

Castle Point Borough Council

Castle Point Borough Green Belt Review 2018 Part 2

FINAL DRAFT

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 South Essex has historically been identified as a national priority for growth and regeneration. In early 2018 the South Essex Authorities, which include Castle Point Borough Council, agreed to establish the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA). It also agreed a “Memorandum of Understanding” setting out their strategic priorities for joint working under the banner “South Essex 2050”. In order to deliver upon strategic priorities, the South Essex authorities have agreed to begin the preparation of a statutory Joint Strategic Plan (JSP), of which one focus is addressing the provision of the amount, type and distribution of housing required to accommodate its growing population.
- 1.2 Castle Point Borough Council is also in the process of preparing a new Local Plan which will set the framework for development within the borough over the next 15 years, up to 2033.. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in July 2018 states that *‘The preparation and review of all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned’*.
- 1.3 Early evidence generated in support of the JSP as well as historic SHLAAs for Castle Point have highlighted that there is likely to be limited capacity within the urban areas of the Borough to accommodate the needs of its growing population. This evidence is suggesting that in order for Castle Point to be able to deliver its Objectively Assessed Need for housing, and subject to unmet need not being able to met outside of the borough, it is likely that a measure of development will be required to take place in land which is currently within the Green Belt. Therefore, as part of the New Local Plan process, a review of the borough’s Green Belt was initiated.
- 1.4 This Green Belt Review 2018 Part 2 builds on the Green Belt Review Part 1 study, which itself evolved from previous work carried out by Castle Point Borough Council between September 2010 and November 2013. The role of the Part 1 study was to enable the Council to understand how the Borough’s Green Belt land contributes to the fundamental aims, characteristics and purposes of the Green Belt. These tests are set out in the NPPF at Paragraph 134 and Section 5 of the Part 1 Review sets out how they were incorporated into the assessment methodology for that report. The assessment was carried out on the basis of splitting the Borough’s Green Belt into 30 distinct parcels using linear features and different land typologies as also set out in Section 5 of the Part 1 Review.
- 1.5 The role of this part of the Review is to assess the degree of harm on the Green Belt, on a site-by-site basis, that would be realised if any of the individual Green Belt sites that are being considered by the Council for potential allocation for housing are allocated for that use. Should it be considered appropriate to allocate these sites for housing through the Local Plan, this would necessitate the removal

of their Green Belt designation as part of a strategic release of Green Belt carried out as part of the formation of the same plan. The assessments carried out as part of this review consider the impact that the release and subsequent development of the proposed site would have on the established purposes of the Green Belt as they pertain to the immediate site and locality, any impact on the wider Green Belt, the consideration of alternative boundaries that might effect a more strategic release which would create Green Belt boundaries which would be more defensible in the long term, and potential options for the mitigation of harm should the site be removed from the Green Belt.

- 1.6 It is not the role of this Review to recommend development in the Green Belt, nor does it act to effect a realignment of the Green Belt boundary. In order for Green Belt development to be considered appropriate, the Council must be able to demonstrate that 'exceptional circumstances' exist which would subsequently justify such a release and *'that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development.'* (NPPF paragraph 137)
- 1.7 Should evidence conclude that development in the Green Belt is necessary, the conclusions drawn by this work will be used in conjunction with the findings of further assessments carried out as part of the Castle Point Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and other technical evidence. The Council will assess the full range of potential housing locations that have been promoted by the house building industry for inclusion in the emerging Castle Point Local Plan, including those which are currently in the Green Belt and included in this Review.
- 1.8 The basis of this subsequent work will be wider ranging than this Green Belt Review and will focus on the full range of sustainable planning considerations on a site-by-site basis. This final, holistic assessment will allow for the emerging Local Plan to promote a sustainable pattern of growth sufficient to accommodate the Borough's housing need so far as is practicable, and, if required, result in the determination of new Green Belt boundaries that can endure for the long term.

2 PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE REVIEW

- 2.1 In early 2018 the South Essex Authorities, which include Castle Point Borough Council, agreed to establish the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA). The South Essex authorities have agreed to begin the preparation of a statutory Joint Strategic Plan (JSP), of which one focus is addressing the provision of the amount, type and distribution of housing to accommodate its growing population.
- 2.2 The Council is also in the process of preparing a new Local Plan which will set the framework for development within the Borough over the next 15 years, up to 2033. Early evidence generated in support of the JSP as well as Castle Point's own initial evidence suggest that there is limited capacity within the urban areas in the Borough to accommodate the needs of its growing population. Therefore, the Council is required to look beyond the urban boundary and assess whether there is land outside the urban areas that could accommodate all or a proportion of this growth.
- 2.3 The vast majority of land outside of the defined urban areas within Castle Point Borough is designated as Green Belt. The only exception to this is a large area of open land on the south side of Canvey Island between Haven Road and Thorney Bay Caravan Site, serves as a buffer between the industrial installations adjacent to the Thames and the residential area of Canvey. It also contains natural features providing important wildlife habitats. In view of its particular importance, the site is designated as a 'Green Lung' and is protected from development that would adversely affect its open character, wildlife or amenity value by virtue of the saved Policy EC8 of the Castle Point Borough Council Local Plan 1998.
- 2.4 Due to the predominance of Green Belt land and early evidence suggesting that not all housing need could be met in the urban area, as part of the New Local Plan process, a review of the borough's Green Belt was considered prudent. Whilst the core message of the NPPF is to protect Green Belt land, it does allow for changes to the Green Belt boundary to be made through the preparation or review of a Local Plan.
- 2.5 This document represents Part 2 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018. The purpose of the Green Belt Review Part 1 assessment was to enable the Council to understand how the Borough's Green Belt land as a whole contributes to the fundamental aims, characteristics and purposes of the Green Belt. These tests are set out in the NPPF at Paragraph 134 and Section 5 of the Part 1 Review sets out how they were incorporated into the assessment methodology.
- 2.6 The role of the second part of the Review is to assess the degree of harm on the Green Belt, on a site-by-site basis, of allocating Green Belt sites that have been put forward for housing. These sites have been suggested to the Council as part of the

Call for Sites exercises that have been carried out by Castle Point Borough Council, or have been the subject of previous enquiries. Should it be considered appropriate to allocate these sites for housing through the Local Plan, it would necessitate the removal of the Green Belt designation as part of a strategic release of Green Belt carried out as part of the formation of the same plan. The assessments carried out through this review considers the impact that the release and subsequent development of the proposed sites would have on the established purposes of the Green Belt as they pertain to the immediate site and locality. The assessments also cover any impact on the wider Green Belt, the consideration of alternative boundaries than those proposed by the site that may allow for the formation of more defensible Green Belt boundaries which could endure in the long term, and potential options for the mitigation of harm should the site be removed from the Green Belt.

- 2.7 However, before any Green Belt sites are to be considered, the Council must evidence that exceptional circumstances exist to justify any changes to the boundaries of the Green Belt. Should such exceptional circumstances exist, the Council must also demonstrate that it has fully examined all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development. Should these reasonable options be exhausted and the exceptional circumstances be proven, the Council will then be required to consider Green Belt release through subsequent work that takes the contents of this Review forward.
- 2.8 The findings presented in Part 2 of the Review will inform subsequent work assessing specific sites within Green Belt parcels. Should emerging evidence conclude that development in the Green Belt is necessary, the conclusions drawn by the Part 2 work will be used in conjunction with the findings of assessments carried out as part of the Castle Point Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and other technical evidence.
- 2.9 The basis for this subsequent work will be wider ranging than this Green Belt Review and will focus on the full range of sustainable planning considerations on a site-by-site basis. In this regard, the NPPF is clear that *'Where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously-developed and/or is well-served by public transport.'* (NPPF paragraph 138). The same paragraph states that *'the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account'* which means the need to consider a diverse range of further criteria including impacts on biodiversity, health and wellbeing and air quality before housing sites can be allocated.
- 2.10 This final, holistic assessment will allow for the emerging Castle Point Local Plan to promote a sustainable pattern of growth sufficient to accommodate the Borough's housing need so far as is practicable, and, if required, result in the determination of new Green Belt boundaries that can endure for the long term.

2.11 The remainder of this Review is structured as follows:

Section 3	National and Local Green Belt Policy
Section 4	Details the assessment area and describes Castle Point Borough's key characteristics
Section 5	Summarises the methodology and findings of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1
Section 6	Details the methodology used in the Green Belt Review Part 2 assessment
Section 7	Summarises the results of the Green Belt Review Part 2 assessment
Section 8	Details the conclusions of the study
Appendix A	Contains the pro-formas for each individual site

- 2.12 **PLEASE NOTE:** This Green Belt Review 2018 is an evidence base document supporting the emerging Castle Point Local Plan. Planning Advisory Service (PAS) advice (Planning on the Doorstep: The Big Issues – Green Belt, 2015) states that *“Any review of Green Belt boundaries should involve an assessment of how the land still contributes to the five purposes noted earlier, and take place via the local plan process”*. This Review Part 2 therefore is solely concerned with impacts in relation to the Green Belt purposes as defined in Paragraph 134 of the NPPF.
- 2.13 Further PAS Advice offered through their Question and Answer service states that focussing on when the Green Belt meets one or more of the Green Belt Purposes is likely to be a typical approach to a Green Belt Review. The Green Belt Review 2018 therefore considers the Green Belt in isolation of other planning matters or constraints that would impact on the viability of development, such as areas of high flood risk and the setting of historical buildings.
- 2.14 As previously stated, it is not the purpose of the Green Belt Review 2018 to allocate land for development and/or modify the current boundary of the Green Belt. Instead, this Review will inform the preparation of the Local Plan alongside

other published evidence, which will have to satisfy the NPPF requirement of demonstrating 'exceptional circumstances' and exhausting reasonable options for otherwise meeting its identified need for development.

- 2.15 Therefore, and if required, the findings of this report may subsequently inform further studies to be carried out by Castle Point Borough Council. These will look to combine the impact that allocating those Green Belt sites submitted to the Council for potential housing would have on the Green Belt with other assessments. These other assessments will be drawn from the Castle Point Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and other technical evidence. Combining assessments in this way ensures that any future development in the Green Belt is inherently sustainable. It will allow the general sustainability of the proposed development to be assessed across a full suite of indicators alongside the role the Green Belt is currently playing in the location of the proposed development, and whether the Green Belt can subsequently be re-aligned such that it still performs a local and strategic function which accords with the Green Belt purposes. Such an approach is considered to be in conformity with national policy when the principle of requiring development to take place in the Green Belt has been established.
- 2.16 It is also important to note that the purpose of this 2018 Review is to understand how the Green Belt is currently performing in the Borough relative to its purposes as set out in the NPPF, rather than being an assessment of the impact that the Green Belt designation has had with regard to shaping development in the Borough.
- 2.17 Finally, this Green Belt Review Part 2 assesses each site on an individual basis; it does not assess any potential cumulative impact of allocating more than one site in proximity. Any such impact will be required to be addressed by the Council as part of any future work which takes the conclusions of this Review forward.

3 National and Local Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.1 The NPPF, first published in March 2012 and revised in July 2018, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The purpose of the NPPF is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, which has three dimensions; an economic role, a social role and an environmental role.
- 3.2 Each Local Planning Authority is required to produce a Local Plan for its area. Paragraph 31 of the NPPF states that 'The preparation and review of all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned'. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF states (inter-alia) that 'strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing'. All local plans are examined by an independent planning inspector who is appointed by the Secretary of State to determine if the plan is 'sound'. A 'sound' plan must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

National Green Belt Policy

- 3.3 Section 13 of the *NPPF* sets out the national policy for Green Belt. It states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land open and identifies the essential characteristics of Green Belts as being their openness and permanence. Paragraph 134 sets out the five purposes that the Green Belt is to serve:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 3.4 Once Green Belt boundaries have been established, they should only be altered in exceptional circumstances which are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of Local Plans. The NPPF doesn't define what these exceptional circumstances are with respect to altering Green Belt boundaries but it does set out what should be considered when defining Green Belt boundaries. These include the need to ensure consistency with the development plan's strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development, and to define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent (NPPF, paragraph 139).

- 3.5 The NPPF further states that 'before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development.' These options are given as making as much use as possible of brownfield and underutilised land, optimising the density of development and whether the Council has entered into dialogue with neighbouring authorities with regard to whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development (NPPF, paragraph 137).
- 3.6 As previously stated, this Green Belt Review does not seek to justify development in the Green Belt, realign its boundaries or seek to explore other opportunities for housing development which exist outside of the Green Belt. The role of the Green Belt Review 2018 is to assess the contribution that the Green Belt makes to its stated purposes (Part 1) and assess the degree of harm that would arise in relation to these purposes by removing those sites put forward for housing allocations from the Green Belt (Part 2).

Local Green Belt Policy

- 3.7 The extant Local Plan for the borough of Castle Point is the Castle Point Local Plan 1998. This was saved in its totality until September 2007 where the Plan expired other than for those policies explicitly saved by a Secretary of State Direction in 2007.
- 3.8 The basis for the Green Belt in Castle Point was originally set out in Policy GB1 of the Local Plan 1998. This policy set the parameters of the Green Belt through reference to the associated Proposals Map. This policy was not saved by the Direction and it subsequently became a point of legal contention as to whether the Green Belt in Castle Point still existed. However, in *Fox Land and Property Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (C1/2014/0394)*, it was found that the expiration of GB1 did not impact on the existence of the Green Belt.
- 3.9 It was argued by the appellant that the Green Belt effectively disappeared when Policy GB1 expired. It was argued that the policy was essential to the status of the Green Belt in the area of the Local Plan as specific reference was made in Policy GB1 to the Green Belt being identified on the Proposals Map, and life was given in that respect to the identification of the Green Belt in the Proposals Map only by Policy GB1. The remaining saved Green Belt policies all assume the existence of the Green Belt but they do not define it or give it life.
- 3.10 This reasoning was found to be erroneous in various respects. Lord Justice Richards in his Court of Appeal Decision March 2015 remarked that it would be very surprising if six saved policies relating to specific aspects of development in the Green Belt (that is Policies GB2 to GB7) were all wholly ineffective and that national policy on Green Belt had nothing to bite on in the area of the Local Plan simply because one policy, Policy GB1, had not been saved and had ceased to

have effect. It was further ruled that Policy GB1 simply referred to ‘the Green Belt identified on the Proposals Map’; it was necessary and appropriate when applying saved policies GB2 – GB7 to also look at the Proposals Map to see what was the area of “the Green Belt” referred to. It was stated that nothing turns on the fact that, unlike Policy GB1, they did not mention the Proposals Map in terms. Recourse to the Proposals Map in order to inform the proper understanding of the policies was inherent in the statutory scheme.

- 3.11 Further, paragraph 2.8 of the supporting text in the Local Plan makes entirely clear that the Green Belt is the area of land identified on the Proposals Map as Green Belt, and as Paragraph 2.8 serves to inform all the Green Belt policies, it remains saved as it applies to those saved policies. It was therefore concluded that there is still a Green Belt for the purposes of the Local Plan, and that its extent is set out in the Proposals Map of the Local Plan 1998.

