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Oxford Green Belt Study

Final Report
Prepared by LUC
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Detailed assessments for broad areas

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Extract from the poem *Thyrsis*, by Matthew Arnold (1865)

How changed is here each spot man makes or fills!

In the two Hinkseys nothing keeps the same;

The village street its haunted mansion lacks,

And from the sign is gone Sibylla's name,

And from the roofs the twisted chimney-stacks—

Are ye too changed, ye hills?

See, 'tis no foot of unfamiliar men

To-night from Oxford up your pathway strays!

Here came I often, often, in old days—

Thyrsis and I; we still had Thyrsis then.

Runs it not here, the track by Childsworth Farm,

Past the high wood, to where the elm-tree crowns

The hill behind whose ridge the sunset flames?

The signal-elm, that looks on Ilsley Downs,

The Vale, the three lone weirs, the youthful Thames?—

This winter-eve is warm,

Humid the air! leafless, yet soft as spring,

The tender purple spray on copse and briers!

And that sweet city with her dreaming spires,

She needs not June for beauty's heightening,

1 Introduction

Study objectives and scope

- 1.1 LUC was commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council (on behalf of the Oxfordshire Local Authorities¹) to undertake an assessment of the Green Belt within the County. The Study was overseen by a Steering Group comprising officers of the local authorities.
- 1.2 The overall aim of the Study was to assess the extent to which the land within the Oxford Green Belt performs against the purposes of Green Belts, as set out in paragraph 80 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):
 - 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.
- 1.3 The brief indicated that the Study should examine the case for including within the Green Belt any additional areas of land that currently lie outside it.
- 1.4 The NPPF attaches great importance to Green Belts and stresses that their essential **characteristics are 'openness and permanence'**. It also advises that, once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances through the preparation or review of a local plan.
- 1.5 The brief emphasised that the Study will **not advise on the suitability or potential of land in the Oxford Green Belt for development**. However, the outputs of the study, alongside other assessments will assist local authorities in considering the extent to which some existing Green Belt land could be used to accommodate sustainable forms, patterns and types of new development. Should the local authorities conclude that there are exceptional circumstances for making alterations to the existing Green Belt boundaries, these changes, including any allocations of land for development, will be taken forward through the Local Plan-making process.
- 1.6 The brief also noted that the Study should not have regard to environmental, policy or land-use constraints and designations that may exist within the Oxford Green Belt, such as landscape areas, SSSIs, and floodplains - except insofar that these are considered to be relevant to the purposes of Green Belts.

Background

- 1.7 The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), published in April 2014, identified a need for the provision of around 5,000 homes per annum over the period 2011-31 across the Oxfordshire Housing Market Area.
- 1.8 The need within the administrative area of Oxford City Council was identified as between 24,000 and 32,000 homes up to 2031. There is general agreement between the local authorities that the capacity of the City is limited and that there will in consequence be a significant shortfall that will need to be met within neighbouring districts.

¹ Oxfordshire County Council, Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council.

- 1.9 To address this challenge, and taking account of the Duty to Co-operate, the Oxfordshire Growth Board agreed a collaborative and joined up approach to provide a county wide spatial picture and strategy. A strategic work programme has been developed, which comprises a number of inter-related projects and milestones around the preparation and appraisal of long-term strategic development options for the county and the identification of associated infrastructure requirements. These projects, including this Green Belt Study, will culminate in the agreement of a new housing distribution for Oxfordshire. That agreed distribution will then be taken forward in subsequent Local Plan Reviews by the individual District Councils.
- 1.10 **Section 110 of the Localism Act (2011) describes English Local Authorities' 'duty to co-operate'.** The duty:
- Relates to sustainable development or use of land that would have a significant impact on at least two local planning areas.
 - Requires that councils and public bodies '*engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis*' to develop strategic policies to address such issues.
 - Requires councils to consider joint approaches to plan making.
- 1.11 Paragraph 156 of the NPPF sets out the strategic issues where co-operation might be appropriate, and includes a number of cross boundary issues that are closely linked to Green Belt (such as the provision of homes and jobs etc.).

Report structure

- 1.12 The remainder of this report is structured in the following Chapters:
- **Chapter 2** sets out the context to the Study, in terms of planning policy and the evolution and character of the Oxford Green Belt.
 - **Chapter 3** describes the Study methodology, including the criteria used to assess the Green Belt.
 - **Chapter 4** reports the findings of the Study.
 - **Chapter 5** sets out the conclusions of the study and recommended next steps.

2 Context

National Green Belt policy

- 2.1 The principle of maintaining a ring of open country around cities can be traced back to the 16th century when Elizabeth I forbade any building on new sites within three miles of the city gates of London. This was motivated by public health reasons, to prevent the spread of the plague, and to ensure a constant supply of food for the metropolis.
- 2.2 The importance of these considerations was later recognised by Ebenezer Howard, a pioneer of British town planning, in his book of 1898 *Tomorrow: a Peaceful Path to Real Reform* in which he referred to *'an attractive setting within the town could develop and which would maintain, close at hand, the fresh delights of the countryside- field, hedgerow and woodland'*.
- 2.3 The only mechanism available at the time to realise this vision, however, was the acquisition of land by public authorities. In 1935 the London County Council Regional Planning Committee therefore put forward a scheme *'to provide a reserve supply of public open spaces and of recreational areas and to establish a Green Belt or girdle of open space lands, not necessarily continuous, but as readily accessible from the completely urbanised area of London as practicable'*. This arrangement was formalised by the 1938 Green Belt (London and Home Counties) Act.
- 2.4 In 1955, Government Circular 42/55 codified Green Belt provisions and extended the principle beyond London. This was replaced by Planning Policy Guidance 2 in 1988 and in 2012, the Government replaced PPG2 with paragraphs 79–92 of a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This has since been supplemented by relevant National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG).
- 2.5 Paragraph 79 of the NPPF states that **'the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence'**. This is elaborated in NPPF paragraph 80, which states that Green Belts should serve five purposes, as set out below. The NPPF does not infer that any differential weighting should be applied to the five purposes.

The purposes of Green Belt

- 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.
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

- 2.6 The NPPF emphasises in paragraph 83 that local planning authorities should establish Green Belt boundaries in their Local Plans which set the framework for Green Belt and settlement policy. It goes on to state that *'once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. At that time, authorities should consider the Green Belt boundaries having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so that they should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period'*.

- 2.7 Paragraph 85 of the NPPF suggests that Local Planning Authorities may wish to identify areas of 'safeguarded land' between the urban area and the Green Belt to accommodate long-term development needs well beyond the plan period. New boundaries must have regard for the permanence of the designation by redefining boundaries which endure beyond the Local Plan period. New boundaries should be defined clearly, using readily recognisable, permanent physical features.
- 2.8 Paragraph 82 of the NPPF indicates that, if proposing a new Green Belt, local planning authorities should:
- demonstrate why normal planning and development management policies would not be adequate;
 - set out whether any major changes in circumstances have made the adoption of this exceptional measure necessary;
 - show what the consequences of the proposal would be for sustainable development;
 - demonstrate the necessity for the Green Belt and its consistency with Local Plans for adjoining areas; and
 - show how the Green Belt would meet the other objectives of the Framework.
- 2.9 Current guidance therefore makes it clear that the Green Belt is a strategic planning tool designed primarily to prevent the spread of development and the coalescence of urban areas. To this end, land should be designated because of its position, rather than its landscape quality or recreational use. However, the NPPF states "*local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land*" (Paragraph 81).

The Oxford Green Belt

Origins and evolution of the Oxford Green Belt

- 2.10 Thomas Sharpe, a pioneer of British planning, first presented the idea of a Green Belt to protect Oxford's special physical and architectural character in 1948². A decade later in 1958, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council and the former Berkshire County Council, with advice from amenity groups that included the Oxford Preservation Trust, instigated Green Belt policies. A tight inner Green Belt boundary was drawn around the city, and the Green Belt extended outwards for some five to six miles in every direction. Within it were a number of villages, most of which were 'washed over', meaning that Green Belt constraints on development applied equally within the village as outside it. Some of the largest villages, including Kidlington, were excluded from the Green Belt, as 'inset villages'. A public inquiry into the proposals was held in 1961 and in 1975 the Green Belt was approved. **This confirmed the 'outer' boundaries of the Green Belt but the 'inner' part was left as interim, pending the outcome of structure and local plans.**
- 2.11 In 1979 the first Structure Plan for Oxfordshire provided for the continuation of Green Belt around Oxford "*to preserve the special character*" of the City. The 1987 Structure Plan continued the Green Belt policy in policy EN5 which set out the purposes of the Oxford Green Belt more fully:
1. *"Protect the special character of Oxford and its Landscape Setting,*
 2. *check the growth of Oxford and prevent ribbon development and urban sprawl,*
 3. *prevent the coalescence of settlements"*³
- 2.12 Final approval of the alterations to the Structure Plan was announced by the Secretary of State on 15 April 1987. This included provision for the inner boundaries of the Green Belt to be decided through Local Plans⁴.

² Oxford Replanned, Thomas Sharpe (1948).

³ Topic Paper on the Oxford Green Belt, Cherwell Local Plan (1996) Cherwell District Council.

⁴ Local Plans such as The Oxford Fringe and Green Belt Local Plan (adopted March 1991), Central Oxfordshire Local Plan -Cherwell (1992) etc.

- 2.13 By the early 1990s, a variety of rationales for using Green Belt to protect the setting and special character of historic towns had been developed in different places. Green Belt was being used to:
- “protect the green and open fabric of such cities, keeping open extensive belts of land which form important parts of the setting of town centres, neighbourhoods or groups of buildings;
 - protect gateways, by keeping open approaches to a city, and providing a clear definition of town and country;
 - protect the wider setting of a city. This may comprise keeping open areas of higher ground which provide a green background to a City, and help give it a distinctive character; and
 - seek control over the size of a city, with a view to influencing the level of activity which **requires to be accommodated in its historic core, thus protecting the character.**⁵
- 2.14 In approving the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 1992 the Secretary of State agreed with his predecessors (from 1979 and 1987) “that the unique, historic character of Oxford and its setting in its natural environment should be conserved and protected, and the growth of the City should **not continue indefinitely.**”⁶
- 2.15 From the 1992 Oxfordshire Structure Plan up to the final Oxfordshire Structure Plan in 2011, Oxfordshire has combined the special character rationale for Green Belt with some of the other purposes. Paragraph 3.9 of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016 stated that:
- “The special character of Oxford and its landscape setting means not just the University and the views of the dreaming spires, but a much broader concept including the countryside around the City, the Cherwell and Thames floodplains and the relationship of nearby settlements to Oxford. Its character also includes the overall scale of activity in the City, since any considerable growth of the City will generate more activity, since significant growth will generate more traffic and pressures for further development, which could threaten the nature, character and setting of the City.”*⁷
- 2.16 More recently, in the City Council’s Core Strategy and Sites and Housing Plan Development Planning Documents (published in 2011 and 2013), Green Belt is described as *“an area of undeveloped land, where the planning policy is to keep it open to (amongst other purposes) prevent urban sprawl and preserve the setting and special character of Oxford and its landscape setting.”*⁸ Paragraph 3.3.23 of the Core Strategy goes on to say, *“protection of the Green Belt therefore helps to retain the distinctive physical form of the city, where the river corridors running either side of Oxford’s historic core are an essential part of its special character and landscape setting.”*⁹
- 2.17 It is generally regarded that the Green Belt around Oxford has served the City and County well, providing an open, landscape backdrop to the urban area and preventing coalescence with neighbouring towns and villages. On the other hand, the Green Belt has been regarded as a **major constraint on the City’s growth and development, alongside the constraint of the floodplain** and sensitive ecological and historical areas. Indeed, the County and District Councils have been debating the spatial distribution of development for over 50 years.

⁵ The Effectiveness of Green Belts, Department of Environment, London, (1993).

⁶ Topic Paper on the Oxford Green Belt, Cherwell Local Plan (1996) Cherwell District Council.

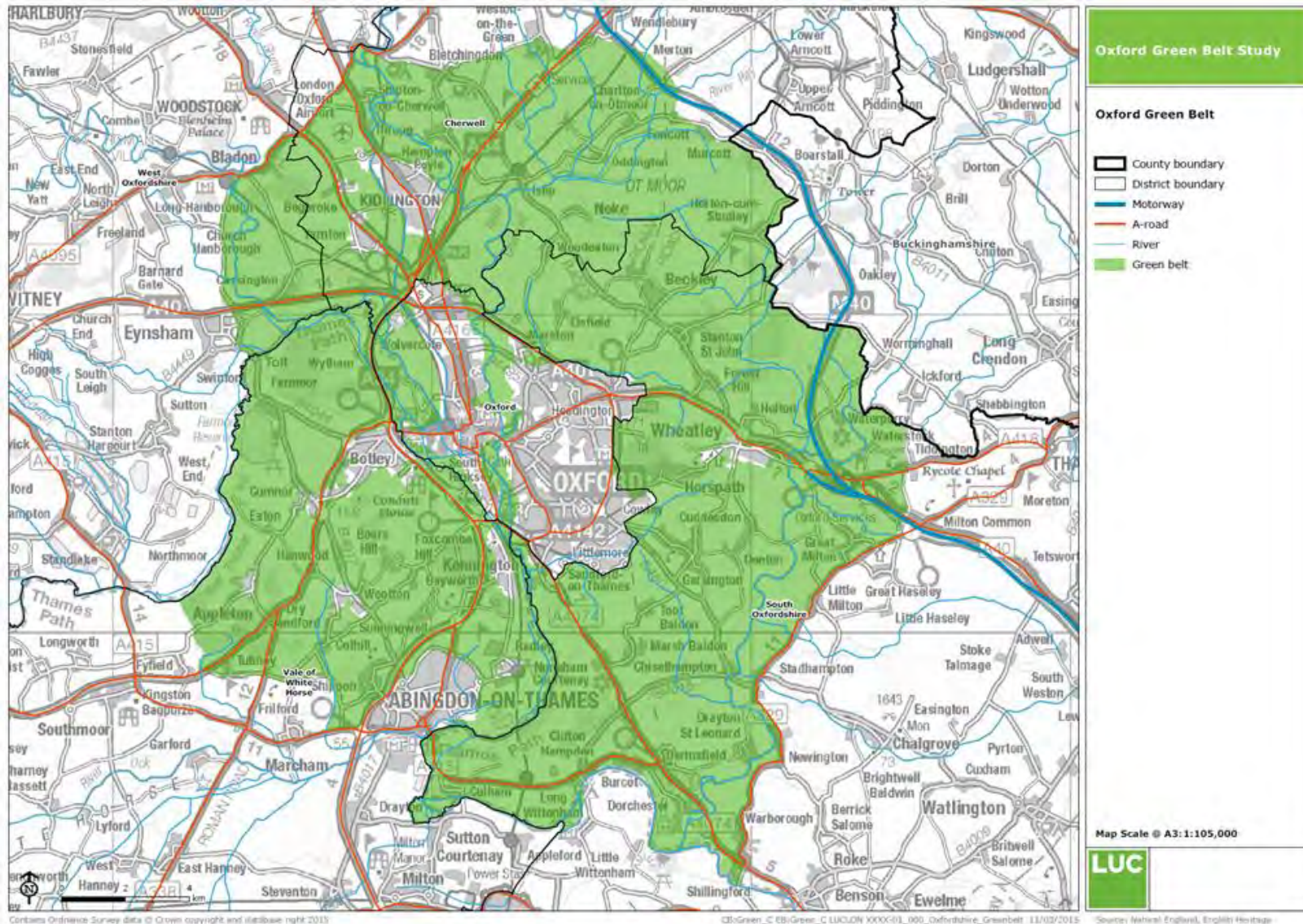
⁷ Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016, Oxfordshire County Council (2005).

