

St Albans City & District Council

Green Belt Review: Washed Over Villages Study

Annex Report

June 2023



Introduction

This Annex report contains the assessment pro forma for the existing and potential Washed Over Villages within the St Albans Green Belt, (Figure A1). The existing and potential Washed Over Villages have been assessed against NPPF (2021) Paragraph 144. The method, key findings and recommendations of this assessment can be found in the accompanying Green Belt Stage 2 Review Report.

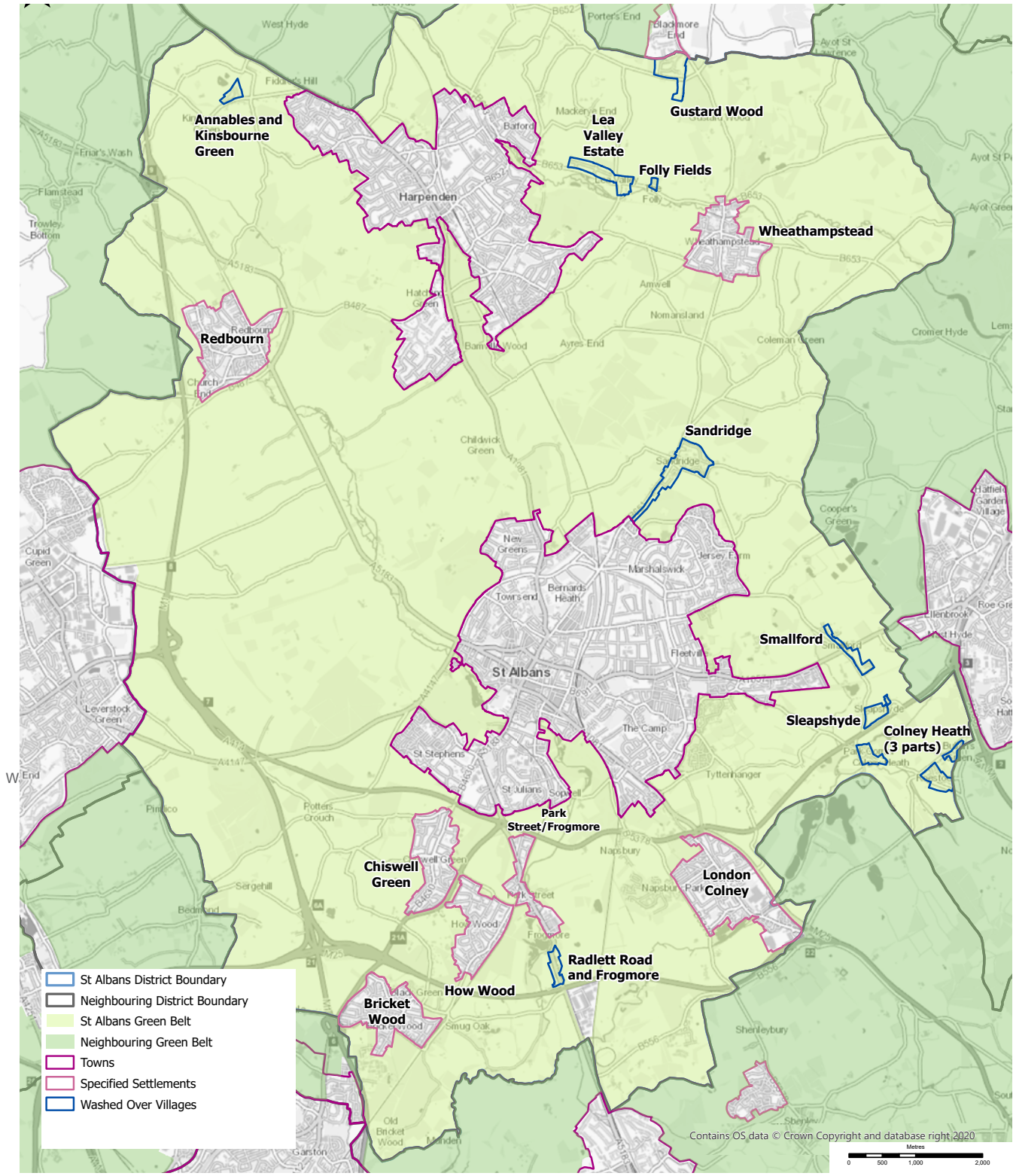
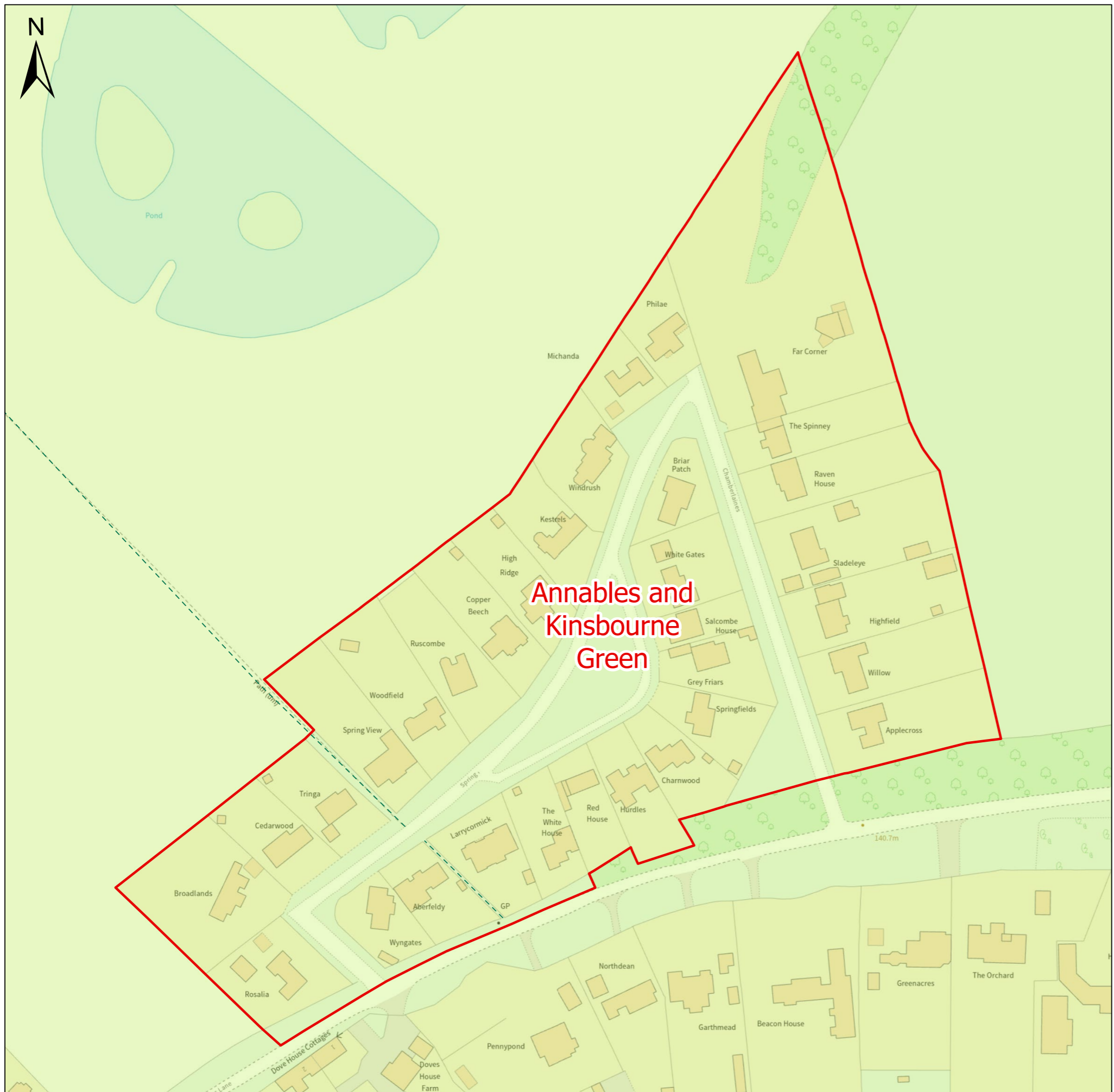


Table A1 summarises the scores and recommendations for the existing and potential Washed Over Villages based on the assessment against the NPPF paragraph 144. It will be for the Council to ultimately make any final decisions regarding the future of Washed Over Villages within the district taking into account all of the Local Plan evidence base and the spatial vision and objectives for St Albans.

Summary table

Settlement	Does the village have an open character?	Settlement Form and Scale	Key Open Spaces	Does the open character of the village make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt?	Key views to/from settlement	Settlement edge characteristics and setting	Recommendation
Annables and Kinsbourne Green	Yes	High	High	Yes	Low	Moderate	Retain as washed over
Colney Heath	Yes	Moderate	Moderate	Yes	Moderate	Moderate	Retain as washed over
Folly Fields	Yes	High	Low	Yes	High	High	Retain as washed over
Gustard Wood	Yes	Moderate	Moderate	Yes	Moderate	Moderate	Retain as washed over
Lea Valley Estate	Yes	High	Moderate	Yes	High	Moderate	Retain as washed over
Radlett Road and Frogmore	Yes	Moderate	Low	No	Low	Moderate	Consider insetting from Green Belt
Sandridge	Yes	Moderate	Moderate	Yes	High	Moderate	Retain as washed over
Sleapshyde	Yes	High	High	Yes	Moderate	Moderate	Retain as washed over
Smallford	Yes	Moderate	Moderate	Yes	Moderate	Moderate	Retain as washed over
Napsbury	Yes	High	High	Yes	High	High	Consider for washed over status



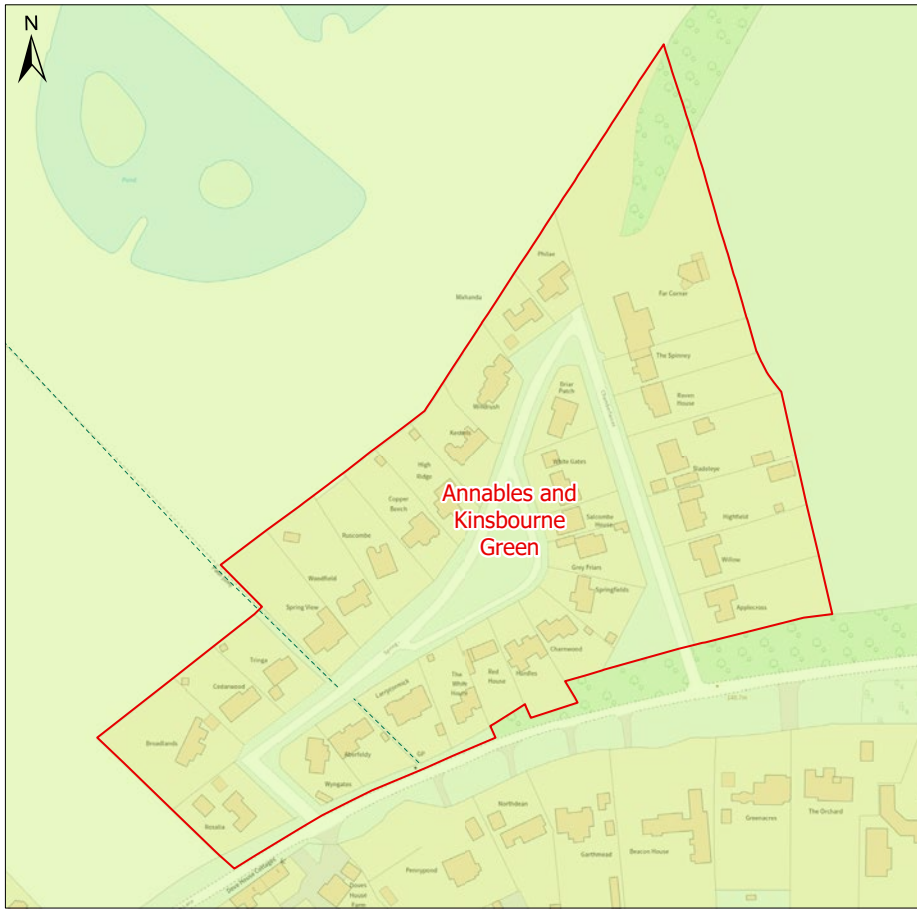
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Annables and Kinsbourne Green



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Village map



A view looking in a north east direction from Spring Road across a greenspace with views of wide green verges, two storey dwellings and a treelined skyline.



A view looking northward along Chamberlaines lane from the southern boundary and entrance with a view of the well vegetated wide green verges.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 1: Assessment of 'open character' of the village

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
1. Settlement Form and Scale	<p>The settlement is a small compact cluster of low-density housing located along a small looping road: Spring Road and Chamberlaines which adjoin Annables Lane to the South of the settlement.</p> <p>The development is made up of large, detached dwellings with large front and back gardens well set back from the road.</p> <p>The built development is situated on both sides of the road with the large vegetated back gardens backing onto the wider Green Belt landscape.</p>	<p>The score is high as the development has an intact, compact settlement form with most development backing onto the wider Green Belt landscapes.</p>
2. Key Open Spaces	<p>Very generous green verges, with scattered mature trees and ornamental planting, create a continuous unbroken link through the settlement. This establishes a high level of legibility and intervisibility. In the centre of the settlement is a relatively large, informal open green space which reduces development density and creates views through the settlement.</p>	<p>The score is high as a result of the strong legibility and intervisibility created by the wide green verges and relatively large central open green space.</p>

Part 1 Conclusion: Does the village have an open character?

