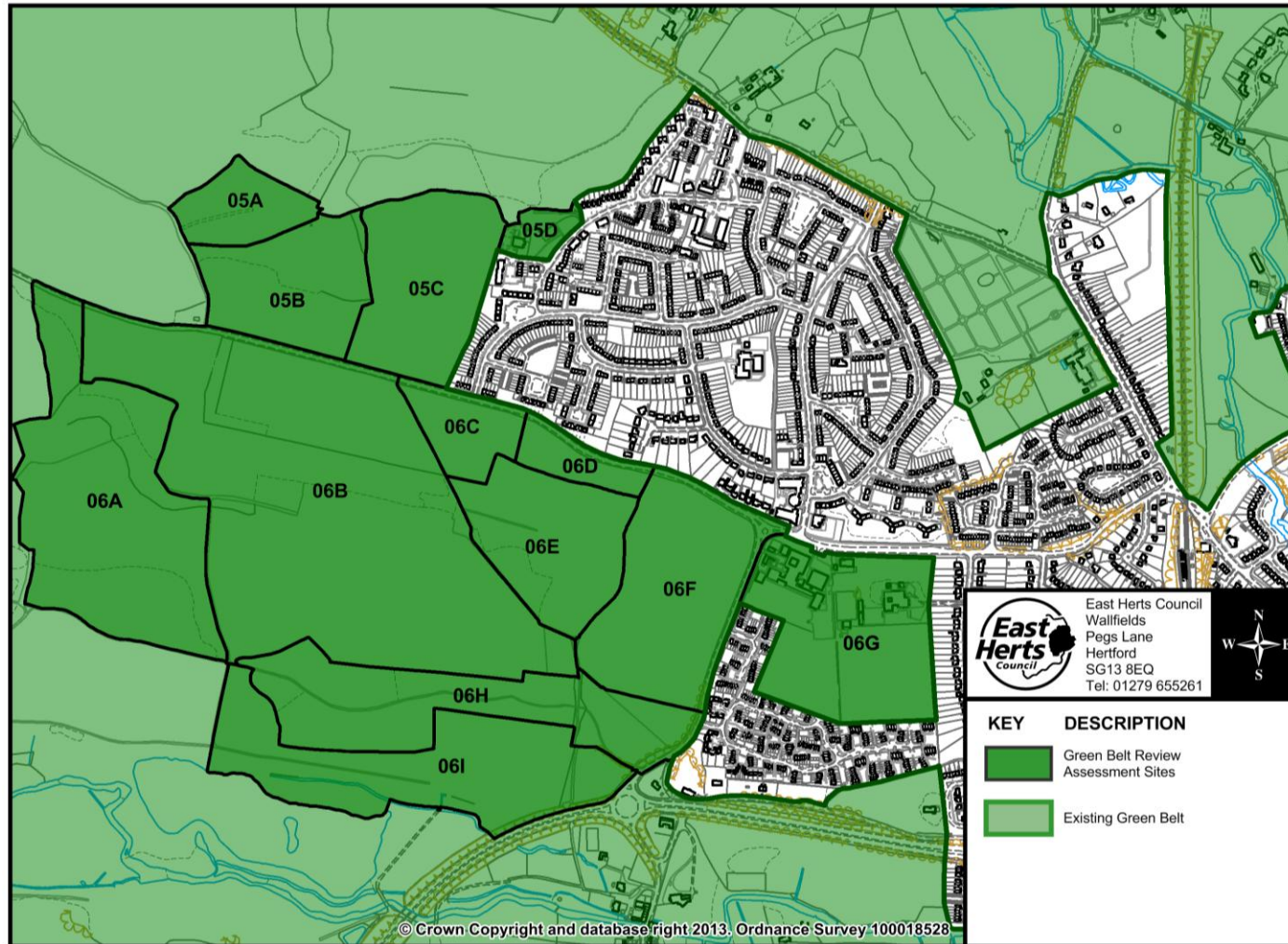
## 6 Detailed Site Assessment of Hertford

### 6.1 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 1 - Green Belt Purpose Assessment

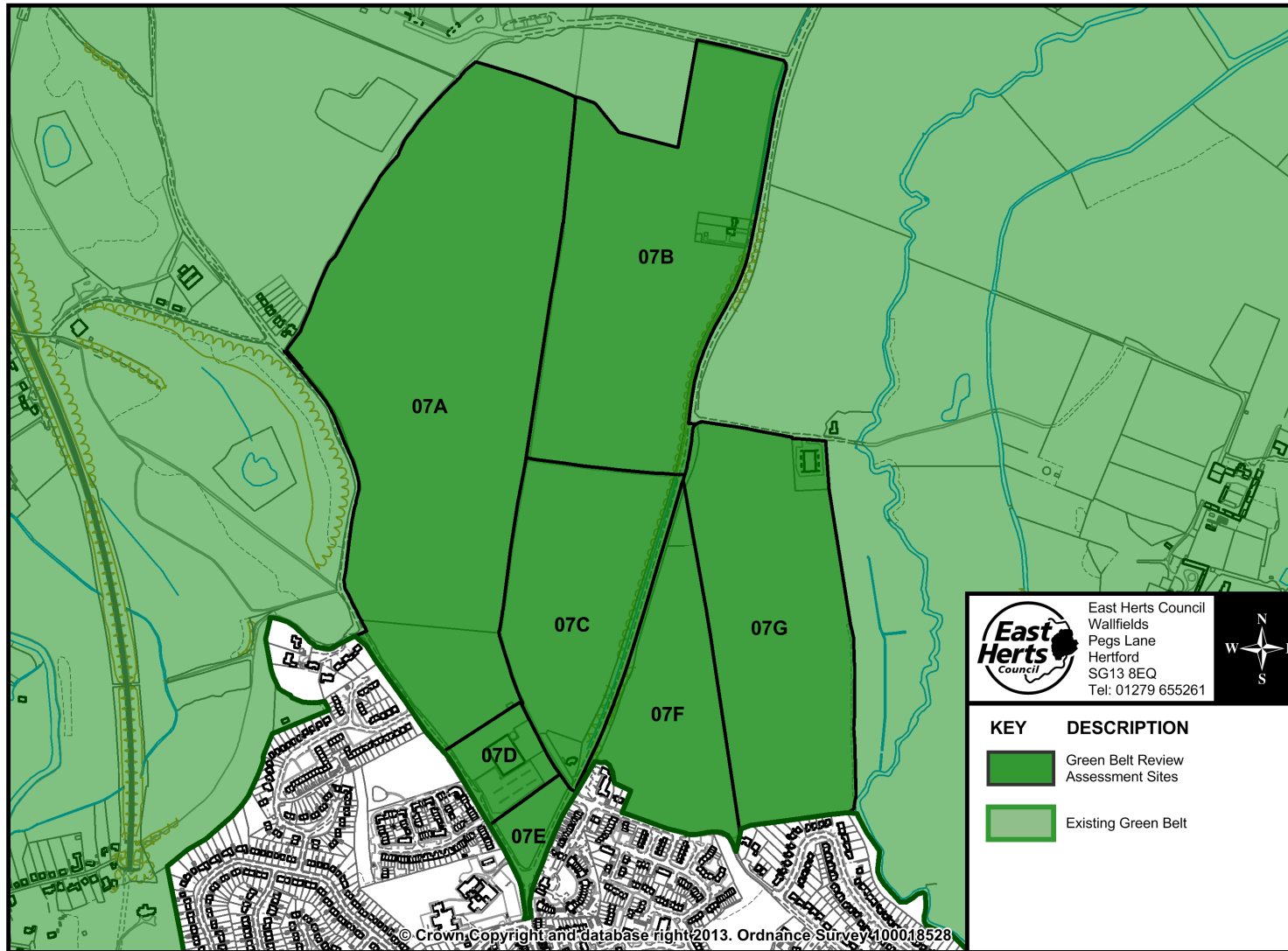
#### Hertford Shortlisted Areas of Search



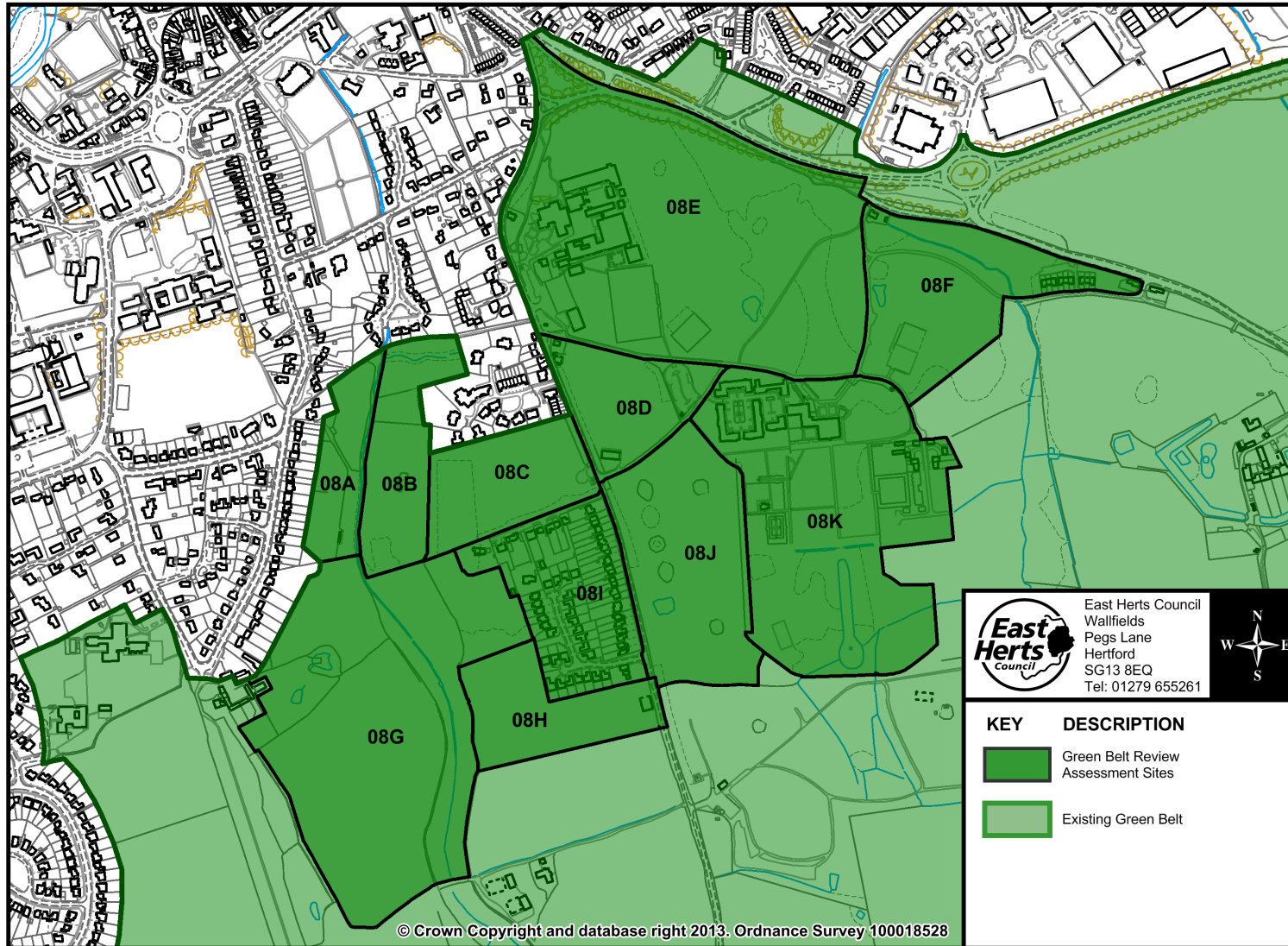
Hertford West Assessment Sites



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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>

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 Bengo 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**

	<b>Hertford West</b>												
	<b>Sub-Area A</b>				<b>Sub-Area B</b>								
<b>GBR Ref</b>	<b>05A</b>	<b>05B</b>	<b>05C</b>	<b>05D</b>	<b>06A</b>	<b>06B</b>	<b>06C</b>	<b>06D</b>	<b>06E</b>	<b>06F</b>	<b>06G</b>	<b>06H</b>	<b>06I</b>
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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

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.

	<b>Hertford North</b>							<b>Hertford South</b>										
	<b>Sub-Area C</b>							<b>Sub-Area C</b>										
<b>GBR Ref</b>	<b>07A</b>	<b>07B</b>	<b>07C</b>	<b>07D</b>	<b>07E</b>	<b>07F</b>	<b>07G</b>	<b>08A</b>	<b>08B</b>	<b>08C</b>	<b>08D</b>	<b>08E</b>	<b>08F</b>	<b>08G</b>	<b>08H</b>	<b>08I</b>	<b>08J</b>	<b>08K</b>
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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>



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)**

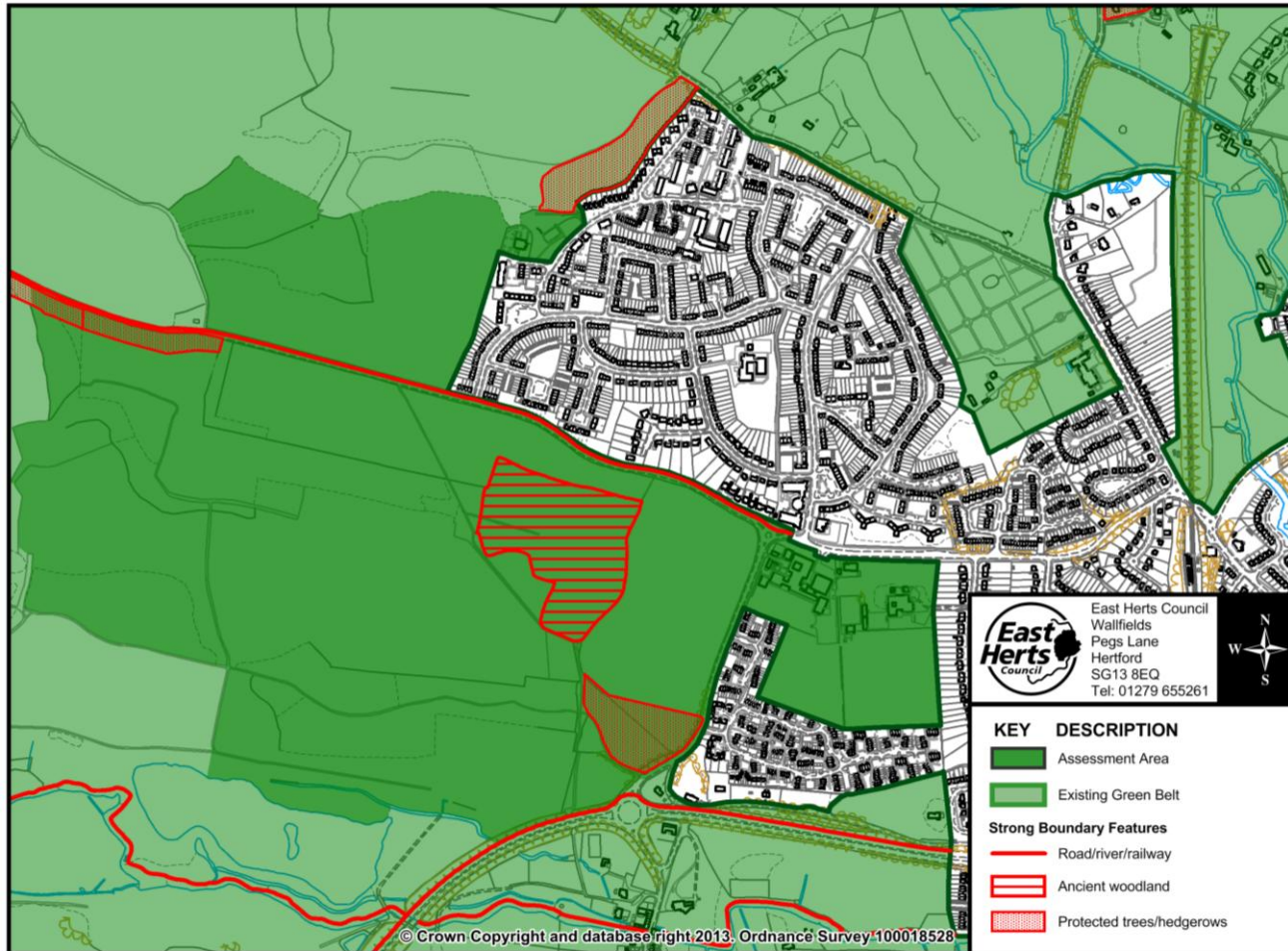
- The Green Belt serves the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl to the north of the area through maintaining the openness and generally impeding ribbon development along Sacombe Road and Wadesmill Road. The Green Belt does not serve the purpose of checking unrestricted sprawl to the south, as development 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**