4 THE ASSESSMENT AREA

Spatial Portrait

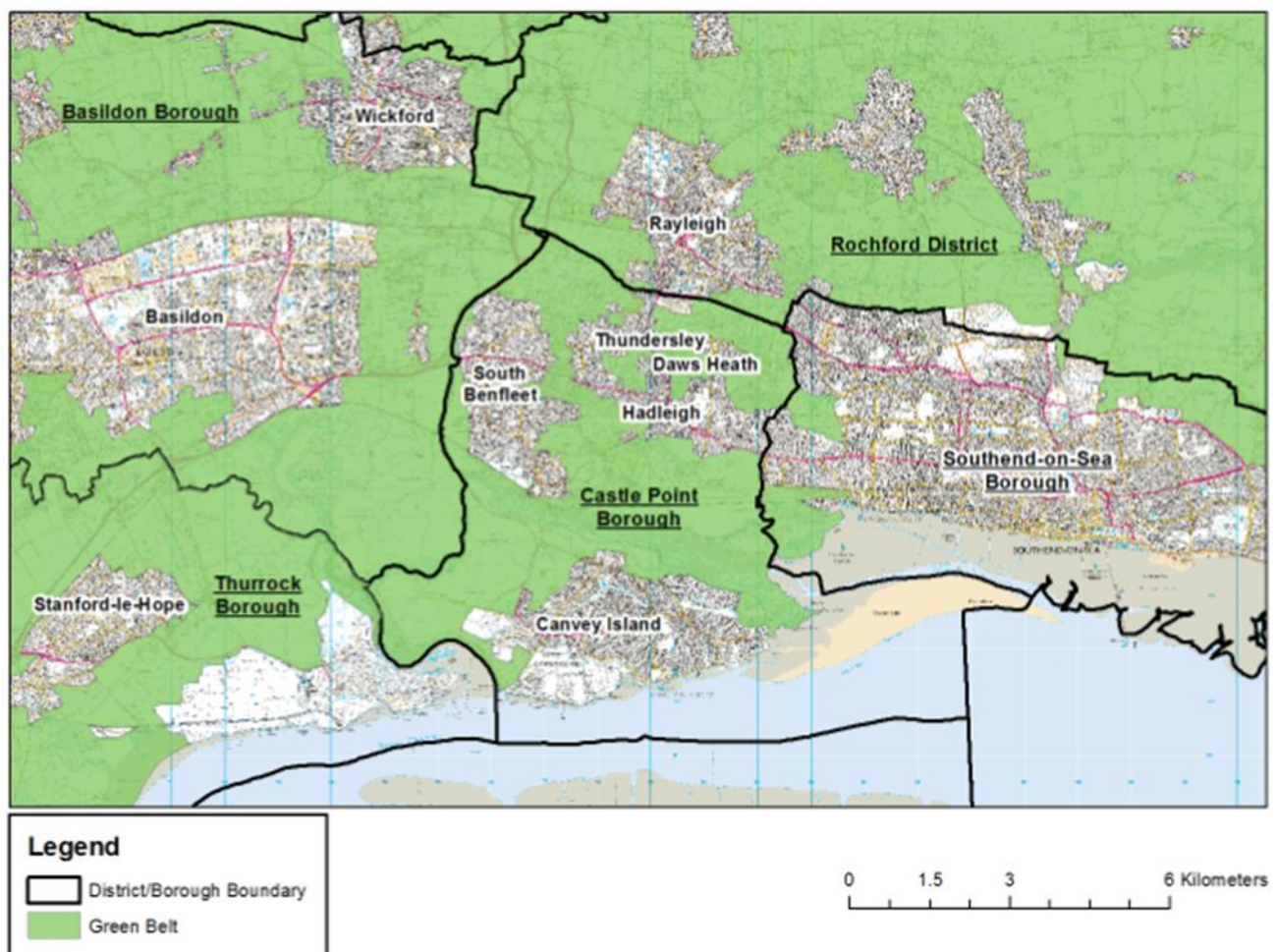
- 4.1 Castle Point is a relatively small local authority area just 45km² in size, with a population of 88,000 people. It sits at the heart of the Thames Gateway South Essex sub-region on the northern bank of the Thames Estuary between the larger settlements of Basildon and Southend. It is these larger settlements, along with London, on which the borough relies for a great deal of its employment, services and leisure opportunities. The urban areas of Castle Point Borough itself largely comprises of the towns of South Benfleet, Hadleigh, Thundersley and Canvey Island.
- 4.2 Castle Point is well connected with the wider south Essex area, and London, by the highway and railway network. The A13, A127 and A130 pass through Castle Point linking the borough with opportunities in south Essex, London and other locations nearby. The railway service meanwhile is well rated for customer satisfaction and provides fast, direct connections to Basildon, London and Southend, and also connecting services to employment growth locations in Thurrock.
- 4.3 The Thames Estuary is a significant feature in the landscape of Castle Point. It has, and will, continue to play an influential role in the natural environment and scope of development within the borough. It also acts to separate the towns in south Essex with those in north Kent, with data indicating that there is a resultant low level of connectivity between these places despite being relatively close in proximity.

Castle Point Green Belt

- 4.4 The general extent of the Green Belt in Essex was first established in South Essex in the draft Review of the Essex County Development Plan in 1964, which was then approved by the Secretary of State in May 1976 as the Approved Review Development Plan (ARDP). The ARDP was replaced by the Essex County Structure Plan (ECSP) which was updated by a series of reviews before finally being replaced by the Essex and Southend on Sea Replacement Structure Plan 1996-2011. Policies defining the general extent and outer boundaries of the Green Belt were carried forward from each of these plans to the next. The inner boundary of the Green Belt was to be determined by the Borough Council's as part of the Local Plan process.
- 4.5 Castle Point Borough Council used the Green Belt boundaries established by the ARDP and subsequent County Structure Plans, until the adoption of the Castle Point Local Plan in 1998, when the inner boundary was defined on the Proposals Map. As part of the preparation of the Local Plan 1998, the Council undertook a comprehensive review of the Green Belt boundaries, and they have remained unchanged since then.

- 4.6 The current extent of the Green Belt in Castle Point is 2,750 hectares, which represents approximately 60% of the borough's area. It is tightly drawn around the existing urban area, incorporating most of the undeveloped land within the borough.
- 4.7 The eastern extent of the Green Belt is demarked by the eastern administrative boundary with Rochford District Council and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council. It is important to identify through the Green Belt assessments that potential Green Belt development could affect Green Belt in an adjacent authority. For example, the eastern extent of the Green Belt in Castle Point is adjacent with Belfairs Park in Southend-on-Sea. This link is important for creating a strategic separation between development in the two settlements, and for providing wildlife corridors which enable the movement of animal and plant species across authority boundaries in order to promote biodiversity at a strategic scale.
- 4.8 The northern and western boundaries of the Green Belt are bound by major transport corridors, the A127, (Southend Arterial Route) to the north and the A130, (Canvey Way and Sadler's Farm Roundabout) to the west. These routes cut through the Green Belt.
- 4.9 The southern area of the Green Belt in Castle Point borders the urban settlement of Canvey Island, and its extent is delineated by the Thames Estuary. This area of Green Belt has a varied topography consisting of marshland, a steep escarpment and some woodland features. This has resulted in a variety of habitats, some of which are of national or European significance.
- 4.10 The following figure displays the Study Area within the borough, which incorporates the entirety of the Green Belt in Castle Point.

Figure 1: The Green Belt within South Essex



- 4.11 The Green Belt in Castle Point is part of a wider network of Green Belt extending across south Essex. This extended network of Green Belt has been effective in maintaining the separation between the towns in south Essex and within Castle Point by ensuring that the open land between towns has remained undeveloped.
- 4.12 As previously stated, the Council has not sought to amend the extent of the Green Belt since 1998. Since the adoption of the Local Plan in that year, the Council has largely been successful in protecting the Green Belt from inappropriate development. However, there is now a need to develop a new Local Plan to accommodate the growth forecasted to take place in the borough over the next 15 years, and emerging evidence suggests that there is a need to re-assess the extent of Green Belt in Castle Point to ensure that it is fit for purpose, and to establish how sustainable development can be best supported.

5 THE RESULTS OF THE GREEN BELT REVIEW PART 1

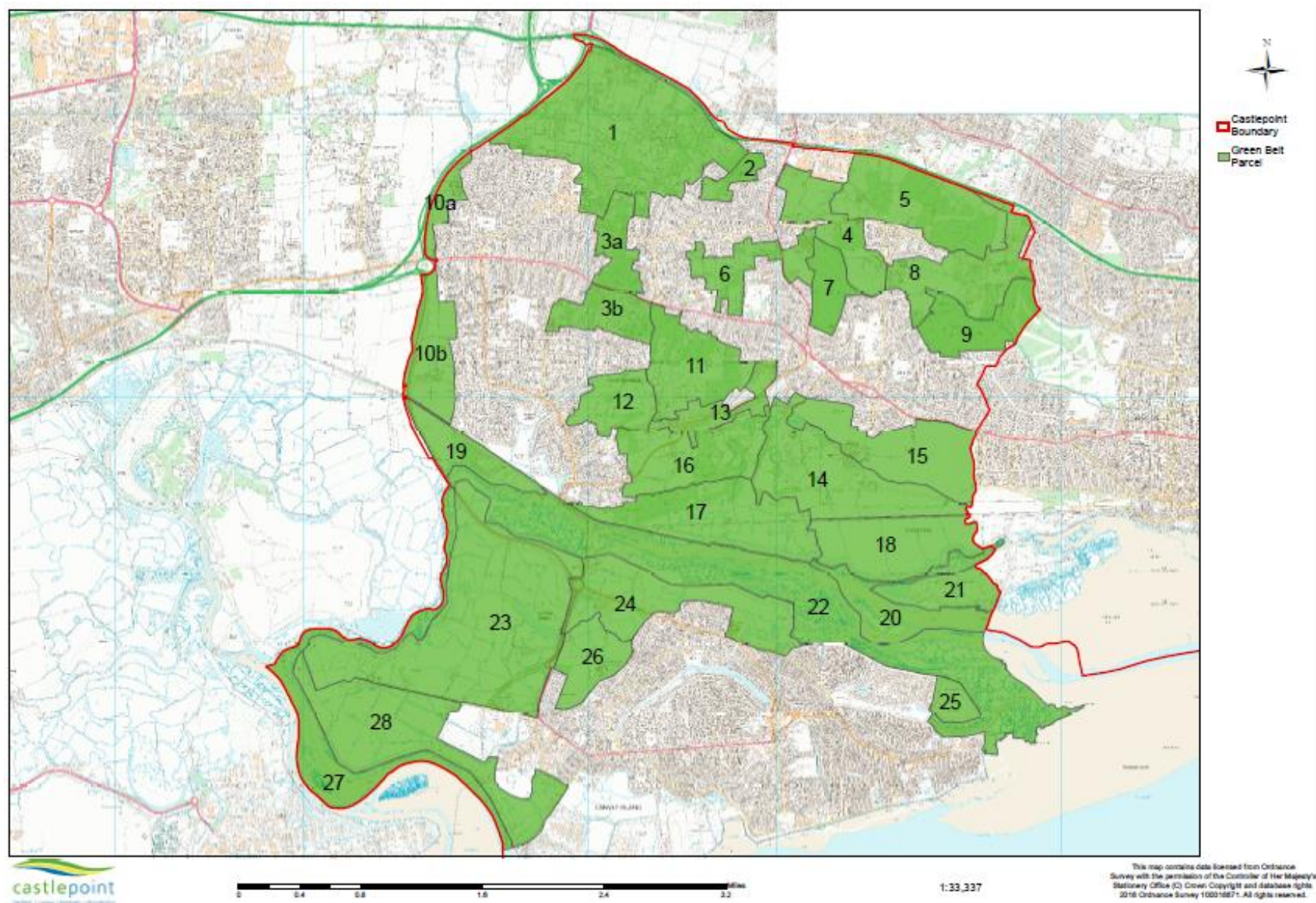
Introduction

- 5.1 The results of the Part 2 assessment are partly based on the results of Part 1 of the Green Belt Review and as such there is merit in revisiting the conclusions of that document here.

Castle Point Green Belt Review Part 1 Conclusions

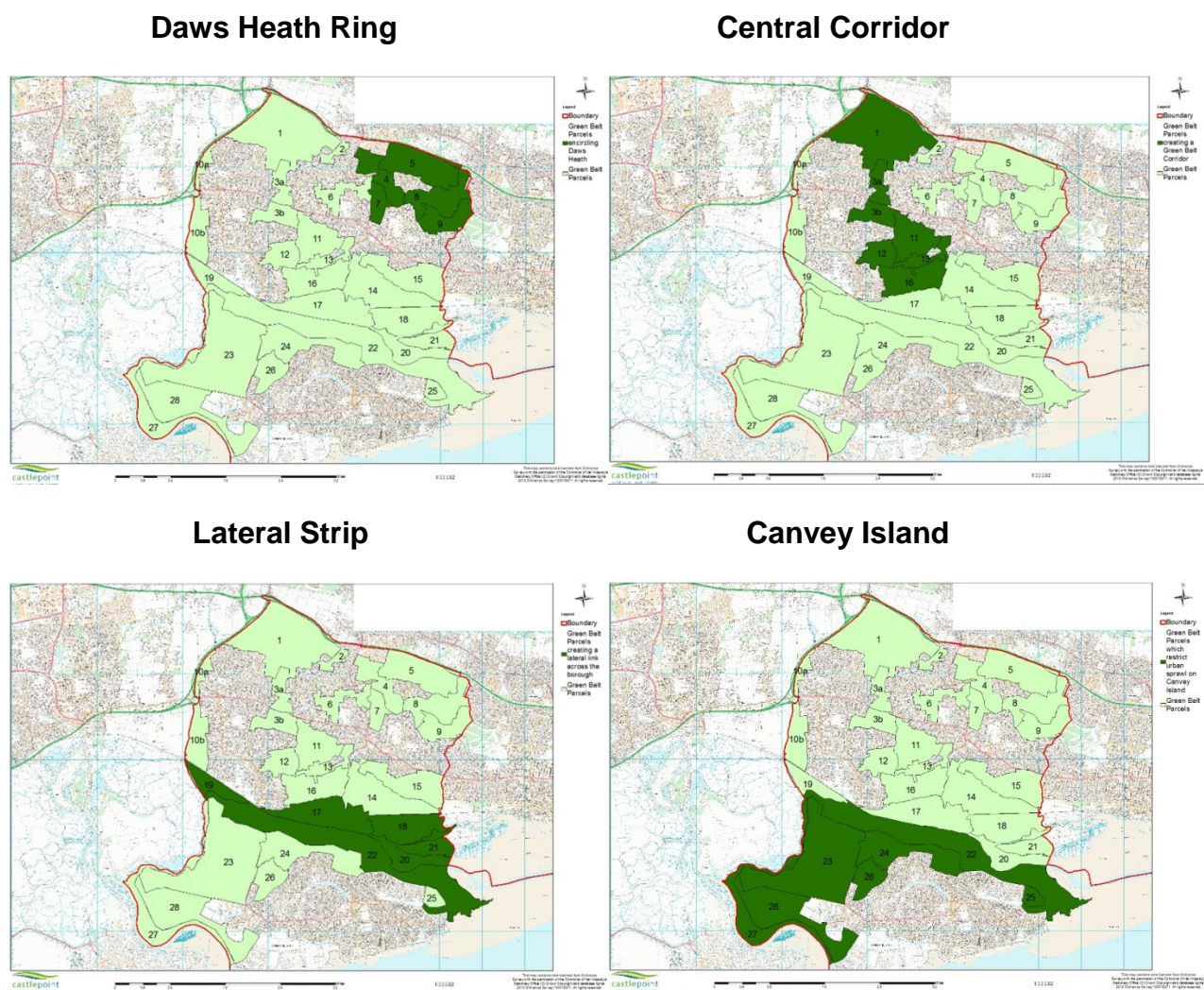
- 5.2 The role of the Green Belt Review Part 1 was to assess the whole of the Green Belt in Castle Point against the purposes of the Green Belt as set out in NPPF Paragraph 134. In order to allow for a meaningful comparison between different parts of the Green Belt throughout the borough, it was necessary to split the full extent of the Green Belt into separate parcels which could each be subjected to the methodology separately.
- 5.3 The NPPF makes it clear that Green Belt boundaries should be robust and permanent. The Council therefore used strong, permanent features such as waterways, railways and roads to divide the Green Belt into separate assessment areas. Following this initial sweep, further sub-division was considered necessary to allow for a meaningful assessment and this was carried out on the basis of features that might be less permanent in nature, such as other water features, belts of trees, marshland, coastal areas and woodland.
- 5.4 Much of the Green Belt in the borough, and particularly in the south, lacks features which could act as strong defensible boundaries upon which to define parcels so recourse often had to be made to features or aspects which are less clearly defined within standard mapping. Changes in land designation and land use were often used to determine the parcels but nonetheless, it is considered that the method employed to define the area boundaries represents a consistent and logical approach.
- 5.5 The results of that parcelling exercise are shown in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2: Map showing Individual Green Belt Parcels in the Borough



- 5.6 Each parcel was then assessed against the contribution it made to the purposes of the Green Belt using a transparent methodology detailed in the Part 1 Review. This methodology was based on the first three of the Green Belt Purposes and omitted the latter two.
- 5.7 The reason for the omission of Purpose 4 (to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns) was that it was considered that there are no towns in the borough which are considered to be historic in nature for the purposes of the application of this Green Belt Purpose.
- 5.8 With regard to the omission of Purpose 5 (to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land), PAS Guidance states that *'If Green Belt achieves this purpose, then all Green Belt does so to the same extent and hence the value of various land parcels is unlikely to be distinguished by the application of this purpose.'* As such each parcel would receive the same assessment, rendering the process unnecessary.
- 5.9 That then left the following three remaining purposes for assessment:
- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
 - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
 - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
- 5.10 Each parcel was assessed on a gradational degree of contribution that each parcel made to the three Green Belt Purposes set out above. A range of criteria were used to assess the degree of contribution and these are set out in Section 5 of the Part 1 Review. Each parcel was assessed on the basis of whether a Purpose was 'not relevant' with regard to the parcel, or whether the parcel was making no contribution, or a minor, moderate, strong or very strong contribution to that Purpose.
- 5.11 Through the assessment, it was found that 27 of the 30 Green Belt parcels made a very strong contribution to at least one Green Belt Purpose with the remaining three making at least a moderate contribution to a single Purpose. Therefore no parcels were found to be making a minor or no contribution to at least one Green Belt Purpose.
- 5.12 Consideration was also given to how the Green Belt extended outside of the borough's administrative boundaries and whether there were also any locally important internal strategic linkages. Through the individual parcel assessments and a high level overview of the Green Belt in Castle Point in a wider context, it was possible to identify four strategic areas of Green Belt in Castle Point. These are shown below

Figure 3: Locally Important Strategic Green Belt Areas



5.13 The four Locally Important Strategic Green Belt Areas are considered to perform the following functions:

- **Daws Heath Ring** - This Green Belt area encircles the settlement of Daws Heath and has been effective in preventing urban sprawl and therefore preventing the settlement from merging with the surrounding settlements of Hadleigh, Thundersley, Rayleigh and Eastwood. The Green Belt area also has an important function of preventing urban coalescence between these settlements more generally.
- **Central Corridor** - These parcels of Green Belt serve to restrict the settlements of South Benfleet and Thundersley from merging and also create a connection between the northern Green Belt parcels within the borough to those in the south.
- **Lateral Strip** - This strategic unit takes the form of a large area of uninterrupted Green Belt extending east to west through the centre of the borough. This area of Green Belt has been effective in protecting a unique area of countryside from encroachment and plays a positive role at a sub-

regional level in promoting biodiversity as well as creating opportunities for recreation in the countryside.