The village scored high for both criteria and therefore is considered to have an open character.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 2: Assessment of 'openness' contribution to the Green Belt

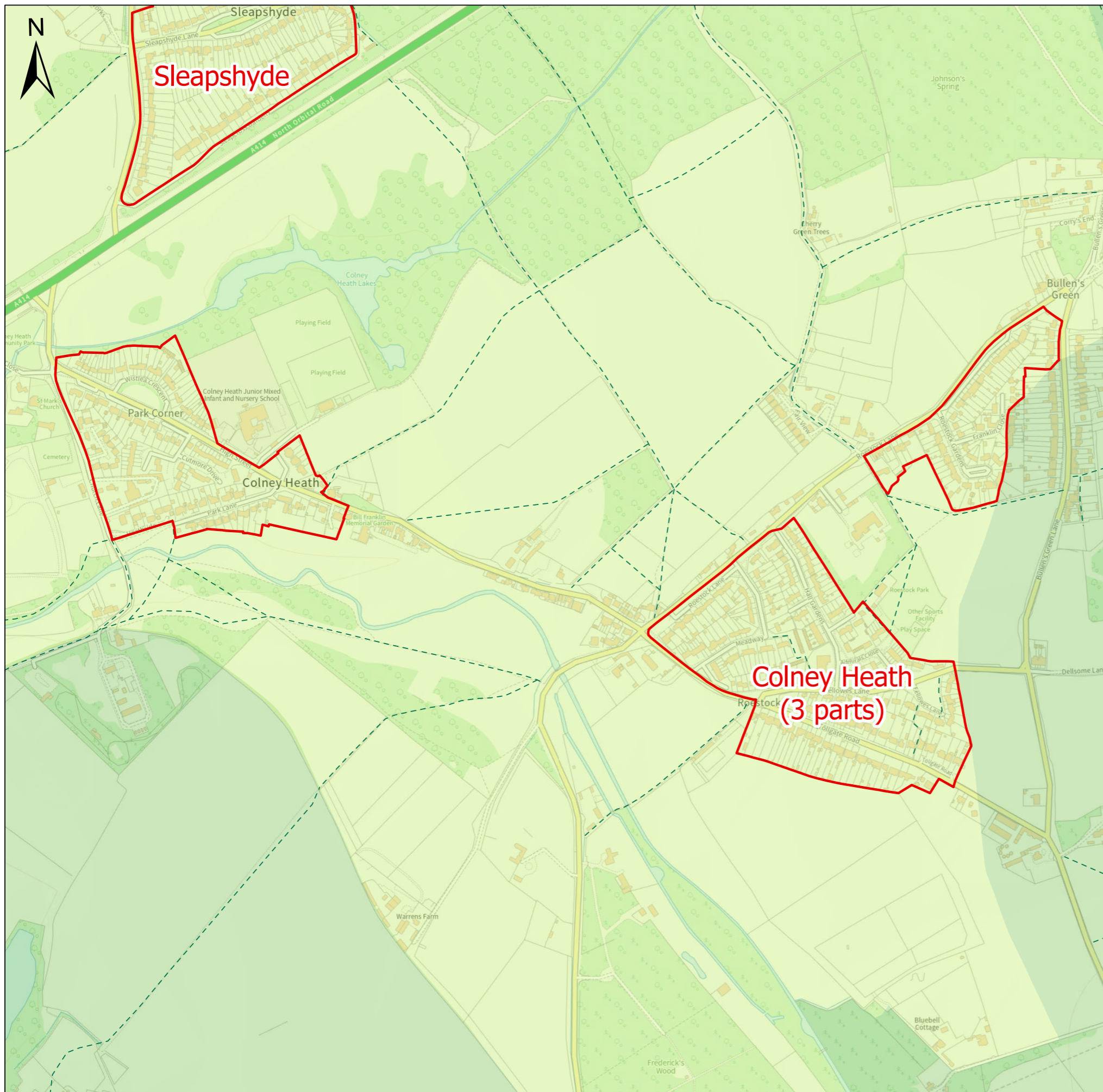
Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
Key views to/from settlement	<p>Most views of the settlement are short range and enclosed by man-made built form and natural features of front or back gardens. There is little intervisibility with the wider landscape from within the settlement.</p> <p>Glimpsed views of dwellings are possible above the clipped hedgerows from the open agricultural fields, primarily to the north of the settlement, creating a moderate intervisibility.</p>	<p>The score is low as there are limited views to the wider landscape. However, numerous glimpsed views toward the built form of the settlement are possible from the open agricultural fields to the north of the settlement.</p>
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	<p>The settlement's boundaries are generally defined by vegetated back garden hedgerows. Most of these are made up of natural features; a combination of formal and informal hedgerows with scattered trees. The hedgerows vary in height along the boundaries to the north west and east of the settlement, with some areas allowing intervisibility between dwellings and the wider landscape. This creates a moderate relationship with the landscape beyond these boundaries.</p> <p>The southern boundary along Annables Lane has a dense woodland belt which has low intervisibility and does not create a relationship between the settlement and the landscape beyond.</p>	<p>The score is moderate as the settlement boundaries are well established, generally natural with some degree of intervisibility between the built form and the wider landscape.</p>

Part 2 Conclusion: Does the open character of the village make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt?

The village scored low for 'Key views to/from the settlement' and moderate for 'settlement edge characteristics and setting'. The moderate score of 'settlement edge characteristics and setting' overrides the low score of 'key views to/from settlement' as all boundaries are largely natural and the lower hedgerow boundaries in some areas e.g. to the north of the settlement; allow some degree of relationship with the wider landscape where localised views to and from the settlement are possible. Its open character is therefore considered to make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt.

Recommendation

The village has an open character and makes an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt, therefore it should be retained as washed over.



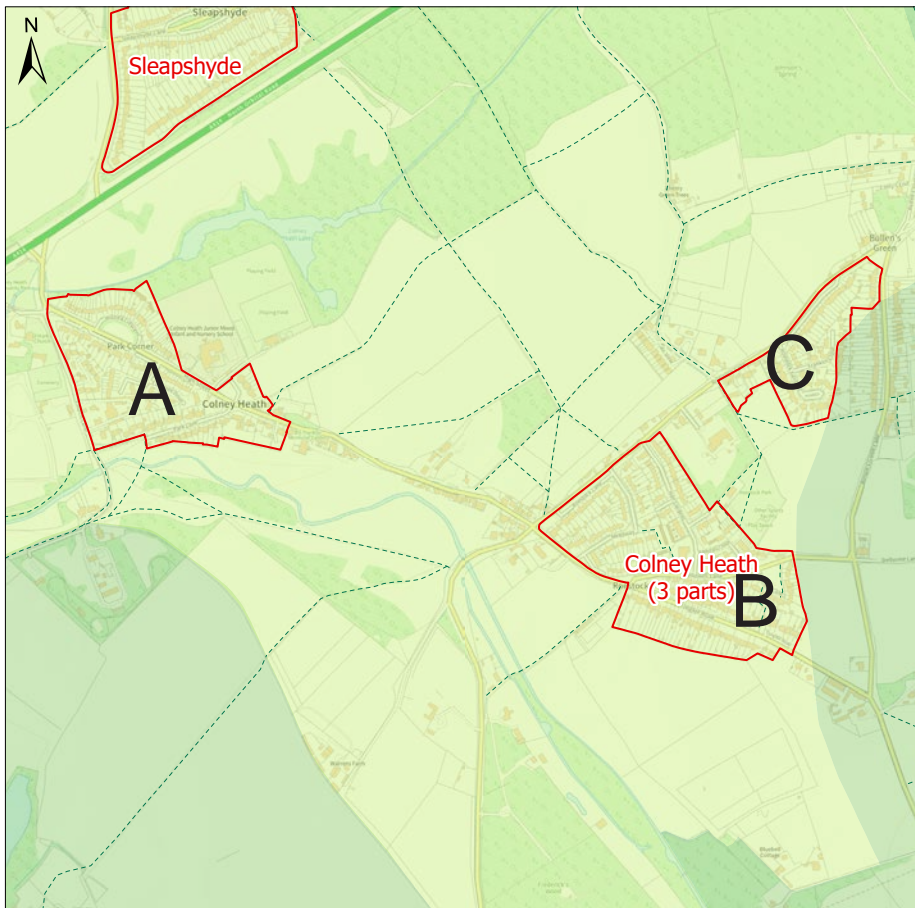
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Colney Heath



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Village map



A view looking north eastward across Wistlea Crescent with two storey dwellings behind a large green open space.



A southward view from Meadway showing the three storey buildings, wide green verges and visually permeable boundaries allowing views to Green Belt beyond.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 1: Assessment of 'open character' of the village

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
1. Settlement Form and Scale	<p>The settlement is in three separate nucleated clusters:</p> <p>The western area of Colney Heath (A) is a small cluster of development located along High Street and the adjacent Wistlea Crescent. There is infill development south of the High Street on Cutmore Drive. The development is moderately dense with moderately sized gardens. Built form is generally up to two storeys with a mixture of detached, semi-detached and a small number of terraced houses.</p> <p>The largest area (B) to the south, is a cluster of development along looping lanes and cul-de-sacs between Tollgate Road and Roestock Lane. This area has some localised three storey development with moderate density and moderately sized gardens. The development is a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses.</p> <p>The third nucleated cluster (C) is located along Roestock Lane and Bullens Green Lane with some infill development along a cul-de-sac. This area has moderate density and moderately sized gardens. The built development is predominantly semi-detached two storey dwellings.</p>	<p>Area B scores low resulting from the development density and infill development. The score for areas A and C is moderate as they are smaller and have a lower development density with a greater proportion of the built form facing onto the surrounding Green Belt.</p> <p>Overall the settlement score is moderate</p>
2. Key Open Spaces	<p>All three areas of Colney Heath have generous green verges, mostly on the primary access roads, which contribute to the legibility and intervisibility of the settlement. Vegetated front gardens also contribute to the open character within all three clusters of the settlement and whilst there are moderate to large back gardens, they are not visually prominent.</p> <p>The crescent is a prominent greenspace in area A which is visually open on a key route through the settlement. There are numerous informal open green spaces which also contribute to the legibility and open character, scattered around the settlement south of Fellowes Lane.</p>	<p>The score is moderate for areas A B and C and is therefore moderate overall. This is a result of the generous green verges but lack of frequent informal greenspaces.</p>

Part 1 Conclusion: Does the village have an open character?

The village scored moderate for both criteria and therefore is considered to have an open character.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 2: Assessment of 'openness' contribution to the Green Belt

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
Key views to/from settlement	<p>In area A there are glimpsed views of St Mark's Church spire, a local landmark feature.</p> <p>Linear views along the High Street are typical, with glimpses of trees in back gardens and the wider Green Belt particularly to the north. Views from Park lane have a particularly close relationship to the surrounding landscape around the River Colne.</p> <p>In the development away from the settlement edge, the sloping topography to the south creates glimpsed views of the wooded skyline of the wider landscape to the south.</p> <p>In area B most views are internal along the looping roads of the settlement structure. They typically feature vegetated green verges and front gardens but have little connection to the wider Green Belt landscapes.</p> <p>Views from the southern boundary, however, have very strong connections to the wider landscape with open arable fields and wooded blocks in the background as there is a visually permeable boundary with no adjacent development along Tollgate Road.</p> <p>There are glimpsed views of the fields and wooded blocks in the wider Green Belt landscapes from Roestock Lane through gaps in development.</p> <p>In area C there are glimpsed views westward to the fields and wooded areas of the wider landscape along Roestock Lane.</p> <p>Views from internal cul-de-sacs of area C are short and enclosed by the surrounding development but often contain glimpses of trees of the surrounding landscape.</p> <p>Views from Bullens Green Lane south feature a continuation of the settlement outside the study area.</p>	<p>The score is moderate for areas A B and C and is therefore moderate overall. This is because all areas of the settlement have mixed boundaries with some degree of intervisibility and relationship with the wider landscape.</p>

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Settlement edge characteristics and setting

Area A is surrounded to the west by woodland which is mostly unbroken but to the south the boundaries are particularly intermittent with low garden hedges which expose the settlement to the wider landscape and create a strong localised relationship with the surrounding landscape. The east of the area is a mix of intact back garden hedgerow boundaries but also relatively undefined or intermittent boundaries with a mix of man-made and natural features in the gaps between residential development.

The southern and eastern boundaries of area B have a mixture of various garden fences and hedges which allow a moderate visual permeability and some areas with simple, very visually permeable fences allow a strong relationship with the wider landscape; for example along Tollgate Road or at Admirals Close. The north western boundary is moderately intact along Roestock Lane with intermittent man-made features of front gardens and the natural hedgerows with some degree of visual permeability.

The western boundary of Area C is mostly unbroken and linear along Roestock Lane but the hedgerow is relatively low. The southern portion of the area is a mixture of back garden hedges and trees. Both western and southern boundaries allow some intervisibility and a moderate relationship with the wider agricultural landscape beyond. The eastern boundary (outside the district study area) is also a linear row of back garden hedgerows and a block of woodland with moderate relationship with the wider landscape.