⁸ Sites and Housing Plan (2011 – 2026), Oxford City Council (2013).

⁹ Core Strategy 2026, Oxford City Council (2011).

- 2.18 Since the designation of the Oxford Green Belt, the most significant alterations to its boundary occurred in the mid-1990s around the edges of Oxford. Oxford City Council released areas of Green Belt land and safeguarded it for future housing, e.g. Barton West, and employment uses, e.g. 'Northern Gateway'. Since then, there have only been very minor alterations to the Green Belt in Oxfordshire. South Oxfordshire's Core Strategy policy CSEN2 South Oxfordshire includes provision for a local review of the Green Belt at Berinsfield. It is proposed that the status of Berinsfield will be changed from Green Belt to an inset settlement. .
- 2.19 The current extent of the Oxford Green Belt is shown in **Figure 2.1**.

Figure 2.1– Oxford Green Belt



The character of the Oxford Green Belt

- 2.20 The Oxford Green Belt covers around 66,000 hectares (660 square kilometres). Nearly 250 hectares are open access land, including 100 hectares of Country Parks. Roughly 75% of the Green Belt is under agricultural use. More than 20% is at significant risk of flooding, being located in Flood Zones 1 and 2. The more significant flood plains are located along the banks of the rivers Thames, Cherwell and Ray and on Otmoor. Many of these floodplains are also important ecological habitats designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), for example, Cothill Fen and Oxford Meadows.
- 2.21 Oxford has an international reputation as an historic centre of learning. It has hundreds of Listed Buildings, many of which are Grade I and Grade II*, many Scheduled Monuments from a range of archaeological and historical periods and several Registered Parks and Gardens. The World Heritage Site at Blenheim Palace lies adjacent to the north western edge of the Oxford Green Belt, in West Oxfordshire.
- 2.22 **Oxford's historic development has been much influenced by its landscape setting.** The development of settlement in this location reflects the benefits of a location associated with major rivers: the rich, flat alluvial land was good for farming and water meadows provided grazing pasture. Oxford rose to prominence in Saxon times, being positioned on an important trade route at the boundary between the Kingdoms of Wessex and Mercia, with the elevated river terraces providing locations for settlement to develop.
- 2.23 The Thames and Cherwell floodplains have constrained the expansion of the City over time, leading to the pattern of development seen today in which outlying settlements have developed beyond the floodplains but central riverside areas have retained openness and rural characteristics.
- 2.24 The surrounding hills, such as Shotover and Cumnor, provided defensible sites around the City in medieval times. **They now afford views into the City and form part of the 'green backdrop' when looking out from the City.** The physical continuity provided by the river valleys that penetrate to the heart of the city is also an important landscape characteristic.
- 2.25 Considering the above, there are some areas of significant environmental sensitivity within the Oxford Green Belt. Examples include (amongst others):
- Otmoor due to its biodiversity interest and flood risk.
 - The flood plain of the river Thames as it passes through the City of Oxford due both to the flood risk and the biodiversity and historic interest of the meadows (including Port Meadow with Wolvercote Common and Green; Pixey and Yarnton Meads; and Cassington Meadows).
 - The area between Eynsham and the City due to the ancient woodland of Wytham Woods SSSI (with associated parkland) and wetlands at Farmoor Reservoir.
 - Nuneham Courtenay due to its large Registered Park and Garden of Historic Interest.
 - Bagley Wood west of Kennington due to its ancient woodland and priority biodiversity status.

Oxfordshire planning policy

The Districts' Local Plans

- 2.26 This section contains a brief summary of the current status of the Local Plans within the five Districts, including reference to their respective spatial strategies.

Cherwell District Council

- 2.27 The Cherwell District Council Local Plan (Part 1) was submitted to the Secretary of State for formal Examination on 31st January 2014. Proposed modifications, including an increase in housing provision in the district in line with the SHMA 2014, were submitted for formal Examination on 21st October 2014. Following Examination Hearings in December 2014, the **Inspector's report was received in June 2015**. Part 1 of the Local Plan was formally adopted on 20th July 2015.

- 2.28 The spatial strategy for how the District will manage its growth can be summarised as:
- Focusing the bulk of the proposed growth in and around Bicester and Banbury.
 - Managing growth in the rural areas and directing it towards larger and more sustainable villages.
 - Aiming to strictly control development in open countryside.
- 2.29 Cherwell Council is commencing work on Part 2 of the Cherwell Local Plan (Development Management Policies and Sites) containing detailed planning policies for considering planning applications and non-strategic site allocations. The Council has invited views on what that document should contain and plans to publish an issues and options document later in 2015, with adoption in the spring of 2017.
- 2.30 The Local Plan Part 2 will include a small scale local review of the Green Belt boundary at Langford Lane/London Oxford Airport and Begbroke Science Park, to accommodate identified employment needs, consistent with Policy Kidlington 1 in the adopted Local Plan Part 1.

Oxford City Council

- 2.31 The Oxford City Council Local Plan 2001-2016, setting out a detailed framework for its land use policies, was adopted on 11th November 2005. However, most of its policies have now been superseded by more recent DPDS.
- 2.32 The Oxford City Council Core Strategy, containing the policies against which all planning applications are judged, was adopted by the City Council on 14th March 2011.
- 2.33 The Oxford City Council Sites and Housing Plan, allocating sites for housing, employment and other uses and setting out detailed planning policies, was adopted by the City Council on 18th February 2013.
- 2.34 The spatial strategy and strategic locations for development in Oxford aim to:
- Ensure that new developments are in accessible locations, to minimise overall travel demand.
 - Maximise regeneration and the reuse of previously developed land and make full and efficient use of all land, having regard to the distinct character of each neighbourhood.
 - **Provide the development required to meet Oxford's needs, ensuring an appropriate balance of housing and employment growth in the context of other competing land uses.**
- 2.35 The Council is currently in the process of drafting a new Local Development Scheme due for publication in 2015.

South Oxfordshire District Council

- 2.36 The South Oxfordshire District Council Core Strategy, identifying issues and directions of growth for new development up to the year 2027, was adopted in December 2012.
- 2.37 **Policy CSS1 of the adopted core strategy outlines the District's adopted spatial strategy to:**
- Focus major new development at the growth point of Didcot.
 - Support the roles of Henley, Thame and Wallingford by regenerating their town centres and by providing new houses, employment, services and infrastructure.
 - Support and enhance the larger villages of Berinsfield, Benson, Chalgrove, Chinnor, Cholsey, Crowmarsh Gifford, Goring, Nettlebed, Sonning Common, Watlington, Wheatley and Woodcote as local service centres.
 - Support other villages in the rest of the district by allowing for limited amounts of housing and employment and by the provision and retention of services.
 - Change outside these towns and villages and other major developed sites needs to relate to very specific needs such as those of the agricultural industry or enhancement of the environment.

- Since then, the Council has been working on a new local plan, known as the Local Plan 2031. The main goal of the new plan is to find a positive way to plan for the updated housing need figures (up to 2031). These were identified in a County-wide Strategic Housing Market Assessment (April 2014).

- 2.38 Consultation documents on the 'Issues and Scope' of the Local Plan 2031 were published in the summer of 2014, followed by some 'Refined Options' in spring 2015. In the 'Refined Options' consultation document have reemphasises the Council's strategic commitment to "*protect and enhance what is best about South Oxfordshire, whilst supporting economic growth, delivering new homes and promoting healthy and vibrant communities.*" The Council seeks "*to promote a network of sustainable settlements across the district to ensure that everybody has access to a basic range of services...*"
- 2.39 The Council plans to adopt the Local Plan 2031 in the spring of 2017, followed by a development management DPD in the autumn of 2017.

Vale of White Horse District Council

- 2.40 The Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan 2011 was adopted in July 2006. Following the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework in 2012, the Council published an assessment of how the saved Local Plan 2011 polices are consistent with the NPPF.
- 2.41 The Council submitted Part 1 of a new Local Plan 2031 to the Secretary of State on 18th March 2015 for formal examination. Part 1 of the new Local Plan 2031 deals with the larger, 'strategic' sites and policies in the Vale.
- 2.42 The spatial strategy in the new Local Plan 2031 makes provision for growth of around 23,000 new jobs, 219 hectares of employment land, and at least 20,560 new homes, to be delivered during the plan period from 2011 to 2031. It:
- Focusses sustainable growth within the Science Vale Area.
 - Reinforces the service centre roles of the main settlements across the district.
 - Promotes thriving villages and rural communities whilst safeguarding the countryside and village character.
- 2.43 It is hoped that Part 1 will be adopted in late 2015. Until Part 1 is adopted, saved policies in this Local Plan 2011 that are consistent with the NPPF are being used alongside the Framework.
- 2.44 Preparation of Part 2 of the Local Plan 2031, containing smaller site allocations and detailed planning policies is due to begin in early 2016, with a view to adoption in the summer of 2018.

West Oxfordshire District Council

- 2.45 The West Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011 was adopted on 16th June 2006. The planning policies that are consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) have been saved and still form the basis for local planning decisions until such time as they are replaced by a new Local Plan.
- 2.46 The new Local Plan 2011-2031 sets out an overall strategy to guide development across the **District up to 2031. Policy 'OS2 – Locating Development in the Right Places'** outlines the proposed spatial strategy of the new plan. In summary it:
- Focusses new homes, jobs and supporting services on the edge of the main service centres of Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton.
 - Will allow development in the smaller rural service centres of Bampton, Burford, Charlbury, Eynsham, Long Hanborough and Woodstock of appropriate scales and types.
 - Will allow limited development in the villages where it respects the village character and local distinctiveness and would help to maintain the vitality of their communities.
 - Development in the small villages, hamlets and open countryside will be limited to that which requires and is appropriate for a rural location and which respects the intrinsic character of the area.

2.47 Following several periods of public consultation, a pre-submission draft was published for consultation between 27th March and 8th May 2015. The Local Plan 2011-2031 was formally submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in July 2015 and will be subject to independent examination in late November 2015, with a view to adopting the plan in the spring of 2016.

Recent Green Belt studies undertaken by the Local Authorities

2.48 Three Green Belt studies have been completed in Oxfordshire as follows:

- **Vale of White Horse Green Belt Review (2014):** A full Green Belt review comprising two key stages, and reported in three phases, was undertaken by Kirkham Landscape Planning Ltd on behalf of the Vale of White Horse District Council. The principal purpose of the review was to assess the extent to which the Oxford Green Belt land meets the five purposes of the Green Belt. Stage 1 of the review identified land parcels and assessed land parcels on the edge of settlements. Stage 2 included an assessment of land parcels not covered in Stage 1, an assessment of opportunities to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, and a review of the Green Belt boundary to examine whether it should be extended.
- **Oxford City Council's Investigation into the Potential to Accommodate Urban Extensions in Oxford's Green Belt – Informal Assessment (2014):** In May 2014 Oxford City Council published an assessment investigating the potential to accommodate urban extensions in Oxford's Green Belt. The assessment appraised the potential of sites for an urban extension in the Green Belt to be developed to meet housing need. The assessment began by considering the implications that development of an urban extension in different parts of the Green Belt would have on the function of the Green Belt. The second part of the assessment gave further consideration to the potential of areas of search in less sensitive parts of the Green Belt to deliver housing development. The assessment concluded that the approach of providing for housing need in an urban extension in the Green Belt merits further investigation.
- **Local Green Belt Study for South Oxfordshire (September 2015):** A local Green Belt study was undertaken by Kirkham Landscape Planning Ltd on behalf of South Oxfordshire District Council. The purpose of this study was to assess the extent to which the land within the Green Belt meets the five purposes of the Green Belt in the context of the need to identify additional land for housing in the District. The study included two key stages. Stage 1 of the study involved an initial assessment of land at the edge of settlements. Consultation was also undertaken with Neighbourhood Planning Groups from six villages to identify land outside of the built up areas that could meet housing requirements. Stage 2 included a review of selected inset villages and previously developed land and a detailed assessment Green Belt land parcels. It set out conclusions regarding land that should be considered further for potential release from the Green Belt, or as Rural Exception sites (around washed over villages).

2.49 A comparison of the methodologies used in the Vale of White Horse Green Belt Review, the Oxford City Informal review, the South Oxfordshire Green Belt Review and this study, is provided in **Chapter 4** of this report.