- Canvey Island - The Green Belt on Canvey Island effectively prevents the urban settlement from expanding to the extent of the coastal wall or urban encroachment disrupting the ecological value and landscape character of the west of the island

5.14 The results of the relevant parcel assessment are summarised on the pro-formas associated with each individual site which can be found in Appendix One. Whether a parcel was part of a Locally Important Strategic Green Belt Area, and the impact that removing the Green Belt designation may have on that strategic function, is also recorded as an element of the Part 2 assessment.

6 GREEN BELT REVIEW PART 2 METHODOLOGY

Introduction

- 6.1 For this Green Belt assessment to be comprehensive and robust, a systematic, transparent and logical methodology has been followed in its production. There is no set way to carry out a Green Belt assessment but it is considered that the following methodology reflects best practice. This section sets out the methodology that was used to inform the assessment of harm to the Green Belt that would be realised through the allocation of each of the 22 Green Belt sites proposed for housing which are in the Green Belt and that have been submitted for the consideration of the Council. Its comprehensive detailing is offered for transparency and to highlight that the methodology has been applied consistently across each of the sites.

Layout of Site Assessment Pro-forma

- 6.2 The pro-forma for each individual site can be found in Appendix One and each site was subjected to the same assessment criteria. This section sets out the criteria employed and, where necessary, the rationale for their inclusion.

Stage 1 – Description of the Proposed Housing Site

- 6.3 Sets out what is contained within the site at the present time

Stage 2 – Relationship to Surrounding Area

- 6.4 This stage describes the current boundary treatment around the perimeter of the site and what land uses are adjacent to the site. This section also notes whether the land adjoining the site is within the Green Belt.

Stage 3 - Performance of Relevant Parcel(s) under Part 1 Methodology

- 6.5 This section summarises the results of the Green Belt Review Part 1 which pertain to the wider parcel within which the proposed site lies.

Stage 4 - Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

- 6.6 This stage records whether the parcel within which the site lies is part of a strategic area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review. This was considered relevant as whilst the removal of a particular site from the Green Belt may not have a significant impact relative to its immediate area, such a removal may compromise a wider strategic function.

Stage 5 - Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

- 6.7 This stage represents the most comprehensive part of the assessment and was

informed by criteria which could be applied in a transparent manner. Different criteria were employed across the three Green Belt Purposes which were selected as being relevant for assessment, with each site receiving the assessment which most closely matched the description of the site and/or its immediate locality. The rationale behind the purposes chosen and a description and justification for the criteria used can be found from Paragraph 6.15

Stage 6 - Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

- 6.8 This section identified what the new Green Belt boundary would take the form of should the proposed site be removed from the Green Belt. It also addresses the impact on any relevant strategic function and whether there would be an impact on the Green Belt Purposes as they apply to the wider parcel within which the site sits.

Stage 7 - Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

- 6.9 This stage assesses whether the proposed site could be re-configured using existing boundaries within the site to either form a more robust boundary, or a boundary that would result in less of an impact on any strategic function or purpose of the wider parcel. Such boundary features considered as part of this stage in the first instance were major pieces of infrastructure such as roads and rail as well as main watercourses. Less robust boundary features such as more local roads, woodland and field boundaries were considered when they did not offer a less robust option for a realignment of the Green Belt boundary than that currently proposed and where they would be more in keeping with the general settlement pattern or would cause less harm on a Green Belt Purpose.

Stage 8 - Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

- 6.10 This stage considers what mitigation methods could be employed to minimise harm on the wider Green Belt should it be considered appropriate to remove the proposed site from the Green Belt.

Stage 9 - Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

- 6.11 Paragraph 139 of the NPPF sets out a number of criteria that a Local Plan must address when taking land out of the Green Belt. These include:
- identifying 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;
 - defining boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent, and
 - not including land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open.
- 6.12 This stage seeks to address these issues by assessing whether the local area

offered a more permanent, robust feature through which to action a wider Green Belt release that was still in keeping with the general settlement pattern. Such a wider release would offer a more sustainable option for growth in the long term, being able to accommodate further immediate housing need or be safeguarded for future need outside of the emerging plan period. This section also considers whether the release of the site affords the opportunity to release the designation from other adjacent areas that are no longer performing a Green Belt function.

Informative

- 6.13 It is important to note that Stage 6 (Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt) is a value judgement based on the release of the site as a whole and is not based on a RAG system such that an outcome is given based on established criteria. Stage 6 is a context sensitive in-combination outcome of the assessment under Stage 5 and is considered to display too great a degree of variance to enable the establishment of meaningful criteria to assess for the purposes of resulting in a final outcome. The impact on the Green Belt as assessed under Stage 6 would also be impacted by any potential decision to reconfigure the site, opportunities for mitigation or whether the release of the proposed site would result in a wider strategic opportunity.
- 6.14 Nonetheless, the conclusions reached by Stage 6 form an important part of the assessment and will need to be held in the balance of the outcomes of Stage 5 and Stage 9.

Assessing the Degree of Harm of Releasing a Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt – Stage 5

- 6.15 As previously stated, there is no set way to carry out a Green Belt Review but best practice is that an assessment of the Green Belt should be based on the purposes of the Green Belt as set out in NPPF Paragraph 134. These purposes are set out below;
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - To prevent the neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 6.16 Further, it is recognised that due to the nature of the assessment, the assessment system is unavoidably qualitative in nature and each assessment can only be made through planning judgements. For clarity, following the description of each Green Belt Purpose below, the criteria which will determine the assessment under that Purpose are set out. These criteria are primarily based on those which informed Part 1 of the Green Belt Review but have been modified to accommodate the fact

that Part 1 of the Review ascertains the role that the Green Belt is currently playing, with Part 2 looking at the degree of harm of releasing a site from the Green Belt relative to its current performance under the Purposes. A site does not have to satisfy all the criteria which lead to a particular assessment being given, and indeed it could not. The criteria employed recognise that there are a multitude of reasons why any particular degree of harm may manifest against any given Purpose.

- 6.17 A gradational scheme has been developed to recognise that a site or parcel may still provide a strong Green Belt function even though it contains an element of inappropriate development. This is not to suggest that further development, even that which is minor, is necessarily appropriate within the Green Belt, nor does it suggest that minor inappropriate development does not have an impact on the purposes of the Green Belt. Further, a release of a particular site within a larger parcel may result in a minor or very strong degree of harm irrespective of whether the parcel was assessed as strongly contributing to a Green Belt Purpose or making a minor contribution to that purpose.
- 6.18 In this respect it is important to note that the assessed harm of developing each Green Belt site is relative to the current context and could be subject to change should any other modifications be made to the Green Belt as a result of future site allocations or deallocations in close proximity. For example, the degree of harm assessed with regard to developing a site on the purpose of maintaining a strategic gap between two different urban centres could increase should another site which is also part of that strategic gap be allocated for development.
- 6.19 To clarify, the purpose of this Review is to assess the potential degree of harm on the Green Belt of removing specific sites from the Green Belt which have been submitted to the Council as potential housing allocations, relative to the Green Belt Purposes as stated in the NPPF. It is also reiterated that the findings of this assessment do not provide the basis for the removal of a site from the Green Belt in isolation. Site allocations should be directed to the most sustainable locations, of which the impact on the Green Belt is but one sustainability consideration, albeit an important one.
- 6.20 The findings of this Review will only be required to be taken forward if emerging evidence concludes that there is the requirement for housing development to take place in the Green Belt. At such a point, the conclusions of this Review will be assessed in conjunction with the findings of the Housing Land Availability Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and other technical evidence to ensure that when redefining Green Belt boundaries, there is consistency with the development plan's strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development.
- 6.21 It is further noted that the NPPF does not seek to apply any weighting to the Green Belt purposes set out in paragraph 134. As such this Review treats each purpose equally under the assessment process.

Green Belt Purpose 1 - to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

- 6.22 A well-recognised function of the Green Belt is to limit the sprawl of urban development into the countryside. Urban sprawl is typically considered to be development that is unplanned, with the PAS Green Belt Guidance asking the important question of whether 'development that is planned positively through a local plan, and well designed with good masterplanning' should be considered to be sprawl. Whether a development would constitute sprawl is therefore not so much an issue of whether it is present in the Green Belt but whether that development is a natural fit in the landscape and forms any logical pattern. The degree of permeability between the built-up area and the countryside is also an important consideration when determining if any future development would constitute sprawl.
- 6.23 It is noted that the purpose relates itself only to 'large built-up areas'. Castle Point do not have an adopted settlement hierarchy as its urban area is primarily comprised of the four large towns of Thundersley, South Benfleet, Hadleigh and Canvey Island. As such the definition of 'large built-up areas' is defined in the first instance as applying to these four towns within the Borough.
- 6.24 Daws Heath represents the remaining prominent settlement within the Borough. There is a clear albeit relatively small gap between Daws Heath and the larger urban settlements in proximity to it, and these gaps are entirely comprised of Green Belt land.
- 6.25 With Daws Heath being the only distinctly urban settled area outside of the four main towns in the borough, it is considered appropriate to consider Daws Heath alongside the four main towns as being relevant to this Green Belt purpose. This is further considered to be a justified approach as whilst Daws Heath is not in the Green Belt, it is entirely circled by Green Belt such that there is a clearly defined boundary between the settlement and the Green Belt. Daws Heath has also long been recognised as a settlement in its own right within Essex, and features in the prominent historical work 'The History and Antiquities of the County of Essex by Philip Morant, 1763 – 1768'. It is further noted that a Green Belt Review should take local context into account, and therefore it is considered that Daws Heath represents a 'large built up area' in the context of the administrative area.
- 6.26 It is important to note the difference between urban sprawl and encroachment which is addressed under Green Belt Purpose 3. For development to constitute urban sprawl for the purposes of this Review, it must be linked to one of the defined built-up areas. All sites assessed through this Review were adjacent at least in part to an existing urban area.
- 6.27 The extent to which the curtilages of residential properties found within a Green Belt parcel amount to urban sprawl (and encroachment) into the countryside has also been considered. Whilst not built development themselves, they are strongly

related to built development, can include built development and / or otherwise act to remove land from open countryside. These impacts are still recognised but in some cases within the borough, the Green Belt has purposely been defined to include residential curtilages as this acts to limit what has been termed ‘garden grabbing’, where large gardens can be partitioned and then sold for housing. Such an action both increases residential density and reduces green field land, which detrimentally affects the character of the Green Belt. In light of this, it was considered perverse to lower the assessment of a Green Belt parcel in the Green Belt Review Part 1 where it includes residential curtilages when their very inclusion limits urban sprawl and protects green space. However, where residential curtilages comprise a significant majority of a Green Belt parcel such that the area can no longer be deemed countryside, this was recognised through the assessment scoring. This distinction is carried through into the site assessments under Part 2.

- 6.28 NPPF Paragraph 138 states that ‘When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account’. This ties in closely with the notion that urban sprawl is only that development which is unplanned. Assessing ‘sprawl’ in the context of this Review is therefore an evaluation of the amount of built development there already is, such that further built development doesn’t introduce the notion of sprawl as the locality is already built up, and also whether the proposed development would fit the settlement pattern such that it would equate to a ‘sustainable’ pattern of development. The relationship of the site to the existing settlement pattern is the primary interest however, such that the allocation of a site containing no development but whose development would be in keeping with the settlement pattern is assessed as representing a lower degree of harm to the Green Belt than a site which contains no development but is not in keeping with the settlement pattern. A further consideration that forms part of the assessment under this Purpose is the nature of the new Green Belt boundary that would be formed by removing the proposed site from the Green Belt. Less harm is assessed where the new Green Belt boundary would be more robust than the existing boundary. An increase in boundary robustness is assessed as according with the NPPF requirement for the process of Green Belt realignment to ‘define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.’ (NPPF paragraph 139)

- 6.29 The following assessment system was applied to Purpose 1

Table 1: Assessment Criteria under Purpose 1

Degree of Conformity with Purpose	Indicative Characteristics
None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed development site and/or its immediate surrounds are

	<p>already developed to the point that any development would constitute local level infilling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development site is not related to an urban area such that its development could not constitute sprawl from an urban area.
Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is already a high degree of permeability between the existing built-up urban area and the immediate location of the proposed development site such that further development would not be to a significant detriment of character. • The site may be free from existing urban development but its development would be in keeping with the general settlement pattern and allow for the Green Belt to be realigned with a strong permanent boundary.
Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development site lacks a strongly defined edge with the existing built-up area, or sprawl from an existing built up area. • Whilst the proposed development site may be largely free from existing urban development, its development would be broadly in keeping with the general settlement pattern. • Development may allow for the Green Belt to be realigned to an existing feature which would create a more logical Green Belt boundary.

Strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development site is adjacent to an existing built up area, or sprawl from a built-up urban area, and contains limited or no development emanating from a built up area. • Future development displays the characteristics of sprawl as it would be poorly related to the existing settlement pattern. • The release of the site from the Green Belt does not result in the boundary being realigned with a robust permanent boundary.
Very Strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development site is adjacent to an existing built-up urban area, or sprawl from a built up urban area, and contains limited or no development emanating from a built-up area. • Future development would constitute sprawl as it would be very poorly related to the existing settlement pattern • Development of the parcel would bring development across a robust boundary feature and there are no alternative features that would provide a strong barrier to development.

Green Belt Purpose 2 - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

- 6.30 This purpose is defined in the NPPF as applying to towns only. It has previously been noted that Castle Point Borough do not operate a Settlement Hierarchy as the urban area is primarily comprised of Benfleet, Hadleigh, Thundersley and Canvey Island, and these are therefore all considered to fall under the definition of 'towns' for the purpose of this review.

- 6.31 Whilst noting the application of this Green Belt purpose to towns only, PAS Guidance states that '*Green Belt is frequently said to maintain the separation of small settlements near to towns*'. The function of this Green Belt purpose is to ensure that urban areas retain separation and are distinctive, potentially with their own unique character and sense of community. Daws Heath in the north east of the borough closely fits this definition of a 'small settlement near to towns'. As previously stated, there is a clear albeit relatively small gap between Daws Heath and the larger urban settlements in proximity to it, and these gaps are entirely comprised of Green Belt land.
- 6.32 As highlighted above, there is no set methodology for a Green Belt Review, and it is noted that different authorities take different approaches when it comes to defining what constitutes a 'neighbouring town' for assessment under this Green Belt purpose. In each case, the approach is determined by local circumstances and may include settlement hierarchies, population or other criteria considered appropriate in the local context. Therefore, for the reasons previously noted in this methodology section, Daws Heath is considered to be a distinct 'neighbouring town' for the purposes of this study.
- 6.33 This assessment will in the first instance describe the existing gap between any towns and then compare this to the gap that would remain if development of the site were to take place. It is however important to note that the notion of preventing neighbouring towns from merging is more one of perception as it is of distance between the two towns. The PAS Green Belt Guidance states that '*a 'scale rule' approach should be avoided. The identity of a settlement is not determined just by the distance to another settlement; the character of the place and of the land in between must be taken into account. Landscape character assessment is a useful analytical tool for use in undertaking this type of assessment.*' As such, this assessment also draws on the Green Belt Landscape Assessment for Castle Point Borough Council, 2010.
- 6.34 Green Belt land that is open in nature with a flat topography and little to no vegetation will have far longer lines of sight than, for example, land which is wooded. There may also be hard barriers to merging such as intervening major infrastructure or waterways. Examples of such barriers in Castle Point which have the potential to impact on this Purpose include the creek to the north of Canvey Island and the A130. Removing sites from the Green Belt for housing development which are in open locations and contain no obvious barriers to line of sight across identified strategic gaps will be assessed as having a greater degree of harm against this purpose as there are no features which exist within the Green Belt parcel which would otherwise inhibit or block inter-visibility.
- 6.35 The degree of harm will be assessed as lower in those areas where relevant land within a strategic gap contains another robust feature that would act to inhibit urban coalescence such as major infrastructure or a significant natural feature which

would provide a clear demarcation between two urban settlements even if development was to take place up to their edge.

- 6.36 This Review therefore avoids a 'scale rule' approach. However, at the strategic level distance is clearly a factor when considering whether development will result in neighbouring towns merging into one another and as such, the proportion of the strategic gap between two settlements made up by the site being assessed is considered through the assessment criteria. However, the assessment criteria themselves will not be based on any particular distance thresholds as the topography and landscape features within the total gap are also important factors.
- 6.37 Another perception judgement involves a consideration of the amount of built development which already exists in the area. For example, a minor impact may be assessed not just because there are strong boundaries which prevent inter-visibility between two urban areas, or the site represents a small part of the current strategic gap between two urban areas. A minor assessment may also be made if the surrounding area is already developed to the point that the land within which the site sits no longer functions as a rural break between two settlements. The emphasis given to the assessment under this process is therefore weighed more towards perception than distance, which is considered appropriate.
- 6.38 The following assessment system was applied to Purpose 2.