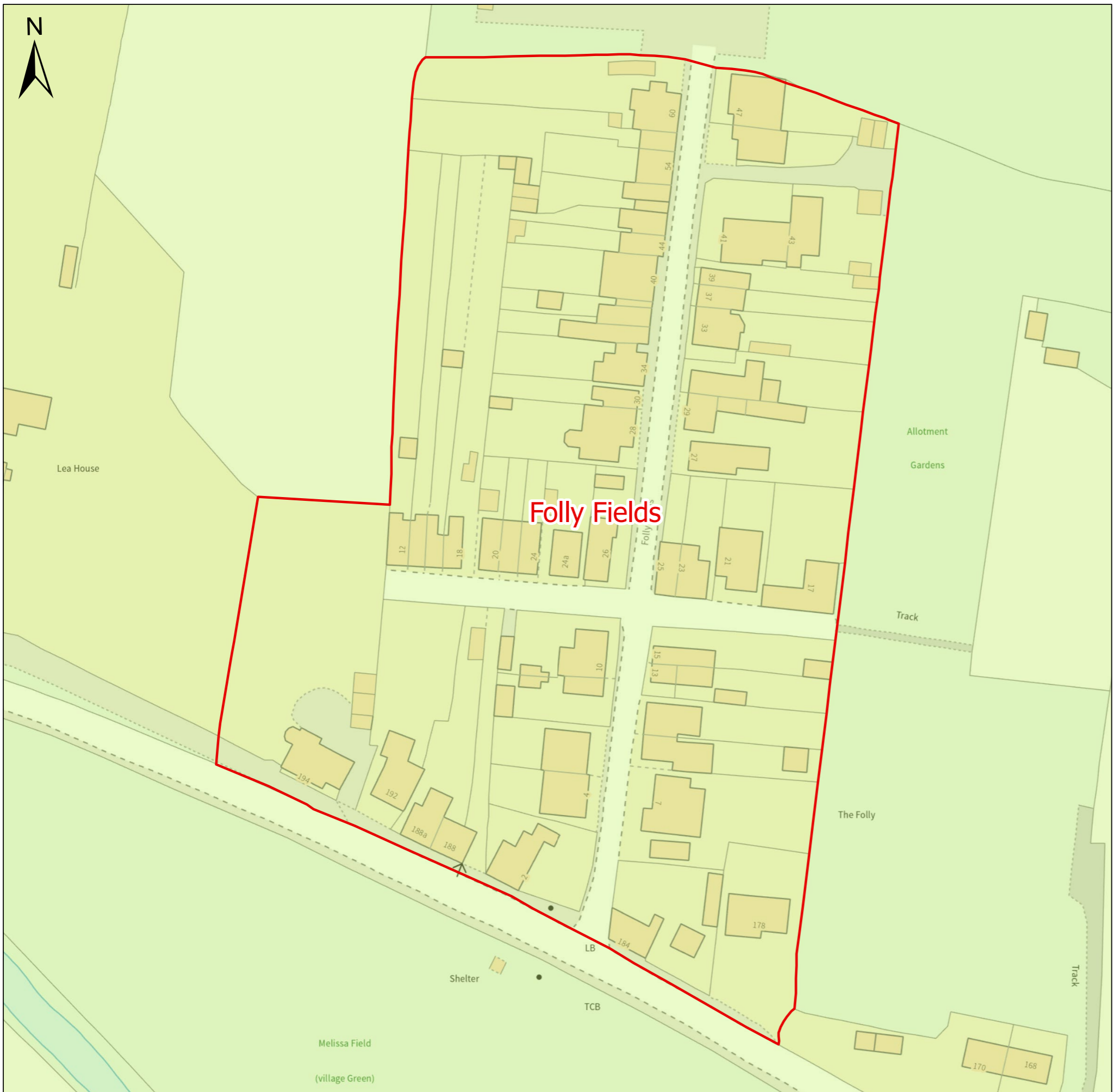
The score is **moderate** as areas A, B and C all have mixed natural and man-made boundaries with some degree of intervisibility and relationship with the wider landscape.

Part 2 Conclusion: Does the open character of the village make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt?

The village scored moderate for both of the criteria. Its open character is therefore considered to make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt.

Recommendation

The village has an open character and makes an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt, therefore it should be retained as washed over.



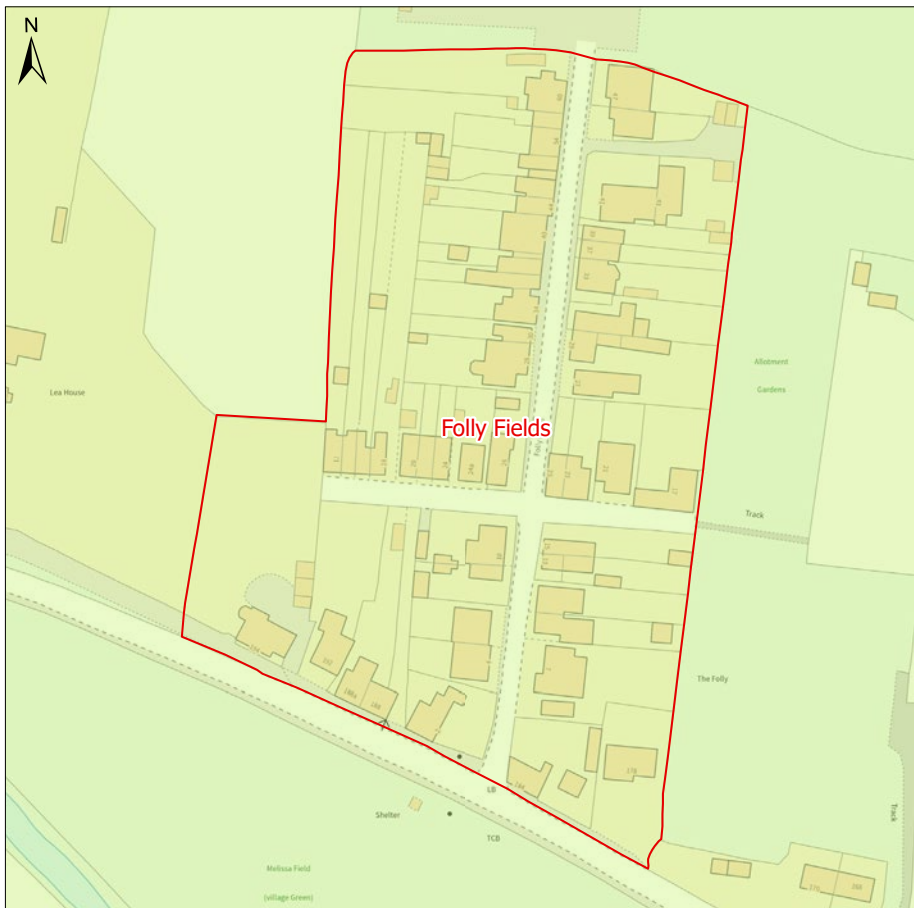
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Folly Fields



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Village map



A view looking southward from the north of the settlement showing the narrow lane and dwellings with long distance views across the wider valley landscape.



Looking northward with views of linear settlement with the open greenspace beyond the northern boundary.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 1: Assessment of 'open character' of the village

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
1. Settlement Form and Scale	<p>Folly Fields has a very small, compact, moderately dense and linear structure which steps up the south facing valley slope. The settlement is made up of a combination of adjoining two storey cottage style dwellings, and a small number of two storey detached or semi-detached properties.</p> <p>The linear road of the settlement has an open end to the north which leads onto the wider Green Belt landscape creating a close relationship to the adjacent landscape.</p>	The score is high as a result of the simple settlement pattern and small settlement depth and relationship with the wider landscape.
2. Key Open Spaces	<p>The compact settlement has no open spaces along the road and only minimal front gardens. However, there is a close relationship with the open space to the north of the settlement. The allotments to the east of the settlement provide a localised open character but are separated from the rest of the settlement by the built form.</p>	The score is low as there are no greenspaces within the main settlement and the allotments to the east have a very localised effect on open space.

Part 1 Conclusion: Does the village have an open character?

The village scored high for 'settlement form and scale' and low for 'key open spaces'. The high score of 'settlement form and scale' overrides the low score of 'key open spaces' as the very small scale nature of the settlement provides results in adjacent landscapes being apparent throughout the settlement. Therefore, the village is considered to have an open character.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 2: Assessment of 'openness' contribution to the Green Belt

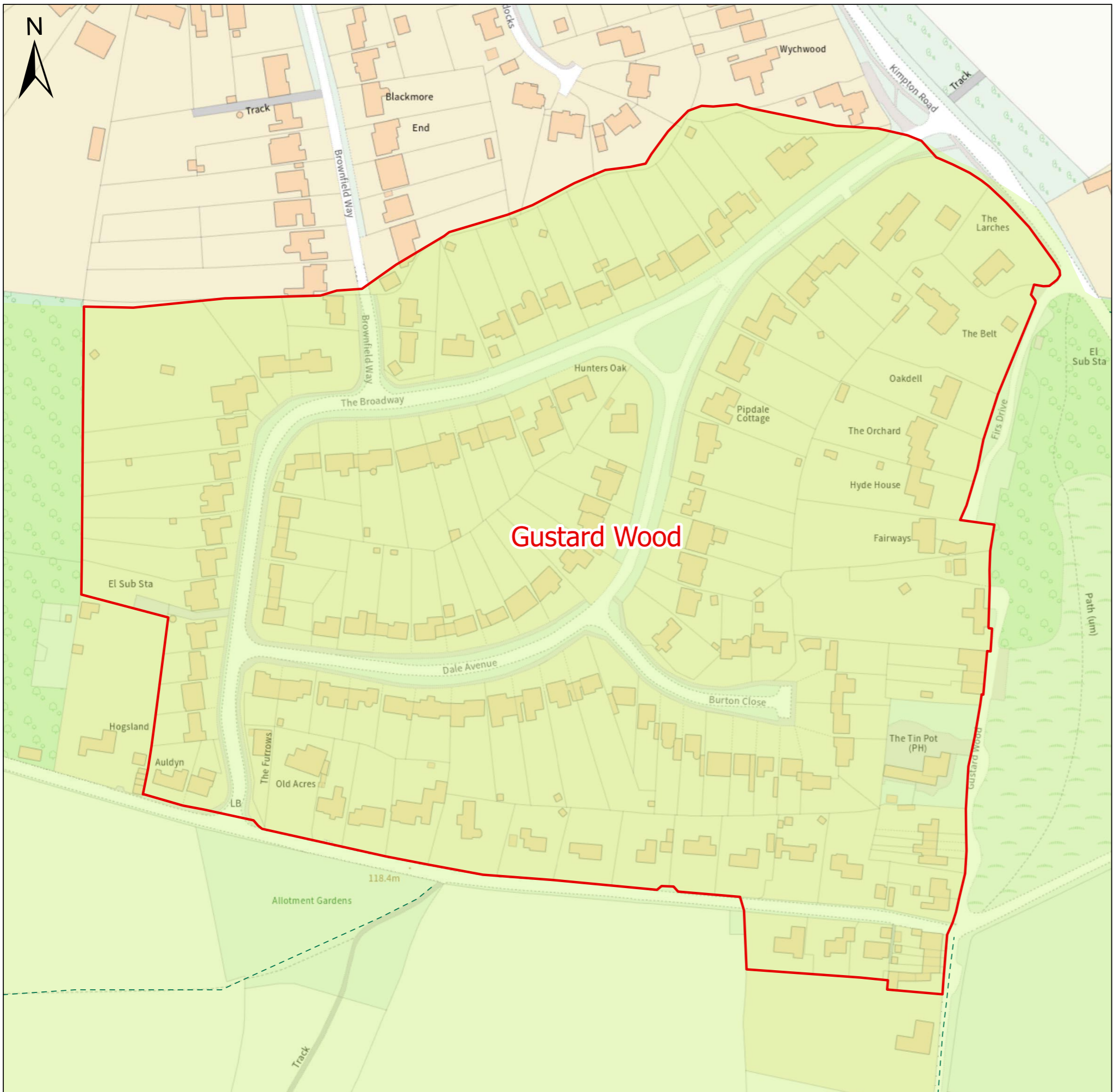
Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
Key views to/from settlement	<p>Due to the linear and compact nature of the settlement views are generally linear, up or down the primary road with medium to long distance views. It is possible to see all the way through the settlement to the landscapes beyond.</p> <p>Views north up the hill are not limited by development at the top of the hill allowing views across the open green space to the north. There are long distance views to the south, particularly from the elevated locations of the settlement which allow views across the agricultural landscapes of the opposite valley side.</p> <p>Lateral views are generally limited by the linear development but glimpsed views of surrounding trees in back gardens and from the surrounding wooded landscapes, are possible.</p> <p>Views toward the settlement are possible from the north and south which allow glimpses of the built form of the settlement.</p>	The score is high as there are long distance views from almost all areas of the settlement and there is a high degree of intervisibility with the wider landscape.
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	<p>The longer boundaries to the east and west of the settlement are a variety of back garden boundaries including a mixture of hedgerows, trees and man-made fences with a moderate degree of intervisibility and relationship with the surrounding landscapes. The eastern boundary adjacent to the allotments has visually permeable, low fences and a high level of intervisibility with the fields and woodland beyond.</p> <p>The boundary to the north is a mixture of low back garden hedges and fences which exposes the built form of the settlement and creates intervisibility with the wider landscape.</p> <p>The southern boundary is defined by the Lower Luton Road (B653) with scattered trees along it. This has a high degree of intervisibility allowing a relatively strong relationship to the landscape to the south.</p>	The score is high as the low, typically natural boundaries with intermittent gaps creates a strong relationship with the surrounding landscapes.

Part 2 Conclusion: Does the open character of the village make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt?

The village scored high for both of the criteria. Its open character is therefore considered to make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt.

Recommendation

The village has an open character and makes an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt, therefore it should be retained as washed over.