3 Methodology

- 3.1 There is no definitive national guidance on how to undertake Green Belt studies. Documents prepared by the Planning Officers Society (POS)¹⁰ and the Planning Advisory Service (PAS)¹¹ provide a useful discussion of some of the key issues associated with assessing Green Belt and reviewing/revising Green Belt boundaries.
- 3.2 The key points from these documents and from **Inspectors’ decisions were reflected in the methodology employed here.** **Figure 3.1** provides a summary of the overall method of approach, which is described in more detail in the following paragraphs.

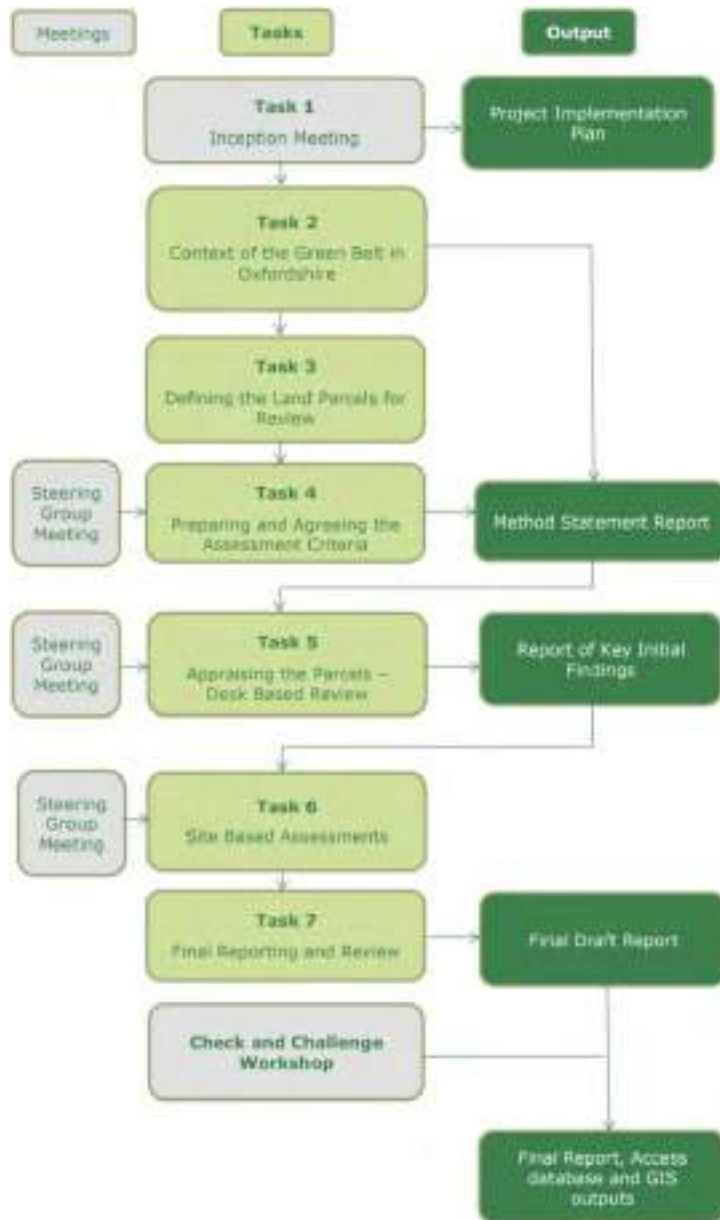


Figure 3.1 – Methodological Flow Diagram

¹⁰ Approach to Review of the Green Belt, Planning Officers Society.

¹¹ Planning on the Doorstep: The Big Issues – Green Belt, Planning Advisor Service (2015).

Project inception

- 3.3 **The core LUC project team and the Oxfordshire Councils' Steering Group met on Tuesday May 5th 2015** to finalise the project scope, objectives and work plan, including agreeing key meeting and reporting dates. Discussions began on the methodology for identifying the land parcels and broad areas and on the detailed criteria for assessment. A list of required GIS data and other information was provided by LUC to the local authorities and arrangements were made for its collation and transfer. Council officers provided an update on the progress of the other Green Belt studies being undertaken in the County and the key issues of relevance to this study.
- 3.4 Following the inception meeting, a meeting note and project implementation plan, setting out the agreed methodology and key deliverable dates, were prepared and circulated to the Steering Group for approval.

Review of study context and background

- 3.5 To inform the development of the assessment methodology, most notably the detailed criteria for assessment of the parcels and broad areas against the Green Belt purposes, a review of relevant contextual information relating to the history and evolution of the Oxford Green Belt was undertaken. A summary of this context and background to the study is provided in **Chapter 2** of this report.

Defining the land parcels for review

- 3.6 Given the overall size of the Green Belt, it was necessary to divide it into appropriate parcels for assessment. Parcels were defined using GIS maps (based on Ordnance Survey and Mastermap), local proposals maps and aerial images. No maximum or minimum sizes were used for the land parcels. The aim was to define parcels that contain land of the same or very similar land use or character, bounded by recognisable features including:
- **Natural features**; for example, substantial watercourses and water bodies.
 - **Man-made features**; for example, motorways, A and B roads and railway lines, and established infrastructure and utilities such as sewage treatment works.
- 3.7 Parcels were defined independently from the previous or ongoing Green Belt studies in Oxfordshire. This ensured independent, comprehensive, and consistent approach. The **Inspector's Report to Leeds City Council** noted that Green Belt studies should be "*fair, comprehensive and consistent with the Core Strategy's aim of directing development to the most sustainable locations*". *Green Belt reviews should be 'comprehensive' rather than 'selective'*.¹² All of the Green Belt was therefore divided into parcels.
- 3.8 Two distinct types were identified:
- **Smaller parcels** adjacent to Oxford City and the inset settlements¹³. Identifying land parcels at the edge of the Green Belt is important as it is these areas which are most likely to be considered for either retention or removal from the Green Belt.
 - **Broad areas** which represent the main 'body' of the Green Belt, rather than land at the edges of Oxford City and the inset settlements enclosed by the Green Belt. It was agreed with the Steering Group, that smaller parcels would be identified around the 'inset settlements' as identified in the relevant Local Plans. Smaller parcels were not identified around settlements 'washed over' by Green Belt; however, commentary considering these settlements in relation to the Green Belt purposes is provided in the assessment of the broad areas.

¹² Inspector's report (A Thickett) to Leeds City Council (September 2014).

¹³ Including Berinsfield which is proposed to be inset and the Green Belt land to the east of Eynsham which sits outside the Green Belt.

3.9 **Table 3.1** lists the inset settlements in the study area agreed by the Steering Group to be appropriate for 'parcelling'.

Table 3.1 – Inset settlements

Cherwell District
Begbroke, Kidlington (including Oxford Spires Business Park), Yarnton
Oxford City Council
Oxford (including urban villages and settlements within Oxford (e.g. Summertown, Marston & Northway, West Oxford, East Oxford, Rose Hill, Littlemore, Grandpont, New Hinksey etc.))
South Oxfordshire District
Berinsfield, Wheatley (including Littleworth)
Vale of White Horse District
Abingdon-on-Thames, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington, Radley, Wooton, Appleton
West Oxfordshire District
Eynsham*

* Eynsham is not an 'inset' settlement as it lies adjacent to the edge of the Green Belt. However it was agreed by the Steering Group that the land within the Green Belt (adjacent to the settlement) should be assessed in detail.

Preparing and agreeing the assessment criteria

- 3.10 A key part of the method involved the development of an assessment framework based on the five purposes of Green Belts set out in the NPPF. A draft set of assessment criteria was drawn-up based on LUC's extensive experience of undertaking Green Belt reviews, information collated on the context and background of the Oxford Green Belt (see **Chapter 2**) and good practice elsewhere.
- 3.11 Through discussion with the Steering Group, the criteria were refined to ensure that the judgements reflected the context and priorities for Oxfordshire, whilst remaining true to the five purposes of the **Green Belt**. **Green Belt studies should be clear "how the assessment of 'importance to Green Belt' has been derived" from assessments against the individual purposes of Green Belt.**¹⁴
- 3.12 **Table 3.2** summarises out the final criteria used to assess the relative performance of the Green Belt parcels and broad areas and the ratings applied to each criterion. This is followed by a description of the rationale for the assessment criteria adopted.
- 3.13 For Green Belt Purposes 1-4, **Table 3.2** sets out:
- The **key settlements** considered relevant for the assessment of the purposes (not all of the settlements listed in Table 3.1 are considered to be large built-up areas (under P1), towns (under P2) or historic towns (under P3)).
 - The **key issue(s)** considered.
 - The assessment criteria used.

¹⁴ Inspectors' Letter (L Graham) to Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire Councils (May 2015).

- The **ratings** that were applied to each criterion, as follows.

High	Parcel performs well.
Medium	Parcel performs moderately well.
Low	Parcel performs weakly.
No Contribution	Parcel makes no, or a negligible contribution.

- **General comments** on the assessment method. This provides further detail about how each criterion / rating was interpreted. This helped ensure consistency was achieved throughout the assessment of the land parcels.

3.14 The Table also includes a summary of the approach used in relation to Purpose 5. Purpose 5 focuses on assisting urban regeneration through the recycling of derelict and other urban land. This study does not include a parcel by parcel assessment of Purpose 5, as it is not possible to distinguish the extent to which each Green Belt parcels delivers against this purpose. Discussions with the project Steering Group did not identify any evidence available that would enable such an assessment to be undertaken.

Table 3.2 – Detailed criteria used to assess the Green Belt within the smaller land parcels adjacent to Oxford City and the inset settlements

A) NPPF Green Belt Purposes	B) Relevant Settlements	C) Issue(s) for consideration	D) Criteria	E) Ratings		F) Comments on assessment
1 To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.	The large built up area is considered to be Oxford, Botley, Kennington and Wolvercote	a Protection of open land from urban sprawl.	Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?	High	Adjacent to large built-up area and land parcel contains no or very limited urban sprawl (in the form of ribbon or non-compact development) and has a strong sense of openness.	<p>Urban sprawl is the spread of urban areas into the neighbouring countryside. This could be in the form of ribbon development or non-compact development which doesn't relate well to the existing urban area.</p> <p>Key issue – the extent to which urban sprawl has already occurred and whether the land is open or not. Parcels which have already been compromised by urban sprawl, as a result of urbanising influences, may play a weaker role than those where the Green Belt is more open in character. However it is acknowledged that parcels which have been significantly affected by urban sprawl could be considered to play a valuable in preventing further sprawl.</p> <p>Development means any built structure.</p>
				Medium	Adjacent to large built-up area and land parcel contains limited urban sprawl (in the form of ribbon or non-compact development) and has a relatively strong sense of openness.	
				Low	Adjacent to large built-up area and land parcel already contains urban sprawl (in the form of ribbon or non-compact development) compromising the sense of openness.	
				N/C	Land parcel makes no, or a negligible contribution to preventing urban sprawl – i.e. not adjacent to urban area.	
		b	Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?	High	Adjacent to large built-up area and land parcel has a high potential for urban sprawl to occur.	The features that that are considered relevant to the assessment of potential include:
				Medium	Adjacent to large built-up area and land parcel has moderate potential for urban sprawl to occur.	

A) NPPF Green Belt Purposes	B) Relevant Settlements	C) Issue(s) for consideration	D) Criteria	E) Ratings		F) Comments on assessment
				Low	Adjacent to large built-up area and land parcel has low potential for urban sprawl to occur.	<p>Significant and durable boundary features - Readily recognisable and permanent features are used to define the borders of Green Belt parcels. The presence of features which contain development and prevent urban sprawl can, in certain limited locations, reduce the potential role of a Green Belt parcel in performing this purpose. The significance of a boundary in preventing urban sprawl is judged based on its relative proximity to the existing urban edge of a settlement and its nature. Only motorways, dual carriageways, railway lines and rivers which have not been breached within the relevant land parcel, or close by, are considered to constitute a very significant and durable boundary that may prevent urban sprawl.</p> <p>The nature of the settlement form - An urban edge that is uneven, rather than 'rounded off', is more vulnerable to urban sprawl.</p> <p>Presence of roads - the presence of roads (apart from motorways and dual carriageways) provides greater opportunities for urban sprawl to occur, because of the potential for ribbon development and the wider access they provide. Where such roads exist, the Green Belt is considered to play a strong role in preventing urban sprawl. These roads are distinct from those considered as boundary features as they will not form part of the existing settlement edge.</p>
				N/C	Land parcel is not adjacent to urban area and therefore makes no, or a negligible contribution to preventing urban sprawl.	

A) NPPF Green Belt Purposes	B) Relevant Settlements	C) Issue(s) for consideration	D) Criteria	E) Ratings		F) Comments on assessment
2 To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.	Vale of White Horse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abingdon on Thames Botley Cumnor Kennington Radley Wooton Appleton West Oxfordshire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eynsham Oxford City <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oxford (including urban villages and settlements within Oxford) Cherwell <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kidlington (including Oxford Spires Business Park) Begbroke Yarnton South Oxfordshire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wheatley (including Littleworth) Berinsfield 	a Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements.	Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?	High	The parcel plays an essential role in preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements. Loss of openness would cause visual or physical coalescence or substantially reduce the gap.	This purpose seeks to prevent settlements from merging to form larger settlements. The PAS guidance states that distance alone should not be used to assess the extent to which the Green Belt prevents neighbouring towns from merging into one another. Two key elements have therefore being used – the extent of the actual or perceived visual and physical gap.
				Medium	The parcel plays some role in preventing the reduction of the visual or physical distances between settlements. Loss of openness would, or would be perceived as, reducing gap between settlements.	
				Low	The parcel plays a very limited role in preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements. Loss of openness would not be perceived as reducing gap between settlements.	
				N/C	Land parcel makes no, or a negligible contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements.	