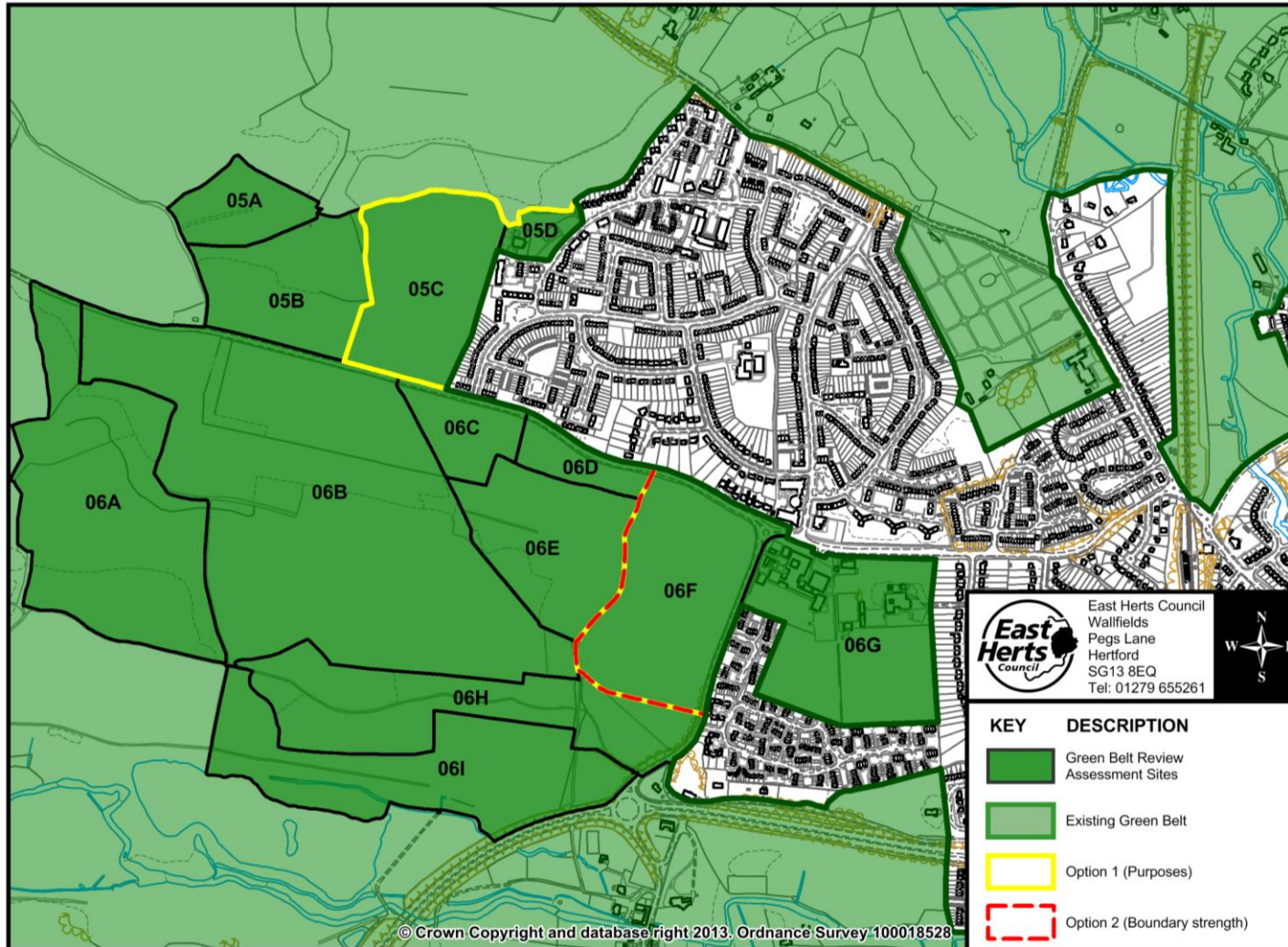


As a secondary distributor road the B1000/Welwyn Road presents a strong boundary within the area of search. The main distributor road of the A414/Hertingfordbury Road presents an even stronger boundary to the south of the area of search. The River Mimram also presents a strong boundary to the south. 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	<p>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.</p>
Sub-Area B: Strong	<p>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.</p>

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

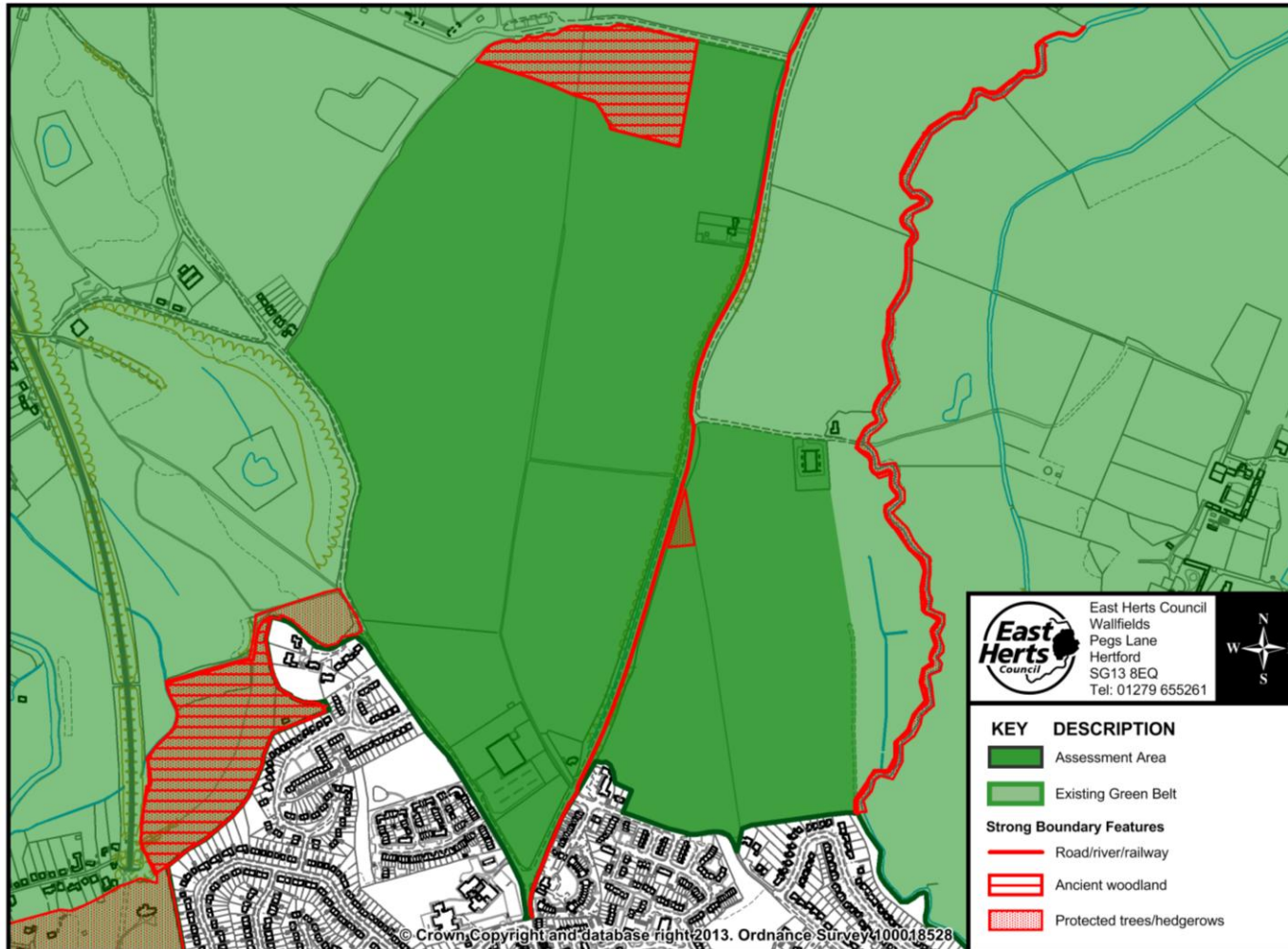








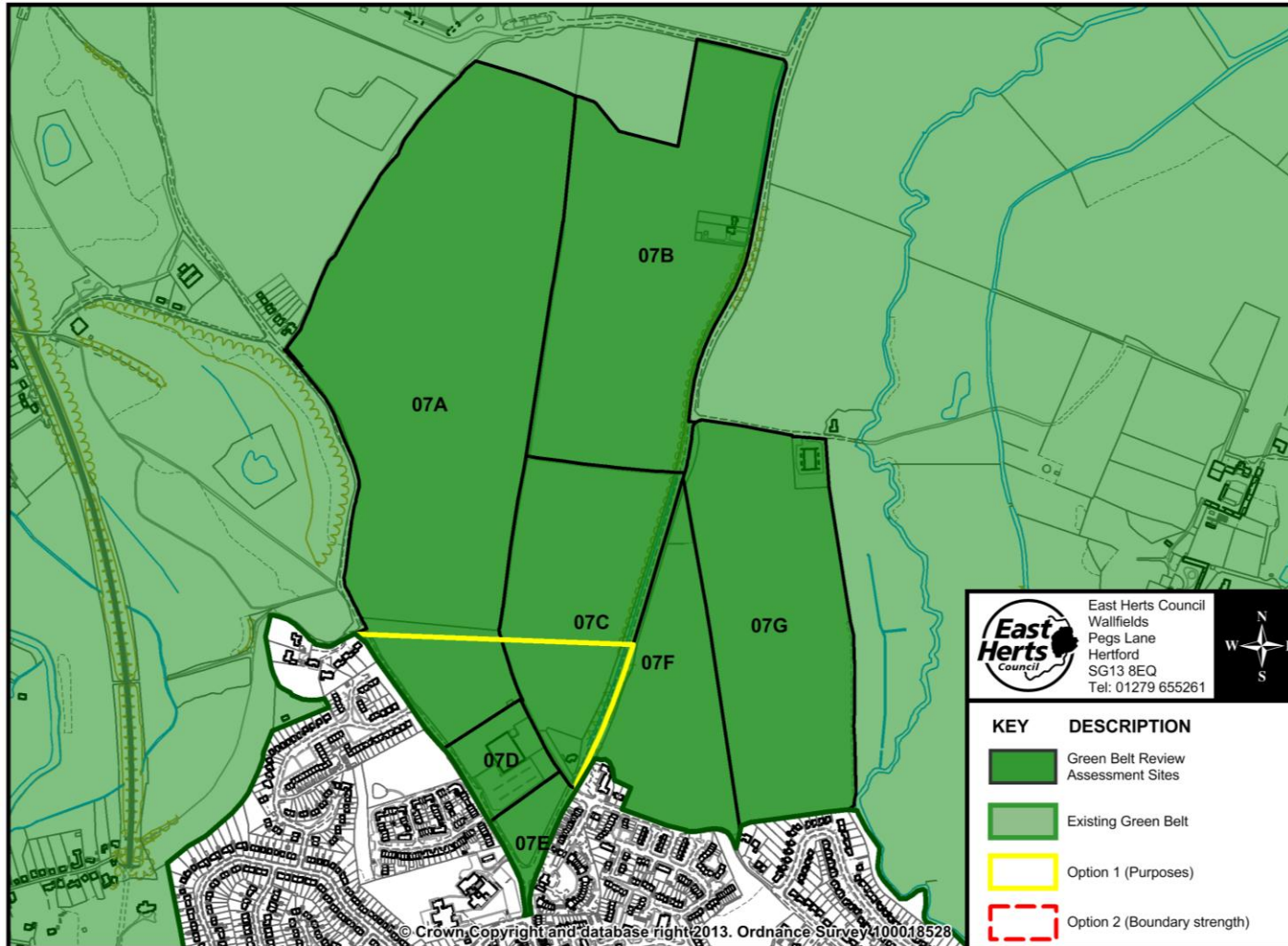
**6.4 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Hertford North  
Map showing strong boundaries at Hertford North Sub-Area C**



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>

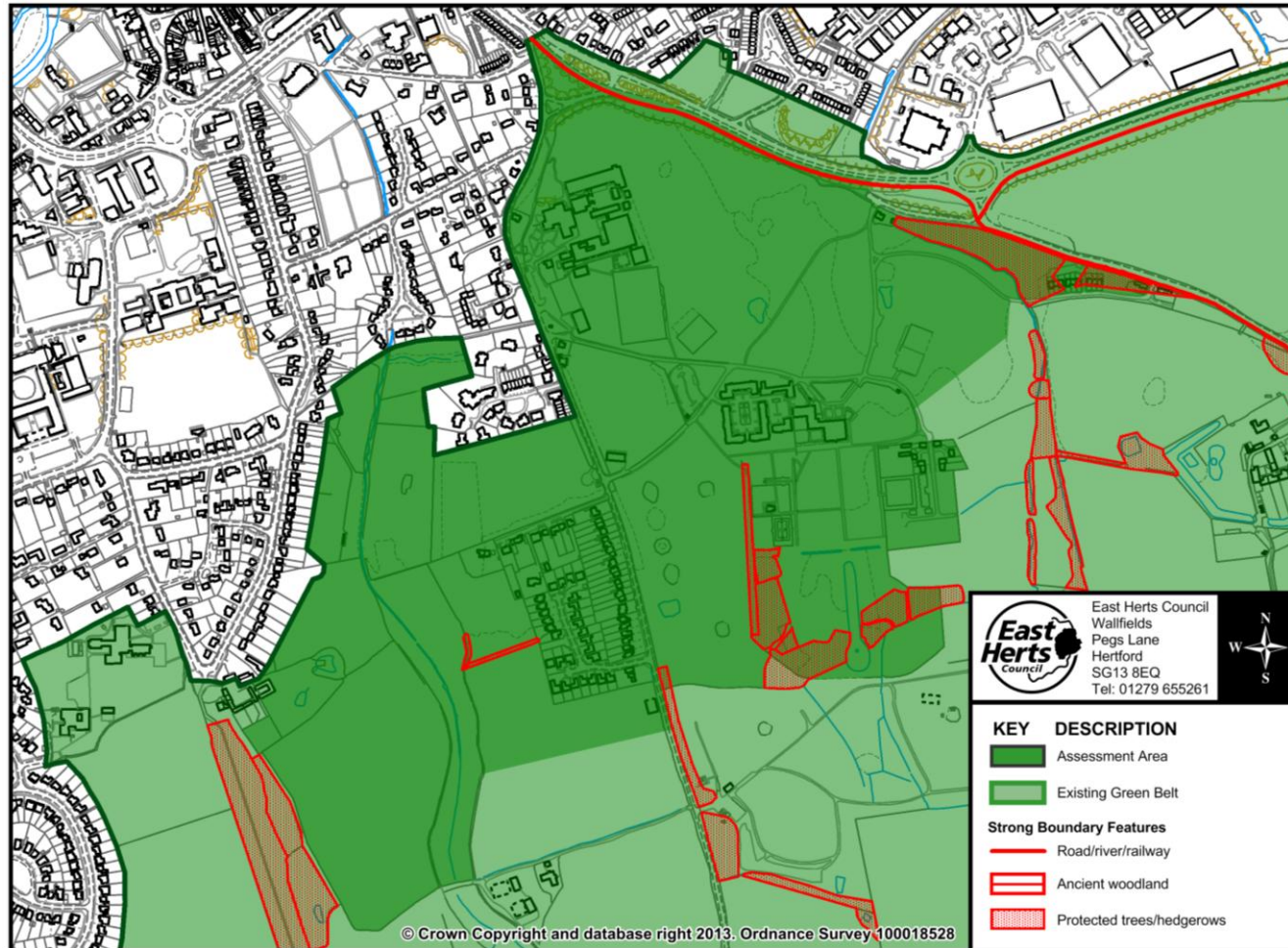
6.5 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for Hertford North  
 Map of recommended options for Hertford North Sub-Area C



	Recommendation	Justification
<p><b>Option 1 (Purposes)</b></p>	<p><b>Release Sites 07D, 07E in addition to part of Site 07A and part of Site 07C</b></p>	<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.
<b>Option 2 (Boundary strength)</b>	<b>No release</b>	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.