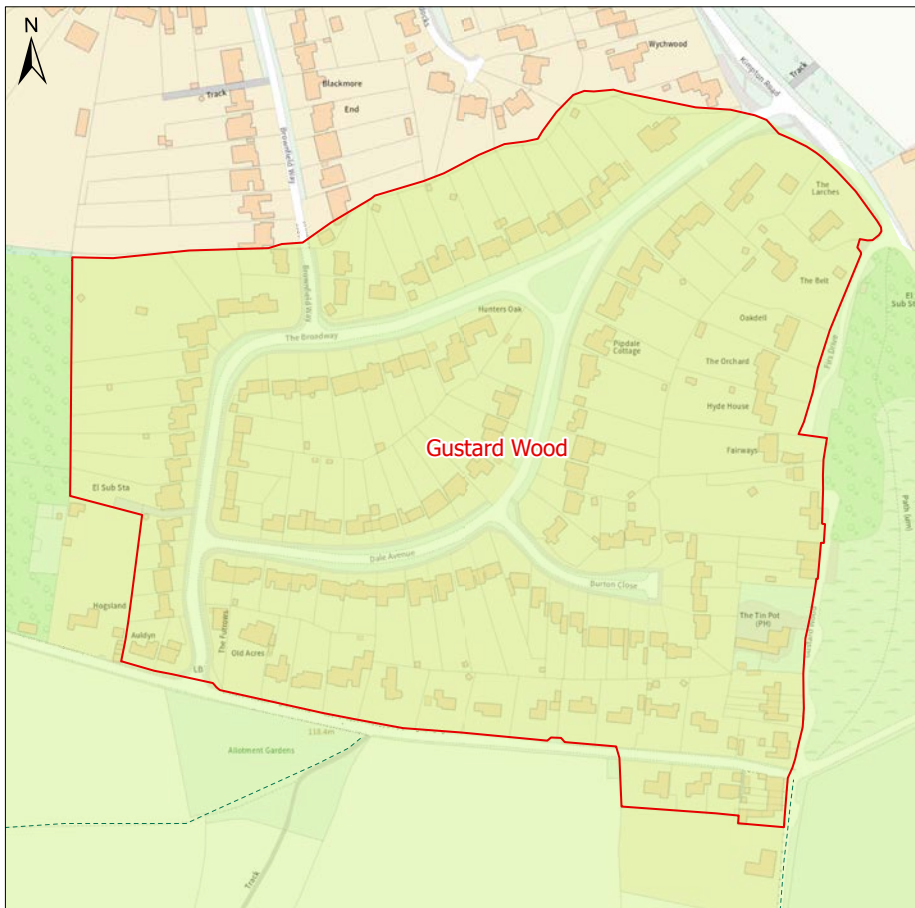
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Gustard Wood



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Village map



A view looking south west along Broadway and the wide planted verges and front gardens of one and two storey dwellings with a treelined skyline beyond.



Looking eastward along Broadway with wide green verges with large trees and the treelined skyline of the wider green belt beyond.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 1: Assessment of 'open character' of the village

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
1. Settlement Form and Scale	<p>The settlement is generally low density, especially the southern end of Gustard Wood, with large to very large back gardens. Dwellings are typically one or two storey detached buildings which have large setbacks from the roads. This is coupled with generous front gardens and green verges which add to the open character of the settlement.</p> <p>The settlement has a moderate settlement depth, located along the Slype, the northern end of Gustard Wood road and Kimpton Road with infill development on looping roads and cul-de-sacs in-between.</p> <p>The settlement is adjacent to development beyond the district boundary; i.e. that within North Hertfordshire District Council, to the north. of the settlement</p>	<p>The score is moderate as the low-density nature of the settlement reduces the detrimental effects of the settlement depth.</p>
2. Key Open Spaces	<p>The generous and vegetated green verges and front gardens are a continuous feature of the settlement which provides good legibility and intervisibility between open spaces.</p> <p>There are no formal open green spaces within Gustard wood. Between Dale Avenue and The Broadway; there is a small to medium sized informal triangle of greenspace which creates improved localised legibility and has views across the space.</p> <p>The back gardens are large but not prominent within the settlement other than contributing to the treelined skyline.</p>	<p>The score is moderate as there is good legibility and internal views along the green verges of the settlement.</p>

Part 1 Conclusion: Does the village have an open character?

The village scored moderate for both criteria and therefore is considered to have an open character.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 2: Assessment of 'openness' contribution to the Green Belt

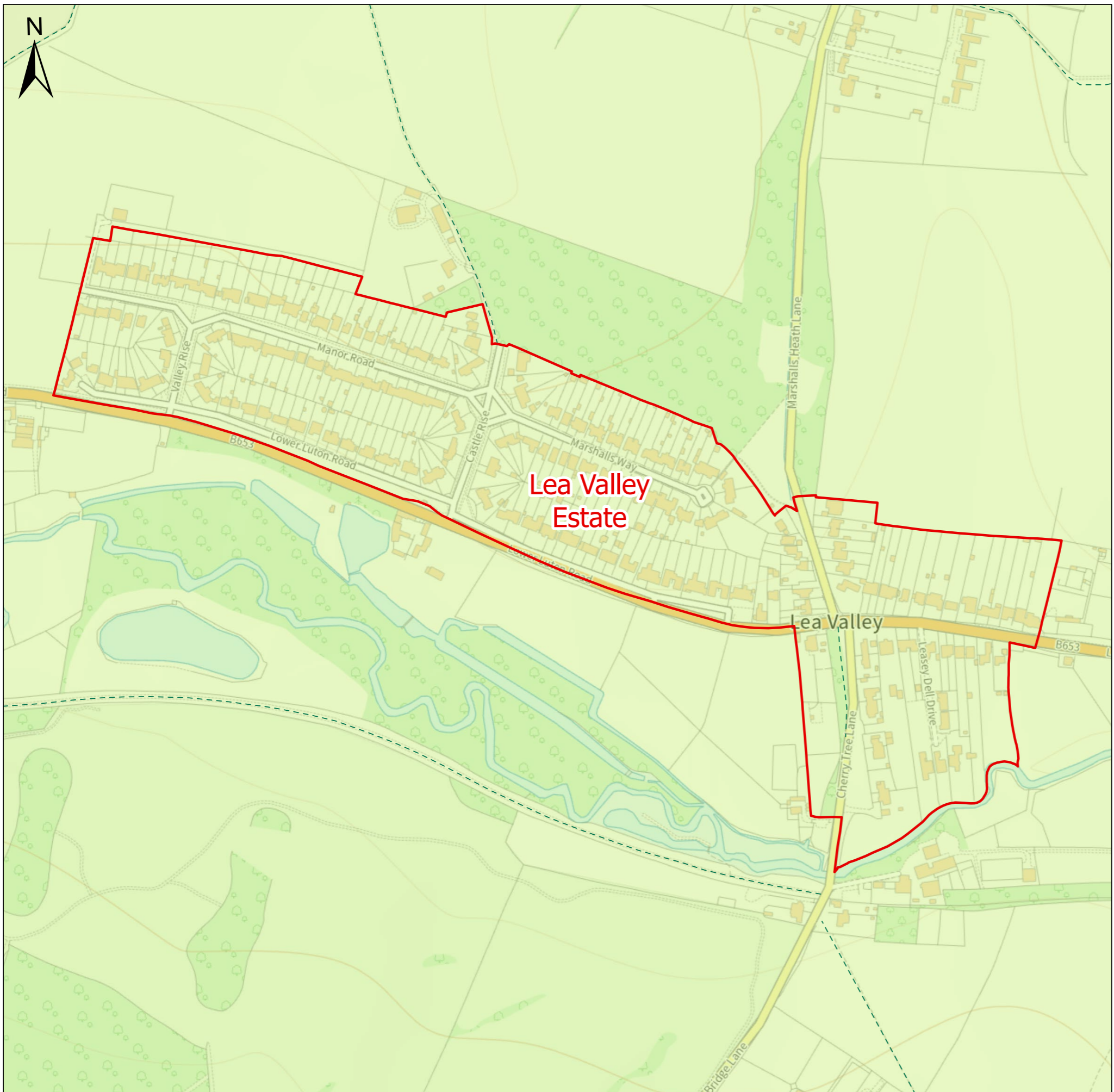
Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
Key views to/from settlement	<p>Dale Close, the Broadway, Burton Close have limited views out of the settlement but have glimpsed views of the treelined skyline of the wider landscape.</p> <p>There is a local highpoint in topography along the Slype; this creates glimpsed views south over agricultural fields beyond the settlement boundary.</p> <p>The eastern boundary along Gustard Wood lane has a low or open boundary allowing medium distance views across the adjoining grassland and woodland areas.</p>	<p>The score is moderate as there is moderate to high intervisibility along the settlement edge, however the many views are enclosed within the settlement away from the settlement boundary reduces the score the moderate.</p>
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	<p>The boundaries of Gustard Wood are typically hedgerows along lanes or well vegetated back garden boundaries; both provide a natural, generally intact edge with low to moderate intervisibility with the wider landscape depending on the height of the hedges.</p> <p>The eastern boundary is along Gustard Wood, a country lane with an intermittent low hedgerow which creates a strong relationship with the grassland beyond the settlement boundary.</p> <p>The St Albans District boundary is situated along back garden boundaries with further development beyond. This edge condition has limited intervisibility with the wider developed area which is outside the Green Belt.</p>	<p>The score is moderate resulting from the combination of boundary conditions. The low to moderate intervisibility of the southern and western boundaries with natural hedges or woodland blocks is improved by the eastern boundary with its strong connection to the adjacent landscapes resulting from the intermittent, visually permeable edge condition.</p>

Part 2 Conclusion: Does the open character of the village make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt?





The village scored moderate for both of the criteria. Its open character is therefore considered to make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt.

Recommendation

The village has an open character and makes an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt, therefore it should be retained as washed over.



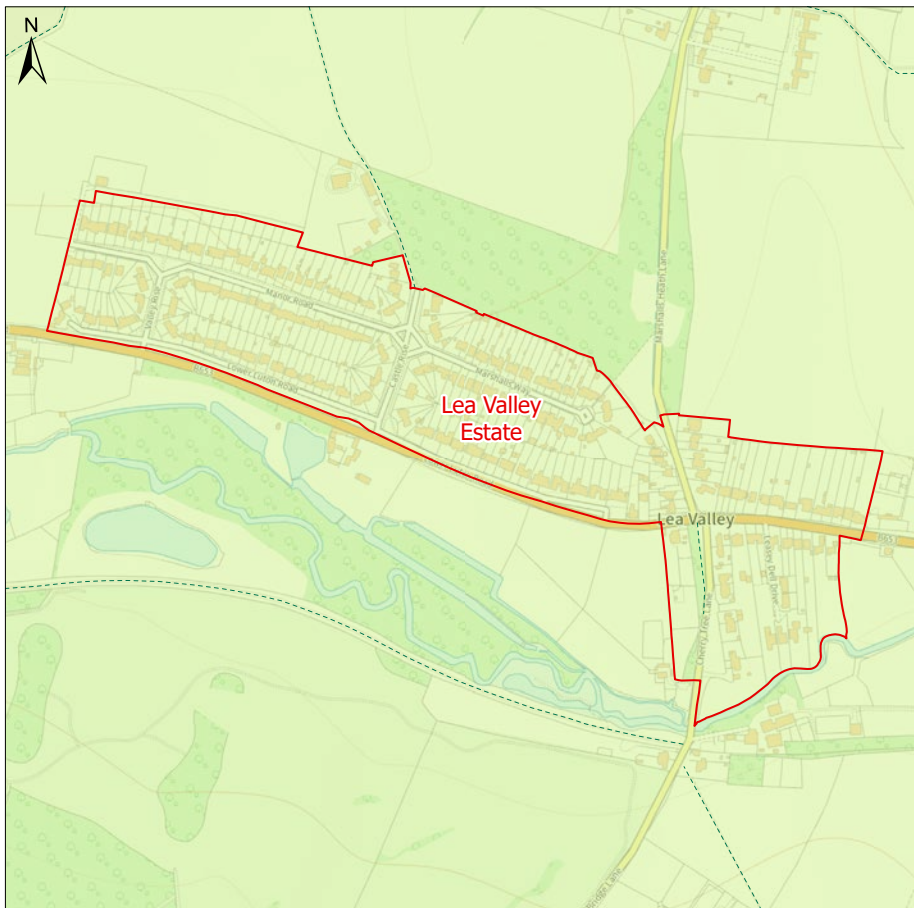
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Lea Valley Estate



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Village map



Looking eastward along Lower Luton Road, the southern boundary. The view shows the road sitting low in the landscape in front of a vegetated buffer.



Looking southward along Valley Rise with wide verges showing the elevation allowing long distance views into the wider Green Belt landscapes.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 1: Assessment of 'open character' of the village

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
1. Settlement Form and Scale	<p>Very linear settlement which is predominantly located along two parallel roads; Lower Luton Road and Manor Road which leads onto Marshalls Way. Development is well set back from the road. It is generally two storeys and relatively low density; particularly along Cherry Tree Lane which features numerous single storey dwellings and a very large green verge.</p> <p>Many of the properties back gardens face onto the Green Belt due to the small scale of the settlement. The lack of development to the western end of Manor Road creates a gap in development and a strong relationship with the adjacent Green Belt landscape.</p>	<p>The score is high as the development structure has a simple linear settlement pattern with a strong relationship with the wider landscape.</p>
2. Key Open Spaces	<p>The Lea Valley Estate has numerous generous, linear green verges which contribute to the intervisibility and legibility of the settlement. Well vegetated front gardens add to the open character of the settlement. The back gardens are large but are not visually prominent.</p> <p>There are no formal open spaces in the settlement with only small informal open spaces along Manor Road and Marshals Lane.</p>	<p>The score is moderate as the informal open spaces and green verges contribute to the open character of the settlement but there is a lack of large open spaces.</p>

Part 1 Conclusion: Does the village have an open character?