A) NPPF Green Belt Purposes	B) Relevant Settlements	C) Issue(s) for consideration	D) Criteria	E) Ratings		F) Comments on assessment
3 To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.	Applies to the countryside around all settlements – i.e. all Green Belt parcels.	a Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness. ¹⁵	Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside? Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?	High	The land parcel contains the characteristics of countryside, has no or very little urbanising development, and is open.	Encroachment from urbanising influences is the intrusion / gradual advance of buildings and urbanised land beyond an acceptable or established limit. Urbanising influences include any features that compromise 'openness' , such as roads lined with street lighting and pavements, large areas of hard standing, floodlit sports fields, roads, pylons etc. They do not include development which is commonly found within the countryside, e.g. agricultural or forestry related development, isolated dwellings, historic schools and churches. Countryside is land/scenery which is rural in character, i.e. a relatively open natural, semi-natural or farmed landscape.
				Medium	The land parcel contains the characteristics of countryside, has limited urbanising development, and is relatively open.	
				Low	Land parcel does not contain the characteristics and/or is not connected to land with the characteristics of countryside, or contains urbanising development that compromises openness.	
				N/C	Parcel makes no, or a negligible contribution to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.	

¹⁵ The significance of existing urbanising influences has a direct influence over the relative openness of Green Belt parcels. We have therefore used the presence of urbanising influences as a proxy for assessing the degree of openness within the parcel.

A) NPPF Green Belt Purposes	B) Relevant Settlements	C) Issue(s) for consideration	D) Criteria	E) Ratings		F) Comments on assessment	
4	To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns. Oxford (including the urban villages and settlements within Oxford)	a	Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town. Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?	High	The parcel plays a major role in the setting of Oxford in terms of its physical extent and degree of visibility and/or its significant contribution to Oxford's special character .	<p>Topographic mapping, Zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) analysis and site visits were used to inform judgements regarding intervisibility between the historic core of Oxford and its open surroundings.</p> <p>Landscape Character Assessments (District and County), Conservation Area Character Appraisals and Management Plans and other specific studies including (amongst others):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of the Oxford View Cones (Oxford City Council, Draft Report March 2014) • A Character Assessment of Oxford City in its Landscape Setting (LUC, 2002) • Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation <p>were used to inform the assessment of the contribution of setting to 'special character'.</p>	
Medium	The parcel plays a moderate role in the setting of Oxford in terms of its physical extent and degree of visibility and/or its contribution to Oxford's special character .	Low	The parcel plays a minor role as it lacks any significant visual relationship with Oxford, and is not visible in the context of views to it. It does however contribute in some way to the wider setting	N/C	Parcel makes no, or a negligible contribution – i.e. does not form part of the setting or contribute to the special character of Oxford.		
5	To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.			Green Belt has the potential to make a strategic contribution to urban regeneration by restricting the land available for development and encouraging developers to seek out and recycle derelict / urban sites. It is considered that it is not possible to distinguish the extent to which each Green Belt parcels delivers against this purpose and therefore the parcels have not been individually assessed against Purpose 5.			

Rationale behind the assessment criteria

- 3.15 National Planning Policy and Guidance provides limited information on how the five purposes of the Green Belt should be interpreted. Based on the review of relevant guidance, recently adopted **Local Plans, and detailed discussions with the Steering Group, this section sets out LUC's rationale and local interpretation of the purposes of the Green Belt for the Oxford Green Belt study.**

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

- 3.16 It is possible to argue that all Green Belt prevents the unrestricted sprawl of large built up urban areas, because that is its principal purpose as a strategic planning designation. However, the study requires us to distinguish one area (or parcel) from another in terms of the extent to which they perform this purpose. This requires a detailed, site specific assessment against this strategic purpose.
- 3.17 Having reviewed good practice guidance documents, other Green Belt studies and the comments from the Steering Group, conclusions were drawn on the following key issues:
- Oxford's 'Large Built-up Area'*
- 3.18 **There is no definition provided in the NPPF or a standard definition for a 'large built up area.'** The Office for National Statistics defines a 'large' built up area as a settlement with between 0.5-1 million people: much larger than Oxford itself. All five local planning authorities have their own settlement hierarchies, each with their own definition of 'large' settlements. It was therefore **necessary to decide on what constitutes the 'large built up area' for the purposes of the study.**
- 3.19 In reaching this decision, it was noted that the original purpose of the Oxford Green Belt was to **prevent the sprawl of the City of Oxford into the surrounding countryside and to protect the City's setting.** While Botley, Kennington and Wolvercote can be regarded as separate settlements, they are in very close proximity to, and almost contiguous with the City of Oxford. They are no more than 300m from the built up area of Oxford and have a sense of being part of the City. Abingdon, Kidlington, Wheatley and even Horspath, on the other hand, are further away and have greater **physical and visual separation from Oxford and cannot be considered to form part of the 'large built-up area' of Oxford.**
- 3.20 With these points in mind, LUC concluded that, for the purposes of this study, the 'large built up area' should comprise Oxford, Botley, Kennington and Wolvercote. The land parcels adjacent to these four settlements were therefore assessed against criteria 1a and 1b, as they collectively **were considered to form the 'large built-up area'.**

Definition of 'Sprawl'

- 3.21 There is no clear definition of what constitutes urban sprawl. The PAS guidance¹⁶ states in relation to Purpose 1:

"The terminology of 'sprawl' comes from the 1930s when Green Belt was conceived. Has this term changed in meaning since then? For example, is development that is planned positively through a local plan, and well designed with good masterplanning, sprawl?"

¹⁶ Planning on the Doorstep: The Big Issues – Green Belt, Planning Advisor Service (2015).

- 3.22 The guidance emphasises the variable nature of the term 'sprawl' and questions whether positively planned development constitutes 'sprawl'. The RTPI Research Briefing No. 9 (2015) on Urban Form and Sustainability is also not definitive on the meaning of sprawl:

"As an urban form, sprawl has been described as the opposite of the desirable compact city, with high density, centralised development and a mixture of functions. However, what is considered to be sprawl ranges along a continuum of more compact to completely dispersed development. A variety of urban forms have been covered by the term 'urban sprawl', ranging from contiguous suburban growth, linear patterns of strip development, leapfrog and scattered development."

- 3.23 For the purpose of this study, it was concluded that well-located and planned urban extensions do not constitute 'urban sprawl'. Rather, this study defines urban sprawl as uncompact and/or ribbon development which does not relate well to the existing urban form of the 'large built-up area' as defined above.

- 3.24 Given this definition, land immediately adjacent to the large built up area is likely to contribute to this purpose, as it provides the boundary and zone of constraint to urban expansion. Nevertheless it should be recognised that sprawl as described can be equally damaging to the overall integrity of the Green Belt, wherever it may arise.

Definition of methods for assessing the role of the Green Belt in maintaining openness around the 'large built-up area'

- 3.25 Criterion 1a considers whether land has already been affected by sprawl and whether it retains an open character. Parcels which have already been compromised by urban sprawl as a result of urbanising influences may be considered to make a weaker contribution to purpose 1 than those parcels where the Green Belt is more open in character. It is important to note that a high rating against criterion 1a does not necessarily imply that Green Belt is performing a more valuable role. The remaining open land in a parcel significantly affected by sprawl could be considered more valuable in preventing further incursions, or less valuable because it has already been compromised. It was agreed with the Steering Group that it is not appropriate for this study to place value judgements on interpreting the ratings. A further, more detailed stage of assessment would be needed to consider such judgements.

- 3.26 Equally important in assessing the role of Green Belt in checking unrestricted sprawl is the extent to which the land parcel has the potential for urban sprawl to occur in the future. Criterion 1b considers the role of the following in affecting the potential for urban sprawl to occur in the absence of a Green Belt designation:

- **The strength of boundary features** – i.e. where there is a very strong and defensible boundary – such as a motorway which may prevent urban sprawl from occurring.
- **The nature of the settlement form** - i.e. an urban edge that is uneven, rather than 'rounded off', is more vulnerable to urban sprawl. This vulnerability is evidenced by the number of the developer proposals to 'round off' and 'fill gaps', even though this may not be desirable from a wider planning perspective (e.g. green wedge/ fingers into the urban area can be desirable from a green infrastructure viewpoint), or to create a 'better edge' to the urban area.
- **The presence of roads** – i.e. roads allow for greater opportunities for urban sprawl to occur, because of the potential for ribbon development and the wider access they provide. Motorways and dual carriageways are not usually relevant in these terms. These roads considered under this criterion are also distinct from those identified as boundary features as they will not form part of the existing settlement edge.

Definition of boundary features considered able to check the sprawl of the 'large built-up area'

- 3.27 While all boundary features can play some role in preventing urban sprawl, in the context of Oxford with its huge pressures for development it was considered that the ability for boundary features to check sprawl was considered to be less significant. Therefore, only motorways, dual carriageways, railway tracks and rivers adjacent to the existing urban edge, which have not been breached by the large built-up area within the immediate vicinity of a parcel and are therefore demonstrably strong and defensible, are considered to be significant in relation to purpose 1.

- 3.28 Other boundaries, such as streams, and lesser roads are not for the purposes of this study considered to be strong enough to prevent urban sprawl. However, such boundary features may form an important part of the landscape and/or pose a physical barrier to unplanned sprawl, albeit one that can more easily be breached. Floodplains are a major factor in restricting the development of Oxford, however as outlined in Chapter 1 of this report, the presence of environmental constraints such as SSSIs and Floodplains have not been considered in this study.

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another

- 3.29 For this purpose, it was concluded **that the 'neighbouring towns' should include all 'inset settlements' i.e. settlements that are set within the Green Belt, but not covered by it.** Berinsfield was added to this list, as it is proposed to be inset in the Green Belt. Eynsham and Abingdon-on-Thames were also included, as they are neighbouring towns that abut the Oxford Green belt.
- 3.30 In addressing the potential for merger of these towns, consideration was also given to the contribution that smaller settlements make to the sense of openness experienced between the larger ones, both in terms of visual setting and physical distance between built-up areas when travelling through the landscape. The detailed assessment of parcels in Appendices 1 and 2 also considers the role that the Green Belt plays **in preventing the coalescence of 'washed over' settlements**, as it is acknowledged that the Green Belt does play a role in preventing the merging of these smaller settlements. This was not however taken into account in the assessment ratings.
- 3.31 Rather than simply measuring the size of the gap between settlements, the assessment considered both the physical and visual role that parcels of land play in preventing the merging of settlements. This accords with the PAS guidance which states that distance alone should not be used to assess the extent to which the GB Green Belt prevents neighbouring towns from merging into one another.

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

- 3.32 For this purpose, the first consideration was whether the land can be described as countryside (i.e. a relatively open natural, semi-natural or farmed landscape), rather than urban land. Very little land within the Oxford Green Belt is fully urban, but there are differences in the extent which parcels have been urbanised and the sense of openness has been eroded.
- 3.33 Urbanising influences were considered to include any features that compromise the countryside character, such as roads lined with street lighting and pavements, large areas of hard standing, floodlit sports fields, roads, pylons etc. They did not include development which is commonly found within the countryside, e.g. agricultural or forestry related development, isolated dwellings, historic schools and churches.
- 3.34 The criterion differs from Criterion 1a as it focuses on the extent to which the countryside characteristics of the Green Belt have been compromised by encroachment from urbanising influences.

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

- 3.35 In considering this purpose, **it was LUC's view following discussion with the Steering Group, that the role of the Green Belt in preserving the setting and special character of the City of Oxford (as opposed to all conservation areas/ historic towns within the Green Belt) should be the key consideration.** There were three main reasons for this.
- 3.36 Firstly, as outlined in **Chapter 2** of this report, the original impetus for the Oxford Green Belt was the strategic role it would play in protecting the special character and setting of the City. The role of the Green Belt in protecting other major historic cities, such as Bath, has also been noted.
- 3.37 Secondly, the smaller historic towns such as Abingdon and Woodstock lie at the edge of the Green Belt and are not surrounded by it. If the intention had been to protect the historic setting of Abingdon, it is reasonable to assume that the town would have been encircled by Green Belt. The Green Belt to the North of Abingdon has little relationship with the historic core of the town.
- 3.38 Thirdly, and related to the second point, there are other local planning mechanisms to protect the setting and character of these other towns and smaller settlements within the Green Belt.

- 3.39 The Green Belt Reviews undertaken for the Vale of White Horse District Council (2014) and South Oxfordshire District Council concur with this approach and apply Purpose 4 in relation to the setting and special character of Oxford City.
- 3.40 The study started from the premise that, to assess the contribution of parcels of land to the setting and special character of Oxford requires an appreciation of **City's** distinctive qualities. **These qualities most obviously relate to the City's historic built environment, which has evolved** principally through its role as a leading university, but they also relate to the physical **characteristics of the landscape. The landscape led to the City's** early evolution and then later **provided a backdrop to the City's prominent buildings, and viewpoints from which to appreciate** them in their landscape context. This landscape setting has been extensively depicted in literature and the visual arts.
- 3.41 **LUC's 2002 study** 'A Character Assessment of Oxford City in its Landscape Setting' and the draft 2014 'Assessment of the Oxford View Cones' were used to inform the assessment of contribution **to Oxford's setting and special character. Reference** was also made to landscape character assessments prepared for Oxfordshire as a whole (the 2004 Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study) and for the different Districts.
- 3.42 **A visual connection with Oxford, in which a parcel forms part of the City's distinctive green** backdrop and/or from which there are views into the City, particularly the historic centre, makes the highest contribution to Purpose 4. As part of the 2002 Character Assessment, a **Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) of the 'dreaming spires' was modelled to identify the extent of the visual setting of** the City. Key views of the spires from the surrounding landscape were identified and mapped. This ZVI data was used within our study to inform the desktop assessment of the extent to which land parcels form part of the visual setting of Oxford.
- 3.43 In considering views into or out from Oxford, the Central (University and City) Conservation Area is taken to be the **most important in terms of 'special character', but some weight is also attached** to the presence of other conservation areas within the large urban area. This is because the special character of Oxford as a historic city does not relate solely to the central area.
- 3.44 Consideration of conservation areas in this way does not extend beyond Oxford, because Green Belt policy is not aimed at protecting the historic character of conservation areas elsewhere within the Green Belt. Paragraph 86 of the NPPF notes that, whilst an open character can justify a **village's inclusion in the Green Belt, the protection of other aspects of village character should be** achieved through other means, such as the designation of conservation areas. The role of Green Belt with regard **to historic character can therefore be seen to relate only to the 'historic towns'** referenced in Purpose 4.
- 3.45 Regardless of direct intervisibility, **a parcel can contribute significantly to Oxford's setting if it** forms an element in views of the City, such as from the surrounding hills. Beyond this visual envelope a parcel can contribute if it has landscape characteristics or elements which have some linkage to Oxford. Physical links are the most evident, and weight is added where these have a strong historic characteristic: the Thames and Cherwell river valleys; road and rail links into the city that have retained their historic character; long distance footpaths; local routes between Oxford and surrounding villages; and the Oxford Canal. These all offer sequential views which **contribute to an appreciation of Oxford's wider setting through a sense of arrival or departure.**
- 3.46 Further from the City, landscape with a pervading rural character can still make some limited **contribution to Oxford's countryside setting**, but if there is an absence of any sense of a relationship with Oxford, either through distance or through the presence of other towns or landscapes with which a parcel has a dominant sense of connection, then no contribution is made to this Green Belt purpose.