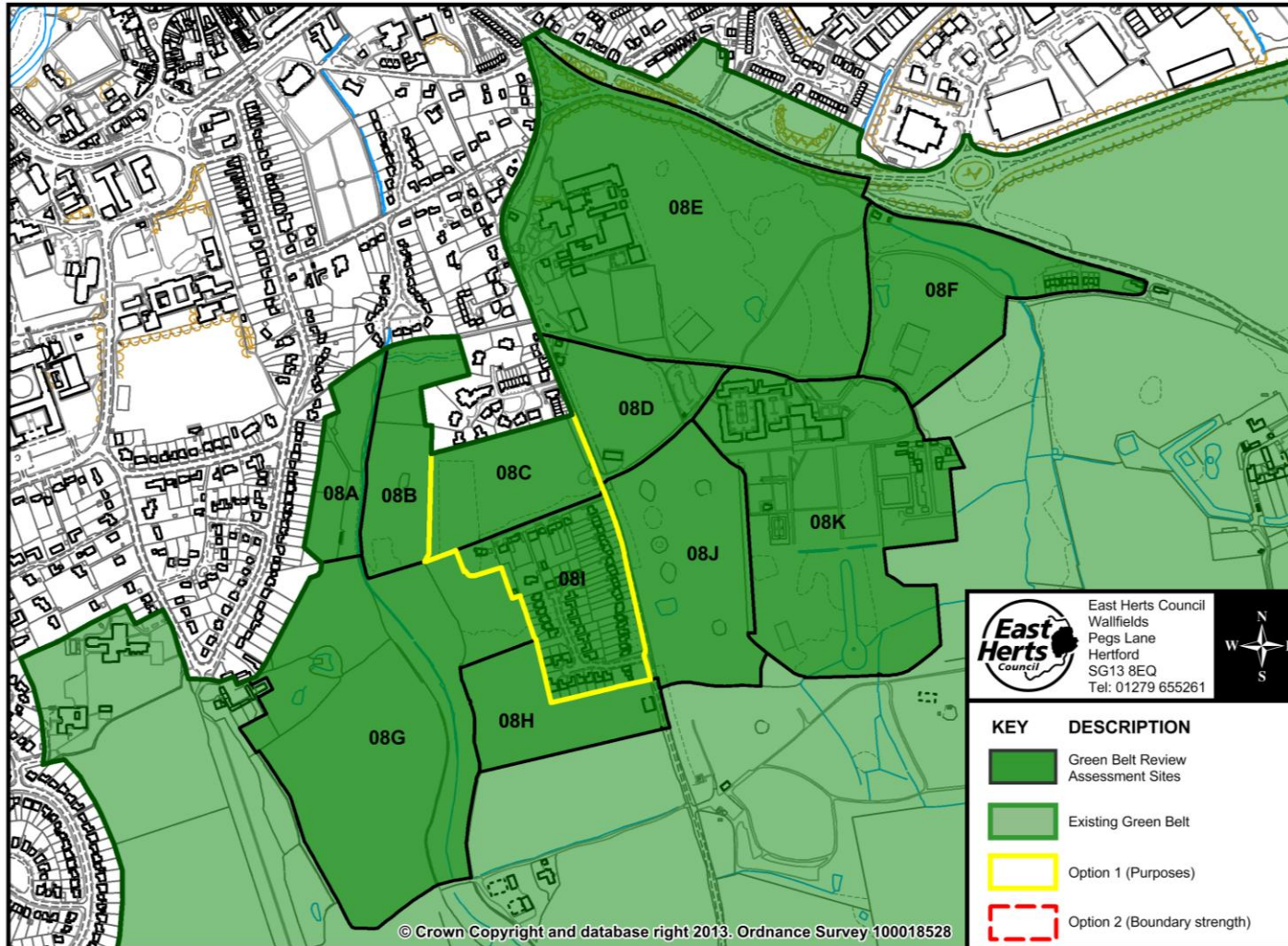
**6.6 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Hertford South**  
**Map showing strong boundaries at Hertford South Sub-Area C**



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



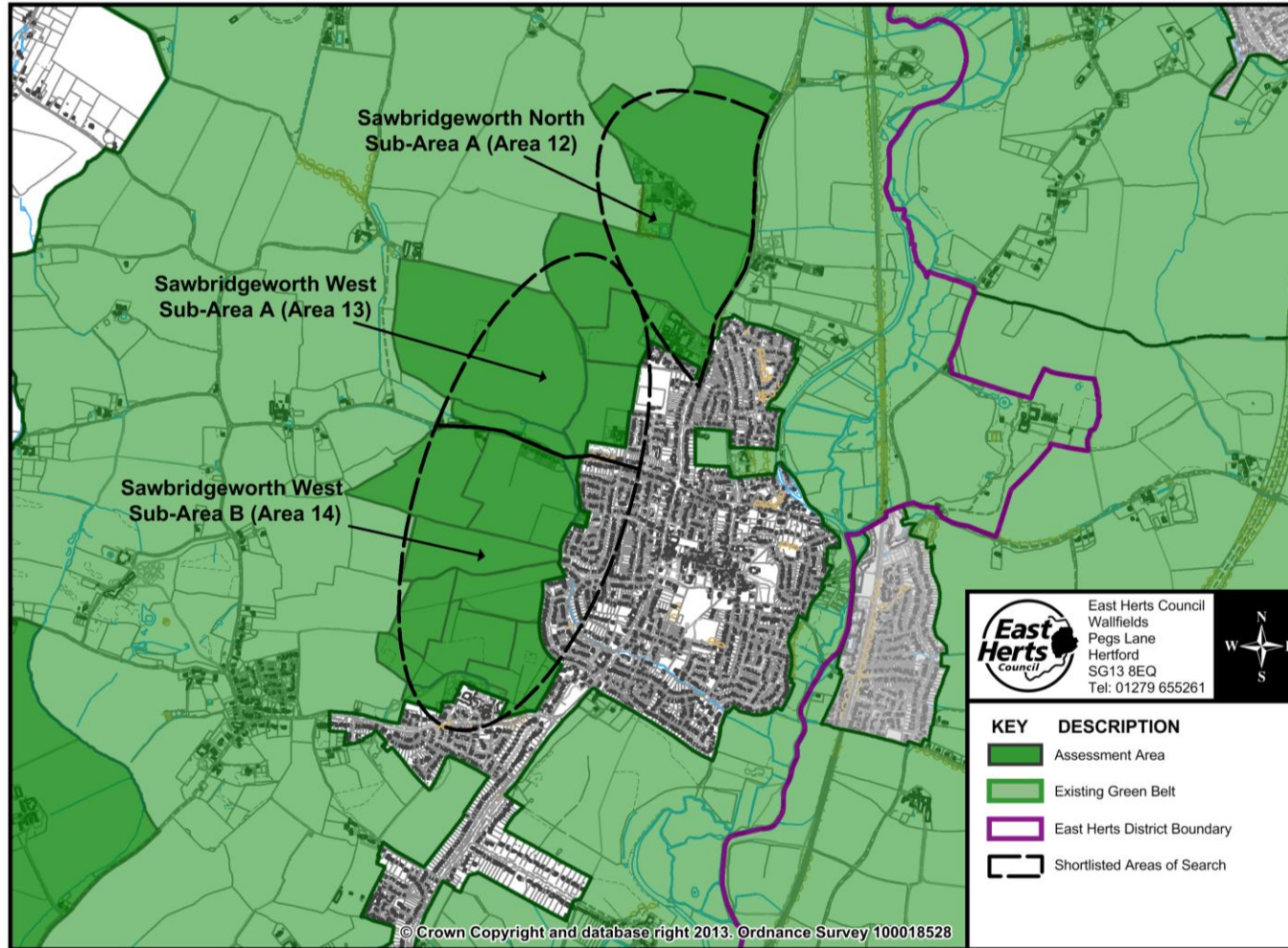


	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>Option 1 (Purposes)</b>	<b>Release Sites 08C and 08I</b>	<p>Green Belt to the east of Mangrove Road is not considered suitable for release from the Green Belt as it is considered to serve a stronger role in preventing merging with the nearby village of Hertford 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>
<b>Option 2 (Boundary strength)</b>	<b>No release</b>	<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>

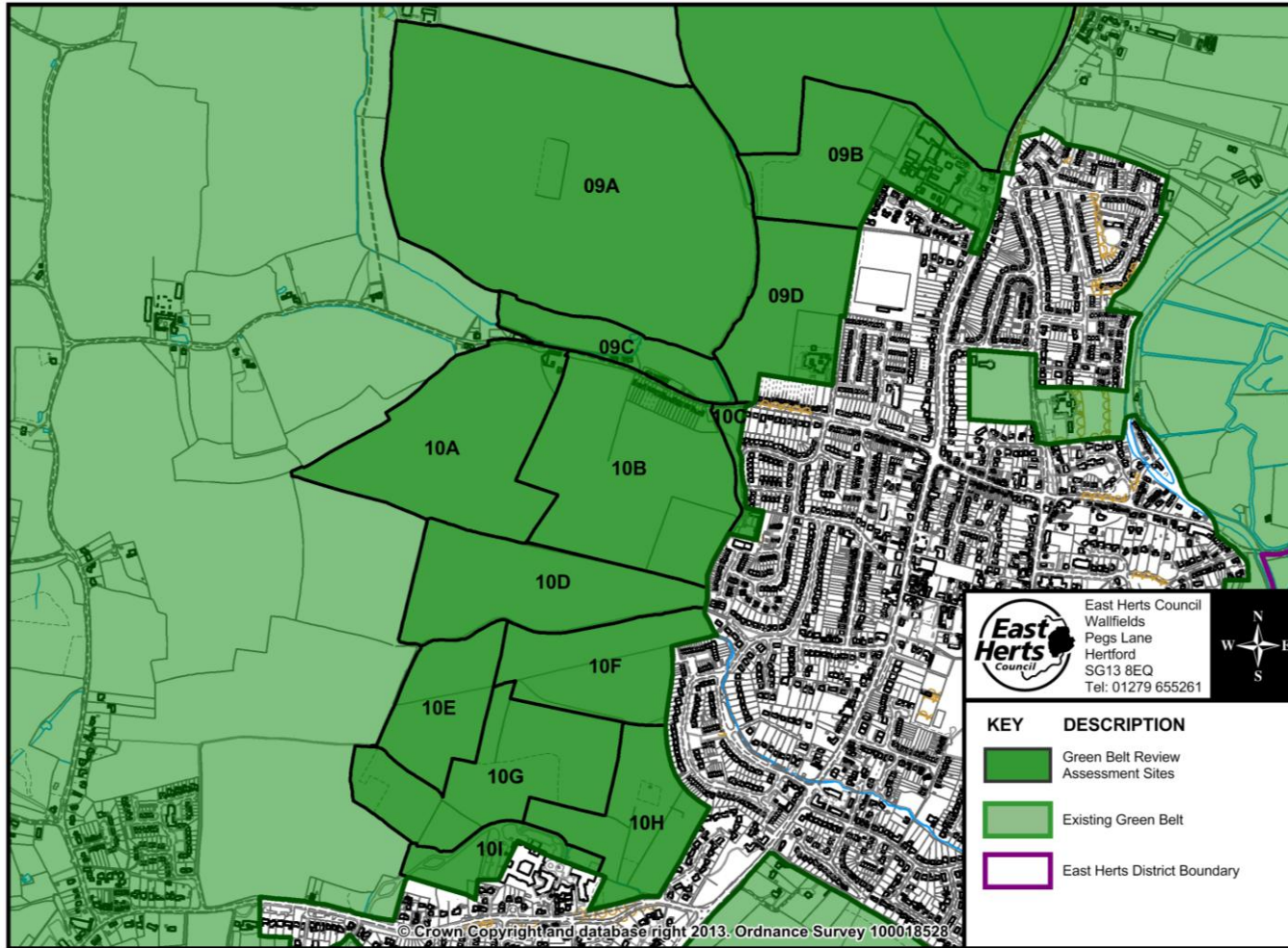
## 7 Detailed Site Assessment of Sawbridgeworth

### 7.1 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 1 - Green Belt Purpose Assessment

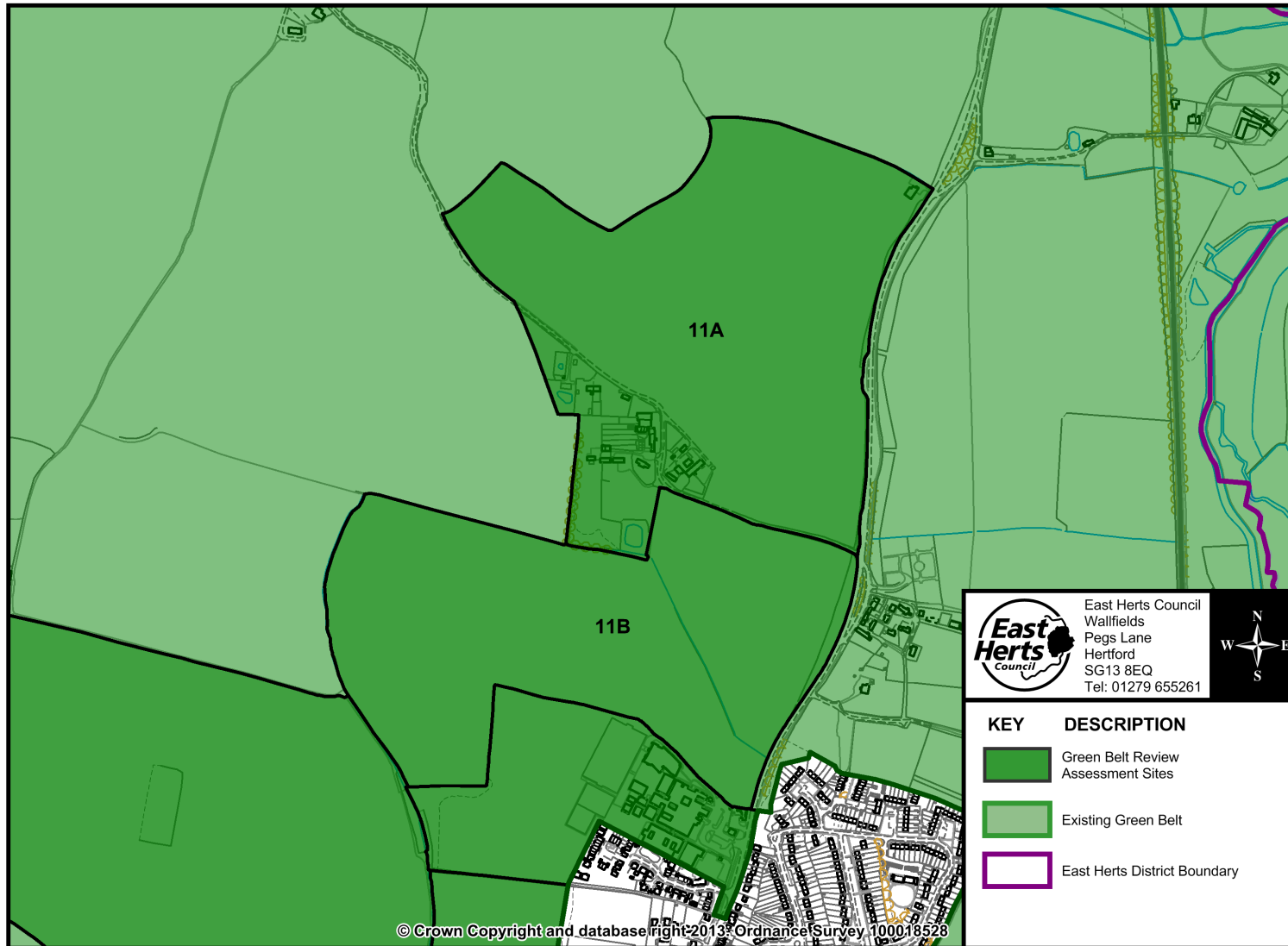
#### Sawbridgeworth Shortlisted Areas of Search



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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

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**

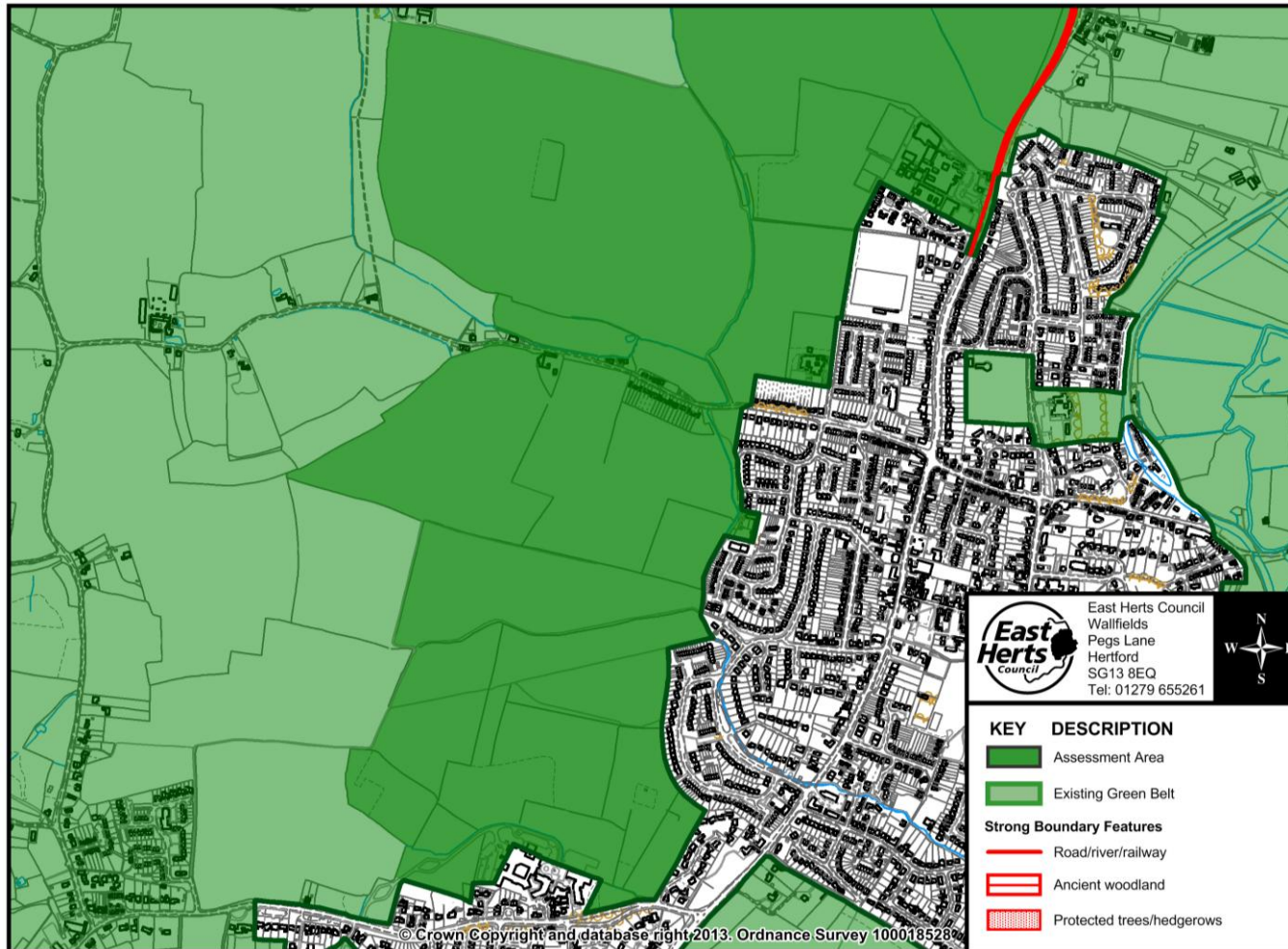
#### **Sawbridgeworth West: Area 9 (Sub-Area A) and Area 10 (Sub-Area B)**

- 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.