The village scored moderate or high for both criteria and therefore is considered to have an open character.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 2: Assessment of 'openness' contribution to the Green Belt

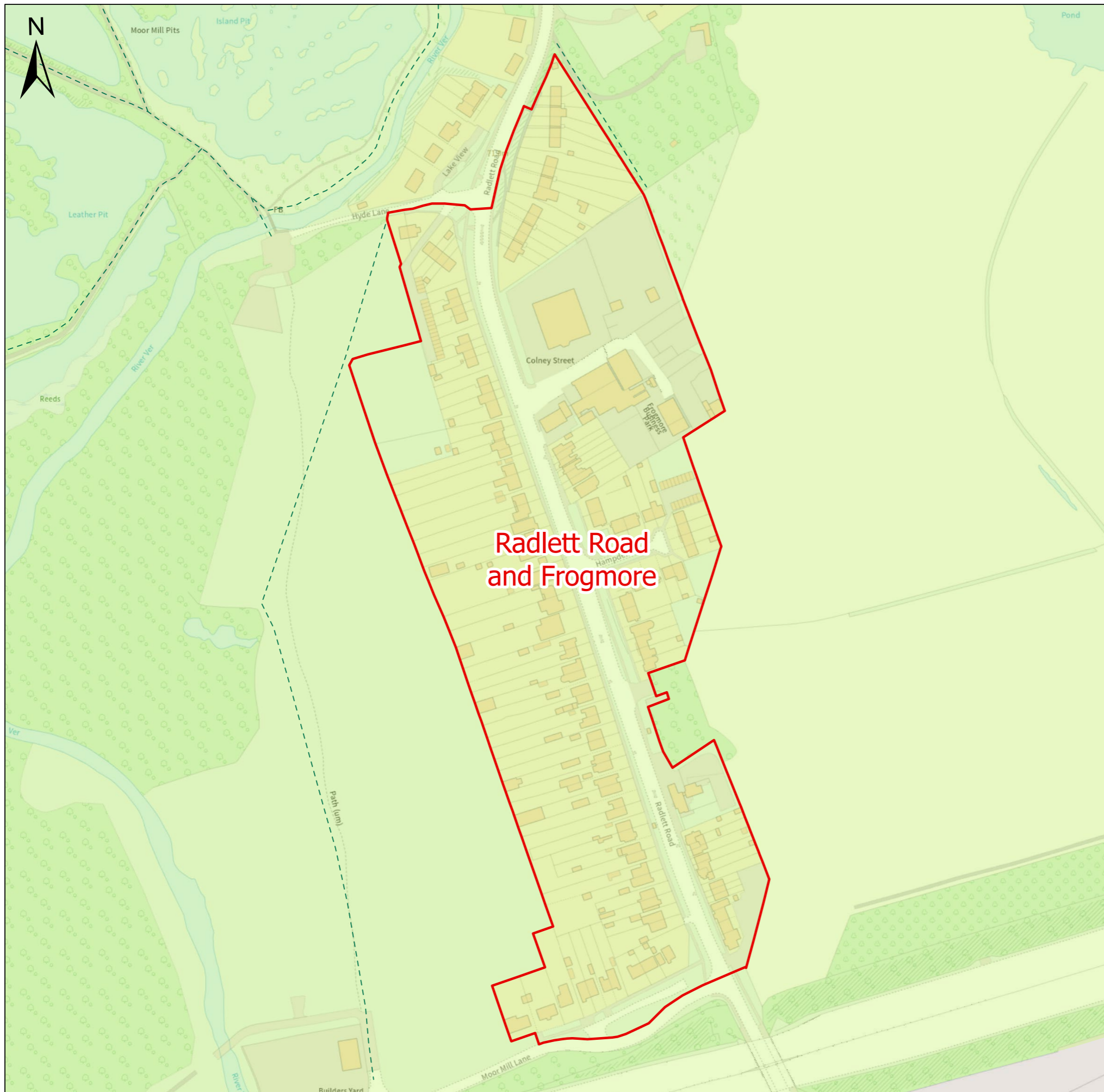
Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
Key views to/from settlement	<p>The sloping topography of the valley creates long range views beyond the settlement to the wider landscapes of the Green Belt. These views are prominent on Marshals Way looking east and south, Valley Rise looking south, Manor Road looking west and south and there are other glimpsed views looking south over adjacent hedgerows from Lower Luton Road.</p> <p>The linear nature of the development creates long views along or deep into the settlement; namely Manor Road, Marshalls Way and Lower Luton Road. Perpendicular views through the whole settlement are possible from Castle Rise and Valley Rise.</p>	The score is high as there are frequent views toward the wider Green Belt landscapes from or through the settlement.
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	<p>The southern edge of the settlement is mostly defined by the Lower Luton Road (B653) with a green verge and a dense treelined hedgerow which limits the relationship with the immediate landscape beyond (although the topography creates some intervisibility with the landscapes further afield).</p> <p>The boundaries to the north and west of the settlement as well as those east of Marshalls Heath Lane and Cherry Tree Lane comprise of a mixture of back garden boundary treatments; typically a combination of man-made and natural hedgerows with scattered trees. These face onto agricultural land with partial intervisibility and a modest relationship with the wider landscape with some areas facing onto blocks of woodland with limited intervisibility. However, there are some localised breaks in the boundaries, for instance on the edge of Manor Road or Castle Rise which allow a greater degree of intervisibility a stronger relationship beyond the boundary.</p>	The score is moderate as the boundaries are made up of a mixture of man-made and natural features and there are localised areas with a strong relationship with the wider landscape.

Part 2 Conclusion: Does the open character of the village make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt?

The village scored moderate or high for both of the criteria. Its open character is therefore considered to make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt.

Recommendation

The village has an open character and makes an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt, therefore it should be retained as washed over.



Legend

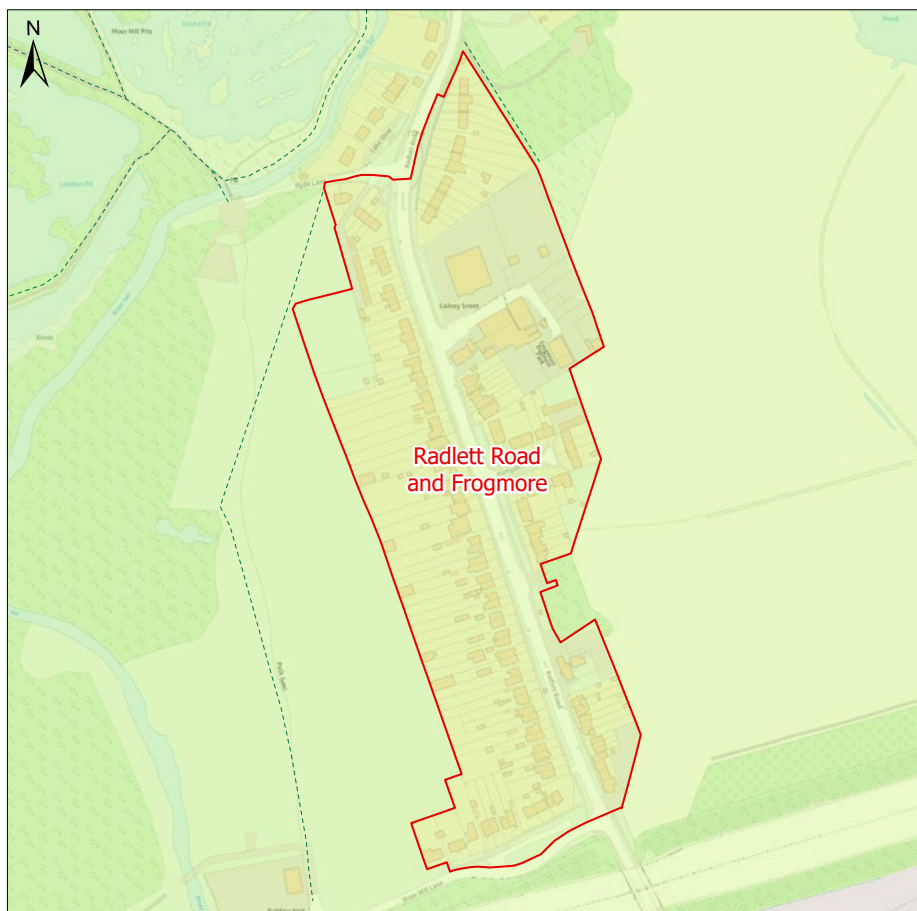
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Radlett Road
and Frogmore



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Radlett Road and Frogmore



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Village map



Looking East across Radlett Road a view showing the light industrial uses and larger built form in the north of the settlement.



Looking northward along Radlett Road from the southern boundary with views of linear green verges which are interrupted by paved driveways.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 1: Assessment of 'open character' of the village

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
1. Settlement Form and Scale	<p>The settlement is very linear located along the Radlett Road. There is continual and regular semi-detached residential development of a moderate density along the western edge of the road with lower density development to the east which includes some larger commercial and light industrial buildings.</p> <p>The settlement depth is generally shallow resulting from the linear form; however, there is a small degree of expansion along; Moor Mill Lane, Hampden Place and Frogmore Business Park. Most of the plots have rear gardens facing directly onto the wider Green Belt landscape and there are gaps in development along the south eastern stretch of Radlett Road.</p> <p>The linear settlement is confined to the south by the M25 and a developed area of Frogmore to the north.</p>	<p>The score is moderate as there is a well-defined linear development form with shallow settlement depth with some degree of expansion which interrupts the linear form.</p>
2. Key Open Spaces	<p>There is no formal open space in the settlement. There are small green verges which creates intervisibility and legibility of the settlement. However, they are often interrupted large paved driveways which reduces the contribution to open character. Front gardens do not contribute greatly to the open character as they have often been paved. Back gardens are often large but are not prominent.</p>	<p>The score is low as there are no open spaces and there has been erosion of the green verges and front gardens.</p>

Part 1 Conclusion: Does the village have an open character?

The village scored moderate for 'settlement form and scale' and low for 'key open spaces'. The moderate score of 'settlement form and scale' overrides the low score of 'key open spaces' as despite the lack of strong open spaces within the settlement there are strong connections to the wider Green Belt landscape by virtue of the generally intact linear nature of the settlement. Therefore the village is considered to have an open character.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 2: Assessment of 'openness' contribution to the Green Belt

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
Key views to/from settlement	<p>Most views of the settlement are short range and enclosed by built form and or vegetation.</p> <p>There are medium to long, internal, linear views along Radlett Road within the settlement which culminate with a tree lined horizon from the landscape beyond looking north or south.</p> <p>Along Radlett Road there are glimpsed short to medium distance views between the built development, particularly to the rising landform east of the settlement but views west are often limited by the woodland belt along the boundary.</p> <p>There are localised, glimpsed views of wooded landscape from the northernmost point of the settlement to the north west. These views are provided by the elevated topography through gaps in the development north of the settlement.</p> <p>As site access was limited; aerial photography reveals an elevated landscape east of the settlement. This topography allows localised views toward the built form increasing the intervisibility with the wider landscape. However, the visual connection is limited by the ridgeline close to the settlement which prevents long range views and greater levels of intervisibility.</p>	<p>The score is low as most views of the settlement are limited by built development and intervisibility with the wider countryside is low with infrequent localised exceptions.</p>

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

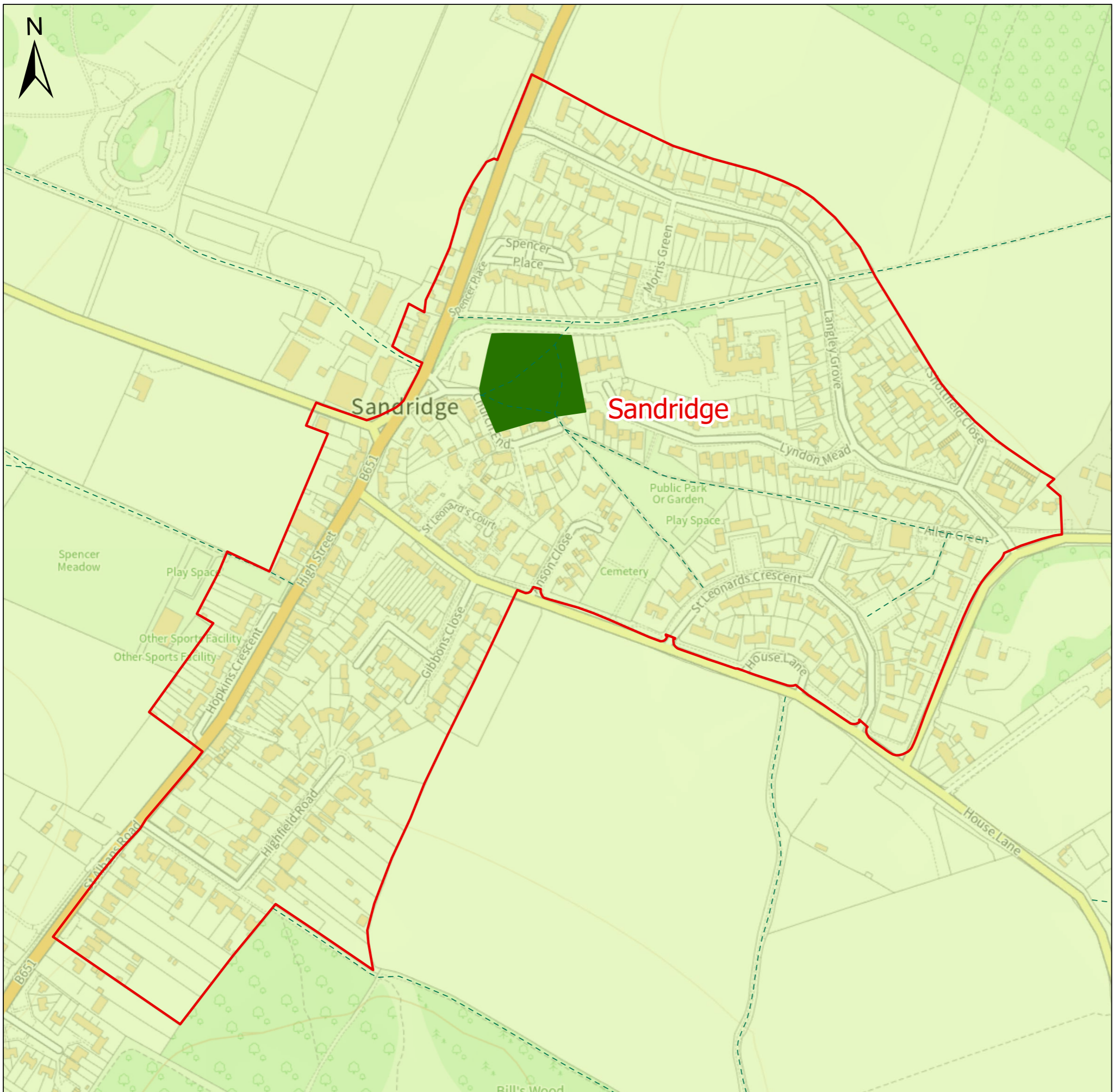
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	<p>The western boundary is strongly defined, linear, and visually impermeable with well vegetated back gardens and a dense woodland belt to the rear gardens of the linear settlement with very low levels of intervisibility with the landscape beyond.</p> <p>The eastern boundary is typically along back gardens or along the back of commercial units. It is comprised of a combination of man-made fences and natural hedgerows and scattered trees. The low hedgerows or visually permeable fences create localised areas with a high degree of intervisibility.</p> <p>The southern boundary along the front gardens of the properties of Moor Mill Lane. These low boundaries are a mixture of man-made and natural hedges and vegetation; this leaves the built development exposed to the wider landscape; however this effect is limited by the visually impermeable hedgerows and woodland belt adjacent to the boundary along the London Orbital Motorway.</p> <p>The narrow northern boundary is along Hyde Lane and Radlett Road with scattered trees surrounding the roads. The built development of the settlement is exposed to the adjacent space beyond the boundary although the effect is limited by the short-range views blocked by surrounding hedgerow and woodland planting.</p>	<p>The score is moderate as whilst most of the boundaries are visually impermeable and allow a limited relationship with the wider landscapes the eastern boundary is very mixed with numerous localised areas of improved intervisibility.</p>
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Part 2 Conclusion: Does the open character of the village make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt?