Assessment criteria for the Broad Areas

- 3.47 Following the definition of parcels of land adjacent to the large built up area and neighbouring towns, the remaining, mainly outlying areas of Green Belt were divided into broad areas. The boundaries of the broad areas were drawn along significant linear features, such as motorways and dual carriageways. They also took account of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) of the historic core of Oxford, **as this is a 'proxy' for the visual setting of Oxford** (see paragraph 3.42, above). The broad areas represent the largely open and undeveloped countryside which extends from the large built-up area to the outer edge of the Green Belt.
- 3.48 The same criteria for assessment were used for the broad areas as for the smaller parcels.

Assessing the parcels

Desk-based assessment

- 3.49 Each land parcel and broad area was assessed using OS maps, aerial images and relevant GIS data to gain a clear understanding of how they performed against the five purposes. A rating system was used. Ratings and detailed notes on the judgements for each land parcel and broad area were input into an Access database. All ratings were rigorously cross-checked and reviewed to ensure consistency, clarity and transparency in all judgements.
- 3.50 Clear, colour-coded GIS maps linked to the Access database were prepared illustrating the defined land parcels and broad areas, the key environmental and cultural considerations and the overall assessed contribution of each land parcel and broad area to each of the five purposes of Green Belt.
- 3.51 There are several primary environmental constraints within Green Belt areas that could render any significant development proposal within the Green Belt inappropriate. These are:
- Internationally designated wildlife sites: Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar sites, Sites of Community Importance.
 - Nationally designated wildlife sites: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or National Nature Reserves (NNRs).
 - Scheduled Monuments.
 - Areas at high risk of flooding (Flood Zone 3b).
- 3.52 These constraints and issues were referred to where they provided valuable context; however, their presence did not influence any ratings or judgements as they do not relate to the purposes of the Green Belt. While landscape quality is not directly included in the purposes of Green Belt, there are aspects of landscape quality and character that are indirectly incorporated – i.e. in relation to safeguarding the countryside. The importance of landscape issues in the original designation of the Oxford Green Belt was also noted.

Site assessment

- 3.53 Following the completion of the desk based assessments, all parcels and broad areas were visited to check and verify the judgements and conclusions reached in the assessment. The Access **database included a 'flag' field** against each assessment test, to highlight any particular points for the field assessor to address. Site visits were particularly important in assessing: the perception of settlement gaps; the extent to which parcels exhibit countryside character; and the nature of **any relationship with Oxford's historic character or setting**. **Fieldwork included driving many of the roads within each parcel and walking along public rights of way**, with particular attention given to locations providing recreational views.
- 3.54 The information obtained in the field was input directly into the Access database with a commentary provided on any changes made to the judgements and ratings.

- 3.55 If as part of the detailed assessment process it was observed that a parcel of land has very distinct attributes within different sections of the parcel, this was recorded in the assessment database. Where this was the case, ratings were applied, to reflect the assessment relevant to the larger part of a parcel.

Reporting and review

- 3.56 Three drafts of the final report were prepared, each responding to the **Steering Group's comments** received on the previous draft.
- 3.57 The third draft was the subject of a '**check and challenge**' workshop, held on 15 October 2015. The workshop was attended by the Steering Group, together with other senior officers from the local authorities. LUC presented the report at the workshop and the local authority representatives raised any outstanding issues. These issues were then discussed and it was agreed that, subject to final changes to the report to respond to the comments, the authorities **would accept the report as an important piece of evidence for the Growth Board's Strategic Options study and for Local Plans**. This report is the fourth and final draft, which responds to comments made at the check and challenge workshop.
- 3.58 A separate note was also prepared of the comments received in relation to the assessment of individual parcels and broad areas, and how these were taken into account¹⁷.

¹⁷ Oxford Green Belt study: Review of comments on the individual land parcels, LUC, October 2015

4 Findings

Presentation of findings

- 4.1 The main aim of the study was to provide a robust, transparent and clear understanding of how the land in the Oxford Green Belt performs against the purposes of the Green Belt. A total of 13 broad areas and 83 parcels of Green Belt land were defined in the Study area. A series of maps present the overall results of the assessment for the broad areas and smaller parcels for each of the assessed Green Belt purposes (i.e. Purposes 1-4) (**Figures 4.1 to 4.5**). **Appendices 1 and 2** contain all the assessment sheets for all broad areas and parcels, respectively. The assessment sheets contain the detailed judgements behind the ratings against each Green Belt purpose including any variations in the performance of a land parcel. **It is therefore essential that the detailed commentaries on the parcels (as set out in Appendices 1 and 2) are read alongside Figures 4.1-4.5 and/or Table 4.1 below.**
- 4.2 The information in these Figures and Appendices essentially fulfils the Study's overall aim. However, the Steering Group requested that the findings should be brought together in some way so that it is possible to see how parcels rate against each purpose. The findings are presented in **Tables 4.1 (Smaller Parcels)** and **4.2 (Broad Areas)**.
- 4.3 **Tables 4.1 and 4.2 do not present an aggregation of the parcels' and broad areas' ratings against all the purposes.** Indeed, not all the parcels were assessed against all purposes and no weighting was applied to the purposes. As noted earlier, the NPPF does not require all the purposes of Green Belt to be met simultaneously and a High rating against any Green Belt purpose could be sufficient, on its own, to indicate an important contribution. Equally, even if an area of Green Belt scores highly against one or more purposes, the NPPF does not suggest that a review of its boundaries would not be appropriate, if exceptional circumstances were demonstrated.

Table 4.1: Assessment ratings for smaller parcels

Order	Unique Reference	Purpose 1 - Issue 1a	Purpose 1 - Issue 1b	Purpose 2	Purpose 3	Purpose 4
1	AP1	N/C	N/C	Medium	High	Low
2	AP2	N/C	N/C	Medium	High	N/C
3	AP3	N/C	N/C	Low	High	N/C
4	AP4	N/C	N/C	N/C	High	N/C
5	AP5	N/C	N/C	N/C	Medium	N/C
6	AP6	N/C	N/C	N/C	Medium	Low
7	AT1	N/C	N/C	Low	High	N/C
8	AT2	N/C	N/C	Medium	Low	N/C
9	AT3	N/C	N/C	Low	Low	Low
10	AT4	N/C	N/C	Low	Medium	Low
11	AT5	N/C	N/C	High	Medium	Low
12	AT6	N/C	N/C	High	Medium	Low
13	AT7	N/C	N/C	N/C	High	Low
14	BE1	N/C	N/C	High	Low	Low
15	BE2	N/C	N/C	Low	Medium	Low
16	BF1	N/C	N/C	N/C	High	Low
17	BF2	N/C	N/C	N/C	High	Low

Order	Unique Reference	Purpose 1 - Issue 1a	Purpose 1 - Issue 1b	Purpose 2	Purpose 3	Purpose 4
18	BF3	N/C	N/C	N/C	Medium	Low
19	BF4	N/C	N/C	N/C	High	Low
20	BF5	N/C	N/C	N/C	High	Low
21	BF6	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C
22	BO1	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
23	BO2	High	High	High	High	High
24	BO3	Medium	High	Medium	High	Low
25	BO4	Medium	Medium	Low	High	Medium
26	BO5	Low	High	N/C	Low	Medium
27	BO6	High	High	High	Medium	Low
28	CU1	N/C	N/C	Low	High	Medium
29	CU2	N/C	N/C	Medium	High	Low
30	CU3	N/C	N/C	Medium	High	Low
31	ES1	N/C	N/C	Low	Medium	Low
32	ES2	N/C	N/C	Low	Medium	Medium
33	KE1	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	High
34	KI1	N/C	N/C	N/C	High	Medium
35	KI2	N/C	N/C	N/C	High	Low
36	KI3	N/C	N/C	N/C	High	Low
37	KI4	N/C	N/C	Low	Medium	Low
38	KI5	N/C	N/C	High	Medium	Low
39	KI6	High	Medium	High	Medium	Medium
40	KI7	N/C	N/C	High	Medium	Medium
41	KI8	N/C	N/C	High	Low	N/C
42	KI9	N/C	N/C	Low	Medium	N/C
43	OX1	High	High	High	Medium	Medium
52	OX10	High	High	Medium	High	Medium
53	OX11	High	High	Medium	High	High
54	OX12	High	High	Low	High	High
55	OX13	Medium	High	High	Medium	Low
56	OX14	High	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
57	OX15	Medium	High	Low	Medium	Medium
58	OX16	Low	High	N/C	Medium	Low
59	OX17	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	High
60	OX18	Medium	High	High	Medium	High
61	OX19	Medium	High	High	Medium	High
44	OX2	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
62	OX20	High	High	Medium	High	High
63	OX21	High	High	High	Medium	High
64	OX22	High	Low	High	Medium	Medium
45	OX3	Medium	Medium	N/C	Medium	Medium
46	OX4	High	High	High	High	High
47	OX5	High	High	High	High	High
48	OX6	High	High	High	High	High

Order	Unique Reference	Purpose 1 - Issue 1a	Purpose 1 - Issue 1b	Purpose 2	Purpose 3	Purpose 4
49	OX7	Medium	High	Medium	Low	High
50	OX8	High	High	N/C	High	High
51	OX9	High	Medium	N/C	High	Medium
65	RA1	N/C	N/C	High	High	Medium
66	RA2	N/C	N/C	High	High	High
67	RA3	N/C	N/C	N/C	High	Medium
68	WH1	N/C	N/C	Medium	High	Medium
69	WH2	N/C	N/C	N/C	Medium	N/C
70	WH3	N/C	N/C	N/C	Low	N/C
71	WH4	N/C	N/C	N/C	Medium	N/C
72	WH5	N/C	N/C	N/C	Medium	N/C
73	WH6	N/C	N/C	Low	High	Low
74	WH7	N/C	N/C	Medium	High	Medium
75	WH8	N/C	N/C	Medium	High	Low
76	WH9	N/C	N/C	High	Medium	Medium
77	WT1	N/C	N/C	Medium	Medium	Medium
78	WT2	N/C	N/C	Low	High	Medium
79	WT3	N/C	N/C	Low	High	N/C
80	WT4	N/C	N/C	Low	High	Low
81	YA1	N/C	N/C	High	High	Low
82	YA2	N/C	N/C	Medium	High	Low
83	YA3	N/C	N/C	Low	High	Medium

Table 4.2: Assessment ratings for broad areas

Order	Unique Reference	Purpose 1	Purpose 2	Purpose 3	Purpose 4
1	Broad area 1	N/C	N/C	High	Low
2	Broad area 2	N/C	Low	High	High
3	Broad area 3	N/C	N/C	High	Low
4	Broad area 4	N/C	N/C	High	Low
5	Broad area 5	N/C	Medium	High	High
6	Broad area 6	N/C	Low	High	High
7	Broad area 7	N/C	N/C	High	Low
8	Broad area 8	N/C	Low	High	Low
9	Broad area 9	N/C	Low	High	High
10	Broad area 10	N/C	Medium	High	Low
11	Broad area 11	N/C	N/C	High	Medium
12	Broad area 12	N/C	Low	High	High
13	Broad area 13	N/C	Low	High	High

4.4 This chapter provides a summary of the findings. Further detail can be found in **Appendices 1 and 2**. References in the detailed assessments to variations of performance within a parcel/ broad area are informative rather than rigorous. No methodology was defined for dealing with such variation and more detailed analysis will be required if the Local Authorities intend to remove areas of land from the Green Belt.

Presentation of findings in relation to Criterion 1b

- 4.5 Criterion 1b relates to Green Belt Purpose 1 (To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas). It was designed to complement Criterion 1a, by considering the extent to which parcels protect open land from the *potential* for urban sprawl to occur. In particular Criterion 1b considers whether existing significant and durable boundary features, such as major roads and railways, play a role in preventing urban sprawl and thereby reduce the role of the Green Belt in these locations.
- 4.6 On completing the assessment, LUC took the view that, while Criterion 1b is helpful in terms of the overall aim of the Study, the findings against this criterion should be presented separately (see **Figure 4.2**) and not combined with Criterion 1a. Criterion 1b, relates to defensibility (or vulnerability) of an area that has been defined as Green Belt. This requires consideration of the direction from which development is likely to come (hence we only consider urban-edge parcels), **and the strength of barriers to development. It doesn't relate to characteristics of the parcel itself;** it relates to the characteristics of linear boundary features rather than of an area of land.
- 4.7 If the findings of the assessment against Criterion 1b were combined with Criterion 1a, it would suggest that the parcel in question has additional value in Green Belt terms when in fact it is the barrier feature, where one exists, that has the value in protecting the Green Belt. If a parcel performs poorly against other criteria, it could be misleading to suggest that it is valuable just because it is not bounded by a railway line or major road. It is therefore important that it is considered separately.

Summary of findings

- 4.8 **Table 4.3** summarises the assessment findings, drawing attention to the spatial pattern of the performance of the parcels against the Green Belt purposes.