Table 2: Assessment Criteria under Purpose 2

Degree of Conformity with Purpose	Indicative Parcel Characteristics
None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed development site is not considered to fall within a strategic gap between two neighbouring towns. The proposed development site operates as an extension to an adjacent built up area such that it does not perform as a rural break.
Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed development site is between two neighbouring towns but forms a small part of the total gap between them. Other land forming part of the strategic gap between neighbouring towns may contain

	<p>strong boundaries which prevent inter-visibility or features which would inhibit their coalescence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other land in the strategic gap in proximity to the proposed development site is developed such that the sense of a rural break is already weakened. • The width of Green Belt between two neighbouring towns is already significantly narrower at other locations
Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development site is between two neighbouring towns and forms an important part of that gap. • Other land forming part of the strategic gap between neighbouring towns may contain strong boundaries which prevent inter-visibility or features which would inhibit their coalescence. • The width of Green Belt between two neighbouring towns is already narrower at other locations
Strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development site is between two neighbouring towns and forms an important part of that gap. • Boundaries which prevent inter-visibility between two urban settlements or features which would inhibit coalescence are weak or non-existent in the land which would form the remainder of the strategic gap.

Very Strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed development site forms the entirety of the strategic gap between two neighbouring towns, or the majority of it. Development would lead to urban coalescence or a very strong perception of merging.
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Green Belt Purpose 3 - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

- 6.39 For the purposes of this assessment, ‘countryside’ is defined as land free of development other than for those types of development which are not considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt, as set out in NPPF paragraph 145. ‘Encroachment’ is defined as being where inappropriate development has taken place within the countryside, with the degree of encroachment either in the site itself or the immediate surrounds being the basis upon which the degree of harm is assessed. Those sites in areas which display less countryside characteristics will cause less harm to the Green Belt under this Purpose through its removal from the Green Belt and subsequent development.
- 6.40 This purpose includes a scale judgement. A Green Belt parcel may have been assessed under Part 1 of the Green Belt Review as making a very strong contribution to the Purpose of safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, perhaps due to its size and position in the landscape, but a release of a small part of that parcel may not have a significant impact on the perception of the wider area still constituting countryside. The Part 2 assessment is one of the *harm* of releasing a part of the whole rather than an assessment of the *contribution* of the whole.
- 6.41 It is important to note that any aspect of ‘quality’ in terms of the landscape or countryside is not part of this Green Belt Review as it is not featured in any of the purposes. It is instead the degree to which the parcel represents ‘countryside’ or whether it is more defined by landuses which are not considered to be appropriate in the Green Belt, which is the key to this assessment.

Table 3: Assessment Criteria under Purpose 3

Degree of Conformity with Purpose	Indicative Parcel Characteristics
None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed development site or immediate surrounds are developed to the point that the land already functions as part of the built-up area.

Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed development site and / or immediate surrounds are urban to semi-urban in appearance such that this has a significant impact on the perception of the site being in countryside.
Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed development site and / or immediate surrounds contain a moderate amount of development which impacts on the perception of the site being in countryside.
Strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The surrounding area predominantly functions as countryside. The proposed development site is predominantly rural in character with a general absence of development considered inappropriate in the Green Belt.
Very Strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The surrounding area predominantly functions as countryside. The proposed development site represents unspoilt countryside and is at least almost entirely characterised by rural land uses when considered as a whole.

Green Belt Purpose 4 - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

- 6.42 As noted in the PAS Guidance, 'This purpose is generally accepted as relating to very few settlements in practice. In most towns there already are more recent developments between the historic core, and the countryside between the edge of the town.'
- 6.43 There are no towns in the borough which are considered to be historic in nature for the purposes of the application of this Green Belt Purpose. It is held that this

purpose applies to a limited number of areas such as Oxford where the Green Belt specifically contributes to its historic significance. As such, this Purpose did not form part of this Review.

Green Belt Purpose 5 - to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

- 6.44 As stated in the PAS Guidance, 'If Green Belt achieves this purpose, then all Green Belt does so to the same extent and hence the value of various land parcels is unlikely to be distinguished by the application of this purpose.' As such this purpose is excluded from this review as each site would receive the same assessment.

Presentation of Findings

- 6.45 Each parcel has been assessed independently on the basis of Stage 2 above. Individual pro-formas for each assessed parcel can be found in Appendix One, with summarised results shown in Section 7 below.

Final Note

- 6.46 It is important to reiterate that the conclusions drawn in this Review do not act to remove any areas of land from the Green Belt. Instead the conclusions provide an understanding of the harm releasing each individual site has on the purposes of the Green Belt both in the immediate locality and in a strategic context.

7 THE RESULTS OF STAGE 5 OF THE GREEN BELT REVIEW 2018 PART 2

Introduction

- 7.1 This section provides a summary of the main findings for Stages 5 of the assessment process carried out as part of this Review. Stage 5 sought to assess the degree of harm of releasing each potential Green Belt housing site from the Green Belt. Justification for the assessments made with regard to each site can be found within the individual pro-formas in Appendix One, with the criteria for assessment set out in Section 6 of this report.

Stage 5 - Identifying the Degree of Harm of Releasing Potential Green Belt Sites for Housing

- 7.2 The summarised results of Stage 5 of the assessment are presented in Table 4 below. The full results on a site-by-site basis across all stages of assessment can be found in Appendix One.

Table 4 – Headline Results of the Green Belt Parcel Assessment

Green Belt Parcel	Purpose 1 - to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Purpose 2 - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	Purpose 3 - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
SH02	Minor	Minor	Moderate
SH07	Moderate	Very Strong	Strong
SH16	Minor	Minor	Minor
SH01	Minor	Minor	Minor
SH18	Moderate	None	Moderate
SH03	Strong	Minor	Moderate
N/A	None	None	None
SH04	Minor	None	None
SH08	Very Strong	Very Strong	Minor

SH10	Strong	Minor	Strong
SH15	Minor	Moderate	Minor
SH17	Moderate	Minor	Minor
SH22	Very Strong	Moderate	Strong
SH23	Moderate	None	Minor
SH30	Strong	Strong	Moderate
SH32	Minor	None	Minor

8 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 As previously stated, once Green Belt boundaries have been established, they should only be altered in exceptional circumstances which are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of Local Plans. The NPPF does not define what these exceptional circumstances are with respect to altering Green Belt boundaries but it does set out what should be considered when defining Green Belt boundaries. These include the need to ensure consistency with the development plan's strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development, and to define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent (NPPF, paragraph 139).
- 8.2 The NPPF further states that 'before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development.' These options are given as making as much use as possible of brownfield land and underutilised land, optimising the density of development and whether the Council has entered into dialogue with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development (NPPF, paragraph 137).
- 8.3 In light of these requirements, this Green Belt Review does not seek to justify the need to realign Green Belt boundaries. The role of the Green Belt Review 2018 is to assess the contribution that the Green Belt makes to its stated purposes (Part 1) and assess the degree of harm that would arise in relation to these purposes by removing those Green Belt sites put forward for housing from the Green Belt (Part 2).
- 8.4 Should these reasonable options have been exhausted and the exceptional circumstances proven, the Council will then be required to consider Green Belt releases through subsequent work that takes the contents of this review forward.
- 8.5 The basis for this subsequent work will be wider ranging than this single issue Review and will focus on the full range of sustainable planning considerations on a site-by-site basis, including the prioritisation of brownfield land. NPPF Paragraph 138 states that '*the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account*' when drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries which means the need to consider a diverse range of further criteria including impacts on biodiversity, health and wellbeing and air quality before housing sites can be allocated.

APPENDIX 1 – Individual Site Assessment Pro-formas

present along most of the northern boundary, with sporadic housing contained within much of the east and south of the parcel, and housing at greater densities associated with roads cutting through the northern and southern boundaries, particularly in the north eastern portion. As such the parcel lacks a strongly defined edge between the built up area and the parcel.	already contains low density residential development across the entire parcel, with the density increasing in the north east. The wooded areas mean that there is limited visibility within the parcel and its development would lead to actual coalescence between these two urban areas.	is present across the entirety of the parcel. Although areas are wooded, the overriding character of this parcel is semi-urban as there is no clear demarcation between the urban settlement and the parcel. Parts of the parcel help to form a corridor of countryside linking that to the north to the countryside to the south. This linkage is however fractured.
Degree of Contribution: Moderate	Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Minor

Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

Parcel 3b lies within the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area of the Central Corridor as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018. These parcels of Green Belt serve to restrict the settlements of South Benfleet and Thundersley from merging and also create a connection between the northern Green Belt parcels within the borough to those in the south.

Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The proposed development site lacks a strongly defined edge with the existing built-up area such that further development would not be of a significant detriment to the character of this area. Although	Removing this site from the Green Belt could potentially result in a continuation of the densities of development in the north east and south, whilst also threatening the wooded areas which act to screen	The proposed development site and the immediate surrounds are urban to semi-urban in appearance such that this has a significant impact on the perception of the site being in the countryside. The

releasing this site from the Green Belt could result in residential development of higher densities, the footprint would be in keeping with the general settlement pattern and a new Green Belt boundary formed primarily along a local road	the development which already exists. However, other land forming part of the strategic gap between South Benfleet and Thundersley contains significant amounts of woodland which prevent inter-visibility between these towns. Whilst the strategic gap would nonetheless be reduced, it wouldn't be any narrower to that which exists along the frontage of Kiln Road.	proposed development site is not located in an area which would significantly impact on the countryside corridor between South Benfleet and Thundersley.
Degree of Harm: Minor	Degree of Harm: Minor	Degree of Harm: Minor

Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

Parcel 3b lies within the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area of the Central Corridor as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018. However, development of this site would not significantly impact on the strategic function of the wider Central Corridor as the width of the strategic gap which renders the parcels identified within the Central Corridor as performing a specific strategic function is already narrower across the majority of its extent. Development of the site would partly represent an infilling of land surrounded by development rather than placing more pressure on the corridor running between South Benfleet and Thundersley. Development of this site would also act to separate the Green Belt currently designated as school playing fields to the west from the wider Green Belt system. In terms of the re-alignment of the Green Belt boundary, a greater proportion of the boundary of Parcel 3b would be demarked by roads with a reduction demarked by residential curtilages.

Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

The parcel contains a number of internal roads which could be used to define an alternative boundary. This could include continuing a revised boundary along the remainder of Bowers Road which already acts to demark the extent of part of the Green Belt. Another option could be to reduce the east to west extent by re-aligning the boundary with Rhonda Road until it meets a footpath and eventually residential

curtilages. However, these approaches are no more defensible than the one proposed by the allocation.

Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

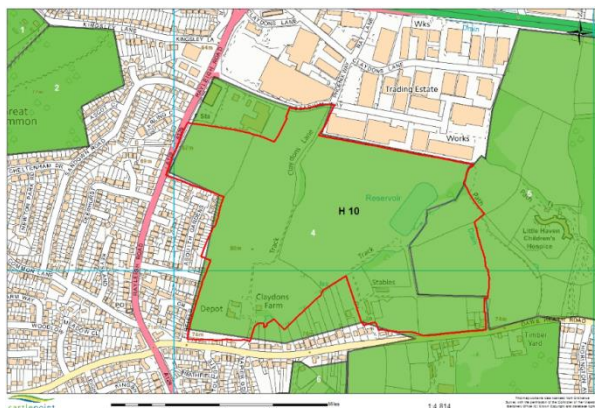
The proposed housing site contains a significant number of mature trees, some of which could be retained and incorporated into sympathetic landscaping to ensure that development is well screened.

Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

Much of the Green Belt in this locality is currently defined by residential curtilages. Development at this site would provide the opportunity to realign the Green Belt with the A13 and Catherine Road which would be a more defensible boundary and ensure the incorporation of the new housing development which no longer acts as Green Belt. Consideration could also be given as to whether it would be appropriate to retain the schools to the west of the proposed site in the Green Belt as these would then be separated from the wider Green Belt. Jarvis Road to the east of Catherine Road presents another realignment opportunity for the eastern boundary but this would act to further narrow the strategic gap between South Benfleet and Thundersley to the extent that the gap at this location would represent amongst the narrowest of gaps across the whole strategic area. As such, this proposed site does not offer a significant opportunity to consider a wider Green Belt release to provide land that could be safeguarded for future housing development beyond the proposed plan period of the emerging Local Plan.

Proposed Housing Site Allocation SH07

Context of Proposed Site



Aerial of Proposed Housing Site



Description of Proposed Housing Site

The proposed housing site is comprised of predominantly open field with internal field boundaries marked by hedgerows. The site contains a farm and an associated depot but is otherwise free of built development. The site also contains a reservoir and is crossed by tracks.

Relationship to Surrounding Area

Part of the northern and southern boundary is adjacent to Green Belt land but if the site was developed this would result in isolated pockets of Green Belt detached from the wider system. The eastern boundary is entirely adjacent to Green Belt land.

To the immediate north of the area is a trading estate, a car showroom and a fire station. These developments are relatively well screened from the site by a tree line. The eastern boundary follows a path and a drain, beyond which is countryside, and this boundary is also tree lined. The southern eastern boundary follows Daws Heath Road, across from which are a small number of dwellings and open field, before wrapping around the curtilage of dwellings along the same road. The western boundary also primarily follows residential curtilages and a small section of Rayleigh Road, across from which are dwellings. Parts of the southern boundary are also lined by trees whilst the western boundary is more open in nature.

Performance of Relevant Parcel(s) under Part 1 Methodology

A significant majority of the proposed housing site is located within Parcel 4. A summary of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1 assessment as it relates to Parcel 4 follows below:

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The Green Belt parcel is	The parcel represents the	The main land use in the

adjacent to New Thundersley, Daws Heath and Hadleigh. There is limited sprawl across the northern border and there is also ribbon development along the short stretch of Daws Heath Road which is in the Green Belt. However, outside of these examples, and despite the absence of permanent robust boundaries along much of the parcel, the parcel itself is free of built up development.	full extent of the strategic gap between Thundersley to the west and Daws Heath to the east, as well as Daws Heath and Hadleigh, located to the south. These strategic gaps at their shortest extent are approximately 350m and 300m respectively, meaning that significant development would act to notably decrease the remaining gap between these urban areas.	parcel is agriculture. The industrial estate on the northern edge is reasonably well screened and set below the high ground in views from the south. The overall perception of this parcel is of agricultural land and woods. The parcel is considered large enough that it is not specifically influenced by its boundary features which take the form of development uncharacteristic to the countryside. The parcel also links to wider countryside to the north and south west.
Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Very Strong

A small proportion of the proposed housing site is located within Parcel 5. A summary of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1 assessment as it relates to Parcel 5 follows below:

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The parcel is adjacent to a trading estate to the north east and Daws Heath to the south. It is also adjacent to development within Rayleigh across the A127. There has been no development in the parcel which amounts to sprawl	Parcel 5 forms the entirety of the strategic gap between Thundersley and Daws Heath, and Rayleigh and Daws Heath. It also forms approximately 600m of the total 750m gap between Daws Heath and the urban settlement of	There is extremely minimal built development in the parcel. Other than for a children's hospice in the south west of the parcel and a place of worship, all other development is associated with the farms that are located in the

from an existing large built up area.	Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea. There are no features which would block inter-visibility outside of the parcel and as such its contribution to this purpose is assessed as very strong.	north and south. The topography is gently rolling with a substantial area of woodland cover and more open fields. As such the parcel displays a distinctly rural character, and is of such a size as to not be influenced by periphery developments which are uncharacteristic of the countryside.
Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Very Strong

Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

Parcel 4 and Parcel 5 sit within the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area of the Daws Heath Ring as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018. This Green Belt area encircles the settlement of Daws Heath and has been effective in preventing urban sprawl and therefore preventing the settlement from merging with the surrounding settlements of Hadleigh, Thundersley, Rayleigh and Eastwood. The Green Belt area also has an important function of preventing urban coalescence between these settlements more generally.

Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The proposed development site is free from existing urban development. Future urban development would display a relationship with the general settlement pattern as the site is directly adjacent to built development to the north, south and west. It would	The proposed site currently forms a significant part of the existing gap between Thundersley and Daws Heath. Development would act to reduce the gap between the two settlements, bringing a greater extent of Thundersley in closer	The proposed development site is currently free of built development considered inappropriate in the Green Belt. Although there is build development around much of the periphery of the site, this is not assessed as being

act to propagate the ribbon development along Daws Heath Road further eastwards but also infill all land inbetween this lateral extension and the industrial estate to the north. Development would not however result in the realignment of Green Belt with an existing boundary feature.	proximity to Daws Heath whilst also narrowing the gap which exists between the two settlements along Daws Heath Road which is currently its narrowest point. In this area, the strategic gap would be reduced by approximately two thirds. The perception of merge would therefore be significantly increased.	sufficient to compromise the rural integrity of the site as a whole due to its size.
Degree of Harm: Moderate	Degree of Harm: Very Strong	Degree of Harm: Strong

Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

Development of the proposed site would not have a significant negative impact on the robustness of Green Belt boundaries as it would act to realign a boundary that is already currently formed of residential curtilages with what would be a different set of residential curtilage.