The village scored moderate for 'settlement edge characteristics and setting' and low for 'key views to/from the settlement'. The low score of 'key views to/from the settlement' overrides the moderate score of 'settlement edge characteristics and setting' as the mixture of boundaries allows some visual connection with the wider landscape, namely along the eastern edge of the settlement, however these effects are limited by the landform of the wider landscape which only creates a very localised area of intervisibility.

Recommendation

The village has an open character, however it does not make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt, therefore it should be considered to be changed from washed over to inset.



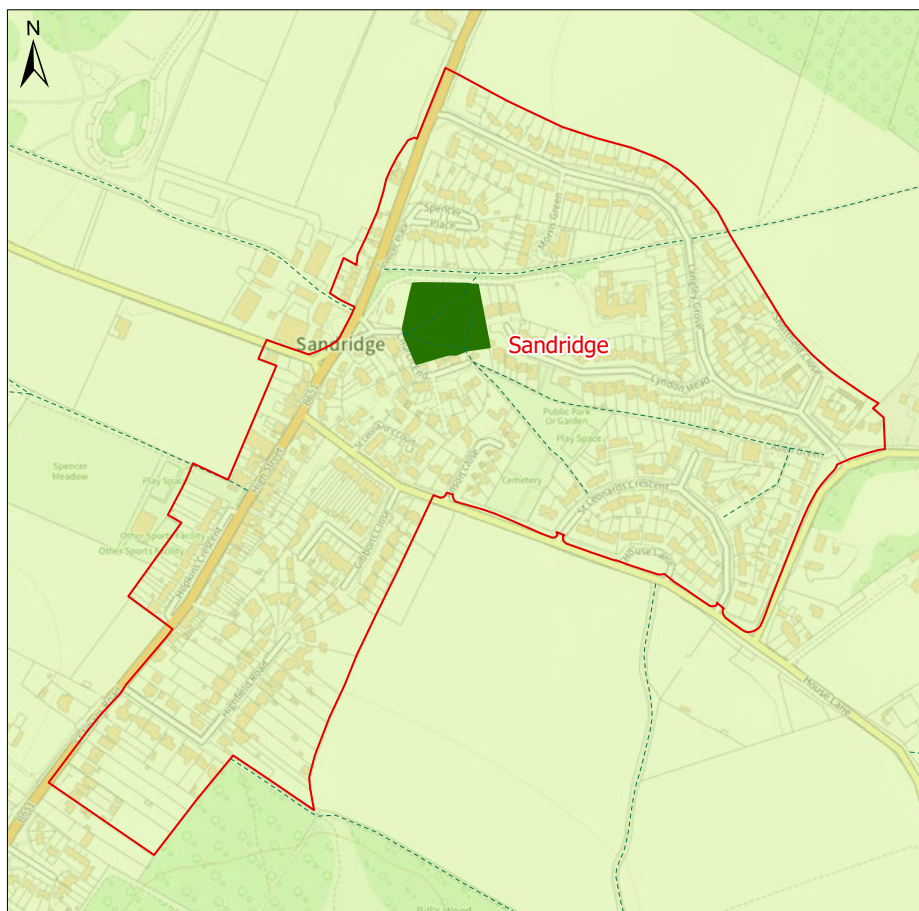
Legend

- Public Rights of Way
- Allotments Cemeteries Church Yards
- Neighbouring Green Belt
- St Albans Green Belt
- Sub-area for assessment



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Sandridge



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 - Sub-area for assessment



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Village map



A view looking north west along Hopkins Cross toward the settlement centre with a linear greenspace adjacent to the High Street.



Looking westward from St Leonards Playground showing the internal green spaces of Sandridge with views of St Leonard's Church spire.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 1: Assessment of 'open character' of the village

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
1. Settlement Form and Scale	<p>Sandridge has three distinct development patterns: A linear settlement located along the High Street and the northern end of St Albans Road and, a crescent development surrounding St Leonard's Crescent, and infill development surrounding scattered historic buildings such as St Leonards Church and the relatively large areas of greenspace. The infill development is located between House Lane, Leonards Crescent and the linear development along St Albans Road and Langley Grove.</p> <p>The overall settlement is a moderate size with a combination of post war development. The built form is close knit typically two storey residential buildings with generous vegetated verges, front and back gardens.</p> <p>The linear development pattern has a relatively shallow settlement depth which means most properties back directly onto the wider Green Belt landscapes.</p>	<p>The score is moderate resulting from the combination of historic form and scale surrounding St Leonards Church, St Leonards Crescent and along the High Street with some deterioration as a result of the more recent infill development.</p>
2. Key Open Spaces	<p>There are a number of key open spaces and greenspaces within Sandridge. Along the southern segment of the High Street is a wide green verge which opens up internal views and intervisibility along one of the key movement and social corridors of Sandridge.</p> <p>The central area of the village has no greenspaces which reduces intervisibility.</p> <p>A small green triangle in front of the church on Church End lane has a modest, localised impact on the views of the adjacent area of the High Street.</p> <p>Other, larger greenspaces of Sandridge are situated away from the streets behind the back gardens. These include St Leonards Playground and open space and the Churchyard around St Leonard's Church and extension on House Lane. These spaces are linked together with some degree of legibility and are enclosed and defined by vegetation and built features with little immediate intervisibility. However, there is some degree of intervisibility with the wider Green Belt beyond the settlement as a result of the undulating topography.</p>	<p>The score is moderate resulting from the intervisibility and legibility created by the linked larger greenspaces of the settlement and the localised benefits from the smaller greenspaces along the High Street.</p>

Part 1 Conclusion: Does the village have an open character?

The village scored moderate for both criteria and therefore is considered to have an open character.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 2: Assessment of 'openness' contribution to the Green Belt

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
Key views to/from settlement	<p>Sandridge has linear internal views through the settlement along the primary roads. Views along the High Street feature glimpses of tree lined skylines and occasional views of distant fields to the wider landscape.</p> <p>In the south of Sandridge there is a high degree of visual intervisibility in elevated locations. Views in these location are across the development, perpendicular to the linear settlement pattern; for example Highfield Road where views north west are relatively elevated and expansive across the wider agricultural landscape.</p> <p>The rolling topography of the area increases the intervisibility with the wider landscape. With surrounding hillsides being visible throughout the settlement. For example, from St Leonards Playground which has views of the rolling fields to the south. Views from the surrounding hills toward the settlement are also possible for example, from Heartwood Forest to the north west of Sandridge.</p> <p>St Leonards Church spire is visually prominent and increases the intervisibility with the areas beyond the settlement boundary; for example from the approach along Sandridgebury Lane.</p> <p>In some locations there are extensive views to the wider landscape. For example looking south from House Lane or Woodcock Hill.</p>	<p>The score is high as there is a high degree of intervisibility with the wider landscape throughout the settlement</p>

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

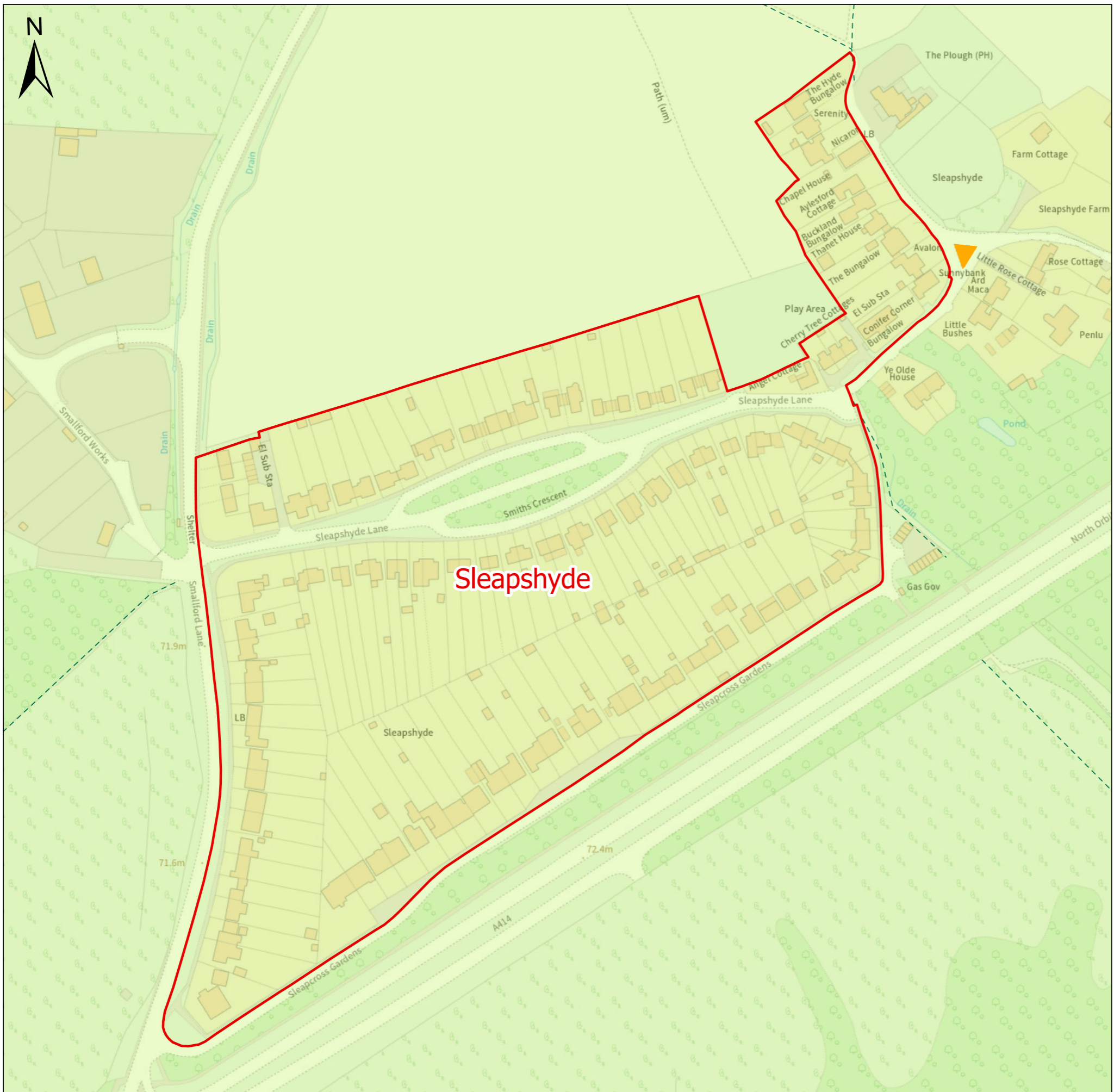
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	<p>The boundaries of Sandridge are varied. Along the south eastern edge of the settlement, the boundary is generally a visually prominent belt or block of woodland abutting the rear gardens; although there are some visible, man-made boundary fences toward House Lane.</p> <p>The western boundary of the settlement is mostly defined by the back gardens of the development along the High Street or by the northern end of St Albans Road. The north western boundary is less intact as it is made up of a combination of man-made garden fences and hedges and some low front garden boundaries of dwellings adjacent to the village boundary.</p> <p>The nucleated cluster of development to the north of Sandridge is generally lined with hedgerows and scattered trees along the edge of the settlement; either behind back gardens or along roads. There are areas with low hedgerows; for example along House Lane, or visually permeable fences; for example, along Shottfield Close. These areas allow views to and from the surrounding agricultural landscapes and increase intervisibility and the relationship with the wider landscape.</p>	<p>The score is moderate as there is a mixture of typically natural boundaries with different levels visual permeability.</p>
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Part 2 Conclusion: Does the open character of the village make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt?

The village scored moderate or high for both criteria and therefore is considered to have an open character.

Recommendation

The village has an open character and makes an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt, therefore it should be retained as washed over.