Table 4.3: Summary of Assessment Findings

Green Belt Purposes		Summary of Findings
1	To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only the smaller parcels immediately adjacent to the 'large built up area' (comprising Oxford, Botley, Kennington and Wolvercote) were assessed against this purpose. • Higher rated parcels are those within the 'green wedges', including Port Meadow, within and very close to the urban area. These areas are subject to other protective designations and constraints (such as SSSI or floodplain) and remain open and unaffected by urban sprawl. • Lower rated parcels are generally found to the south and south west of the built up area, where urban sprawl has already occurred to some degree. This does not imply that these areas are less valuable as Green Belt as the remaining open land in a parcel significantly affected by urban sprawl could be considered more valuable in preventing further development.
2	To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher rated parcels are found, not surprisingly, between the large built up area and surrounding relevant settlements (considered under Purpose 2). • Higher ratings are also given in relation to gaps associated with smaller settlements between Oxford and Wheatley where these gaps, although not situated directly between settlements defined as towns, are considered to make an important contribution to the overall perception of the Oxford-Wheatley gap. • Most of the broad areas are rated as making a limited contribution, or no contribution, to this purpose, apart from those that form part of the gap between settlements.

Green Belt Purposes		Summary of Findings
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parcels on the 'outer side' of the neighbouring towns tend to have a lower rating.
3	To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All parcels contribute to this purpose to a greater or lesser extent. • Higher rated parcels and broad areas are generally further away from the larger settlements, where there is a stronger sense of openness and countryside character.
4	To preserve the setting and special character of Oxford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller parcels close to the urban area, from which there are views into and out of the City are generally rated highly. • Smaller parcels on the 'outer side' of the surrounding towns and which tend to have weaker physical or visual links to the historic core of Oxford tend to rate lower. • Similarly, broad areas that are within the 'zone of theoretical visibility' and /or form part of the physical setting of the City are generally rated highly. Broad areas further away from the City, where the physical or visual connection is more limited, achieve lower ratings.

- 4.9 As well as these 'purpose and parcel specific' findings, it was noted that the Oxford Green Belt has helped to maintain the sense of openness and rural character of the 'washed over', rural settlements. This is broadly related to, and supports, Purpose 3 'To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment'.

Interpretation and use of the study findings

- 4.10 The application of the agreed methodology results in a helpful and informative strategic overview of the performance of the Oxford Green Belt, on a parcel by parcel or broad area basis, against the purposes defined in the NPPF. Variations in performance against particular criteria within individual parcels are noted in the assessment text (Appendix 1). This cannot be reflected in a single parcel rating, and will need to be considered when interpreting the study findings. The parcel boundaries used in this study are not intended to reflect potential development areas and the study cannot be used as a means of allocating development land. There are a number of considerations (alongside the Green Belt) that need to be taken into account in deciding on where new development should be allocated.
- 4.11 There are also 'bigger picture' considerations that the methodology does not address, such as how to review Green Belt boundaries (to accommodate development) whilst minimising harm to the Green Belt as a whole. Options may include Green Belt release at the edge of the 'large built up area', or at the edge of surrounding towns, or indeed within the broad areas. The evaluation of options for development will need to be the subject of further work, drawing on the findings of this study alongside other considerations (such as infrastructure, environmental sensitivity) and related studies. Further discussion on making changes to the Green Belt boundaries is provided in **Chapter 5**.

Assessment of land not currently in the Green Belt

- 4.12 The Study brief required an assessment of whether any land not currently within the Green Belt fulfils Green Belt purposes and whether there is justification for including new areas within the Green Belt. It was agreed at the inception meeting, however, that no areas outside the Green Belt will be parcelled or assessed, as there is no clear rationale for doing so at this stage. This may be justified at a later stage, as a second phase of the Green Belt study.

- 4.13 Notwithstanding this, it was agreed that the report should comment on the appropriateness of the outer boundary of the Green Belt and on the settlements just outside the Green Belt (e.g. Woodstock), indicating whether there may be justification for amending Green Belt boundaries to secure their continued separation.
- 4.14 In this regard, it is important to note that the NPPF requirement that new Green Belt boundaries must have regard for the permanence of the designation by redefining boundaries which endure beyond the Local Plan period. In addition, new Green Belt should only be established in exceptional circumstances (para. 82), and subject to various criteria such as:
- demonstrating why normal planning and development management policies would not be adequate;
 - setting out whether any major changes in circumstances have made the adoption of this exceptional measure necessary;
 - showing what the consequences of the proposal would be for sustainable development;
 - demonstrating the necessity for the Green Belt and its consistency with Local Plans for adjoining areas; and
 - showing how the Green Belt would meet the other objectives of the Framework.
- 4.15 In terms of the outer boundary of the Green Belt, the assessment revealed that the outer broad areas generally perform well, although not as well as the inner broad areas which contribute more to the setting of the City. Otherwise, the study did not produce evidence that would justify any changes to the outer boundary. It was observed, however, that Green Belt areas on the eastern side of the M40 are 'cut off' by the motorway, which itself could be regarded as a more defensible boundary.
- 4.16 With regard to the settlements at the edge of, or just outside the Green Belt, these have effectively been covered by the Study. Woodstock could be regarded as an exception to this. Given the findings of the Study and the NPPF requirements outlined above, however, there is currently no clear case for altering the Green Belt boundary between Kidlington and Woodstock, or to include Woodstock in the Green Belt. Normal planning and development management policies, together with the extent of existing Green Belt between Kidlington and Woodstock, are sufficient to maintain the separation of the settlements.

Assessment of findings compared with completed Green Belt studies

- 4.17 As outlined in Chapter 2, three main Green Belt studies have recently been completed in Oxfordshire:
- Vale of White Horse District Council Green Belt Review (Phase 1&2, February 2014) and Vale of White Horse District Council Green Belt Review (Phase 3, February 2014).
 - Oxford City Council - Investigation into the Potential to Accommodate Urban Extensions in **Oxford's Green Belt: Informal Review (May 2014)**.
 - Local Green Belt Study for South Oxfordshire Green Belt Study (September 2015):
- 4.18 The findings of the studies are broadly comparable to the Oxford Green Belt Study. However there are some methodological differences which have led to some variations in the study findings. These variations relate to differences in the land parcels used for assessment and/or differences in the assessment criteria. A summary of the key differences are summarised below.
- 4.19 **Vale of White Horse Green Belt Review** - Phase 1 and 2 identifies 11 large land parcels within the Green Belt. These were identified using two key factors - landscape units of a well-defined character and linear boundaries which are readily visible on the ground. The study provides commentary on the relative performance against the Green Belt purposes of different sections of these parcels. Phase 3 identifies much smaller land parcels where it is suggested there is scope for amendment of the Green Belt boundary. The difference in size and boundaries of the land parcels used for the Vale study makes it difficult to directly compare the findings with this Study.

- 4.20 **Oxford City Informal Review** - The land parcel boundaries used in the Oxford City study are very similar to those used in this study with a few minor exceptions. The Oxford City study takes account of primary constraints such as European designations, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Registered Parks and Gardens, flood plain etc. prior to undertaking the assessment. Areas are also ruled out of further review if they have an existing development allocation. This means that not all land parcels are assessed for their performance against Green Belt purposes. This study does not take into account primary constraints before undertaking the Green Belt assessment.
- 4.21 **South Oxfordshire Local Green Belt Study** - Phase 2 of the study identifies 13 large land parcels within the Green Belt which are assessed. As per the Vale of White Horse Study, these were identified using two key factors - landscape units of a well-defined character and linear boundaries which are readily visible on the ground. The study provides commentary on the relative performance against the Green Belt purposes of different sections of these parcels. The difference in size and boundaries of the land parcels used for the South Oxfordshire study makes it difficult to directly compare the findings with this Study.

Purpose 1

- 4.22 **Vale of White Horse Green Belt Review** - The Vale study considers the 'large built up area' in the assessment of purpose 1 as Oxford. It assesses the land parcels against Purpose 1 based on extent to which they protect against contiguous development with Oxford City and prevent another settlements being absorbed into Oxford. This study defines Oxford, Botley, Kennington and Wolvercote collectively as the 'large built up area' and parcels adjacent to these settlements are assessed against purpose 1. They are however still considered to be separate settlements in this study and are treated accordingly in the assessment of Purpose 2. The Vale study considers the role of physical boundaries such as roads, railways, watercourses under Purpose 3, as opposed to the Criterion 1b in this study.
- 4.23 **Oxford City Informal Review** - All land parcels within the Oxford City Study are assessed against Purpose 1. This study defines the Oxford, Botley, Kennington and Wolvercote collectively as the 'large built up area' and therefore only parcels adjacent to these settlements are assessed against purpose 1. The Oxford City study defines unchecked urban sprawl, as irregular or straggling which occurs as ribbon development and non-compact development. This is the same as the definition used in this. This study considers the role of defensible boundaries under Criterion 1b. This is not directly referred to in the assessment criteria for the Oxford City study but is referred to under Purpose 1, 2 and 3 for some of the detailed land parcel assessments.
- 4.24 **South Oxfordshire Local Green Belt Study** - As per the Vale Study, the South Oxfordshire study considers the 'large built up area' in the assessment of purpose 1 as Oxford. It assesses the land parcels against Purpose 1 based on extent to which they protect against contiguous development with Oxford City and prevent another settlements being absorbed into Oxford. The South Oxfordshire study also considers the role of physical boundaries such as roads, railways, watercourses under Purpose 3, as opposed to the Criterion 1b in this study.

Purpose 2

- 4.25 **Vale of White Horse Green Belt Review** - The Vale study considers the role that is being played preventing the merging of inset settlements within the Oxford Green Belt. This is consistent with the approach used in this study.
- 4.26 **Oxford City Informal Review** - The Oxford City study considers the role that is being played preventing the merging of **all** settlements within the Oxford Green Belt (including inset and washed over settlements). A detailed assessment is provided in Appendices 1 and 2 of this study referring to the role that the Green Belt plays in preventing the merging of other settlements (which are not inset) but this is not taken into account in the ratings.
- 4.27 **South Oxfordshire Local Green Belt Study** - The South Oxfordshire study defines Wheatley as a 'town'. However it also includes Berinsfield, Clifton Hampden, Dorchester, Garsington, and Horspath in the assessment, as South Oxfordshire District Council state they do not wish to allow these settlements to merge.

Purpose 3

- 4.28 **Vale of White Horse Green Belt Review** – The Vale study considers Purpose 3 in relation to the extent to which landscape character of the land parcel impacts on the open countryside. This study in contrast assesses the extent to which the parcel contains the characteristics of countryside, has no or very little urbanising development, and is open.
- 4.29 **Oxford City Informal Review** - uses similar criteria to this study, as it assess whether there are any significant urbanising influences.
- 4.30 **South Oxfordshire Local Green Belt Study** – The South Oxfordshire study considers the proximity of the land to existing settlements and the extent to which the land is contained by physical barriers such as roads, railways, watercourses etc. It also provides an overview of the landscape character of the land parcel and the extent to which it impacts on the open countryside.

Purpose 4

- 4.31 **Vale of White Horse Green Belt review** – The Vale study assesses Purpose 4 specifically in relation to the setting and special character of Oxford City which is the same approach adopted by this study.
- 4.32 **Oxford City Informal Review** – The Oxford City study considers the role play by the Green Belt in preserving the setting and special character of all conservation areas in the Green Belt, which includes some villages, as well as the city of Oxford.
- 4.33 **South Oxfordshire Local Green Belt Study** – The South Oxfordshire Study considers Purpose 4 specifically in relation to the setting and special character of Oxford City which is the same approach adopted by this study.

Purpose 5

- 4.34 All three studies assume that all areas of the Green Belt contribute equally to this purpose and therefore the land parcels are not reviewed against it.




Summary

- 4.35 These methodological differences have led to some variations in the findings of the studies. The key differences have resulted from variations in the parcels assessed (i.e. particularly in the case of the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire Green Belt Studies) and which parcels have been assessed against which purposes (i.e. particularly in the case of the Oxford City Informal Review – where Purpose 1 and Purpose 4 were assessed against a much larger number of parcels).




Figure 4.1

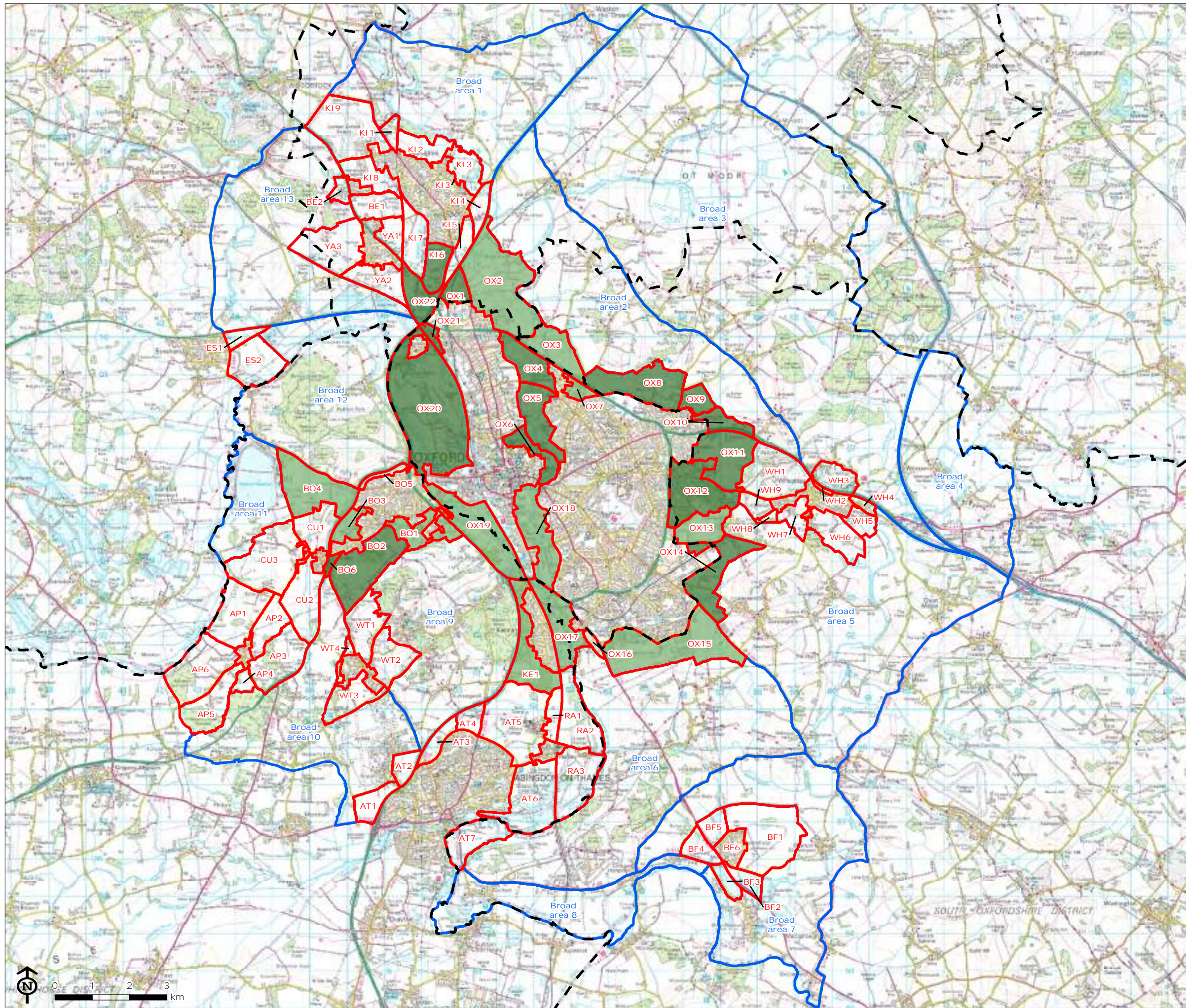
Performance Against Green Belt Purpose 1 - To Check the Unrestricted Sprawl of Large Built-up Areas

Issue 1a - Protection of Open Land from Urban Sprawl

-  District boundary
-  Green Belt parcel
-  Broad area

Performance

-  High
-  Medium
-  Low
- N/C



The broad areas are symbolised using their overall performance against Purpose 1, as they are not assessed separately under 1a and 1b.