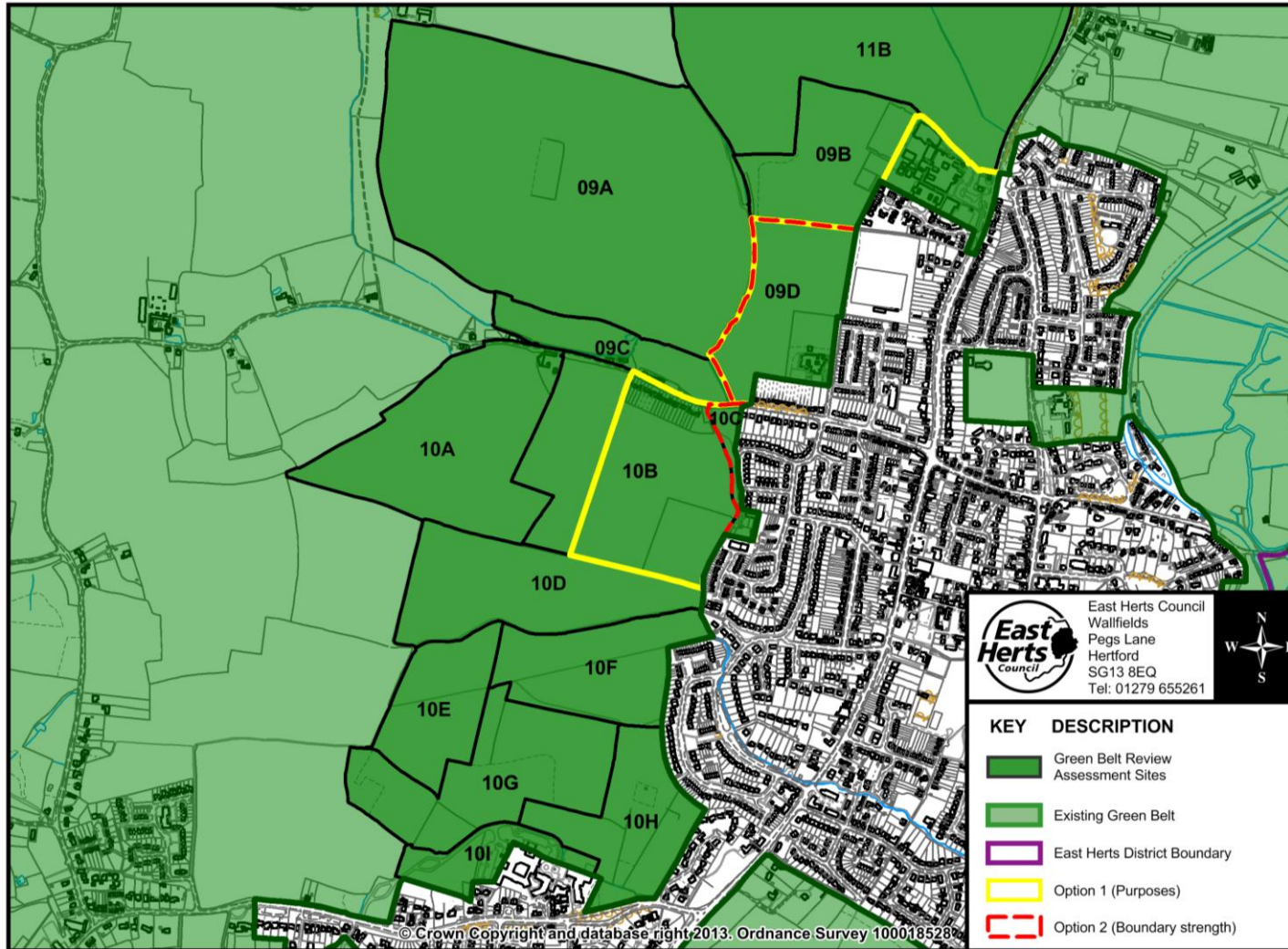
**7.2 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Sawbridgeworth West**  
**Map showing strong boundaries at Sawbridgeworth West Sub-Area A and Sub-Area B**



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**



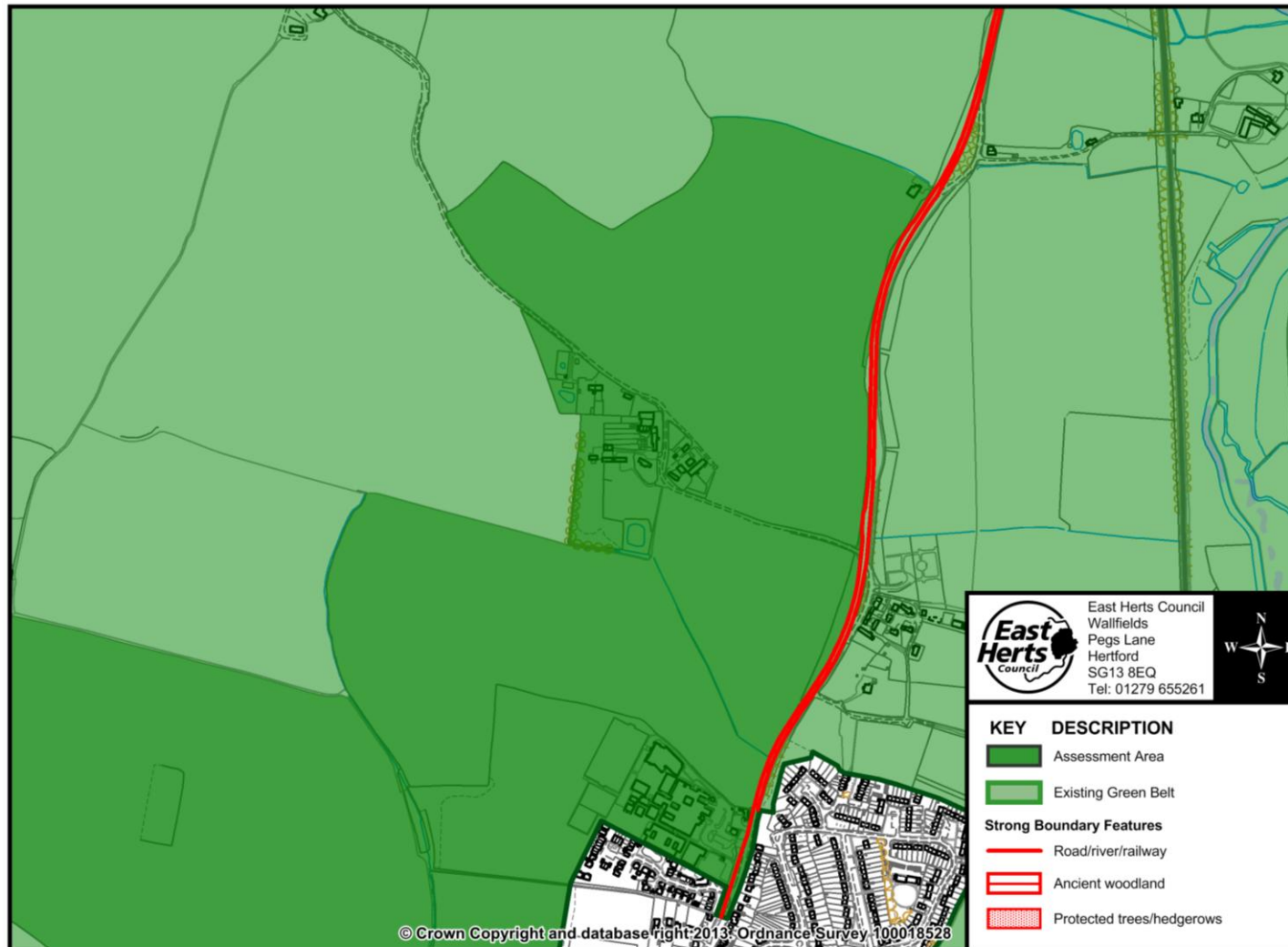


		<p>importance as a designated wildlife site, and the surrounding sites safeguard it from encroachment and act as a buffer to the existing built-up area. Comparatively, Sites 10B and 10C do not prevent merging or safeguard the countryside to such an extent as the others. Site 10A to the north serves a 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>
<p><b>Option 2 (Boundary</b></p>	<p><b>Sub-Area A: Site 9D</b></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, the stream would provide a stronger western</p>

<p><b>strength)</b></p>	<p><b>Sub-Area B: Site 10C</b></p>	<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.

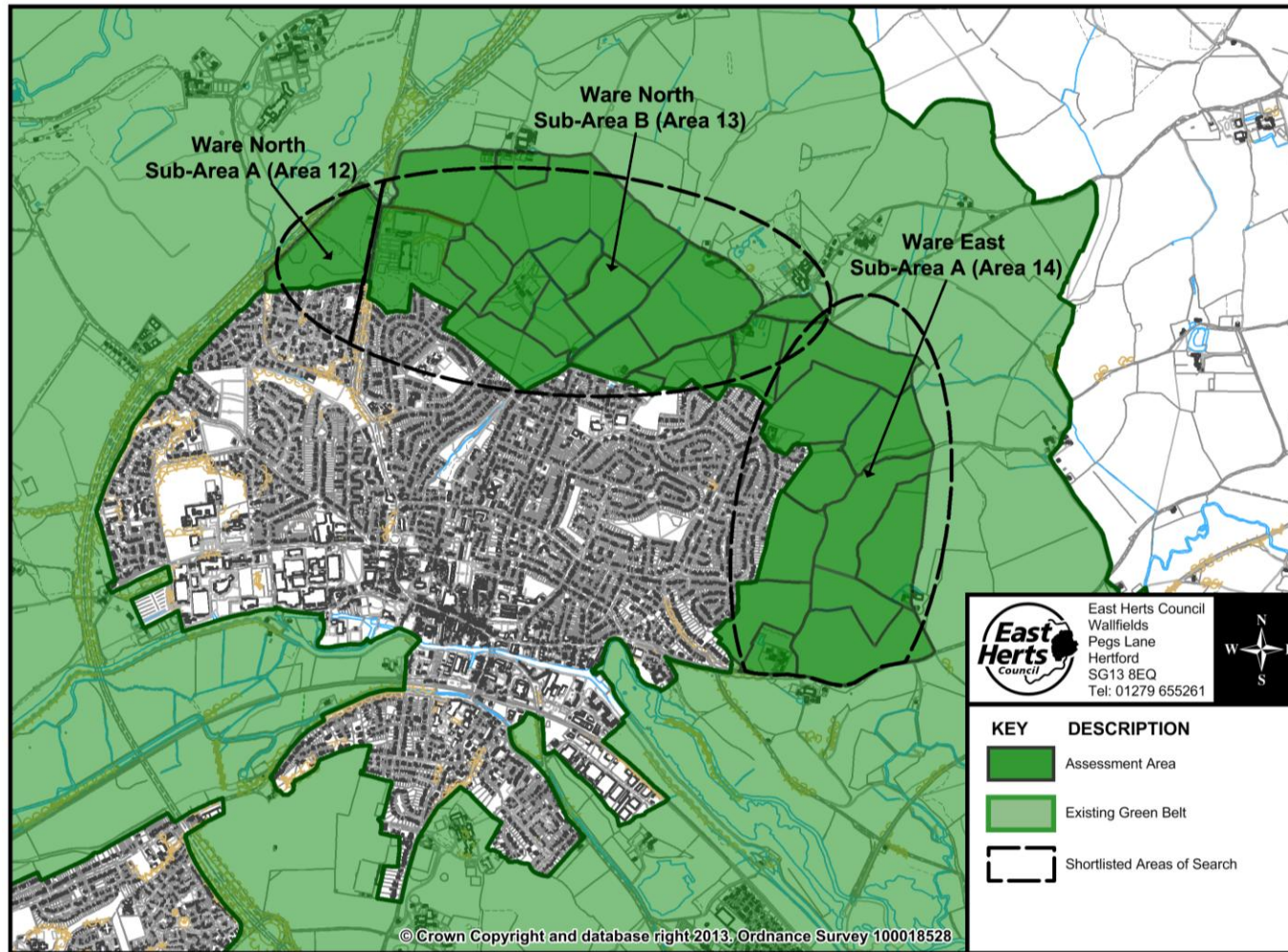
### 7.5 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Options for Sawbridgeworth North

	Recommendation	Justification
<b>Option 1 (Purposes)</b>	<b>No release</b>	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.
<b>Option 2 (Boundary strength)</b>	<b>No release</b>	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.

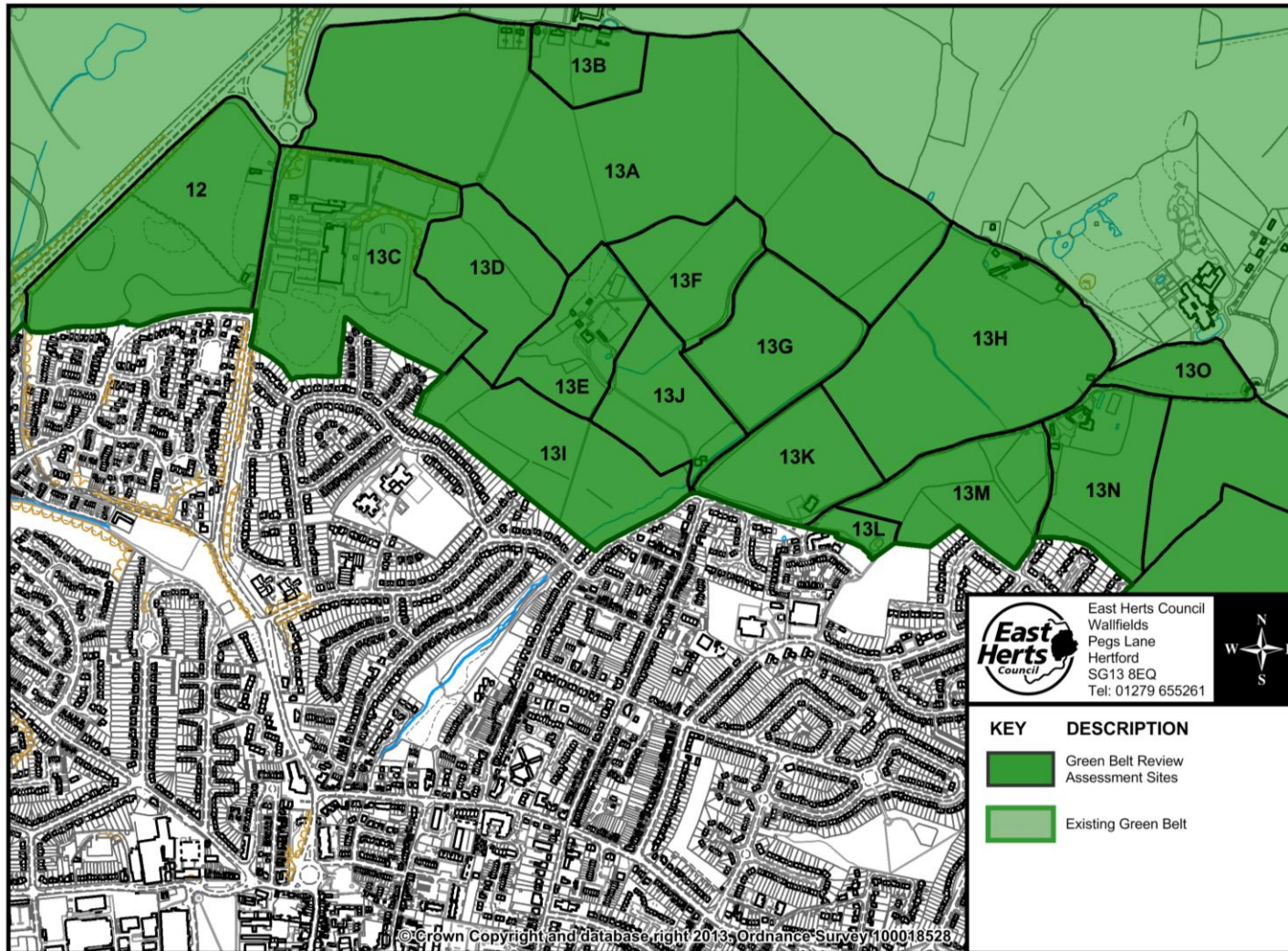
## 8 Detailed Site Assessment of Ware

### 8.1 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 1 - Green Belt Purpose Assessment

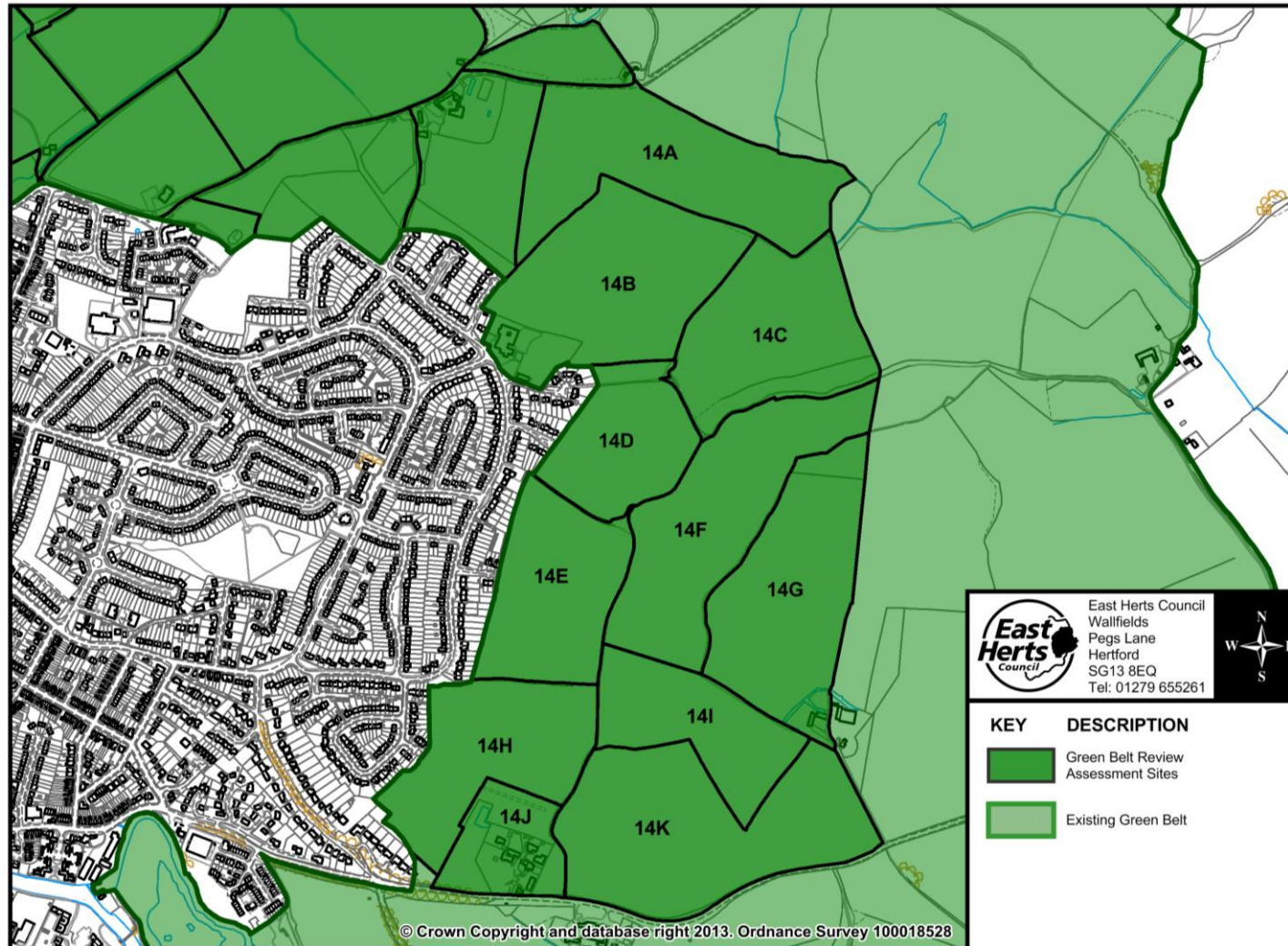
#### Ware Shortlisted Areas of Search



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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

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.