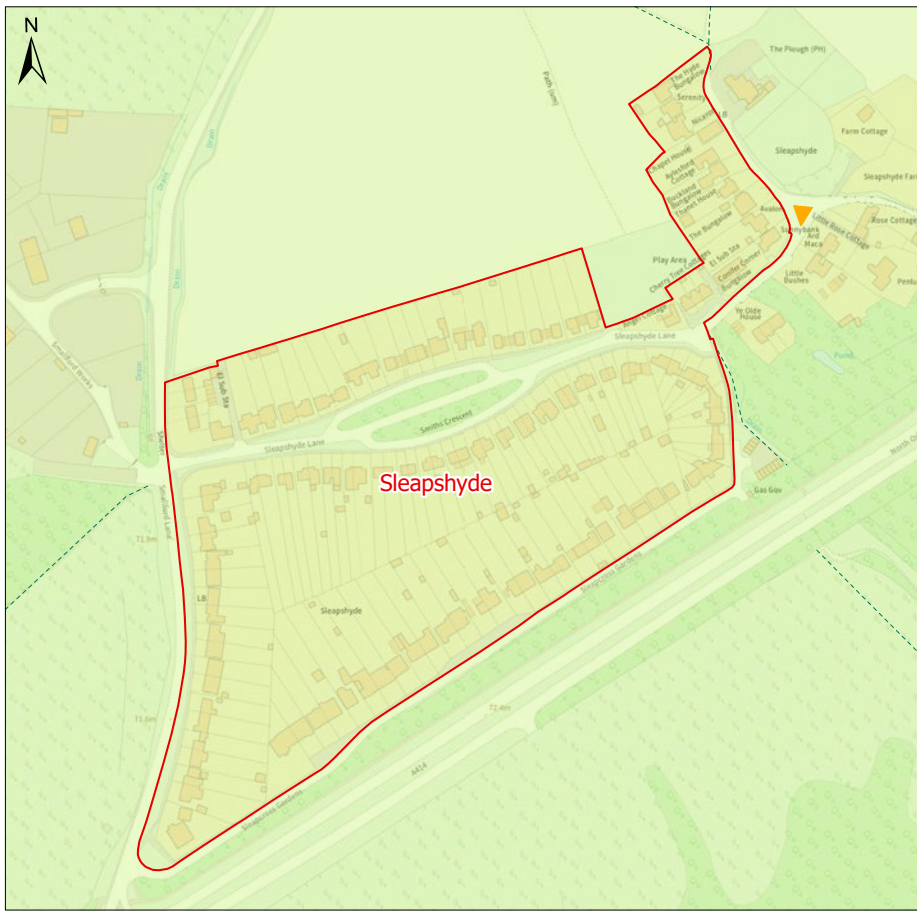
Legend

- Public Rights of Way
- Village Greens
- Neighbouring Green Belt
- St Albans Green Belt
- ▭ Sub-area for assessment

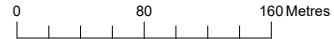


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Sleapshyde



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Village map



Looking eastward along Sleapshyde Lane across the very wide green verges and informal greenspace within the crescent shaped development.



Looking southward across the small village green (outside the settlement boundary) to the north of the settlement by the historic core of the village.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 1: Assessment of 'open character' of the village

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
1. Settlement Form and Scale	<p>Sleapshyde is a small, nucleated settlement located around Smallford Lane, Sleapshyde Lane and Sleapcross Gardens. The settlement has tight knit rows of two storey detached and semi-detached houses. It has a low density due to the generous front and rear gardens and wide green verges along the lanes.</p> <p>There are two crescent shaped residential streets along Sleapshyde Lane.</p>	The score is high as the development has a strong small-scale, intact traditional settlement pattern.
2. Key Open Spaces	<p>The most significant green space is the generous green verges between the crescent shaped development along Sleapshyde Lane in the heart of the settlement. This space offers good intervisibility and clear legibility to the space and surrounding dwellings and it has a strong rural character from the scattered tree planting.</p> <p>The settlement has an open nature from the continuous, wide green verges which clear legibility around the settlement.</p>	The score is high as a result of the legibility of the continuous and generous green verges.

Part 1 Conclusion: Does the village have an open character?

The village scored high for both criteria and therefore is considered to have an open character.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 2: Assessment of 'openness' contribution to the Green Belt

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
Key views to/from settlement	<p>Views of Sleapshyde are generally linear along the roads of the settlement. Those from Smallford Lane are enclosed by dwellings on one side and a woodland block on the other. Sleapshyde Lane has views down the wide lane with development on both sides; there are also glimpsed long views of the wooded skyline of the wider landscape beyond, particularly to the west and east.</p> <p>Views from the north west of the settlement are generally enclosed by vegetation but some glimpsed views to the agricultural landscape beyond are possible creating a moderate degree of intervisibility.</p> <p>Views from the southern boundary along Sleapcross Gardens are relatively narrow linear views enclosed by screening planting which blocks views of the North Orbital Road (A414).</p> <p>Views from the surrounding landscape are generally limited by vegetation to the south and west but from the fields north of the settlement there are partial views toward the built form along Sleapshyde Lane over the hedgerows creating moderate intervisibility.</p>	<p>The score is moderate as there is a mixture of enclosed areas and others which are open to the surrounding agricultural or wooded landscapes beyond the boundary with most views are often limited by rural hedgerows or trees.</p>
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	<p>The western and southern edges are defined by roads with unbroken, dense visually prominent woodland belts allowing very little relationship to the landscapes beyond the boundaries.</p> <p>The northern boundary is made up of a moderately intact line of back garden boundaries comprising of hedges and fences with a mixture of visual permeability creating a moderate relationship and intervisibility with the wider Green Belt landscapes.</p> <p>The north eastern edge of the settlement has a mixture of low front garden hedges along the meandering Sleapshyde Lane which allows intervisibility with the low density historic area beyond the settlement boundary. There are also localised areas with visually permeable deciduous hedgerows or fences which allow a moderate degree of intervisibility with the wider landscape.</p> <p>The south eastern boundary is more enclosed by woodland planting with limited intervisibility.</p>	<p>The score is moderate as there is a mixture of unbroken and moderately intact natural boundaries and the northern and eastern boundaries allow a moderate relationship between the settlement edge and the wider landscape.</p>

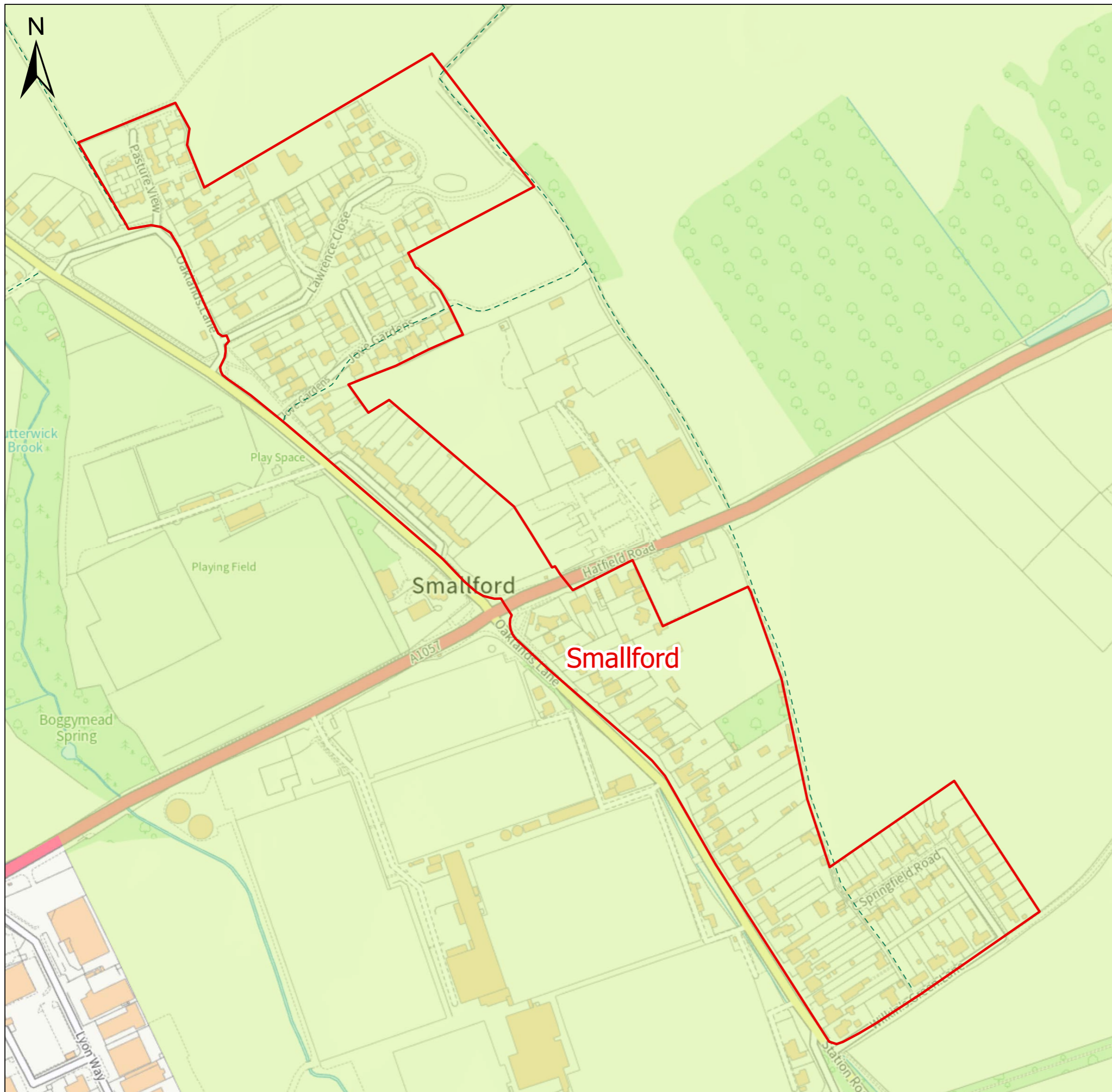
Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 2 Conclusion: Does the open character of the village make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt?

The village scored moderate for both of the criteria. Its open character is therefore considered to make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt.

Recommendation

The village has an open character and makes an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt, therefore it should be retained as washed over.



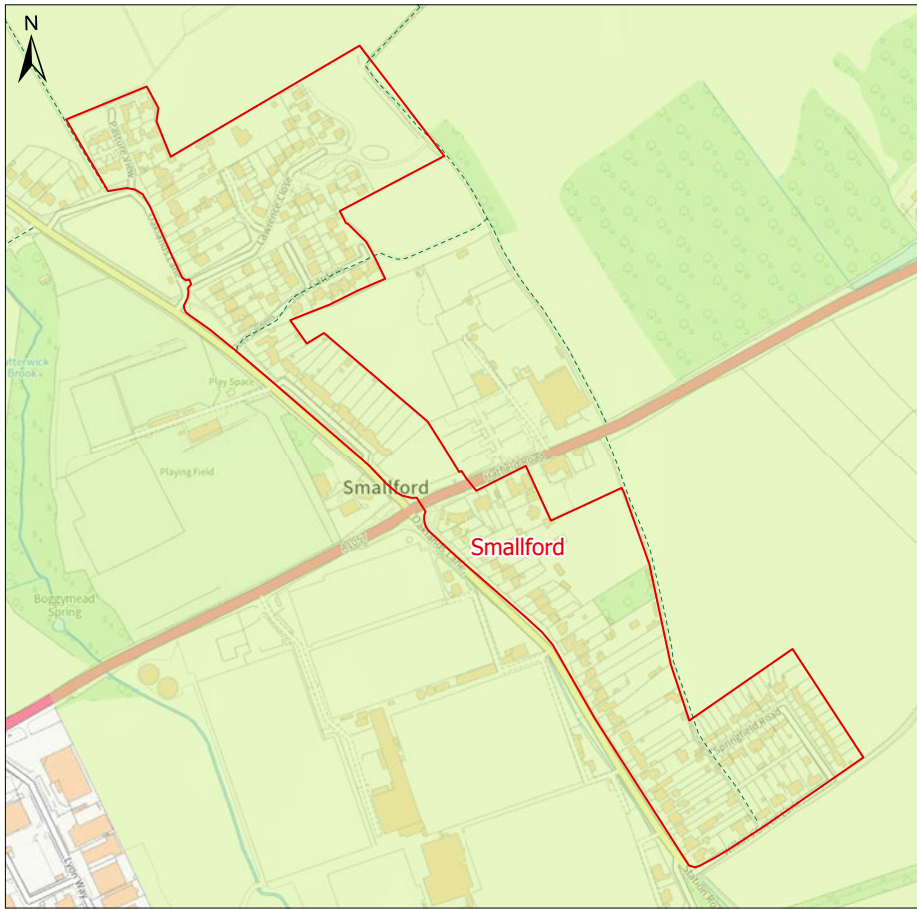
Legend

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Smallford



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Village map



Looking southward along Station Road with views of dwellings set back behind a large verge on the left of the road and screening vegetation on the right.



Looking northward at the roundabout from Station Road which intersects the linear settlement pattern, surrounded by open fields and hedgerows.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 1: Assessment of 'open character' of the village

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
1. Settlement Form and Scale	<p>Smallford has a linear historic settlement pattern along Oaklands Lane and Station Road. The linear settlement pattern is intersected by the Hatfield Road which separates Oaklands Lane and Station Road.</p> <p>There are localised areas of development which interrupt the linear development pattern of Smallford; for example, Springfield Road to the south of Smallford or Jove Gardens east of Oaklands Lane. Lawrence Close also appears to interrupt the linear development pattern of Smallford but was assessed from imagery and satellite views as the development was constructed after the assessment was conducted.</p> <p>The residential development of Smallford is situated on the east side of the roads with light industrial uses beyond the boundary to the west. This reduces the traditional linearity of the settlement form, although the impact of the atypical scale and type of development is lessened because of dense screening planting.</p>	<p>The score is moderate as the settlement has a generally strong linear development pattern. However, the localised areas which interrupt the linear pattern; namely Hatfield Road, reduce the score to moderate.</p>
2. Key Open Spaces	<p>There are no large public greenspaces in Smallford. However, the wide green verges along Station Road and Oaklands Lane provides intervisibility and legibility along the length of the village.</p> <p>A small field north of the roundabout in the centre of the village also offers frequent glimpsed views across the undeveloped space.</p> <p>The back gardens are large but are not prominent features of the settlement.</p>	<p>The score is moderate as the minimal amount of linear green spaces along the length of the settlement contribute to the legibility, whilst the lack of large public open spaces prevents the score being high.</p>

Part 1 Conclusion: Does the village have an open character?