Map Scale @ A3: 1:100,000

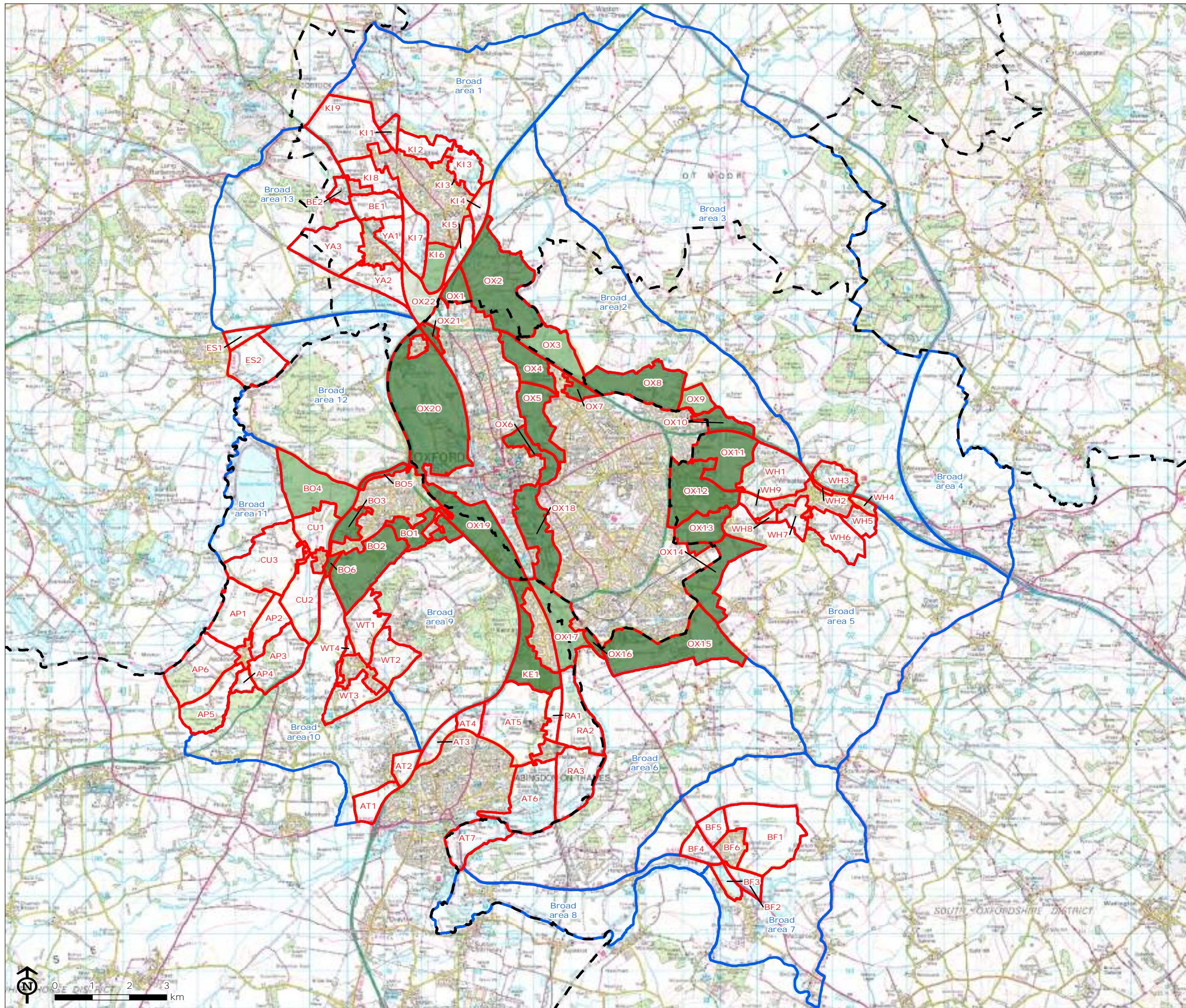


Figure 4.2

Performance Against Green Belt Purpose 1 - To Check the Unrestricted Sprawl of Large Built-up Areas

Issue 1b - Ability of Boundaries/Features to Contain Development and Prevent Urban Sprawl

-  District boundary
 -  Green Belt parcel
 -  Broad area
- Performance
-  High
 -  Medium
 -  Low
 - N/C

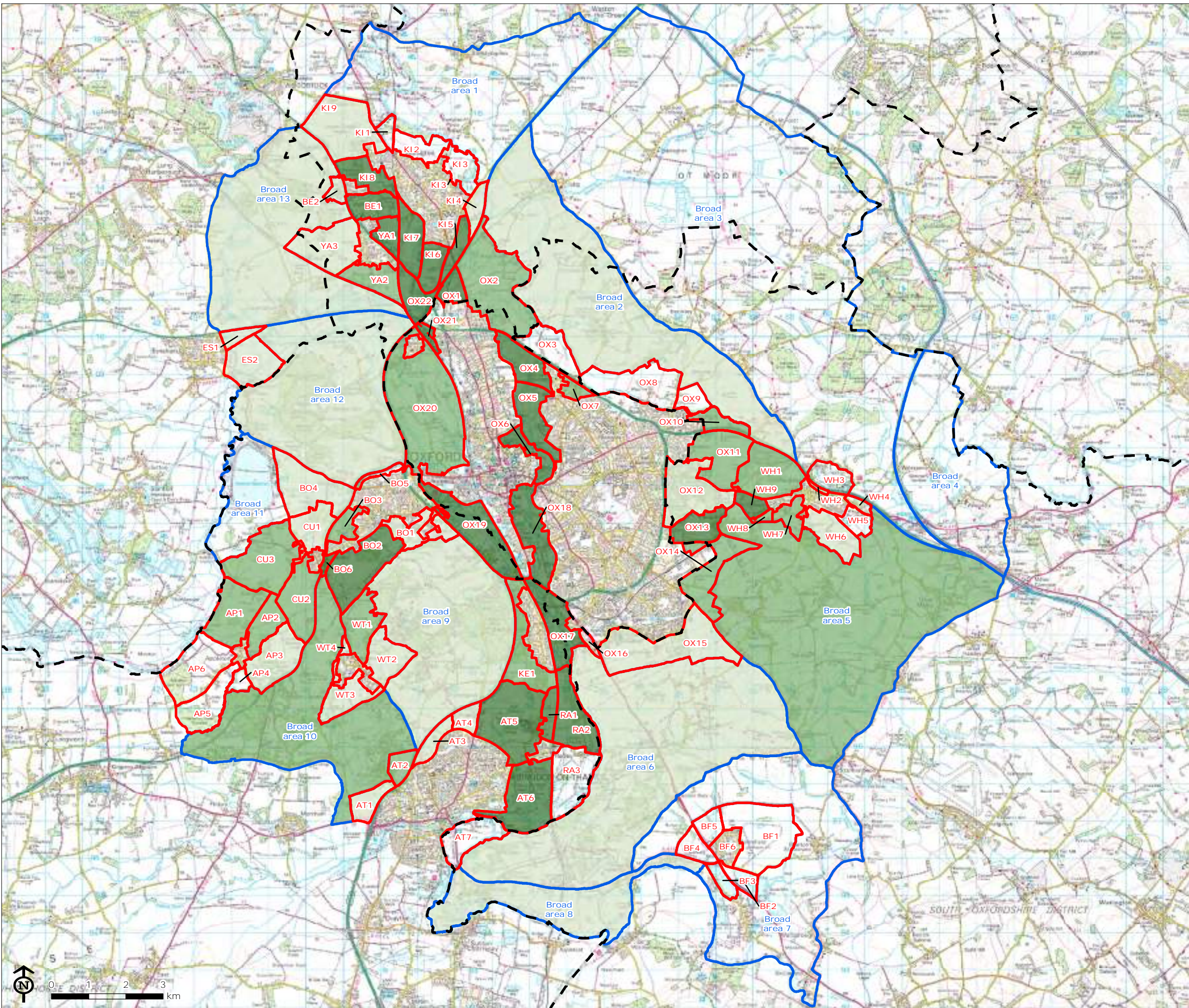


The broad areas are symbolised using their overall performance against Purpose 1, as they are not assessed separately under 1a and 1b.

Map Scale @ A3: 1:100,000



Figure 4.3
Performance Against Green Belt Purpose 2 - To Prevent Neighbouring Towns Merging Into One Another









District boundary
 Green Belt parcel
 Broad area
Performance
 High
 Medium
 Low
 N/C

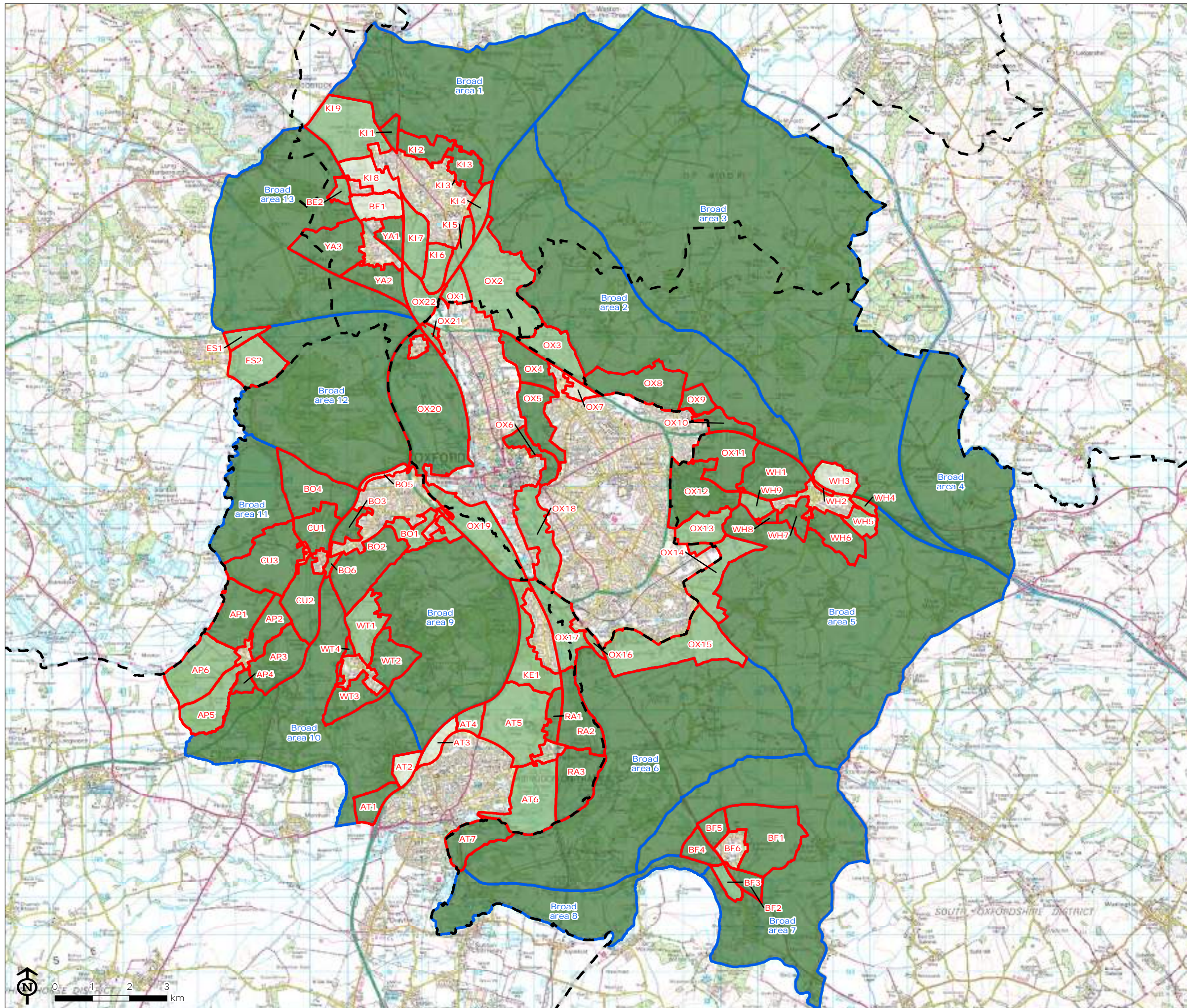
Map Scale @ A3: 1:100,000



Figure 4.4

Performance Against Green Belt Purpose 3 - To Assist in the Safeguarding of the Countryside from Encroachment