	<b>Ware East</b>										
	<b>Sub-Area A</b>										
<b>GBR Ref</b>	<b>14A</b>	<b>14B</b>	<b>14C</b>	<b>14D</b>	<b>14E</b>	<b>14F</b>	<b>14G</b>	<b>14H</b>	<b>14I</b>	<b>14J</b>	<b>14K</b>
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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>

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.

	<b>Ware East</b>										
	<b>Sub-Area A</b>										
<b>GBR Ref</b>	<b>14A</b>	<b>14B</b>	<b>14C</b>	<b>14D</b>	<b>14E</b>	<b>14F</b>	<b>14G</b>	<b>14H</b>	<b>14I</b>	<b>14J</b>	<b>14K</b>
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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

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.

	<b>Ware East</b>										
	<b>Sub-Area A</b>										
<b>GBR Ref</b>	<b>14A</b>	<b>14B</b>	<b>14C</b>	<b>14D</b>	<b>14E</b>	<b>14F</b>	<b>14G</b>	<b>14H</b>	<b>14I</b>	<b>14J</b>	<b>14K</b>
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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

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)**

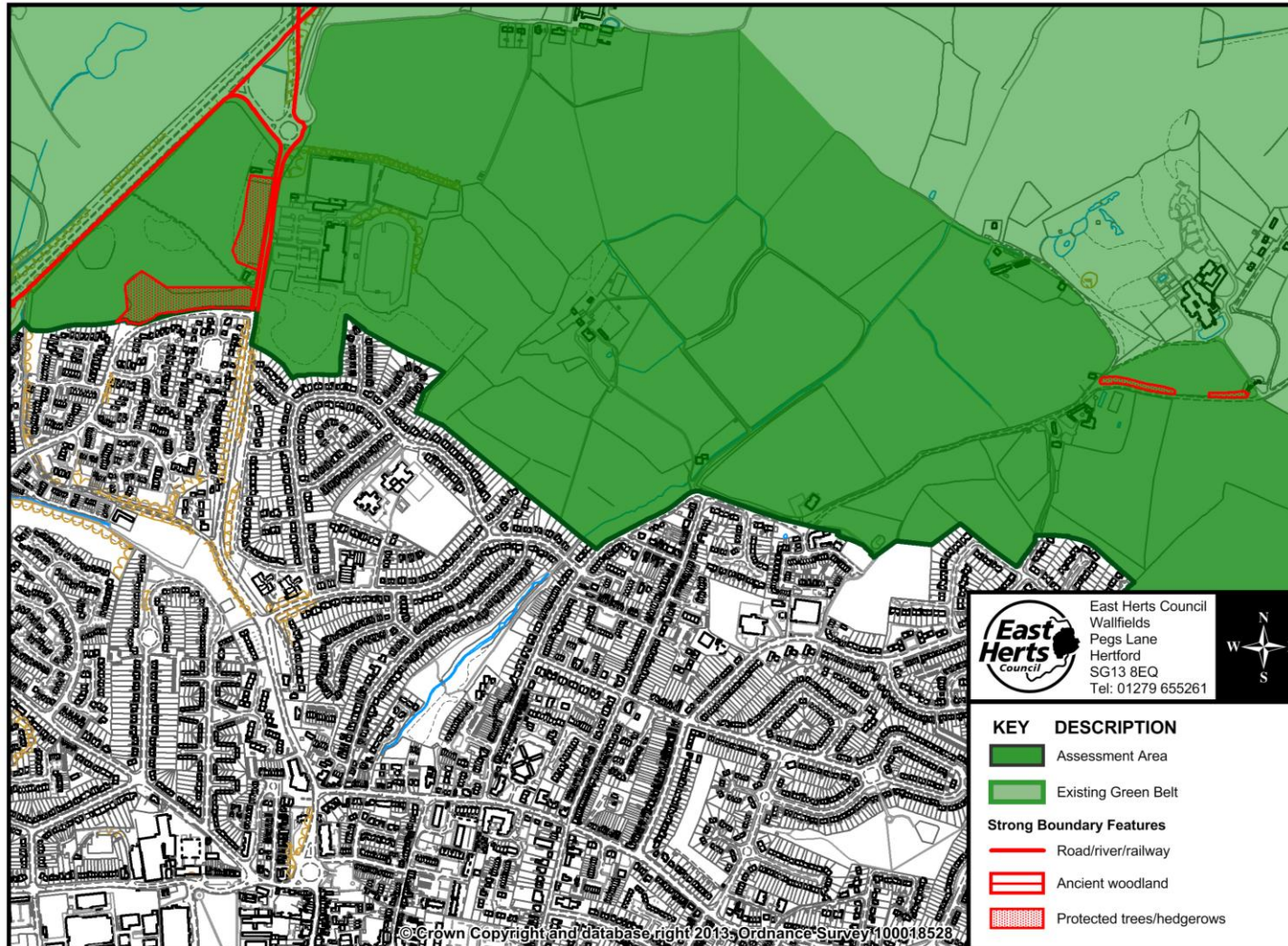
- The Green Belt at Ware North serves a role in checking unrestricted sprawl, given the largely open nature of the land. In Area 13 (Sub-Area B), Site 13I is an exception to this as it is well connected to the existing built-up area and thus does not serve to maintain the openness. The Green Belt at 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.

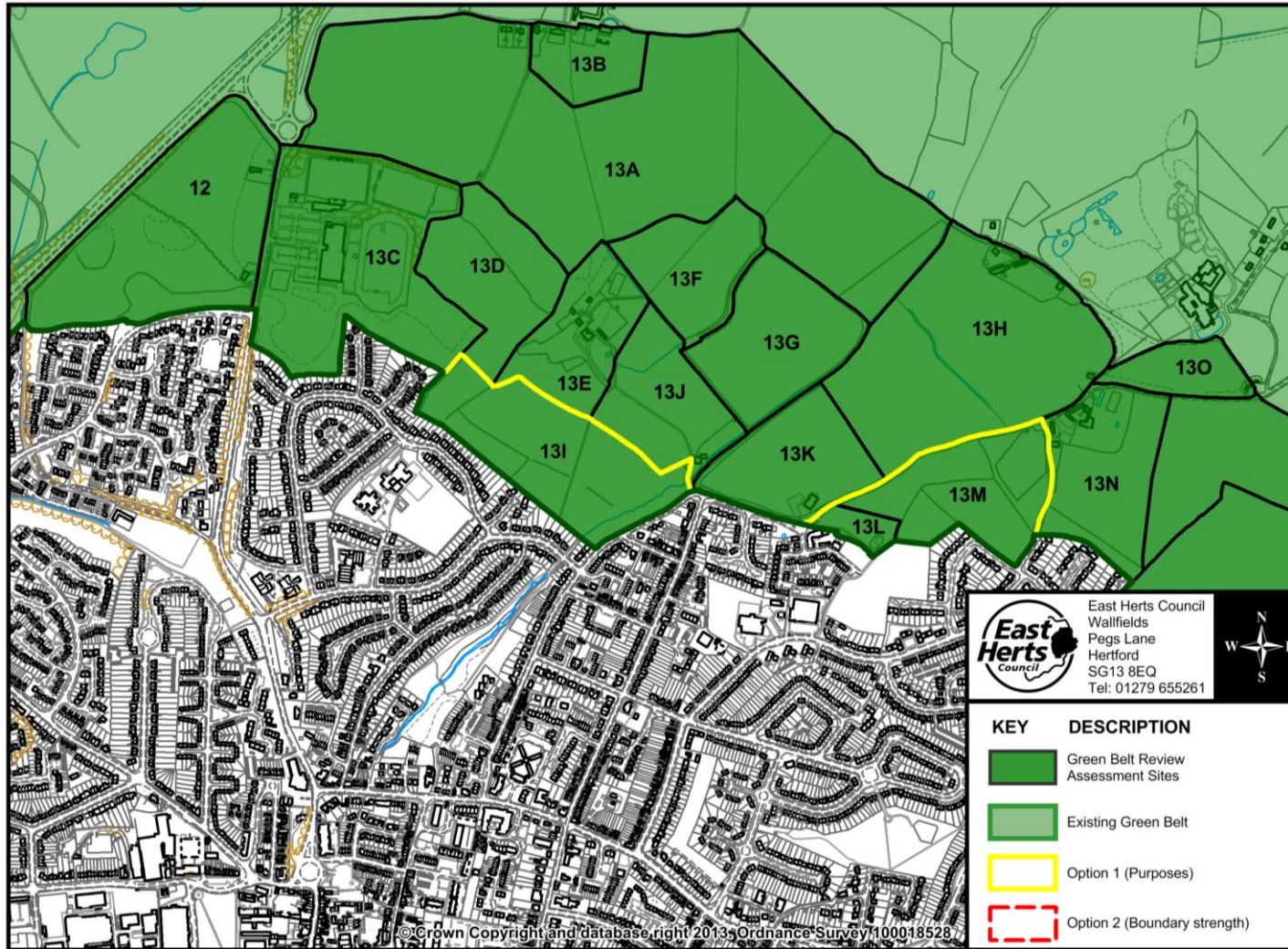
**8.2 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Ware North**  
**Map showing strong boundaries at Ware North Sub-Area A and Ware North Sub-Area B**



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	<p>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.</p>
Sub-Area B: Weak	<p>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.</p>

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

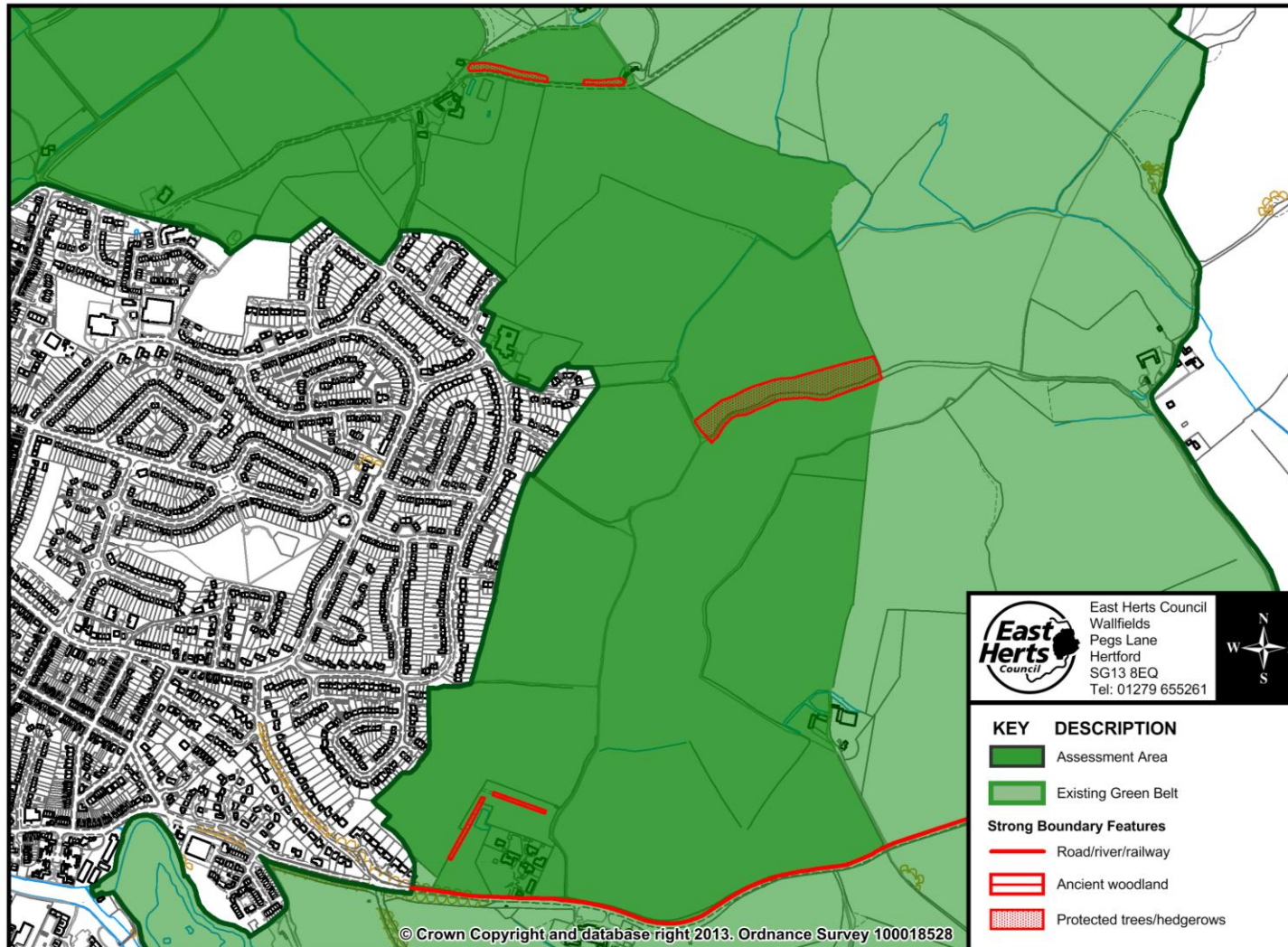






		In respect of boundaries, Site 13l is bounded by a tree line to the north which is a weak boundary. High Oak Road marks the eastern boundary, which although as a minor road is weak, is comparatively stronger than the tree line.
<b>Option 2 (Boundary strength)</b>	<b>Sub-Area A: Release Site 12</b>	If 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.
	<b>Sub-Area B: No release</b>	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.