The village scored moderate for both criteria and therefore is considered to have an open character.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 2: Assessment of 'openness' contribution to the Green Belt

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
Key views to/from settlement	<p>Views in Smallford are generally linear along either Station Road or Oaklands Lane.</p> <p>Station Road views are generally confined with limited connections to the wider landscape. To the west views are limited by a belt of woodland planting with infrequent glimpsed views of the greenhouses beyond. To the north east, views are limited by built form or by the vegetated back gardens.</p> <p>Views from Oaklands Lane are similar however there is a moderate degree of intervisibility as a result of glimpsed views west toward the woodland or open playing fields.</p> <p>At the roundabout views are possible along the adjoining roads but also across the agricultural field to the north east of the junction to the treelined skyline of the Green Belt landscapes beyond.</p> <p>The field adjacent to Pasture View to the north of the site has visually permeable edges which allows for wide-angle medium distance views across the surrounding agricultural landscape.</p> <p>There are views toward the built form of the settlement from the surrounding landscape where there are lower hedgerows or fences. Namely views toward Springfield Road development, Jove Gardens development but also glimpsed views of the built form along the north eastern edge of the settlement are possible. These views toward the settlement create localised areas of intervisibility.</p>	<p>The score is moderate as there are several areas with a moderate degree of intervisibility and relationship with the wider landscape.</p>

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Settlement edge characteristics and setting

The settlement has a very intact western boundary. This edge follows the main roads of the settlement lined by fairly unbroken, dense, tall, and visually impermeable hedgerows with little relationship to the landscape beyond. The exceptions are in the north; along Oaklands lane where the hedgerow planting is less dense and the field boundary along Pasture View which is a low, visually permeable hedgerow. Both examples create localised intervisibility.

Most of the eastern boundary of the settlement is lined by a generally unbroken series of back garden hedgerows with scattered trees. These boundaries do not expose the development to the wider landscape and have low levels of intervisibility. However, the north eastern areas of the settlement and where there has been erosion of the development pattern; namely along Springfield Road, Jove Gardens and Lawrence Close. In these locations the boundaries are either less continuous, or made up of low hedgerows or man-made fences which exposes development to the wider landscape and allow a moderate degree of intervisibility.

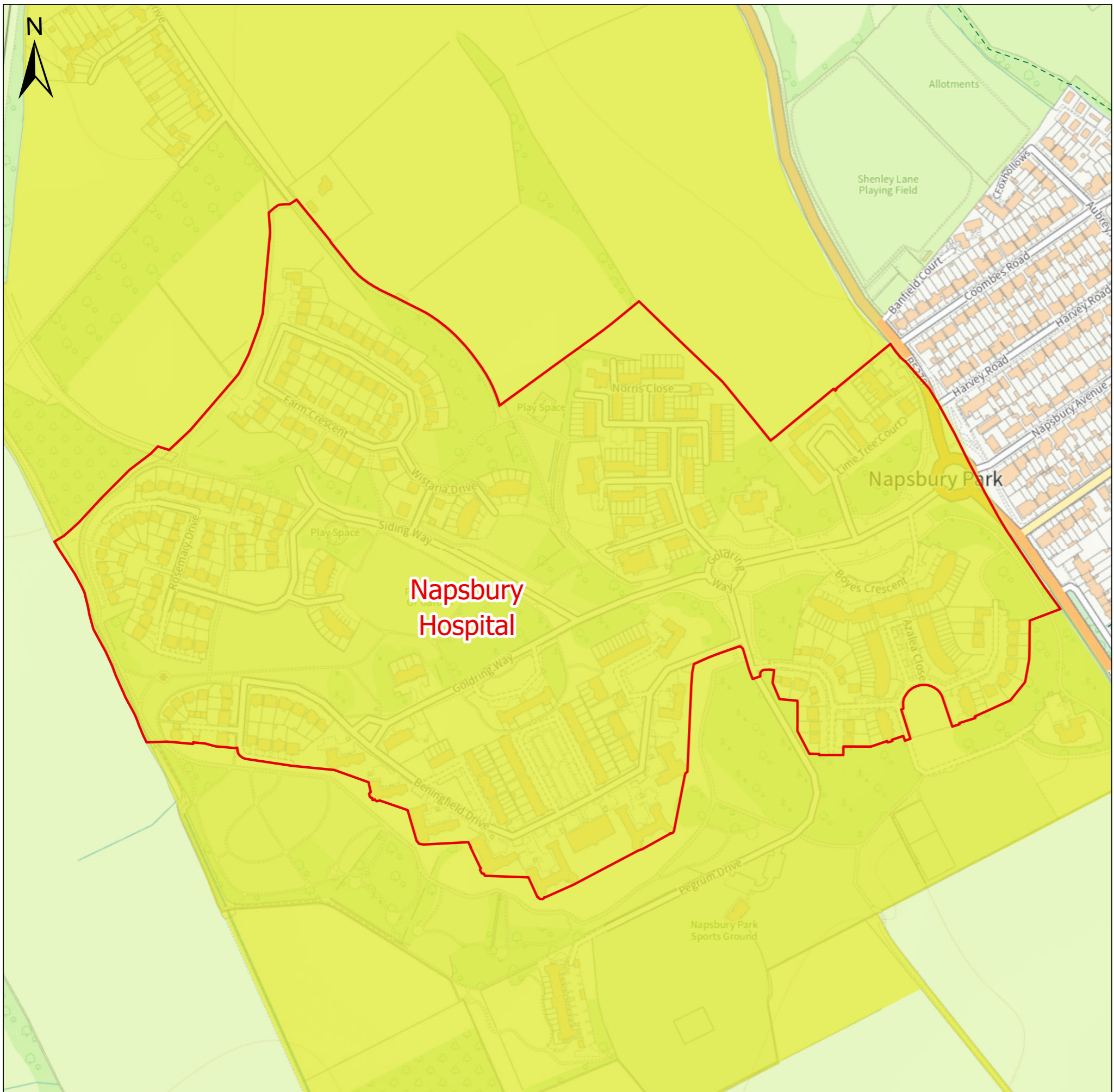
The score is **moderate** as boundaries are mostly natural, some of which feature dense and tall hedgerows but others allow a moderate degree of intervisibility between the built form and the wider landscape.

Part 2 Conclusion: Does the open character of the village make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt?

The village scored moderate for both of the criteria. Its open character is therefore considered to make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt.

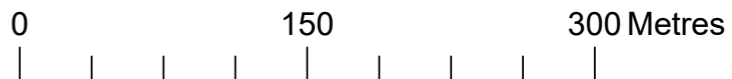
Recommendation

The village has an open character and makes an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt, therefore it should be retained as washed over.



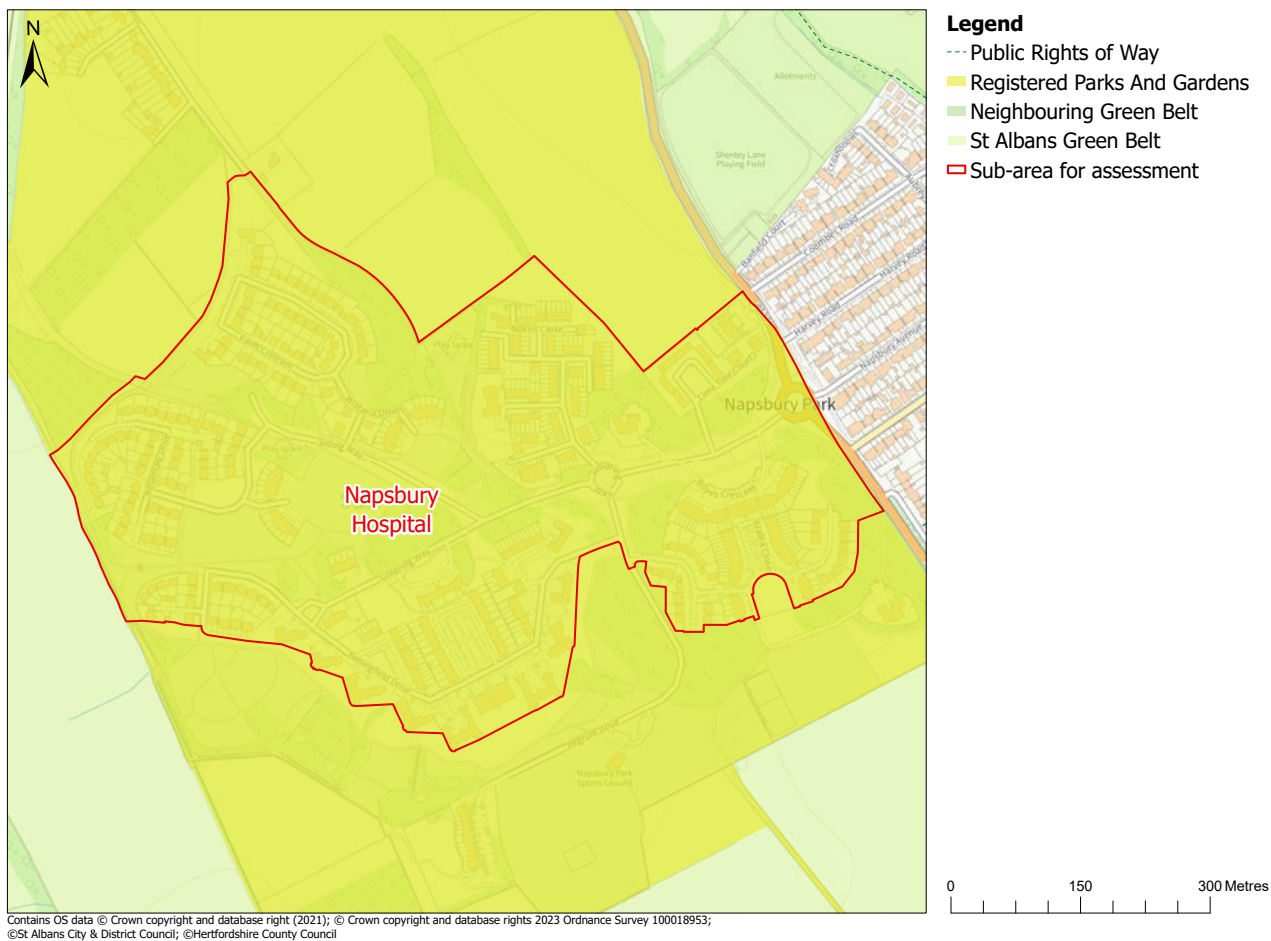
Legend

- Public Rights of Way
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Proposed Washed Over Village: Napsbury



Village map



Looking northward at the clocktower from Beningfield Drive with three storey, dense development surrounding the formal courtyard with a treelined skyline.



Looking southward from Pegrum Drive showing the visually permeable southern boundary which opens out into the wider Green Belt landscapes.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 1: Assessment of 'open character' of the village

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
1. Settlement Form and Scale	<p>The settlement is a series of moderate to high density nucleated clusters of dwellings with large areas of undeveloped parkland in-between. The areas of undeveloped parkland give a dispersed settlement pattern to the settlement. There are localised geometric layouts within the nucleated development clusters; for example the rectilinear structure of the development between The Clock Tower and Beningfield Drive.</p> <p>Built development height varies between development clusters typically ranging between two and three storeys with some taller historic buildings.</p> <p>The settlement pattern is defined by a series of branching access roads which lead to the separate nucleated clusters of development. Between the areas of development are areas of undeveloped greenspace which separate each cluster of development. The undeveloped areas between the clusters of development form connections directly to the wider landscapes of the Green Belt.</p>	<p>The score is high despite the localised areas of high development density, as the large undeveloped areas of the settlement have strong connections to the wider Green Belt landscapes beyond the settlement and create a loose, dispersed character.</p>
2. Key Open Spaces	<p>The settlement has very large areas of greenspace within and surrounding it which creates a parkland setting. These spaces are well vegetated and very well inter-connected creating very strong intervisibility and legibility which extends into the wider landscapes of the Green Belt.</p>	<p>The score is high as a result of the very large areas of well-connected and legible open green space.</p>

Part 1 Conclusion: Does the village have an open character?

The village scored high for both criteria and therefore is considered to have an open character.

Assessment of village against NPPF Paragraph 144

Part 2: Assessment of 'openness' contribution to the Green Belt

Element	Degree of Contribution Description	Conclusion & Justification
Key views to/from settlement	<p>The settlement has multiple landmark buildings, namely the historic Napsbury Hospital buildings, including a converted water tower, a clock tower and the grand West Hall. All of which are visible from large areas of the surrounding parkland and wider landscape, particularly the tall water tower.</p> <p>The settlement has a number of avenues which add to the parkland character and create framed views with strong visual connections along greenspaces or roads through the settlement to the wider landscapes.</p> <p>Views toward the settlement feature the prominent treelined skyline due to the extensive mature tree planting. There are frequent views through the settlement to the wider landscape because of the large areas of interconnected greenspace.</p> <p>There are expansive views to and from the edges of the settlement across the undulating agricultural fields to the north as well as the sports grounds to the south or young woodland to the west. The eastern edge, with its dense tree planting, intervisibility across the boundary is limited.</p>	<p>The score is high as there is strong intervisibility with the wider landscape from many parts of the settlement with numerous prominent features and landmark buildings within the settlement visible from various locations in the surrounding landscapes.</p>
Settlement edge characteristics and setting	<p>The boundaries of Napsbury are typically either; a dense woodland buffer or an open grassland with scattered trees and a visually permeable, low level perimeter fence or hedgerow.</p> <p>The eastern edge is very well defined and enclosed by the dense wooded area along Shenley Lane which separates the settlement from the adjacent developed areas with low levels of intervisibility.</p> <p>The frequent areas of grassland with a low perimeter fence or hedge allow a high level of intervisibility and a close relationship with the with the landscapes beyond the boundaries.</p>	<p>The score is high as despite the areas of dense woodland the boundaries frequently have a high degree of intervisibility from visually permeable edges and in places where views are obstructed they are typically limited by natural features.</p>

Part 2 Conclusion: Does the open character of the village make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt?

The village scored high for both of the criteria. Its open character is therefore considered to make an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt.

Recommendation

The village has an open character and makes an important contribution to the openness of the Green Belt, therefore it should be considered for washed over status.