Its development would act to cut off the small parcel of Green Belt land which is currently developed as a fire station and car show room from the wider Green Belt. This is not considered to have a significant impact on the purposes of the Green Belt as the land is already developed with inappropriate uses and of limited strategic importance.

There is however a significantly negative impact in relation to the merging of urban settlements as the strategic gap between Thundersley and Daws Heath will be significantly reduced in general, as well as narrow by approximately two thirds at the point where it is currently the narrowest. Development would act to exacerbate the perception of coalescence of the urban settlements in this area and reduce the contribution the Green Belt makes to the identified locally strategic priority of preventing the urban coalescence of Thundersley, Daws Heath and Hadleigh.

Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

The proposed development site largely comprises of open fields and therefore there are no alternative boundaries that would act to more robustly define the boundary between the Green Belt and the development site. Nonetheless, should this site be considered for release from the Green Belt, opportunities should be explored in terms of the configuration of the site in order to limit the propagation of ribbon

development along Daws Heath Road.

Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

The development site is currently open countryside and has particular significance to the Green Belt purpose of preventing urban coalescence and so therefore any development would need to be well screened.

Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

Development of the proposed site would give rise to the need to consider the merit of keeping the land developed as a fire station and car show room in the Green Belt as this would be cut off from the wider Green Belt system and in any event no longer functions as Green Belt land.

Any further Green Belt realignment would have to consider extending into woodland further south into Parcel 4 but this would further weaken the integrity of the Daws Heath Ring and act to exacerbate the perception of urban coalescence in this wider area. As such, this proposed site does not offer a significant opportunity to consider a wider Green Belt release to provide land that could be safeguarded for future housing development beyond the proposed plan period of the emerging Local Plan.

Proposed Housing Site Allocation SH16

Context of Proposed Site



Aerial of Proposed Housing Site



Description of Proposed Housing Site

The proposed development site takes the form of open field and scrubland with a small number of trees in the northern portion.

Relationship to Surrounding Area

The northern, southern and western boundaries are adjacent to further Green Belt land.

The northern boundary is defined by a tree belt beyond which lies a school and playing fields which are both located within the Green Belt. Residential curtilages of dwellings in South Benfleet form the eastern boundary, with the western boundary taking the form of foliage running along the A130. The A130 marks the boundary between the administrative areas of Basildon and Castle Point, beyond which is Green Belt.

Performance of Relevant Parcel(s) under Part 1 Methodology

The proposed housing site is fully located within Parcel 10a. A summary of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1 assessment as it relates to Parcel 10a follows below:

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The entirety of the eastern boundary follows the western edge of South Benfleet. There is very little built development within the parcel, with the sum of the development taking	The parcel represents approximately 100m of the total strategic gap of 500m between South Benfleet and North Benfleet. It is considered that there is no inter-visibility between South	The parcel is a relatively narrow strip of land and is considered to be strongly influenced by residential development to the east and the A130 to the west. The parcel is cut off from the wider countryside by

the form of a school and associated buildings in the north of the parcel, and a small collection of dwellings at the pinch point by the A130. This amount of sprawl is assessed as minor in the context of the level of urban development across the eastern boundary	Benfleet and North Benfleet, with the A130 forming a strong permanent boundary.	these features and also contains a school in the north which is uncharacteristic of the countryside and relatively prominent given the size and configuration of the parcel.
Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Minor	Degree of Contribution: Minor

Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

Parcel 10a is not considered to lie within a Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018.

Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The site is currently free from existing urban development but future development would act as a westerly extension of South Benfleet and would be in keeping with the general settlement pattern and allow for the Green Belt to be realigned with the A130 which would create a strong permanent boundary.	The parcel represents a small part of the strategic gap between South Benfleet and North Benfleet. It is however considered that there is no inter-visibility between South Benfleet and North Benfleet, and the A130 would form a strong barrier to any further expansion and resultant reduction of that gap.	The proposed development site is currently free of built development considered inappropriate in the Green Belt. However, the area is cut off from the wider countryside by the A130 and its development would amount to the infilling of a relatively narrow strip of land inbetween South Benfleet and the A130.
Degree of Harm:	Degree of Harm:	Degree of Harm:

Minor	Minor	Minor
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Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

Development of the proposed site would act to reduce the amount of Green Belt land between North Benfleet and South Benfleet but the A130 acts as a natural boundary feature which runs through the Green Belt in this area. It is considered that the removal of this site from the Green Belt would not have a significant impact on the wider Green Belt system. The Green Belt boundary at this locality would be realigned away from residential curtilage to the more robust boundary feature of the A130.

Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

The proposed development site comprises of open field and scrubland and therefore does not contain any robust boundary that would represent a logical realignment of the development site.

Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

The introduction of landscaping and mature trees would create the perception that this part of the A130 is cutting across a rural area.

Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

The land comprising Parcel 10b to the south is a similar lateral strip that exists between the A130 and Benfleet. Any future development of this site would constitute a similar westerly extension of South Benfleet that would be contained by the A130.

Should it be considered appropriate to remove this site from the Green Belt, consideration should be given to the potential of removing the rest of the land to the north of this site bound by the A130 from the Green Belt such that the A130 forms the new boundary. Part of this land is already developed as a school and is therefore not performing a Green Belt function.

Proposed Housing Site Allocation SH01

Context of Proposed Site



Aerial of Proposed Housing Site



Description of Proposed Housing Site

The very northern portion of the proposed development site is covered by dense foliage with the rest of the site being predominantly open field separated by hedge rows. There is built development already within the parcel towards the south which takes the form of a collection of buildings primarily in agricultural use as well as a reservoir. There is however an element of non-agricultural related commercial activity associated with the buildings predominantly in agricultural use.

Relationship to Surrounding Area

The northern, part of the eastern, southern and western boundaries are adjacent to further Green Belt land.

The northern boundary of the parcel follows Sadlers Farm Roundabout, across from which is further fields. The eastern boundary follows the residential curtilage of properties and allotment gardens in South Benfleet, as well as a playing field until it meets the railway line which comprises the southern boundary. Beyond the railway line is further Green Belt land. The western boundary follows the administrative boundary of the borough, beyond which is further Green Belt land associated with the borough of Basildon.

Performance of Relevant Parcel(s) under Part 1 Methodology

The proposed housing site is fully located within Parcel 10b. A summary of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1 assessment as it relates to Parcel 10b follows below:

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The parcel is adjacent to curtilages associated with South Benfleet along the	The parcel represents a small proportion of the total strategic gap of	The parcel primarily takes the form of pasture used as fields for horses. The

entirety of the eastern boundary. Although this boundary is not considered to be strong and robust, there has been no urban sprawl into the area.	approximately 550m between South Benfleet and North Benfleet. It is considered that there is no inter-visibility between South Benfleet and North Benfleet, with multiple lanes and slip roads of the A130 providing a robust barrier between the two urban areas.	only built development within the parcel is a collection of buildings primarily in agricultural use towards the south as well as a reservoir in the central portion. However, the parcel is a relatively narrow strip of land and is considered to be influenced by residential development to the east and the A130 to the west. The parcel is assessed as being cut off from the wider countryside by this peripheral development.
Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Minor	Degree of Contribution: Minor

Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

Parcel 10b is not considered to lie within a Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018.

Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The site is currently almost entirely free from built development. Future development would act as a westerly extension of South Benfleet and would be in keeping with the general settlement pattern, and allow for the Green Belt to be realigned with the A130	The proposed development site represents a small proportion of the total strategic gap between South Benfleet and North Benfleet. It is considered that there is no inter-visibility between South Benfleet and North Benfleet, with multiple	The site is currently almost entirely free from built development that is considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt. However, the area is cut off from the wider countryside by the A130 and its development would amount to the

which would create a strong permanent boundary	lanes and slip roads of the A130 providing a robust barrier between the two urban areas.	infilling of a relatively narrow strip of land inbetween South Benfleet and the A130.
Degree of Harm: Minor	Degree of Harm: Minor	Degree of Harm: Minor

Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

Development of the proposed site would act to reduce the amount of Green Belt land between North Benfleet and South Benfleet but the A130 acts as a robust boundary feature which runs through the Green Belt in this area, and much of the development would be 'away' from North Benfleet. It is considered that the removal of this site from the Green Belt would not have a significant impact on the wider Green Belt system. The Green Belt boundary at this locality would be realigned away from residential curtilage to the more robust boundary feature of the A130.

Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

The proposed development site primarily comprises of open field and foliage. The proposed development site is crossed by Jotmans Lane which could potentially act as a boundary but it is considered that the currently proposed boundaries of the A130 and railway line make for more appropriate robust boundaries that could act to define the Green Belt in the long term.

Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

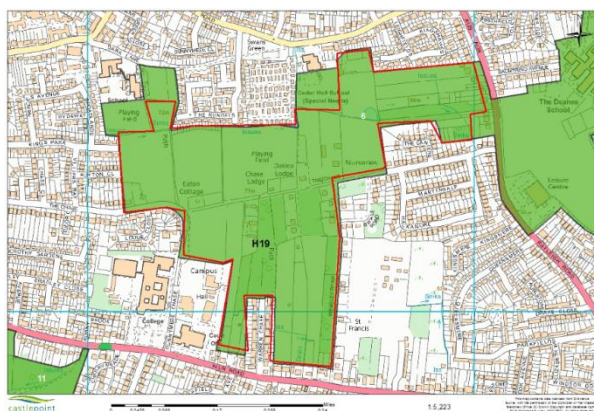
The introduction of landscaping and mature trees would help create the perception that this part of the A130 is cutting across a rural area but the full visual impact would be hard to mitigate due to the landform. Development would require a substantial belt of vegetation to be created or retained along the A130 to create a rural character on the approach to Canvey Island.

Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

The land comprising Parcel 10a to the north is a similar lateral strip that exists between the A130 and South Benfleet. Development of this site would constitute a similar westerly extension of South Benfleet that would be contained by the A130.

Proposed Housing Site Allocation SH18

Context of Proposed Site



Aerial of Proposed Housing Site



Description of Proposed Housing Site

The site is predominantly open field, including playing fields. Field boundaries are marked with mature vegetation and there are a number of densely wooded areas in the southern portion. There is sporadic residential development primarily taking the form of ribbon development along The Chase and roads leading off it. Dwellings are typically bungalows with large garden plots.

Relationship to Surrounding Area

Part of the eastern boundary is adjacent to Green Belt although this is relatively narrow.

The majority of the northern, part of the eastern as well as the entirety of the southern and western boundaries are adjacent to residential curtilages. Whilst the density of development is clearly different between those areas that are within and outside of the Green Belt in this location, development has sprawled into the parcel such that there is not a clear demarcation in some areas. The parts of the northern boundary which are adjacent to Green Belt land are adjacent to school playing fields which then abut residential curtilage. The eastern boundary is adjacent to the A129 and this portion is made up of further school playing fields.

Performance of Relevant Parcel(s) under Part 1 Methodology

The proposed housing site is fully located within Parcel 6. A summary of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1 assessment as it relates to Parcel 6 follows below:

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
Much of the boundaries are formed by residential	The parcel is almost entirely encircled by	There are plotland developments across

curtilages but nonetheless, high density residential development has been resisted across all of the parcel. There is however ribbon development and much of the parcel is comprised of development inappropriate in the Green Belt. There is a lack of a strongly defined edge between the built-up area and the parcel.	Thundersley. Across much of the eastern boundary, Thundersley and Hadleigh can be seen to have already merged. All of the undeveloped land within the parcel is within Thundersley such that its development would represent infilling of land within Thundersley.	much of the centre of the parcel which amount to inappropriate development and a semi-rural perception, whilst the eastern portion contains a school and a leisure facility and displays no countryside character. The parcel is surrounded by residential or other built development uncharacteristic to a rural location which strongly influences the perception of this parcel being in the countryside.
Degree of Contribution: Moderate	Degree of Contribution: None	Degree of Contribution: Minor

Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

Parcel 6 is not considered to lie within a Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018.

Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
Although much of the proposed development site is rural in nature, in places the proposed development site lacks a strongly defined edge with the existing built-up area as it contains ribbon development running through the centre. Any	The proposed development site is not considered to fall within a strategic gap between two neighbouring towns.	Whilst a greater proportion of land at this relatively large site is undeveloped, the site does not display a strong rural character due to parts of the proposed development site having already been encroached and due to the fact that

development would constitute an infill of land within Thundersley and therefore be in keeping with the existing settlement pattern.		development has already taken place around the vast majority of its borders. In terms of the impact on the wider countryside system in the Borough, the impact is considered minimal as the site is largely cut off from this wider rural system. However, in the local context the site represents a rural break, albeit one which has been relatively significantly encroached.
Degree of Harm: Moderate	Degree of Harm: None	Degree of Harm: Moderate

Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

The proposed development site does not lie within a Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018. The release of land comprising SH18 from the Green Belt would amount to the residential infilling of Thundersley and it is assessed that this would not impact on the integrity of the wider Green Belt system as this area of land is already relatively isolated from the wider Green Belt. Any new boundary would be formed of residential curtilage which mirrors the nature of the current boundary such that there would be no change in their robustness, but the extent of such boundaries would be significantly reduced. Development of the site would however sever the land currently developed as playing fields associated with educational facilities from the Green Belt.

Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

Land to the north of The Chase is of a more rural character than that to the south where much of the ribbon development exists. As such it may be considered appropriate to realign the proposed housing site to just incorporate the land to the south of The Chase. This would however leave a strip of Green Belt which is even more isolated than that which exists now.

Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

The release of land comprising SH18 from the Green Belt would amount to residential infilling and would leave just part of the eastern and north western boundary adjacent to Green Belt. The harm arising from this development proposal could be managed through the appropriate design and layout of development on the site, accompanied by the use of strong landscaped boundaries. Much of the site boundary and land within the site already benefits from mature trees which could be retained.

Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

Should this site be developed, it would amount to the infilling of land surrounded by residential development in the settlement of Thundersley. Release of this site from the Green Belt would require a consideration of whether it would be more apt to slightly extend the release eastwards such that the new boundary is aligned with Rayleigh Road which would present a more logical boundary than what would otherwise be residential curtilage. The release of this site would result in a significant opportunity for accommodating housing need. Further, it would be appropriate to consider the removal of the Green Belt designation from the land occupied by the primary school and nursery as these would become small, isolated pockets of Green Belt entirely detached from the wider system.

Any wider Green Belt release would need to be to the east of the site, crossing the robust boundary of Rayleigh Road. Such a release would see the boundary aligned away from Rayleigh Road to either a hedged field boundary or the edge of woodland. These boundaries are less robust and would therefore be against the grain of national policy, but such development would equate to a rounding off of the general settlement pattern.

Proposed Housing Site Allocation SH03

Context of Proposed Site



Aerial of Proposed Housing Site



Description of Proposed Housing Site

The proposed housing site takes the form of an open, unmanaged field and part of another field.

Relationship to Surrounding Area

Part of the northern and the full extent of the eastern and southern boundary is adjacent to further land in the Green Belt.

Part of the northern boundary follows the residential curtilage of dwellings on Essex Way before following a path and a drain, beyond which is Essex Way. The eastern boundary cuts through a field and runs south until it meets with the curtilage of dwellings which form the southern boundary. The southern boundary is formed of dense foliage. The western boundary is also made with the curtilages of dwellings and is relatively open.

Performance of Relevant Parcel(s) under Part 1 Methodology

The proposed housing site is fully located within Parcel 16. A summary of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1 assessment as it relates to Parcel 16 follows below:

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The northern boundary is adjacent to ribbon development emanating from Hadleigh whilst the western boundary is adjacent to South Benfleet. Sprawl has been resisted across the	The parcel lies between South Benfleet and Hadleigh and represents the only parcel in the strategic gap at this location. Due to the screening offered by existing woodland and	The parcel is adjacent to two urban settlements and although there has been residential sprawl into the parcel, these dwellings are very well screened. There are properties to the north

western boundary but this is not the case at the northern boundary, where a number of large properties have been developed inside the parcel. Many of the properties that have sprawled into the Green Belt have large residential curtilages, but the fact that they are in the Green Belt acts to limit their further development beyond normal householder development.	other vegetation there is no inter-visibility between most of South Benfleet and Hadleigh. However, due to the sloping topography, there is visibility of properties along Essex Way on the eastern edge of South Benfleet from the ribbon development emanating from Hadleigh.	which overlook the parcel but these are well set back from the parcel edge. Given the size of the parcel it is not influenced by the residential development along its western boundary. Coupled with the relative lack of development, the overriding characteristic of the parcel is of countryside, and it contains strong links to further countryside to the east and south..
Degree of Contribution: Strong	Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Very Strong

Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

Parcel 16 lies within the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area of the Central Corridor as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018. These parcels of Green Belt serve to restrict the settlements of South Benfleet and Thundersley from merging and also create a connection between the northern Green Belt parcels within the borough to those in the south.

Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The development site is currently free from existing urban development and the release of this site would constitute an easterly extension of South Benfleet. The release of	Although Parcel 16 as a whole is making a very strong contribution to this Green Belt Purpose, development of this site would not cause significant harm in this regard. Development	The proposed development site is currently free of built development considered inappropriate in the Green Belt. Whilst much of the development site is surrounded by urban

<p>this site from the Green Belt would result in the reforming of the Green Belt boundary away from the current residential curtilage to a new curtilage defined by the proposed new development. Whilst much of the development would constitute an infilling of the current settlement pattern, development of the whole site would amount to the beginnings of ribbon development along Essex Way and not result in a robust Green Belt boundary.</p>	<p>would primarily be an infilling of the existing settlement pattern. The easterly protrusion that would mark the beginning of a ribbon development would however be visible from the existing ribbon development along Vicarage Hall which would create a limited perception of the growth of South Benfleet towards Hadleigh.</p>	<p>development, the eastern protrusion juts out into open countryside, with the majority of its extent not surrounded by a robust boundary.</p>
<p>Degree of Harm:</p> <p>Strong</p>	<p>Degree of Harm:</p> <p>Minor</p>	<p>Degree of Harm:</p> <p>Moderate</p>

Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

Development of the proposed site would primarily act to realign the majority of a boundary that is currently formed of residential curtilages with a different set of residential curtilages. Development would also not act to sever any Green Belt from the wider system nor impact significantly on the locally strategically important function of the wider Parcel. However, the eastern protrusion would result in a finger of land being deallocated from the Green Belt which would not be well aligned to the existing settlement pattern or an existing robust boundary. This is considered to weaken the integrity of the Green Belt in this locality and potentially open up the opportunity for further ribbon development along Essex Way, or further extensions to South Benfleet.

Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

The proposed development site comprises of field and therefore there are no alternative boundaries that would act as a more robustly define the boundary between the Green Belt and the development site. Reconfiguring the development site up to the point where the eastern boundary runs directly north to south, thereby

omitting the easterly protrusion, would however create a pattern of development more akin to residential infill whilst removing the element considered to constitute ribbon development and encroachment into the countryside.

Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

Part of the northern boundary and the entirety of the eastern boundary of the proposed development site would be adjacent to Green Belt land so a landscaped boundary would be required to minimise the visual impact on the rural area beyond. Due to the topography, any new properties that may be built along Essex Way, like those which exist, would be visible from Vicarage Hall which is also in the Green Belt and are unlikely to be able to be screened.

Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

Development of this site would give rise to the need to consider the realignment of the Green Belt boundary further to the east such that it fully incorporates the field which the current boundary cuts through. There are no other boundaries in this area which offer the potential to form an alternative, robust Green Belt boundary should this site be released from the Green Belt. As such, this proposed site does not offer a significant opportunity to consider a wider Green Belt release to provide land that could be safeguarded for future housing development beyond the proposed plan period of the emerging Local Plan.

Proposed Housing Site Allocation SH04

Context of Proposed Site



Aerial of Proposed Housing Site



Description of Proposed Housing Site

The proposed site is a small residential curtilage in close proximity to a number of residential properties in South Benfleet.

Relationship to Surrounding Area

The northern, eastern, southern and majority of the western boundary is adjacent to Green Belt.

The northern boundary is tree-lined, beyond which lies a number of trees which form the boundary of existing residential curtilage. The eastern boundary is also lined by foliage beyond which is residential curtilage. The southern boundary is open, beyond which are a number of outbuildings. The western boundary is with a fence which again follows residential curtilage.

Performance of Relevant Parcel(s) under Part 1 Methodology

The proposed housing site is fully located within Parcel 11. A summary of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1 assessment as it relates to Parcel 11 follows below:

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The northern, half of the eastern, the southern and part of the western boundary are adjacent to urban settlements. There has been a small amount of sprawl across the northern boundary and isolated residential sprawl	The parcel represents the entire strategic gap between Thundersley and South Benfleet. The parcel also represents the majority of the gap between South Benfleet and Hadleigh. Its development would	Development within the parcel that is considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt is well screened relatively isolated and does not act to define the parcel. The parcel is considered to be of such

in the northern portion and the south west. However, in the context of the parcel, and particularly given the amount of urban development surrounding the parcel, it is considered that this parcel makes a strong contribution to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas.	therefore lead to the actual merging of Thundersley and South Benfleet, and the significant reduction of the strategic gap between South Benfleet and Hadleigh. Development would also lead to the merging of South Benfleet with the ribbon development to the south of the parcel stretching out from Hadleigh.	a size as to not be strongly influenced by the residential development at the northern, southern and part of the western boundary, which in any event are predominantly screened by woodland. The parcel contains links to the countryside to the north west and south west.
Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Very Strong

Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

Parcel 11 lies within the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area of the Central Corridor as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018. These parcels of Green Belt serve to restrict the settlements of South Benfleet and Thundersley from merging and also create a connection between the northern Green Belt parcels within the borough to those in the south.

Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The proposed development site is adjacent to an existing built up area and would act as a very small scale southerly extension of the settlement boundary of South Benfleet. There is already a high degree of permeability between the existing built-up urban	The proposed development site is between two neighbouring towns but forms a small part of the total gap between them. Development of this site in isolation would not have an impact on this function as there is already built development	Although the proposed development site itself is undeveloped, its character is of a small undeveloped space within an urban area rather than that of countryside, with any views of the wider countryside to the east largely obscured by existing trees at the

area and the Green Belt in this immediate location such that development would act to infill land surrounded by existing residential development and curtilage. However, as stated, not all of this developed land is outside of the Green Belt. As such the proposed site is still assessed as being a southerly extension to a non-robust boundary but due to the size of the proposed site, any impact on this purpose would be relatively minor.	enclosing the proposed site.	boundary.
Degree of Harm: Minor	Degree of Harm: None	Degree of Harm: None

Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

Development of this site in isolation would not have a significant impact on the Green Belt. The proposed development site falls within Parcel 11 which is part of the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area of the Central Corridor. This local Green Belt system serves to restrict the settlements of South Benfleet and Thundersley from merging and also creates a connection between the northern Green Belt parcels within the borough to those in the south. The size of the site means that there would not be a markedly negative impact on this strategic function.

Its release would not constitute the realignment of the Green Belt boundary to a robust defensible boundary that could be defended in the long term, with the current boundary with residential curtilage being realigned to the new curtilage.

Development here would however effectively round off the Green Belt that currently exists at the edge of the settlement of South Benfleet, rather than a strategic release and would create a more logical boundary. Development would also add to the residential sprawl which has already encroached into the Green Belt.

Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

The proposed site is a small unmanaged patch of land that contains no obvious

internal boundary features through which the site could be reconfigured.

Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

The proposed development site is well-screened by existing built development and tree lines and therefore its development would not be particularly detrimental to the wider character of the area.

Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

There are no obvious robust boundary features to which the Green Belt could be realigned as part of a wider strategic release of land from the Green Belt. It is considered that any significant release would directly impact on the locally important strategic function that the Green Belt performs in this area.

Should this site be considered appropriate to release from the Green Belt, consideration will need to be given to remove the sliver of land to the north from the Green Belt as this would become isolated.

Proposed Housing Site Allocation SH08

Context of Proposed Site



Aerial of Proposed Housing Site



Description of Proposed Housing Site

The proposed housing site is comprised of open field with internal field boundaries marked by hedgerows and the Brook Farm complex in the south west.

Relationship to Surrounding Area

The eastern, southern and part of the western boundary is adjacent to Green Belt.

The northern boundary follows the curtilages of dwellings associated with Fairmead Avenue in Daws Heath which is tree lined. The eastern boundary cuts through a hedge bound field. Part of the southern boundary follows an unsurfaced road, which has little boundary treatment, and beyond which continue fields. The southern boundary then wraps around Brook Farm Stables such that it is incorporated into the parcel and then runs adjacent to the curtilage of properties along Daws Heath Road. The western boundary continues following residential curtilages associated with dwellings on Daws Heath Road. This boundary has some screening provided by foliage but this is sporadic.

Performance of Relevant Parcel(s) under Part 1 Methodology

The proposed housing site is fully located within Parcel 8. A summary of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1 assessment as it relates to Parcel 8 follows below:

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The parcel is adjacent to Daws Heath at the northern boundary, Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea to the east and Hadleigh	The parcel is adjacent to Daws Heath, Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea, and Hadleigh and as such its development would lead	Other than for limited ribbon development, the parcel comprises of a number of farms and associated dwellings

<p>to the south west.</p> <p>Although sprawl has occurred within the parcel in the form of ribbon development, the degree of sprawl compared to the size of the parcel, and its proximity to three separate urban settlements means that it is assessed as strongly contributing to checking unrestricted sprawl.</p>	<p>to the physical merging of these three settlements.</p>	<p>along with agricultural fields. The landscape is compartmentalised and also well screened by trees and hedges. The parcel adjoins significant expanses of countryside to the north and south but there is however residential development located along much of the boundaries in the eastern and western portion of the site. These influence the perception of the parcel being in open countryside, which is compounded by the ribbon developments in the centre.</p>
<p>Degree of Contribution:</p> <p>Strong</p>	<p>Degree of Contribution:</p> <p>Very Strong</p>	<p>Degree of Contribution:</p> <p>Moderate</p>

Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

Parcel 8 lies within the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area of the Daws Heath Ring as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018. This Green Belt area encircles the settlement of Daws Heath and has been effective in preventing urban sprawl and therefore preventing the settlement from merging with the surrounding settlements of Hadleigh, Thundersley, Rayleigh and Eastwood. The Green Belt area also has an important function of preventing urban coalescence between these settlements more generally.

Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
Releasing this site would realign a Green Belt boundary that currently takes the form of	Given the existing development within the Green Belt along Daws Heath Road,	The proposed development site is currently free of built development considered

<p>residential curtilages with an unsurfaced road in the most part, but which also brings the boundary across the unsurfaced road meaning much of the south western boundary would be aligned against residential curtilage. The proposed site is free of development considered inappropriate in the Green Belt and would act as a southerly extension of Daws Heath. However, this extension as a whole would not be well related to the existing settlement pattern, with the land associated with Brook Farm jutting out from what otherwise would be a general rounding out of the south of Daws Heath, and forming a ribbon development along Daws Heath Road.</p>	<p>development of the proposed site would likely constitute a loss of the current strategic gap between Hadleigh and Daws Heath along Daws Heath Road to the point where the general perception would be that these urban settlements had merged.</p> <p>In the wider context of the proposed development site, development would act to reduce the existing strategic gap between Hadleigh and Daws Heath, with boundaries or features which prevent inter-visibility between the two urban settlements being weak or non-existent in the land which would form the remainder of the strategic gap.</p>	<p>inappropriate in the Green Belt and its development would therefore constitute a loss of countryside. However the immediate surrounds are predominantly urban to semi-urban in appearance and this has a significant impact on the perception of the site being in countryside.</p>
<p>Degree of Harm:</p> <p>Very Strong</p>	<p>Degree of Harm:</p> <p>Very Strong</p>	<p>Degree of Harm:</p> <p>Minor</p>

Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

Development of the proposed site would not have a significant negative impact on the robustness of Green Belt boundaries as it would primarily act to realign the majority of a boundary that is currently formed of residential curtilages with new residential curtilage and an unsurfaced road.

There would however be a very strong degree of harm in relation to the merging of urban settlements as the area of Green Belt land between Daws Heath and Hadleigh will be reduced in extent, particularly in the south west where the strategic gap will be effectively lost. Development would therefore act to exacerbate the perception

and reality of coalescence of the urban settlements in this area and reduce the contribution this part of the Green Belt makes to the identified locally strategic priority of preventing the urban coalescence of Thundersley, Daws Heath and Hadleigh. The southern part of the Daws Heath Ring would be all but severed along Daws Heath Road.

Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

The proposed development site could be realigned along the unsurfaced road such that the land incorporating Brooks Farm is not included. This wouldn't represent a significantly more robust boundary than what is currently proposed but would importantly omit most of the land in proximity to Daws Heath Road from potential development which would cause the merging of Hadleigh and Daws Heath.

Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

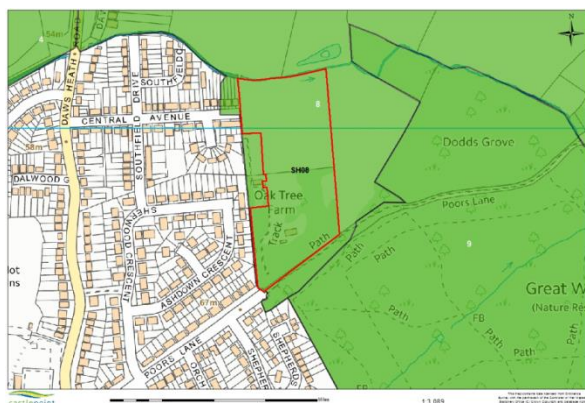
Development within this site will be required to be well screened along the southern edge such that it doesn't significantly contribute to the perception of Daws Heath merging with Hadleigh.

Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

Development of this site would give rise to the need to consider the realignment of the Green Belt boundary further to the east such that it fully incorporates the field which the current boundary cuts through. There are no other boundaries in this area which offer the potential to form an alternative, robust Green Belt boundary to that which would result through development of this site. As such, this proposed site does not offer a significant opportunity to consider a wider Green Belt release to provide land that could be safeguarded for future housing development beyond the proposed plan period.

Proposed Housing Site Allocation SH10

Context of Proposed Site



Aerial of Proposed Housing Site



Description of Proposed Housing Site

The proposed site takes the form of two tree bound fields within which sits Oak Tree Farm which comprises of a small number of buildings scattered along the south west border.

Relationship to Surrounding Area

The northern, eastern, southern and part of the western border is adjacent to Green Belt.

The northern boundary follows a tree belt across from which is further field. The eastern boundary follows another tree line beyond which is further field. The southern boundary is heavily wooded and follows Poors Lane. The western boundary follows residential curtilage and also wraps around a farmhouse and its curtilage. Those areas adjacent to residential curtilage are also tree lined.

Performance of Relevant Parcel(s) under Part 1 Methodology

The proposed housing site is fully located within Parcel 8. A summary of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1 assessment as it relates to Parcel 8 follows below:

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
<p>The parcel is adjacent to Daws Heath at the northern boundary, Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea to the east and Hadleigh to the south west.</p> <p>Although sprawl has</p>	<p>The parcel is adjacent to Daws Heath, Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea, and Hadleigh and as such its development would lead to the physical merging of these three settlements.</p>	<p>Other than for limited ribbon development, the parcel comprises of a number of farms and associated dwellings along with agricultural fields. The landscape is compartmentalised and</p>

occurred within the parcel in the form of ribbon development, the degree of sprawl compared to the size of the parcel, and its proximity to three separate urban settlements means that it is assessed as strongly contributing to checking unrestricted sprawl.		also well screened by trees and hedges. The parcel adjoins significant expanses of countryside to the north and south but there is however residential development located along much of the boundaries in the eastern and western portion of the site. These influence the perception of the parcel being in open countryside, which is compounded by the ribbon developments in the centre.
Degree of Contribution: Strong	Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Moderate

Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

Parcel 8 lies within the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area of the Daws Heath Ring as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018. This Green Belt area encircles the settlement of Daws Heath and has been effective in preventing urban sprawl and therefore preventing the settlement from merging with the surrounding settlements of Hadleigh, Thundersley, Rayleigh and Eastwood. The Green Belt area also has an important function of preventing urban coalescence between these settlements more generally.

Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The proposed development site is adjacent to Hadleigh and currently contains no development considered inappropriate in the Green Belt. Its release for	The direction of the extension would not be towards Daws Heath which is the closest settlement to Hadleigh at the point where this proposed development	The proposed development site is currently free of built development considered inappropriate in the Green Belt, and development would be extended out

development would constitute an easterly extension of the urban area out into the countryside, rather than a more general rounding off of the urban edge, and will not result in the Green Belt boundary being aligned to an existing robust feature. Any realignment would be from existing curtilage to new curtilage.	site lies. Development would reduce the gap between Hadleigh and the ribbon development inbetween Daws Heath and Leigh-on-Sea but this ribbon development is not considered to be a 'town' with regard to this purpose. Nonetheless, the proposed site forms a small part of the existing gap between Hadleigh and Leigh-on-Sea although there is no inter-visibility which would lead to the perception of merge.	into rural countryside where no boundary feature exists to contain such development.
Degree of Harm: Strong	Degree of Harm: Minor	Degree of Harm: Strong

Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

Development of the proposed site would not have a significant negative impact on the robustness of Green Belt boundaries as it would act to realign a Green Belt boundary that currently takes the form of residential curtilage with new curtilage that would be developed as part of the release of this site. Other boundaries will continue to follow the field boundary and lane which they currently follow before taking the form of the new residential curtilage.

Parcel 8, within which this proposed development site lies, is part of the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area of the Daws Heath Ring. Release of sites in this part of the Green Belt will reduce the extent of the rural break that currently exists between the settlements of Hadleigh, Daws Heath and Leigh-on-Sea, contributing to the general perception of urban coalescence. The width of Green Belt between Hadleigh and Daws Heath would not however be specifically reduced through the release of the proposed site, and there would still be a significant rural break between Hadleigh and Leigh-on-Sea. The intervening Green Belt between Hadleigh and the ribbon development along Bramble Road would however be materially reduced, although this intervening land contains features which ensure there is no

inter-visibility between settlements.

Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

The only boundary feature within the proposed development site is a field boundary which isn't considered a permanent feature for the purposes of realigning the Green Belt. The orientation of the proposed development site in the context of the general settlement pattern means that no alternative configuration would be more defensible.

Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

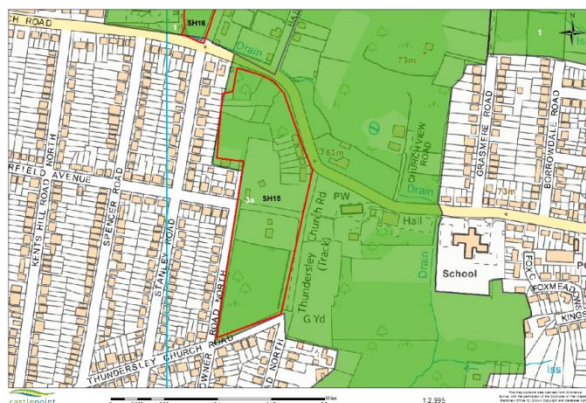
The well-developed screening along the northern, eastern and southern edge should be retained but otherwise development would act as an extension of the existing urban area.

Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

The wider available land in this area is comprised of open field with hedged or tree lined boundaries. As such there are no robust boundaries that could be used to realign the Green Belt as part of a larger strategic release. Further development in this wider area would also directly impact on the strategic function of the Daws Heath Ring and act to propagate the perception and reality of the merge between the three settlements of Hadleigh, Daws Heath and the ribbon development between Daws Heath and Leigh-on-Sea.

Proposed Housing Site Allocation SH15

Context of Proposed Site



Aerial of Proposed Housing Site



Description of Proposed Housing Site

The proposed development site is primarily woodland although there are a small number of dwellings located in the northern portion and a single dwelling in the southern portion. The site is bisected by Chesterfield Avenue.

Relationship to Surrounding Area

The northern and eastern boundary is adjacent to Green Belt land.

The northern boundary follows Church Road beyond which lies allotments, low density residential development, field and woodland. The eastern boundary follows an unsurfaced road across from which is field and a church. The southern boundary follows Thundersley Church Road beyond which are residential dwellings. The western boundary is formed by Downer Road North across from which are residential dwellings.

Performance of Relevant Parcel(s) under Part 1 Methodology

The proposed housing site is fully located within Parcel 3a. A summary of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1 assessment as it relates to Parcel 3a follows below:

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The eastern and western parcel boundaries are adjacent to urban development associated with South Benfleet and Thundersley. Whilst not considered to be robust boundaries, development	The parcel takes the form of a strip of land which forms the entire gap between the settlements of South Benfleet and Thundersley. Views between the two settlements are currently	The eastern and western parcel boundaries are adjacent to urban development associated with South Benfleet and Thundersley. Whilst not considered to be robust boundaries, development

<p>within the parcel has been largely restricted. However there is clear, albeit limited ribbon development following the route of Church Road which runs through the centre of the parcel and includes dwellings, a church, a hall and carparking.</p>	<p>blocked due to the presence of large wooded areas, and development would lead to physical coalescence. There is also very limited development within the parcel and as such, this parcel is very strongly contributing to this purpose.</p>	<p>within the parcel has been largely restricted and the parcel is primarily characterised by wooded areas and open land. However there is clear, albeit limited ribbon development following the route of Church Road which runs through the centre of the parcel. There are further residential dwellings in the north associated with Windemere Road and in the south east associated with Lake Drive.</p> <p>Although the parcel is a relatively narrow strip, it is not considered to be strongly influenced by periphery development to the east and west due to its wooded nature, and it also acts to link countryside in the north of the borough to that in the south.</p>
<p>Degree of Contribution:</p> <p>Strong</p>	<p>Degree of Contribution:</p> <p>Very Strong</p>	<p>Degree of Contribution:</p> <p>Strong</p>

Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

Parcel 3a lies within the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area of the Central Corridor as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018. These parcels of Green Belt serve to restrict the settlements of South Benfleet and Thundersley from merging and also create a connection between the northern Green Belt parcels within the borough to those in the south.

Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
<p>The proposed development site lacks a strongly defined edge with the existing built-up area due to the presence of a small number of properties along Church Road in the north east and those further properties that exist more centrally. Land to the immediate west is fully developed into residential use whilst land to the east of the site also contains built development in the form of a church and school. Development of this site would primarily act as an eastern extension to South Benfleet although it would also act to infill land between what is clearly the settlement of South Benfleet and ribbon development along Church Road leading to Thundersley, and would be in keeping with the extent of the settlement pattern to the immediate south. If this site was to be released from the Green Belt, in the northern portion of the site the Green Belt boundary would be realigned away from residential curtilage to Church Road and an</p>	<p>The proposed development site is between South Benfleet and Thundersley, and forms an important part of the current gap in terms of distance. The release and subsequent development of this site would narrow the Green Belt between the two towns to what is already its narrowest extent, whilst development along the edge of Church Road in the northern portion would create an almost unbroken frontage of development between South Benfleet and Thundersley. The impact on this Green Belt Purpose is however tempered by the fact that there is already ribbon development along Church Road between the two settlements such that there is no strong rural break along the main access route between them in this locality, with residential dwellings already present on the eastern border which would represent the new building line. Additionally there is also well established woodland in the remaining strategic gap between the two</p>	<p>Although much of the proposed site is wooded, the proposed development site is adjacent to significant residential development to the west and south, whilst there is also low density non-residential development to the immediate east. The site itself contains a number of dwellings and an access track.</p>

unsurfaced road. In the south, the release of this site would realign the boundary away from an existing local road to the same unsurfaced road.	settlements. As such it is assessed that in terms of the perception of urban coalescence, the impact would not be as strong.	
Degree of Harm: Minor	Degree of Harm: Moderate	Degree of Harm: Minor

Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

Parcel 3a, within which the proposed development site lies, is part of the Locally Important Strategic Area of the Central Corridor, which acts to prevent urban coalescence between South Benfleet and Thundersley whilst maintaining an unbroken chain of Green Belt through the centre of the borough. Deallocation would act to narrow the width of the strategic gap between Thundersley and South Benfleet, though this narrowing would broadly be to a similar extent to where the gap is already narrowest, and would equate to a 'filling out' of the land which lies between the properties along Downer Road North and those on Church Road, and match the extent of development that has already occurred to the south of Thundersley Church Road. Unless appropriately screened, development would also likely impact on the perception of the remaining land being in countryside, as development of this site would necessitate the loss of woodland in this locality.

Consideration would therefore need to be given to the balance of whether this land could be released for further development as much of the site and surrounding land is already developed to varying degrees, or whether the localised impact on the strategic function that this part of the Green Belt is playing would be significantly detrimentally impacted by the release of this site, such that its Green Belt designation should be maintained for that reason.

Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

The only potential boundary feature that exists within the site is Chesterfield Avenue which runs through the site in an east to west direction. Its orientation is such that it wouldn't make for a partially logical alternative boundary in the context of the wider settlement pattern, but should development be restricted to the southern portion of the site only, it would avoid further development up to the boundary of Church Road. This is the main access between South Benfleet and Thundersley and is tree lined, albeit one interrupted by built development along the extent of the road.

Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

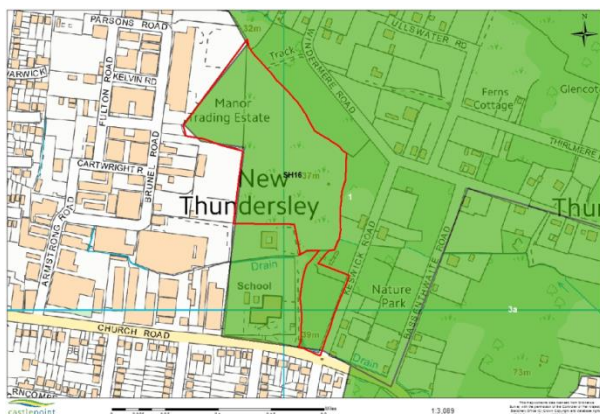
Should this site be released for development, consideration should be given to maintaining the tree line along Church Road and thus avoiding an almost unbroken frontage of built development between South Benfleet and Thundersley. Further trees could be retained along the eastern boundary to screen what would become the new easterly extent of South Benfleet.

Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

Any further Green Belt release as part of the release of this site would need to be across Church Road to the north east into further woodland, or to the east across the unsurfaced road and further woodland. Both of these additional releases would mean bringing development across a boundary feature into an area which is not confined. Any development to the north east and east would also further impact on the strategic function of the Green Belt in this locality and reduce the perception that the remaining Green Belt is safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. As such the site is not considered to offer a strong opportunity for further release.

Proposed Housing Site Allocation SH17

Context of Proposed Site



Aerial of Proposed Housing Site



Description of Proposed Housing Site

The proposed development site is primarily comprised of some hedges and trees. The land is primarily unmanaged and is free of built development.

Relationship to Surrounding Area

The northern, eastern and south west boundary is adjacent to Green Belt.

The northern boundary follows a tree line beyond which are further trees. The eastern boundary also follows a tree line then runs along residential curtilage in the south east before joining Keswick Road. Beyond this boundary are further trees and other vegetation as well as residential properties. The boundary then adjoins Church Road at its southernmost point before running around a school before adjoining the boundary of Manor Trading Estate which forms the western boundary.

Performance of Relevant Parcel(s) under Part 1 Methodology

The proposed housing site is fully located within Parcel 1. A summary of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1 assessment as it relates to Parcel 1 follows below:

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The parcel is adjacent to Thundersley and South Benfleet at its southern boundary. The only residential development in the parcel at the same density as the adjoining urban areas is located in	Whilst such a scale of development is recognised as being unlikely, developing the parcel as a whole would lead to the coalescence of South Benfleet and Thundersley.	There are a large number of different uses within this parcel although a significant proportion are not considered to be inappropriate to the Green Belt. In combination, the parcel is

the south east corner. The rural / urban boundary is also relatively weakly defined in other areas with other residential dwellings and plotland development present in the parcel. These are considered to constitute sprawl. The majority of the parcel is however free from built development and the parcel lacks alternative features that could act as a strong, defensible boundary.		considered to represent a semi-rural character, although there are areas that are entirely rural (particularly in the centre and south west) and others more obviously developed (north and south east). Plotland dwellings, smallholdings, recreational buildings and stables are largely hidden by the vegetation. The parcel is considered large enough that it is not materially influenced by its peripheral features.
Degree of Contribution: Strong	Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Moderate

Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

Parcel 1 lies within the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area of the Central Corridor as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018. These parcels of Green Belt serve to restrict the settlements of South Benfleet and Thundersley from merging and also create a connection between the northern Green Belt parcels within the borough to those in the south.

Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
Although the release of this land from the Green Belt would not result in the formation of more defensible Green Belt boundaries, it would not weaken them relative to the boundaries that	The proposed development site forms a relatively important part of the strategic gap between Thundersley and South Benfleet. However, development of this site would not act to reduce	The site is currently free from built development and densely wooded. However, the immediate surroundings of the site is predominantly developed, in part by industrial uses, such that the rural

currently exist. The site itself is free of built development but is encircled by a trading estate, local roads, dwellings and a school. Development would therefore broadly constitute urban infilling although it is noted that the densities associated with true urban development are only prevalent in the residential area to the south and the industrial estate to the west.	any existing strategic gap due to the prevalence of plot land development to the immediate east of the site.	integrity of the site is compromised.
Degree of Harm: Moderate	Degree of Harm: Minor	Degree of Harm: Minor

Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

As noted above, much of the Green Belt in this locality is already developed with plot land style housing and an industrial estate. It is noted that Parcel 1, within which the proposed development site lies, is part of the Locally Important Strategic Area of the Central Corridor, which acts to prevent urban coalescence between South Benfleet and Thundersley whilst maintaining an unbroken chain of Green Belt through the centre of the borough. Whilst deallocation would act to narrow the width of the strategic gap between Thundersley and South Benfleet, there has already been a significant amount of encroachment in the immediately locality such that the immediate Green Belt area is already not significantly contributing to the purposes of the Green Belt. This is despite the parcel as a whole having a clear role in preventing sprawl and urban coalescence. Consideration would need to be given to the balance of whether this land could be released for further development as much of the surrounding land is already developed to varying degrees, or whether the localised impact on the strategic function that this part of the Green Belt is playing would be significantly detrimentally impacted by the release of this site, such that its Green Belt designation should be maintained for that reason.

The land developed as a school and associated playing field to the south west of the site is currently allocated as Green Belt and this would become cut off from the wider Green Belt.

Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

There are no alternative boundaries within the proposed development site that could provide an alternative configuration.

Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

Any development within this parcel should be well screened from the proximal road network to preserve the rural feel of what largely functions as a small rural break inbetween the industrial estate and surrounding residential dwellings.

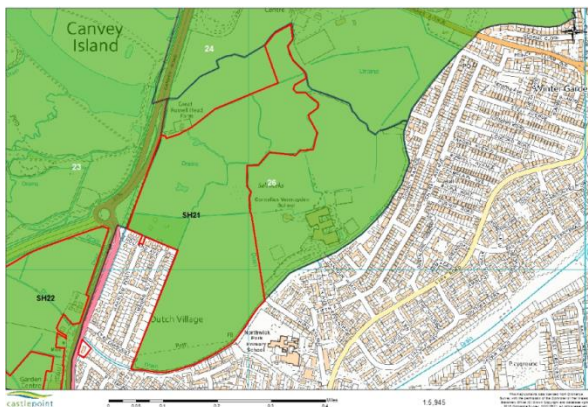
Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

The release of this proposed development site from the Green Belt would present the opportunity to consider whether a further release to the extent of Windermere Road and Keswick Road may represent more robust and defensible Green Belt boundaries in the long term.

Consideration should also be given as to whether the land accommodating the school situated to the south west of the parcel should also be removed from the Green Belt. Being developed, this land does not contribute to the purposes of the Green Belt and would also become cut off should the proposed site be released.

Proposed Housing Site Allocation SH22

Context of Proposed Site



Aerial of Proposed Housing Site



Description of Proposed Housing Site

The site contains woodland in the west but otherwise comprises of open field

Relationship to Surrounding Area

The northern and eastern boundary, as well as half of the western boundary, is adjacent to Green Belt.

The northern boundary follows the curtilage of a single residential dwelling before following a hedged field boundary. Beyond this boundary lies playing fields. In the north east, the boundary cuts through a field before re-joining a hedged field boundary adjacent to a sports centre. The eastern boundary is also formed of a hedged field boundary, beyond which is a school and further fields. The southern boundary follows a drain beyond which is a school and residential dwellings. In the south west, the boundary follows the residential curtilage of the Dutch Village, with the western boundary following the path of another drain until it meets the northern boundary. Beyond this part of the western boundary is Canvey Road and further fields.

Performance of Relevant Parcel(s) under Part 1 Methodology

The proposed housing site is fully located within Parcel 26. A summary of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1 assessment as it relates to Parcel 26 follows below:

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The eastern, southern and part of the western boundary either follow residential curtilages or a drain in very close	The parcel is between Canvey Island and South Benfleet. At its closest point, the current strategic gap between these two	The area includes the grounds of a school and is bounded by metal fencing. The housing bordering the site to the

proximity to the western urban edge of Canvey Island. There is no residential sprawl into the parcel. The only development within the parcel which is not considered to be appropriate development in the Green Belt is a single school. As such the parcel does not display significant urban characteristics.	settlements is approximately 1200m. Development of this parcel would cause a different part of Canvey Island to come within approximately 1100m of South Benfleet, although there would still be another two parcels between them. One of these parcels contains Benfleet Creek which would be a strong boundary between the two settlements.	east, south and part of the west is partially screened. The northern portion is of a different quality to the rest, and is used for formal recreation. The overall character is of a relatively extensive rural area close to large areas of housing, but one influenced to some degree by the presence of the school in the east. The parcel contains linkages to further countryside to the north and west, but these are intervened by a leisure centre and Canvey Road respectively.
Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Minor	Degree of Contribution: Moderate

Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

Parcel 26 lies within the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area of Canvey Island as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018. The Green Belt on Canvey Island effectively prevents the urban settlement from expanding to the extent of the coastal wall or urban encroachment disrupting the ecological value and landscape character of the west of the island.

Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
There is no built development currently in the proposed development site.	The proposed development site is between Canvey Island and South Benfleet. Due	The proposed development site is currently free of built development considered

<p>Development in the southern portion of the proposed site would primarily amount to an infilling of open land within Canvey Island due to the built footprint of the Dutch Village. However, the northern portion of the site is not considered to reflect the existing settlement pattern. Its development would act to begin the encirclement of a parcel of Green Belt comprising of a school and further fields.</p> <p>Other than to the west where the boundary would be with Canvey Road, development of this site would not result in the Green Belt being realigned to a robust boundary</p>	<p>to the extent of the northern portion of the proposed development site, the strategic gap would be noticeably reduced between the two settlements. This reduction would leave the remaining gap broadly similar to the narrowest extent that currently exists at proximal locations. However, Benfleet Creek lies between South Benfleet and Canvey Island and this acts as a strong boundary between the two settlements.</p>	<p>inappropriate in the Green Belt, with the northern portion extending through what is an open expanse of countryside. However, the southern portion of the site is bounded by residential development and a school which impacts on the perception of the area being a rural locality.</p>
<p>Degree of Harm:</p> <p>Very Strong</p>	<p>Degree of Harm:</p> <p>Moderate</p>	<p>Degree of Harm:</p> <p>Strong</p>

Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

The proposed development site falls within the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt Area of Canvey Island. This strategic area acts to prevent the urban settlement of Canvey Island from expanding to the extent of the coastal wall or urban encroachment disrupting the ecological value and landscape character of the west of the island. Whilst the southern portion of the proposed site would largely amount to residential infilling, the northern portion is not well located with regard to the existing settlement pattern, would cause an impact on wider the countryside in this location and its development would also act to begin the encirclement of a parcel of Green Belt comprising of a school and further fields, and also bring development

significantly closer to Benfleet Creek.

Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

The proposed development site is predominantly open field with a general absence of boundary features beyond hedged fields such that there are no alternative boundaries that could act to more robustly define the extent of the Green Belt. Nonetheless, re-aligning the development site to the hedgerow which extends from the wooded area to the school would result in a development site which more closely reflects the existing settlement pattern.

Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

The northern and eastern boundaries of the site would need to be effectively landscaped as this will be immediately adjacent to rural Green Belt. Development at the western boundary will continue the urban form up to Canvey Road where existing vegetation acts to screen the properties in the Dutch Village that are already in close proximity to the road. Such screening should be retained and further developed as necessary

Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

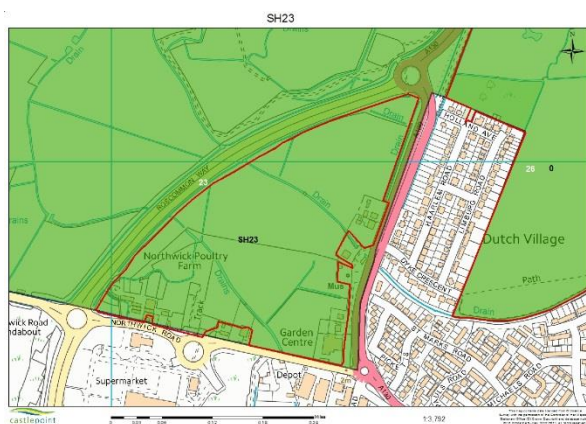
Should it be considered appropriate to release all or part of this site from the Green Belt, consideration should be given to also releasing the land already developed as a school as this land does not accord with the purposes of the Green Belt. This will assist in creating a more logical settlement boundary.

Any further Green Belt release would need to be north and north east of the proposed site otherwise urban development would sprawl across Canvey Road, although to the south west any development that did cross Canvey Road would be subsequently bound by Roscommon Way which could act as an alternative robust boundary.

Somnes Avenue is some distance north from the proposed site and this represents the only feature that could act as a robust boundary feature in this area. It is however noted that Canvey Island has already crossed over Somnes Avenue in some areas. Such a Green Belt release would amount to a sizeable release in this locality. As such, this proposed site does not offer a significant opportunity to consider a wider Green Belt release to provide land that could be safeguarded for future housing development beyond the proposed plan period of the emerging Local Plan, unless such a sizeable release is considered appropriate.

Proposed Housing Site Allocation SH23

Context of Proposed Site



Aerial of Proposed Housing Site



Description of Proposed Housing Site

The proposed development site is a triangular slice of primarily open land entirely bound by Canvey Road, Northwick Road and Roscommon Way. Primarily consisting of open field, there is some limited development considered inappropriate in the Green Belt. This takes the form of a small residential development and a small collection of cultural buildings associated with the Dutch Village on the eastern boundary, two residential dwellings and a garden centre in the south east, and two industrial parks associated with Northwick Farm along the southern border and in the south west.

Relationship to Surrounding Area

The western boundary is adjacent to the Green Belt.

The eastern boundary is formed by Canvey Road beyond which is residential development. The southern boundary is formed by Northwick Road across from which is commercial / industrial development and unmanaged grass land. The western boundary follows Roscommon Way, beyond which is open field.

Performance of Relevant Parcel(s) under Part 1 Methodology

The proposed housing site is fully located within Parcel 23. A summary of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1 assessment as it relates to Parcel 23 follows below:

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
A small proportion of the Green Belt parcel borders the west of Canvey Island. There has been a	The parcel forms the strategic gap between South Benfleet and Canvey Island in	The parcel is generally very flat, open, rough grassland. It is generally without hedges and is

limited amount of sprawl across the eastern boundary although this is primarily contained within Green Belt land bound by Roscommon Way. There is also limited sprawl across the southern boundary taking the form of industrial / commercial development. This sprawl is however extremely limited in the context of the whole parcel.	conjunction with Parcel 22, and forms the majority of that gap. However, Parcel 22 incorporates Benfleet Creek which constitutes a strong boundary between the two settlements.	therefore an expansive landscape. The flat, open character means that higher features beyond the area are noticeable, although they are generally fairly distant. Whilst there is also some built development around the margins of the parcel, this does not impact significantly on the parcel, with the overwhelming character being of open countryside.
Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Moderate	Degree of Contribution: Very Strong

Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

Parcel 23 lies within the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area of Canvey Island as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018. The Green Belt on Canvey Island effectively prevents the urban settlement from expanding to the extent of the coastal wall or urban encroachment disrupting the ecological value and landscape character of the west of the island.

Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
Developing this site would have little impact on the robustness of the Green Belt boundaries in this locality as it would re-align those boundaries which are currently aligned with Northwick Road and Canvey Road to Roscommon Way	Developing the proposed site would act as a lateral extension which is not considered to be located in a strategic gap.	The proposed development site is predominantly undeveloped but contains a small amount of development considered inappropriate in the Green Belt. The site is cut off from the wider countryside by

which is considered to be similarly robust. The development site would be entirely contained by main roads but would amount to continuing the westerly extension of Canvey Island rather displaying a particularly strong fit with the existing settlement pattern. It is however noted that the development to the immediate south does provide the proposed development site with a measure of coherency with the general settlement pattern.		Roscommon Way, and is also bound by two other main roads. This creates more of a semi-urban environment.
Degree of Harm: Moderate	Degree of Harm: None	Degree of Harm: Minor

Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

The proposed development site falls within the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt Area of Canvey Island. This strategic area acts to prevent the urban settlement of Canvey Island from expanding to the extent of the coastal wall or urban encroachment disrupting the ecological value and landscape character of the west of the island. Although the proposed development site would act to extend development westward, this would be into a parcel that is well contained from the wider open countryside to the west of Canvey Island. As such there would be some impact on the strategic role this part of the Green Belt plays. In terms of the general integrity of the Green Belt in this immediate locality, what are currently robust boundaries between Green Belt and non-Green Belt land would be realigned to equally robust strong boundaries.

Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

The proposed development site is surrounded by robust boundaries in the form of main roads. Within the site itself, any boundaries are formed of hedged field boundaries and as such there are no robust alternative boundaries through which to reconfigure the site.

Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

Screening will need to be considered along the boundary with Roscommon Way such that a sympathetic edge is created between the proposed development and wider countryside.

Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

The parcel is well constrained by existing infrastructure in all directions. The proposed development site does not offer significant potential for a wider strategic release. Any release across Roscommon Way would be into open countryside with no other robust boundary by which to constrain such a release. Whilst there is open land to the south of Northwick Road which is also contained by Roscommon Way, existing industrial commercial development impacts on the ability to accommodate future housing need.

Proposed Housing Site Allocation SH30

Context of Proposed Site



Aerial of Proposed Housing Site



Description of Proposed Housing Site

The proposed development site takes the form of a field on the outskirts of Daws Heath.

Relationship to Surrounding Area

The eastern, southern and western boundary is adjacent to further Green Belt land.

The northern boundary follows a line of trees beyond which is residential curtilage of dwellings in Daws Heath. The eastern boundary is relatively open, beyond which lies buildings associated with Solby Wood Farm, although this land has recently received planning permission for housing development. The southern boundary is open and formed by a lane beyond which are further fields. The western boundary is tree lined beyond which lies another field.

Performance of Relevant Parcel(s) under Part 1 Methodology

The proposed housing site is fully located within Parcel 4. A summary of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1 assessment as it relates to Parcel 4 follows below:

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The Green Belt parcel is adjacent to New Thundersley, Daws Heath and Hadleigh. There is limited sprawl across the northern border and there is also ribbon development along the short stretch of Daws	The parcel represents the full extent of the strategic gap between Thundersley to the west and Daws Heath to the east, as well as Daws Heath and Hadleigh, located to the south. These strategic gaps at their shortest	The main land use in the parcel is agriculture. The industrial estate on the northern edge is reasonably well screened and set below the high ground in views from the south. The overall perception of this parcel is

Heath Road which is in the Green Belt. However, outside of these examples, and despite the absence of permanent robust boundaries along much of the parcel, the parcel itself is free of built up development.	extent are approximately 350m and 300m respectively, meaning that significant development would act to notably decrease the remaining gap between these urban areas.	of agricultural land and woods. The parcel is considered large enough that it is not specifically influenced by its boundary features which take the form of development uncharacteristic to the countryside. The parcel also links to wider countryside to the north and south west.
Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Very Strong

Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

Parcel 4 lies within the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area of the Daws Heath Ring as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018. This Green Belt area encircles the settlement of Daws Heath and has been effective in preventing urban sprawl and therefore preventing the settlement from merging with the surrounding settlements of Hadleigh, Thundersley, Rayleigh and Eastwood. The Green Belt area also has an important function of preventing urban coalescence between these settlements more generally.

Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The proposed site is currently undeveloped. If it were to be removed from the Green Belt, a current boundary with residential curtilage would be re-aligned to the lane in the south, with new residential curtilage forming the remainder of	Development would act to reduce the strategic gap between Hadleigh and Daws Heath, with boundaries or features which prevent inter-visibility between the two urban settlements being relatively weak in the land which would form the	The proposed development site is currently free of built development considered inappropriate in the Green Belt. The site is adjacent to countryside or rural uses on three sides such that the general perception would be an

the new boundary. The resultant Green Belt release would be a southerly protrusion into the Green Belt which although localised, would not be particularly reflective of the settlement pattern.	remainder of the strategic gap. Nonetheless, it would not extend the built frontage of Daws Heath out further than what exists at Solby Wood Farm. However, it is noted that the development site falls within Green Belt considered strategically important in preventing urban coalescence.	extension of housing into functional countryside, but one which is limited in harm due to the size of the proposed development.
Degree of Harm: Strong	Degree of Harm: Strong	Degree of Harm: Moderate

Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

The release of this site would not constitute the realignment of the Green Belt boundary to a robust boundary that could be defended in the long term. Although the site is relatively small, there would be a strong degree of harm in relation to the merging of urban settlements as the area of Green Belt land between Daws Heath and Hadleigh will be reduced in extent, although development would bring settlement boundaries in line with where they are already the narrowest rather than further decrease any gap at its narrowest extent. Nonetheless, development would act to exacerbate the perception of coalescence of the urban settlements in this area and reduce the contribution this part of the Green Belt makes to the identified locally strategic priority of preventing the urban coalescence of Thundersley, Daws Heath and Hadleigh.

It is noted that the granting of permission for the redevelopment of Solby Wood Farm presents a difficult context for the assessment of this site, as in effect development considered inappropriate in the Green Belt has been permitted in close proximity. Completion of this permitted development will reduce the perception of this site being in the countryside. Additionally, whilst a realignment of the Green Belt to exclude this site would act to form a protrusion of undesignated land into the Green Belt which would not be reflective of the general settlement pattern, in effect development of the site would result in a rounding off of the pattern of development that will be present once the development of Solby Wood Farm has taken place.

Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

The proposed development site takes the form of open field which does not contain any internal boundaries that could be used to re-align the site.

Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

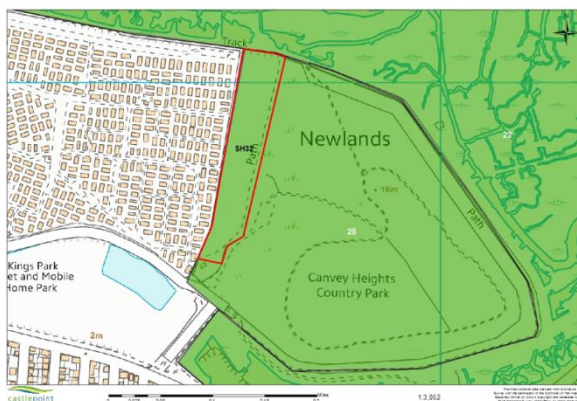
Any development should incorporate screening to the south and west. Effective boundary treatment would be particularly important to the south to preserve the perception of a rural gap between Hadleigh and Daws Heath.

Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

Should this site be considered suitable for development, a more natural settlement pattern would be afforded by taking the land currently occupied by Solby Wood Farm out of the Green Belt given that the land has been permitted for housing development. It would however not result in the opportunity for further housing delivery, nor would such a deallocation ensure that the Green Belt boundary becomes more robust. It is not considered that there is a strong opportunity for any other wider Green Belt release in this locality such that the Green Belt would be more robustly aligned.

Proposed Housing Site Allocation SH32

Context of Proposed Site



Aerial of Proposed Housing Site



Description of Proposed Housing Site

The proposed development site is a broadly rectangular piece of land comprising of unmanaged grassland free of any development.

Relationship to Surrounding Area

The northern, eastern and southern boundary is adjacent to Green Belt land.

The northern boundary is adjacent to the coastal wall beyond which is intertidal tidal land associated with Hadleigh Ray. The eastern boundary is predominantly tree lined beyond which is land which is raised above its surroundings and associated with a reclaimed landfill. The boundary in the south is made up of the curtilage of a building in community use, whilst the western boundary is relatively open and formed of hedges, beyond which are residential properties within the Kings Park Chalet and Mobile Home Park.

Performance of Relevant Parcel(s) under Part 1 Methodology

The proposed housing site is fully located within Parcel 25. A summary of the Green Belt Review 2018 Part 1 assessment as it relates to Parcel 25 follows below:

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
The western boundary of the parcel is adjacent to the edge of Kings Park Chalet and Mobile Home Park. There has been no urban sprawl across this boundary.	This parcel is not considered to fall within a gap between two neighbouring towns.	There is a single one story building located on the parcel which is otherwise completely free of built development. The parcel was once a landfill and is now designated as Canvey Heights Country

		Park. Its landform, which is raised with a gently domed top, is noticeable in the context of the lower, flat surroundings. This therefore means that the proximal residential developments to the west and south are clearly noticeable and impact on the character of the parcel, although there are also strong linkages to the wider countryside to the north and east.
Degree of Contribution: Very Strong	Degree of Contribution: Not Relevant	Degree of Contribution: Moderate

Is the Parcel in a Strategic Area as defined by Part 1 of the Green Belt Review?

Parcel 25 lies within the Locally Important Strategic Green Belt area of Canvey Island as defined by Part 1 of the Castle Point Green Belt Review 2018. The Green Belt on Canvey Island effectively prevents the urban settlement from expanding to the extent of the coastal wall or urban encroachment disrupting the ecological value and landscape character of the west of the island.

Degree of Harm of Releasing Whole Proposed Housing Site from the Green Belt

Purpose 1 – Check Unrestricted Sprawl	Purpose 2 – Prevent Towns from Merging	Purpose 3 – Safeguard Countryside
Development of this site would not result in the realignment of the Green Belt to a more robust development boundary but the site is largely constrained by inter-tidal habitat and a reclaimed landfill which would act to limit any further significant	The proposed development site is not considered to fall within a strategic gap between two neighbouring towns.	Although the proposed development site is formed of undeveloped countryside, the entirety of its eastern edge is adjacent to existing dwellings which are part of a sizeable residential area. There is also considerable

development beyond the site. Development would result in an easterly extension of build development on Canvey Island which would be in keeping with the settlement pattern in the surrounding area adjacent to the inter-tidal habitat.		development to the south. This gives the area a broad urban feel. Development would not act to significantly extend development beyond existing peripheries or cause a marked change in visual impact.
Degree of Harm: Minor	Degree of Harm: None	Degree of Harm: Minor

Impact on Remaining Wider Green Belt

Development of this site is not considered to have a significant impact on the Green Belt. Development would not result in a reduction in the robustness of Green Belt boundaries and would act as a small lateral urban extension to an existing settlement, with any further expansion problematic as the site is bound by inter-tidal habitat and a reclaimed landfill.

Potential Alternative Boundaries within the Proposed Housing Site

There are no alternative boundaries within the site which could act as a more robust Green Belt boundary.

Options for the Mitigation of Harm on the Green Belt

The proposed development would act as a relatively minor lateral extension to the existing settlement boundary of Canvey Island, which is already relatively developed albeit with large views of open countryside to the north and east. Boundary treatments should aim to provide a sympathetic edge with the inter-tidal habitat to the north and the nature reserve which would remain in the Green Belt to the east. The topography to the immediate east would however make any screening difficult to fully achieve if the proposed development was of any significant height.

Considering the Green Belt in the Longer Term

The wider Green Belt in this area forms inter-tidal habitat or takes the form of a reclaimed landfill. Further development opportunities that could be put into effect through a larger Green Belt release are therefore not considered to be present.