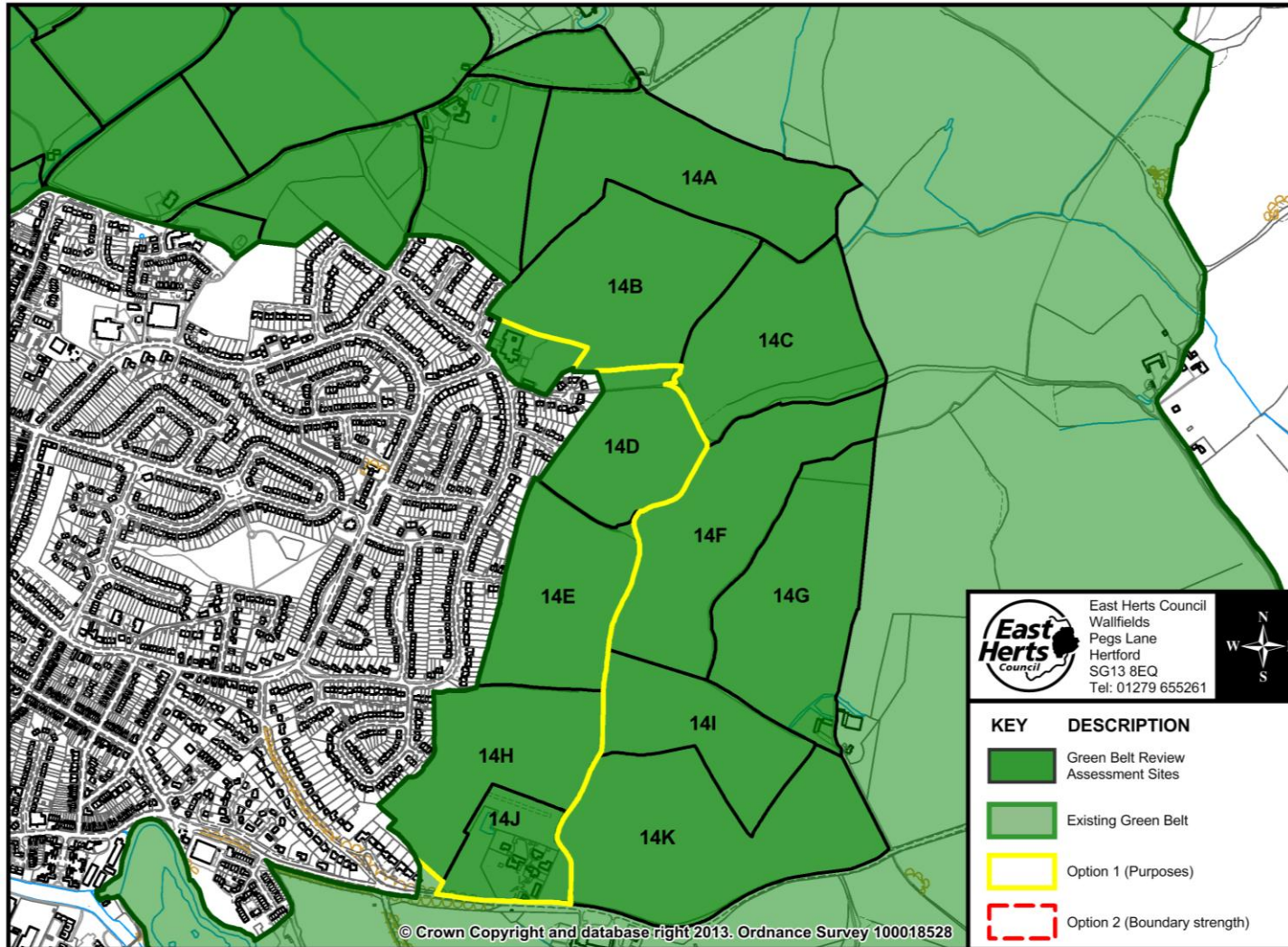
8.4 Detailed Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for Ware East  
 Map showing strong boundaries at Ware East Sub-Area A



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.

<b>Existing boundary strength</b>	<b>Existing boundary description</b>
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

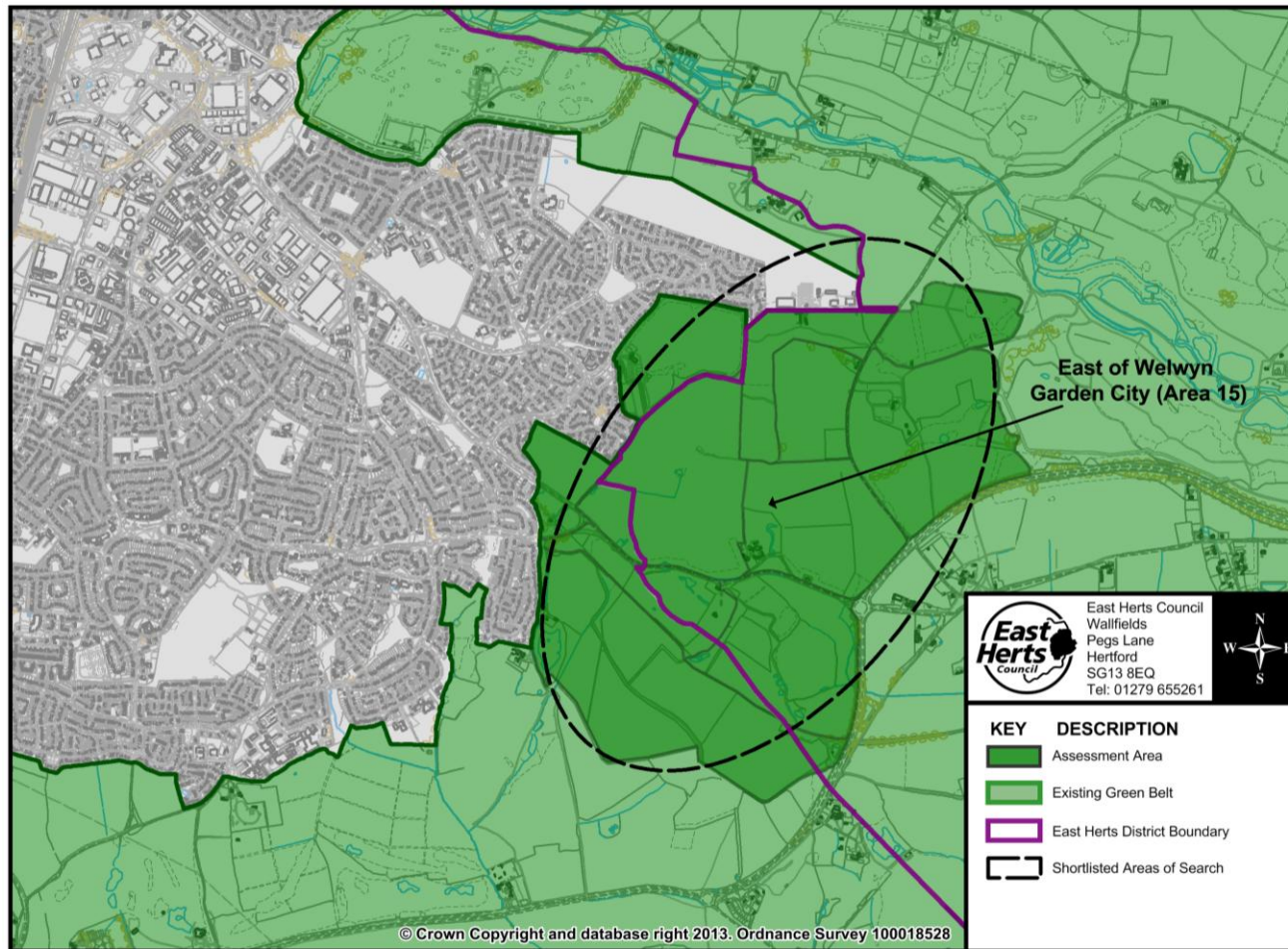


	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>Option 1 (Purposes)</b>	<b>Release Sites 14D, 14E, 14H, 14J and part of Site 14B</b>	<p>The area serves an important role in preventing the unrestricted sprawl of Ware in retaining the openness, particularly given that the urban form of Ware on the eastern 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>
<b>Option 2 (Boundary strength)</b>	<b>No release</b>	<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>

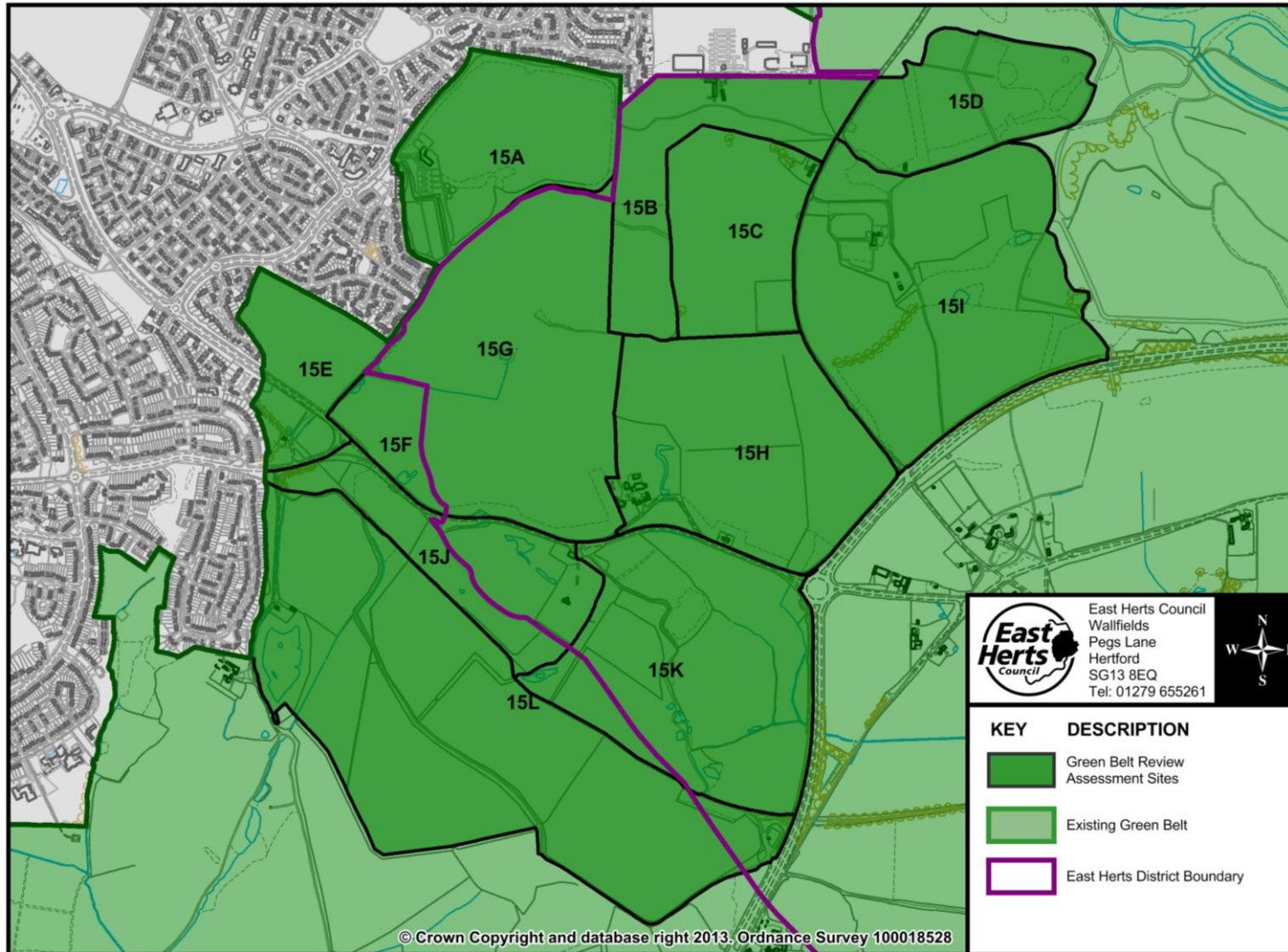
## 9 Detailed Site Assessment of land East of Welwyn Garden City

### 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**

<b>East of Welwyn Garden City</b>												
<b>GBR Ref</b>	<b>15A</b>	<b>15B</b>	<b>15C</b>	<b>15D</b>	<b>15E</b>	<b>15F</b>	<b>15G</b>	<b>15H</b>	<b>15I</b>	<b>15J</b>	<b>15K</b>	<b>15L</b>
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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>

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**

<b>East of Welwyn Garden City</b>												
<b>GBR Ref</b>	<b>15A</b>	<b>15B</b>	<b>15C</b>	<b>15D</b>	<b>15E</b>	<b>15F</b>	<b>15G</b>	<b>15H</b>	<b>15I</b>	<b>15J</b>	<b>15K</b>	<b>15L</b>
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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

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**

<b>East of Welwyn Garden City</b>												
<b>GBR Ref</b>	<b>15A</b>	<b>15B</b>	<b>15C</b>	<b>15D</b>	<b>15E</b>	<b>15F</b>	<b>15G</b>	<b>15H</b>	<b>15I</b>	<b>15J</b>	<b>15K</b>	<b>15L</b>
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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>

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**

<b>East of Welwyn Garden City</b>												
<b>GBR Ref</b>	<b>15A</b>	<b>15B</b>	<b>15C</b>	<b>15D</b>	<b>15E</b>	<b>15F</b>	<b>15G</b>	<b>15H</b>	<b>15I</b>	<b>15J</b>	<b>15K</b>	<b>15L</b>
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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>

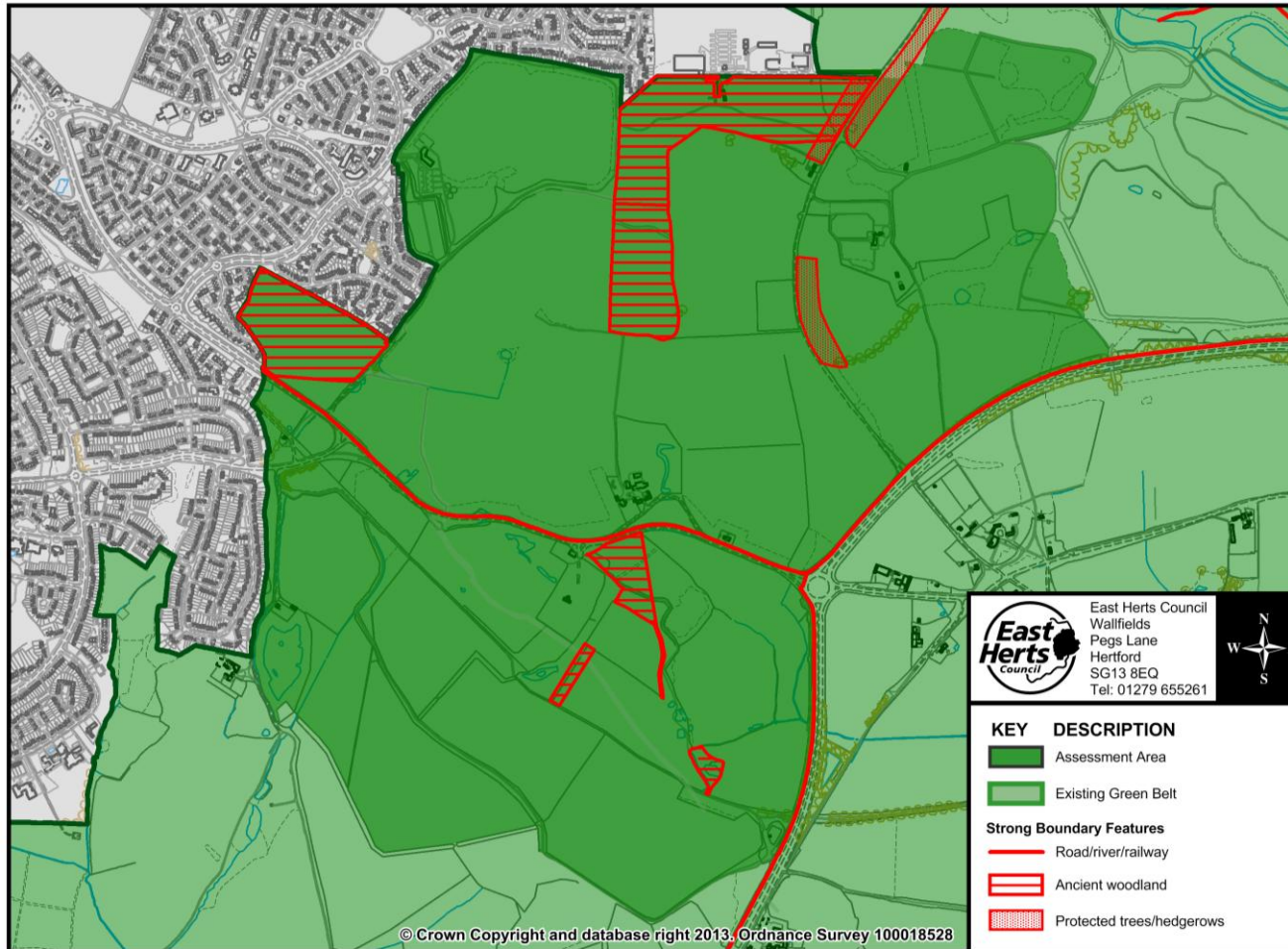
Although none of the sites lie within or in close proximity to the Conservation Area of Welwyn Garden City, there are numerous designated heritage assets contained within and surrounding the area of search. The sites to the east of Brocket Hill (Sites 15D and 15I) are located within the registered historic 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.

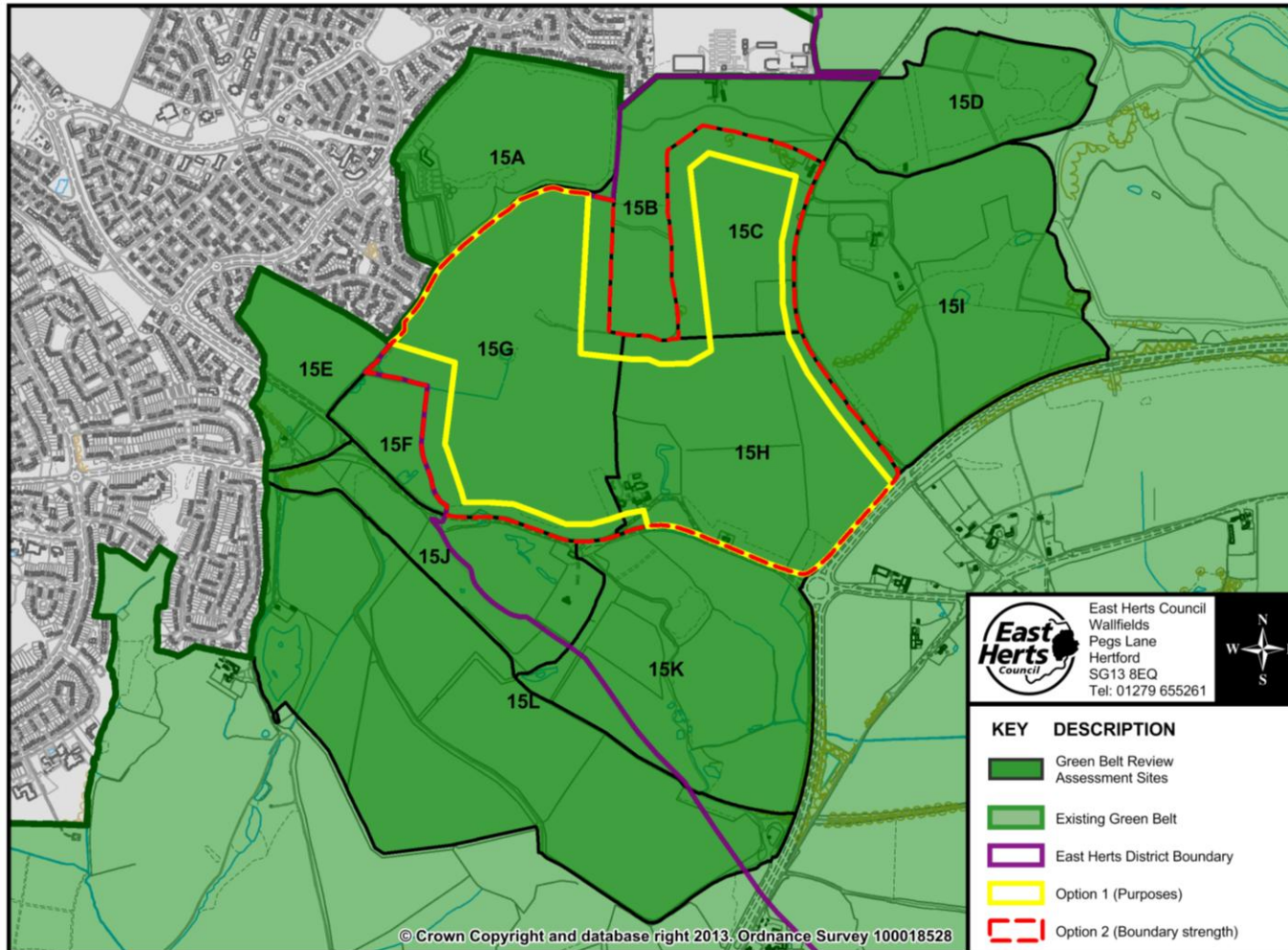
**9.2 Detail Site Assessment Stage 2 – Boundary Assessment for East of Welwyn Garden City**  
**Map showing strong boundaries at East of Welwyn Garden City**



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.

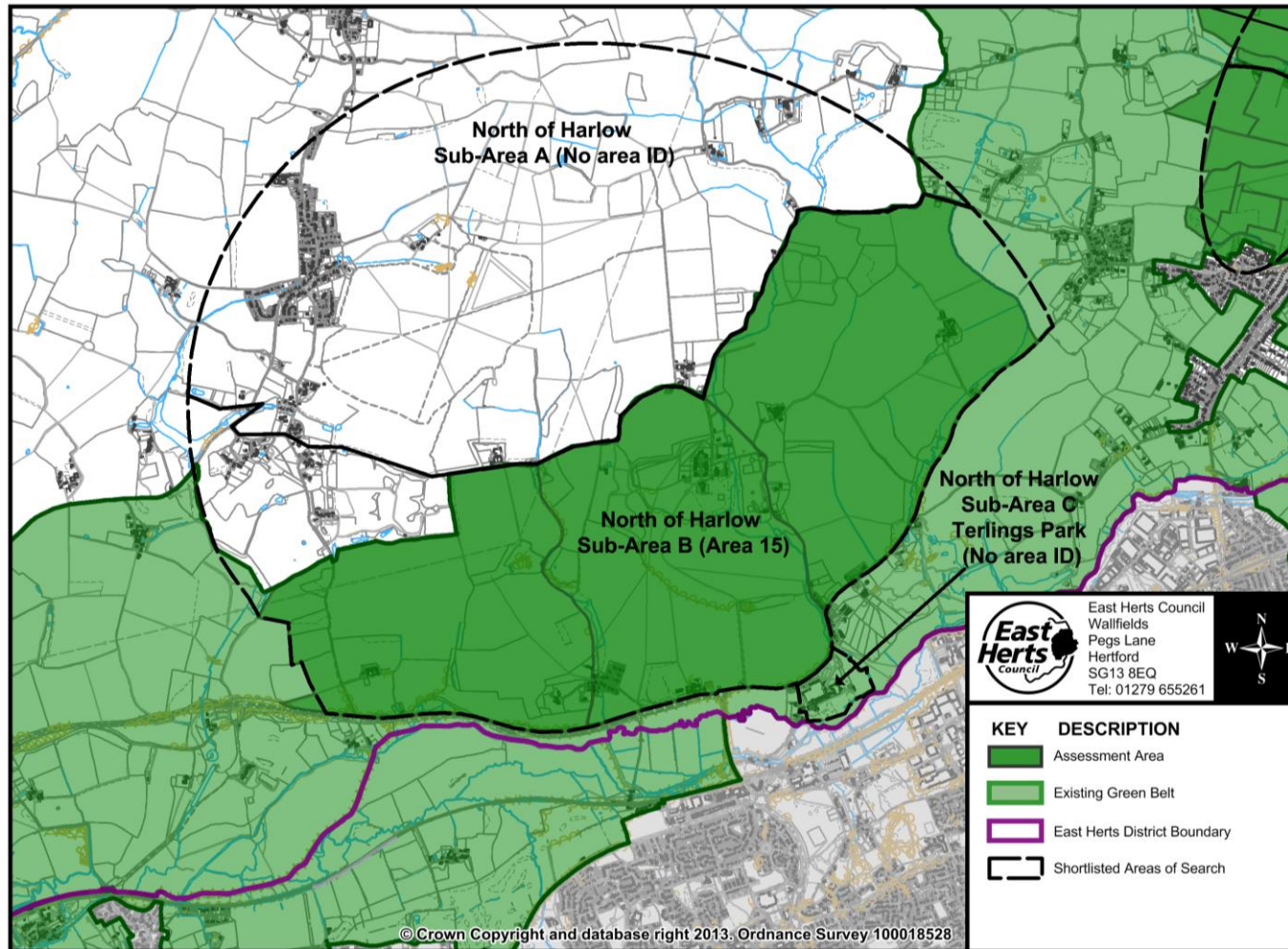
	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>Option 1 (Purposes)</b>	<b>Release of part of Site 15C, part of Site 15G and part of Site 15H</b>	Parts within Sites 15C, 15G and 15H are considered to fulfil the Green Belt purposes the least. Although the Green Belt in Area 15 is considered to safeguard 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.
<b>Option 2 (Boundary strength)</b>	<b>Release of Sites 15C, 15G and 15H</b>	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.



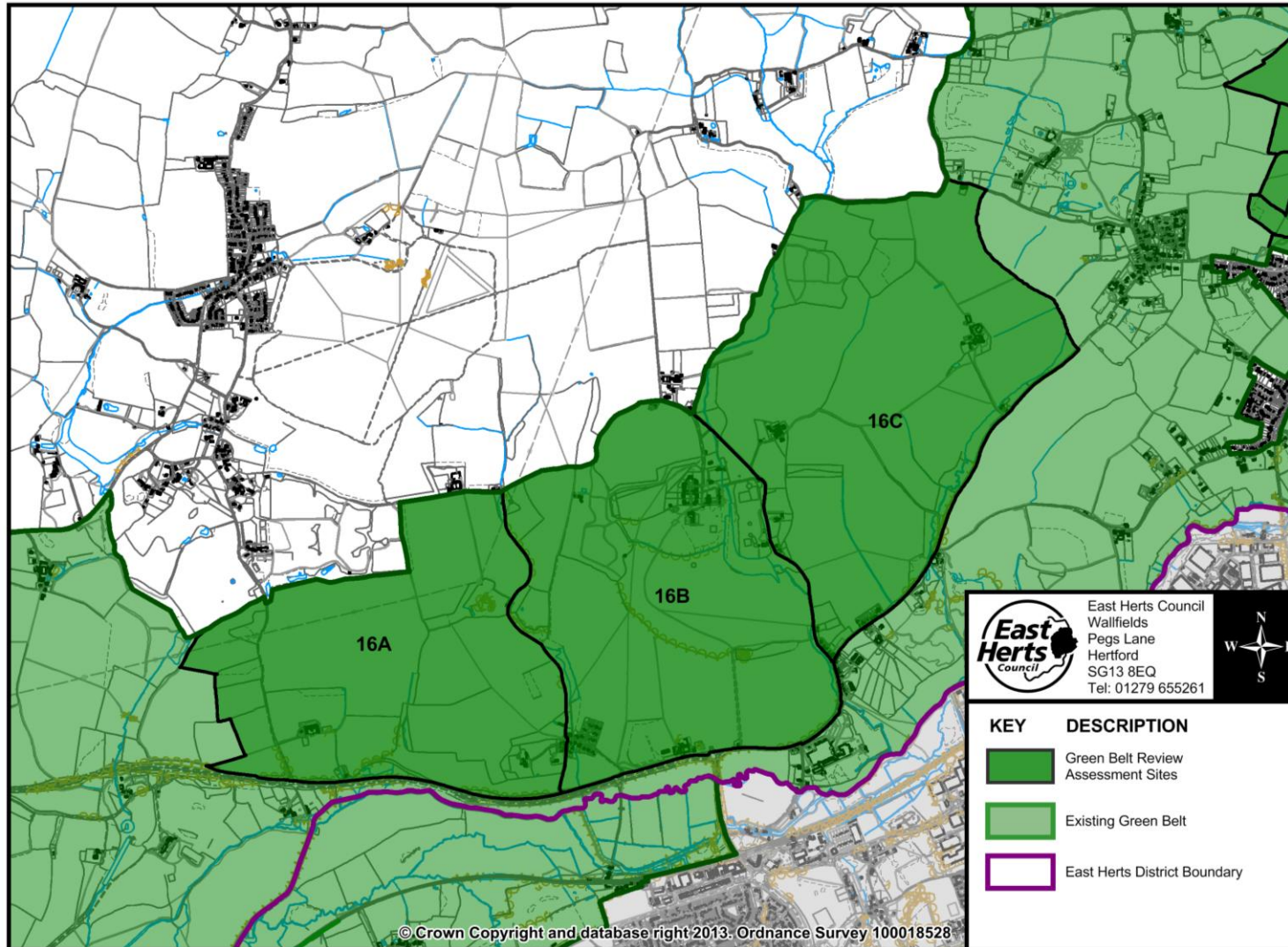
## 10 Detailed Site Assessment of land North of Harlow

### 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**

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

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**

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

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>

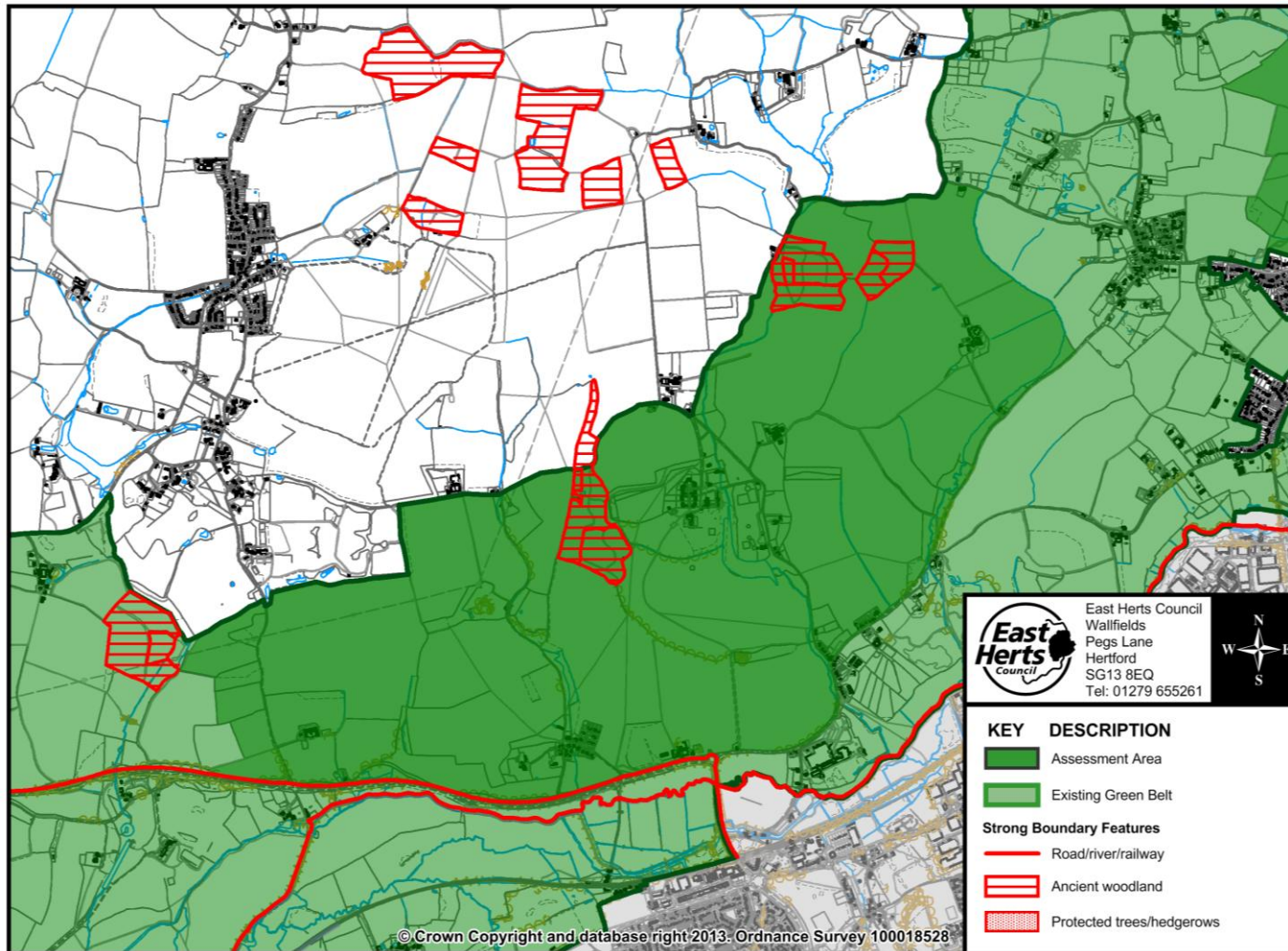
The Green Belt at Area 16 (Sub-Area B) contains a number of designated heritage assets. Site 16A contains a number of Areas of Archaeological Significance, including those around the Scheduled Monument of the moated site south of Eastwick Hall Farm, the listed buildings at Brickhouse Farm and Eastwick 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, Channoeks 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.

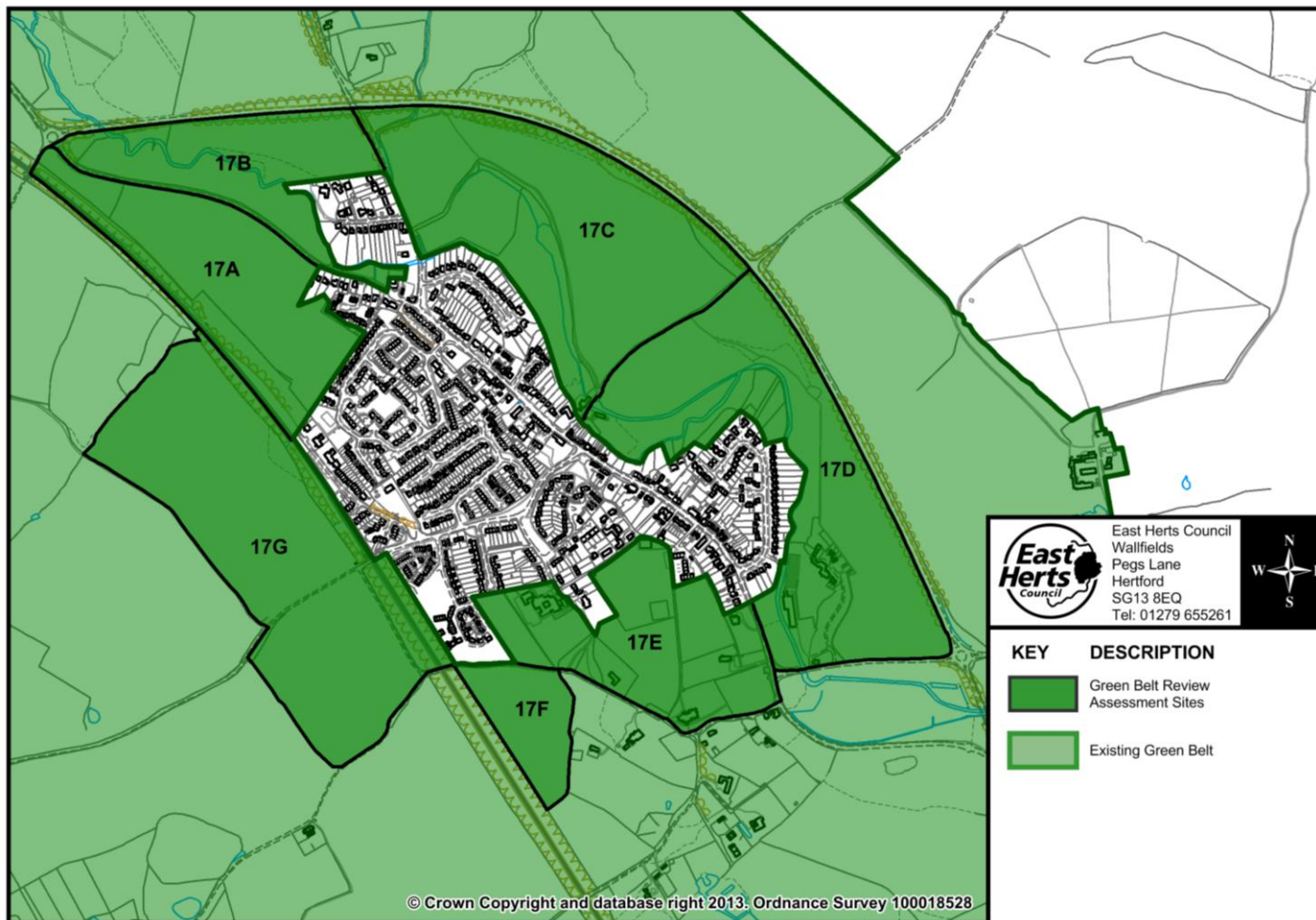
### 10.3 Detailed Site Assessment – Recommended Option for North of Harlow

	Recommendation	Justification
<p><b>Option</b>  <b>Sub-Area B: Dependent on scale and form of development.</b></p>		<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**

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

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

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
<b>Purpose Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>

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**

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

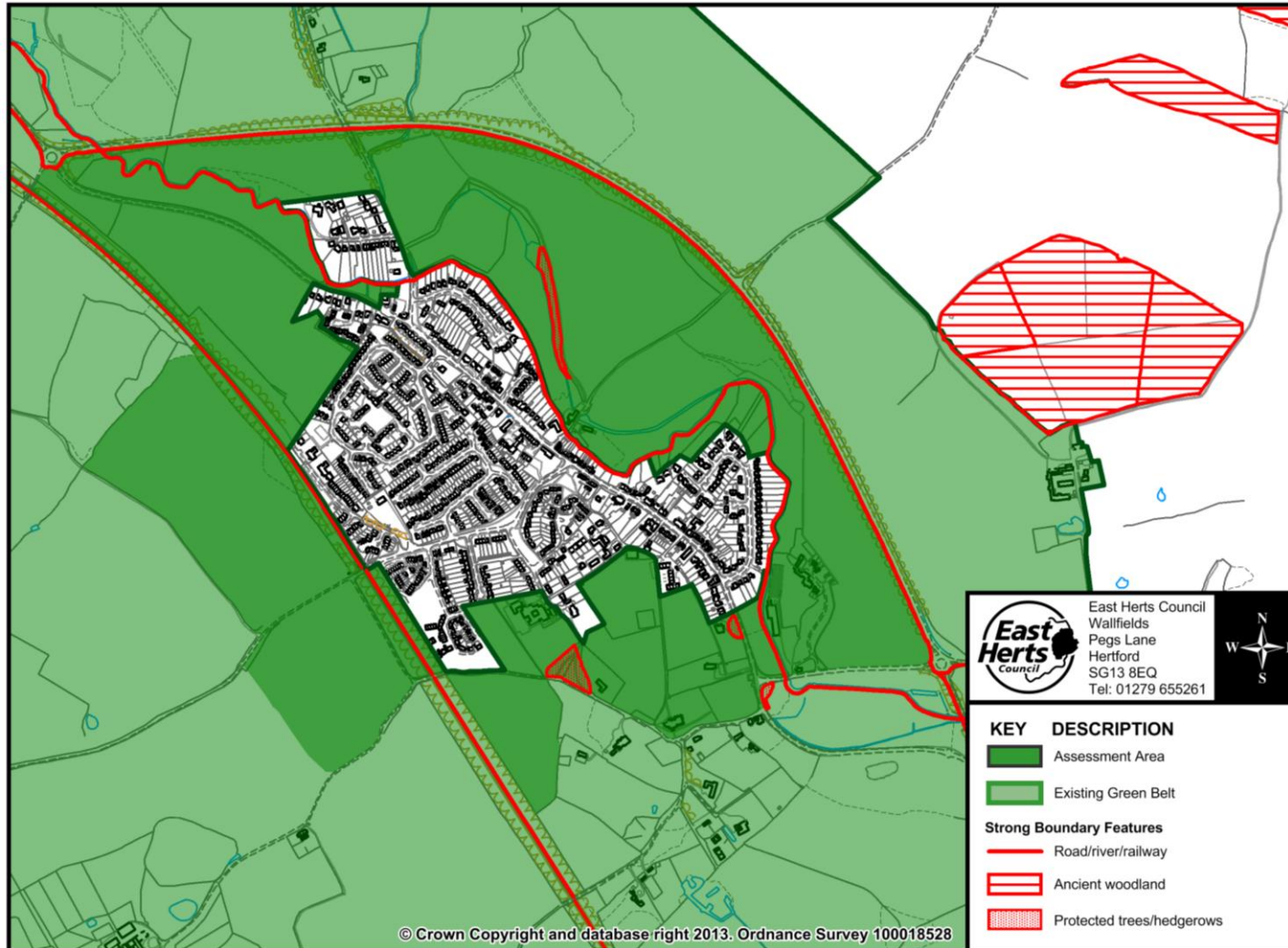
The Green Belt at Watton-at-Stone does little in preserving the setting and special character of historic towns, given the distance from the nearest ones. However, it does contribute to preserving the setting and special character of the village itself, particularly to the south of the village. To the 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	<p>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.</p>
Eastern: Strong	<p>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.</p>
Southern: Weak	<p>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.</p>
Western: Strong	<p>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.</p>

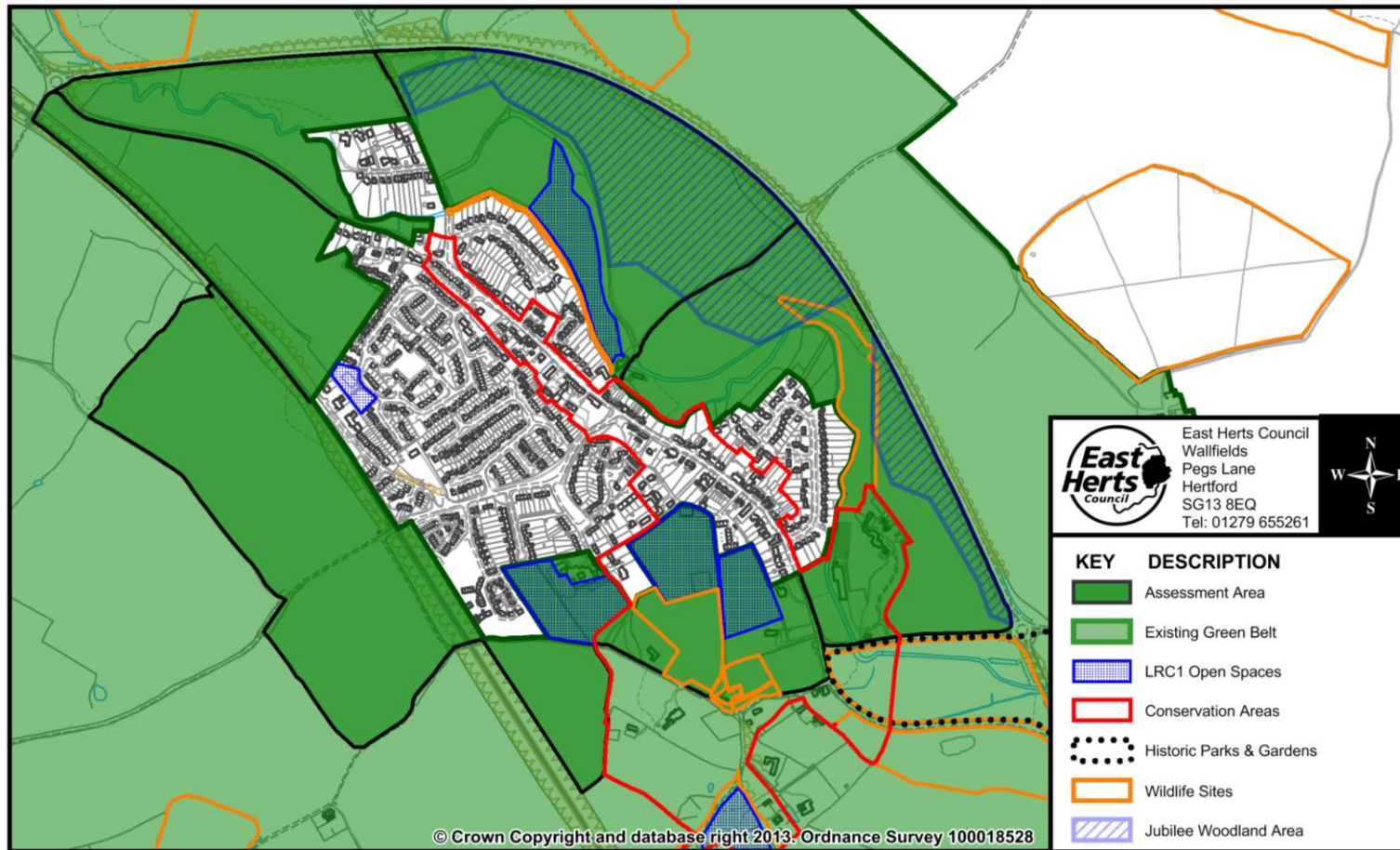


### **11.3 Detailed Site Assessment – Suitability for Development**

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.

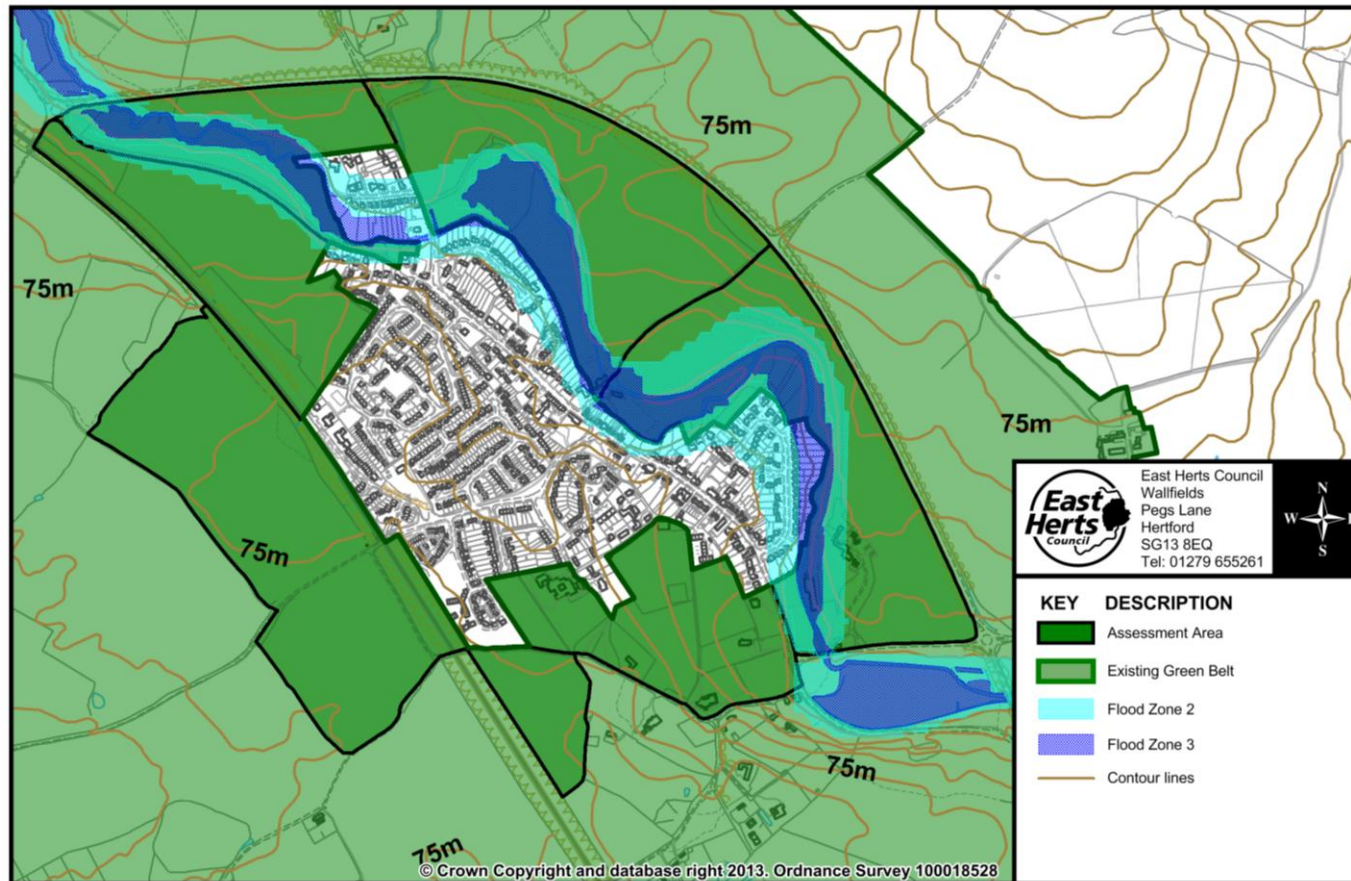
Map of local policy constraints and proposed Jubilee woodland at Watton-at-Stone



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

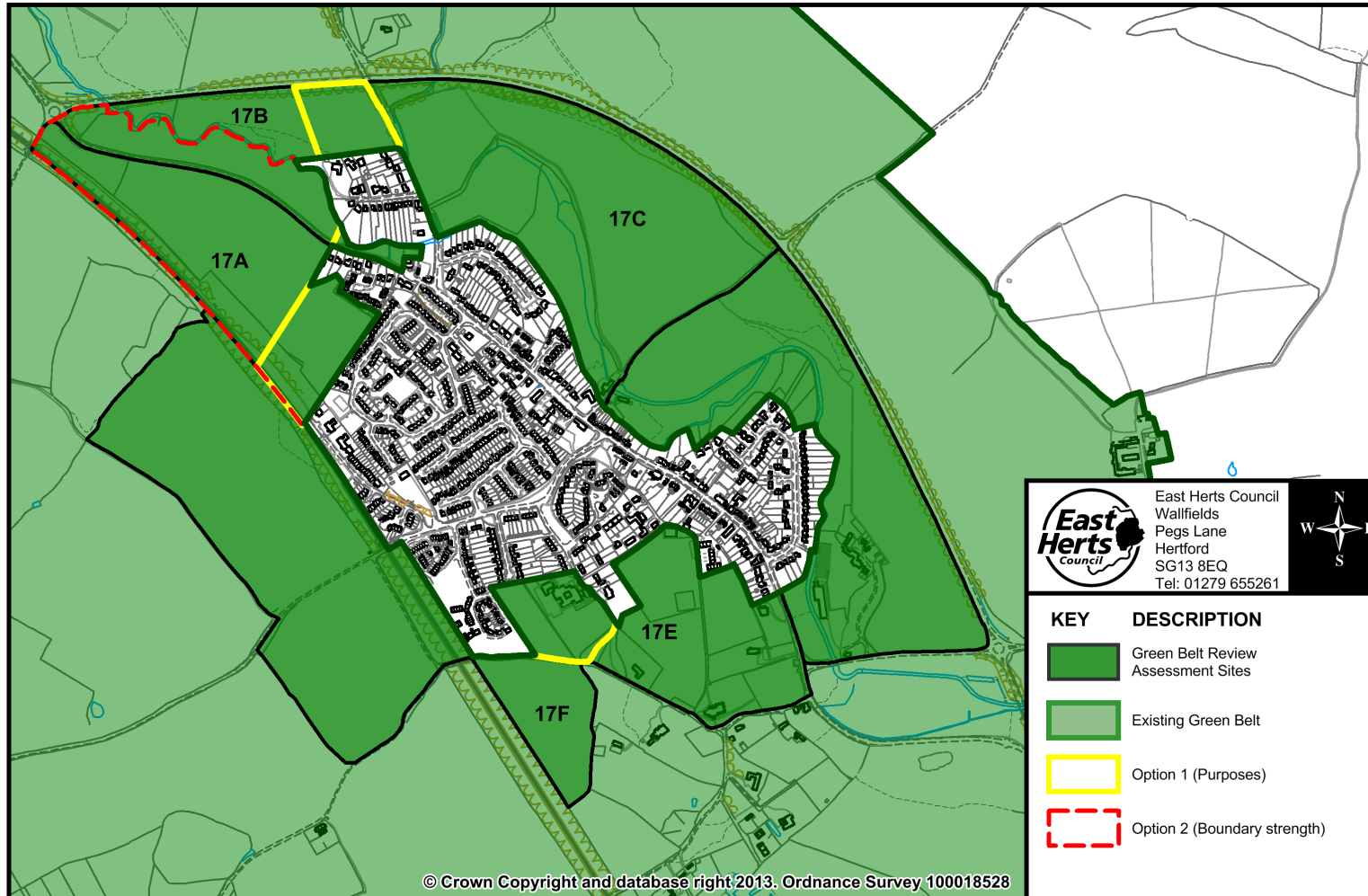


The map of the physical constraints identifies Flood Zones 2 and 3, where development is discouraged due to the flood risk. This renders the western section of Site 17B largely unsuitable for development, as well as sections of the eastern sites closest to the village. The contours of the land are also 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



	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>Option 1 (Purposes)</b>	<b>Release part of Site 17A, two parts of Site 17B and part of Site 17E</b>	<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>
<p><b>Option 2 (Boundary strength)</b></p>	<p><b>Release Site 17A and part of Site 17B</b></p>	<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 Bengo 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 Bengo 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 Bengo allotments, bordered by a public right of way to the north-east, the built-up area at the B158/Wadesmill Road, Bengo Street and Wadesmill Road to the south-east, south and south-west and a sparsely treed curtilage of Bengo 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