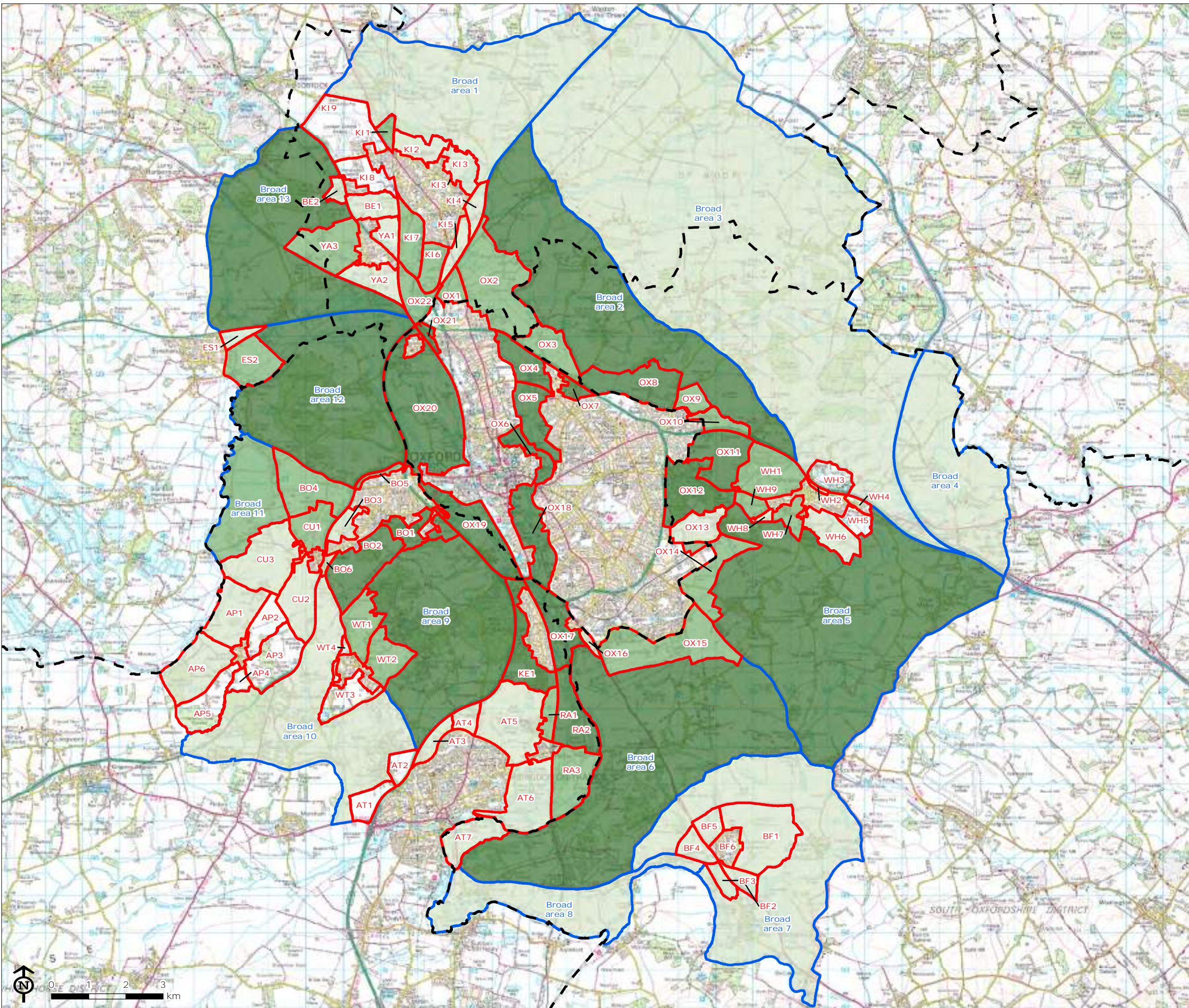
-  District boundary
-  Green Belt parcel
-  Broad area
- Performance
 -  High
 -  Medium
 -  Low
 - N/C



Map Scale @ A3: 1:100,000



Figure 4.5
 Performance Against Green Belt Purpose 4 - To Preserve the Setting and Special Character of Historic Towns



District boundary
 Green Belt parcel
 Broad area
Performance
 High
 Medium
 Low
 N/C

Map Scale @ A3: 1:100,000



5 Conclusions and next steps

- 5.1 This final chapter draws overall conclusions from the Study and suggests some next steps, in terms of how the Oxfordshire Growth Board and the Local Authorities might use the findings.

Meeting the duty to co-operate

- 5.2 Although commissioned by the County Council, the Study was undertaken for all the Oxfordshire **Local Authorities**. **The Study will inform the Growth Board's Spatial strategy and will also** ultimately form part of the evidence base for Local Plans. Any differences in the individual **Districts'** Green Belt studies should be justified against this Study.

Making changes to the Green Belt

Helping to meet development requirements

- 5.3 As noted in Chapter 2, the NPPF requires any changes to the Green Belt to be made through the Local Plan process. Any such proposals should include:
- i. demonstration of exceptional circumstances, such as unmet housing or employment land needs, that cannot be met elsewhere; and
 - ii. consideration of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development, considering a range of local, regional and national issues such as economic growth, health and wellbeing, accessibility and biodiversity, cultural heritage and climate change resilience, as well as an assessment against Green Belt purposes.
- 5.4 A common interpretation of the policy position is that, where necessitated by development requirements, plans should identify the most sustainable locations, unless outweighed by adverse effects on the overall integrity of the Green Belt according to an assessment of the whole of the Green Belt based around the five purposes¹⁸. In other words, the relatively poor performance of the land against Green Belt purposes is not, of itself, an exceptional circumstance that would justify release of the land from the Green Belt. We therefore recommend that the Growth Board considers points i) and ii) above in developing the spatial strategy.
- 5.5 If decisions are made to remove land from the Green Belt, the local authorities should seek to minimise any harm to the remainder of the Green Belt. This should include careful master planning of development to ensure that harm is minimised, enduring Green Belt boundaries are defined, and that positive uses for the wider Green Belt are secured.

Safeguarded land

- 5.6 As part of the above, and as suggested in paragraph 85 of the NPPF, the Local Authorities may **also wish to consider the need for 'safeguarded land'**. **This is land taken out of the Green Belt in this plan period for potential development in the next plan period and protected from development proposals arising in the meantime by policies with similar force to Green Belt.**

¹⁸ Planning on the Doorstep: The Big Issues – Green Belt, Planning Advisory Service (PAS), 2015: <http://www.pas.gov.uk/documents/332612/1099309/Planning+on+Your+Doorstep+-+The+Big+Issues+Green+Belt.pdf/bb5fcd90-fa29-42a0-9dd9-82b27a43f72f>

Positive use of land in the Green Belt

- 5.7 Although the positive use of Green Belt land is not directly related to the purposes of Green Belt, the NPPF encourages local planning authorities to secure positive use of land in Green Belts, once defined.
- 5.8 The Study did not include a detailed assessment of existing positive uses of land in the Green Belt. As noted in Chapter 2, nearly 250 hectares are open access land, including 100 hectares of Country Parks. Roughly 75% of the Green Belt is under agricultural use. More than 20% is at significant risk of flooding, being located in Flood Zones 1 and 2 (which is itself a positive use).
- 5.9 Despite this, there remains considerable scope to enhance the positive use of the Green Belt - particularly in terms of providing for informal recreation close to the City. Key barriers include: Ring Road, which makes it difficult to access the surrounding countryside on foot or by bicycle; and the lack of convenient parking places that allow people easily to access the extensive public footpath network.
- 5.10 It is recommended that, as part of the overall Green Belt review, following an agreed spatial strategy, the Councils should cooperate on a strategy for securing greater positive use of the Green Belt. It is understood that considerable progress is already being made on a new Strategic Environmental Economic Investment Plan (SEIIP) for Oxfordshire, which will include many proposals for the environmental enhancement and the more positive use of land in the county. This will include some land within the Green Belt.

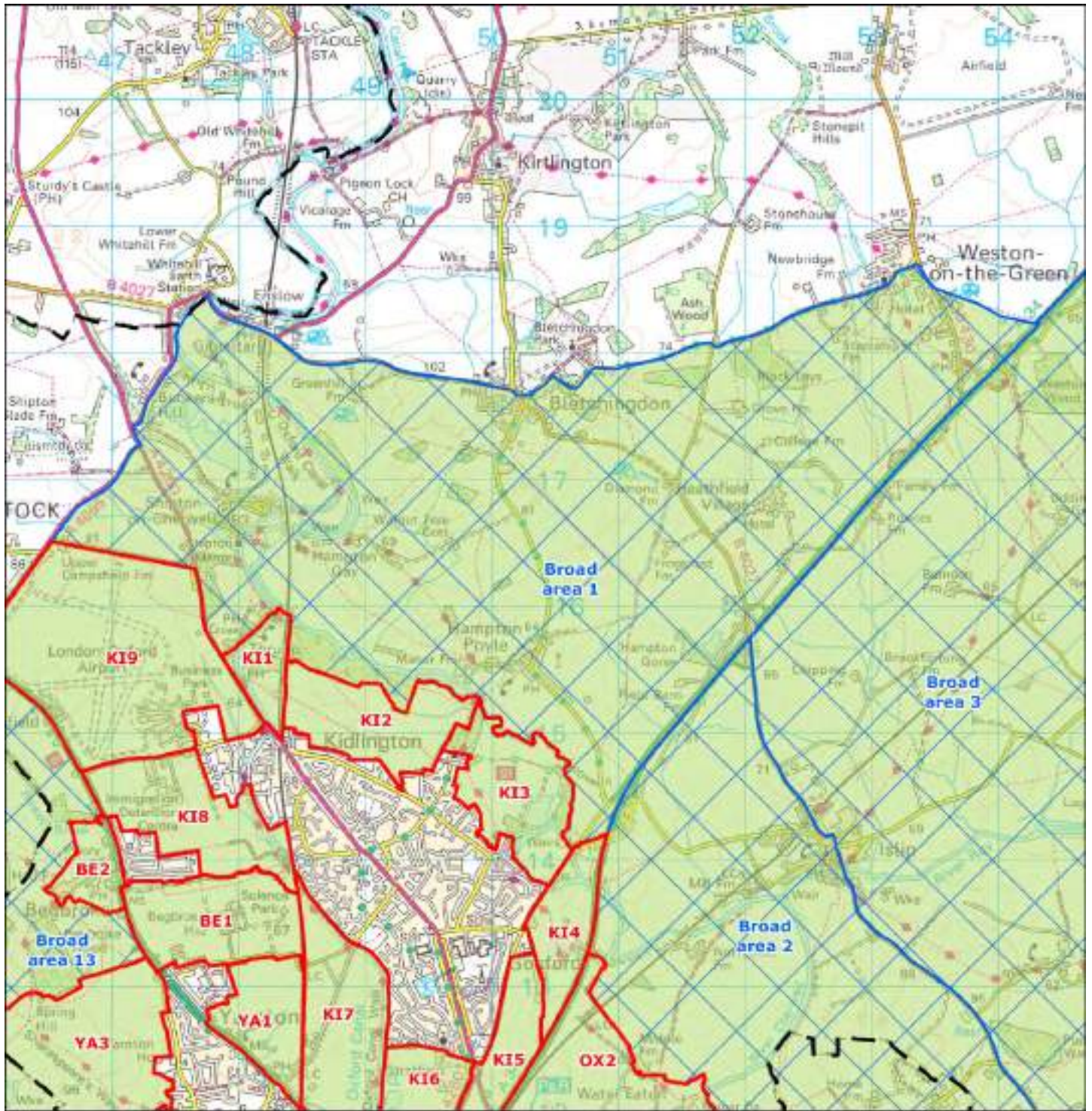
APPENDIX 1:

Detailed assessment findings for broad areas

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 1

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Broad area



--- District boundary Green belt parcel Broad area Green belt 0 1 km

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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 1

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Broad area

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

The broad area does not lie adjacent to a large built-up area.

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another or into neighbouring smaller settlements

Does the Broad Area prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between the following settlements; Abingdon on Thames, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington, Radley, Wooton, Appleton, Eynsham, Oxford (including urban villages and settlements within Oxford), Kidlington (including Oxford Spires Business Park), Begbroke, Yarnton, Wheatley (including Littleworth) and Berinsfield?

Rating: N/C

The Broad Area is located to the north of Kidlington and is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose and makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between the settlements being considered against this purpose. The Broad Area has a strong sense of openness and includes smaller settlements, including Bletchingdon and Weston-on-the-Green to the north, Shipton-on-Cherwell to the west and Hampton Poyle to the south of the parcel. Bletchingdon and Weston-on-the-Green are situated on higher ground than Shipton-on-Cherwell and Hampton Poyle, which are both located in close proximity to the Oxford Canal. Due to the changing topography there are limited views between these settlements. The Green Belt does, however, play a role in preventing the reduction of the physical gap between these settlements, and between Shipton-on-Cherwell and Hampton Poyle, and Kidlington.

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Does the Broad Area have the characteristics of countryside or has it been significantly affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

The broad area contains four villages – Bletchingdon, Shipton-on-Cherwell, Hampton Poyle and Weston-on-the-Green. All are rural in character; however the size and density of Bletchingdon compared to the other settlements makes it more of an urbanising influence. Shipton-on-Cherwell Quarry is the only other notable feature within the broad area which in isolation would be rated lower; however this is not considered to be a significant urbanising influence in the context of the broad area as a whole due to topography limiting its visibility. The open agricultural fields that make up the vast majority of the land within the broad area typically have good views of the surrounding countryside. There are expansive open views southwards from the edges of Bletchingdon.

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

Does the Broad Area contribute to the setting and special character of Oxford?

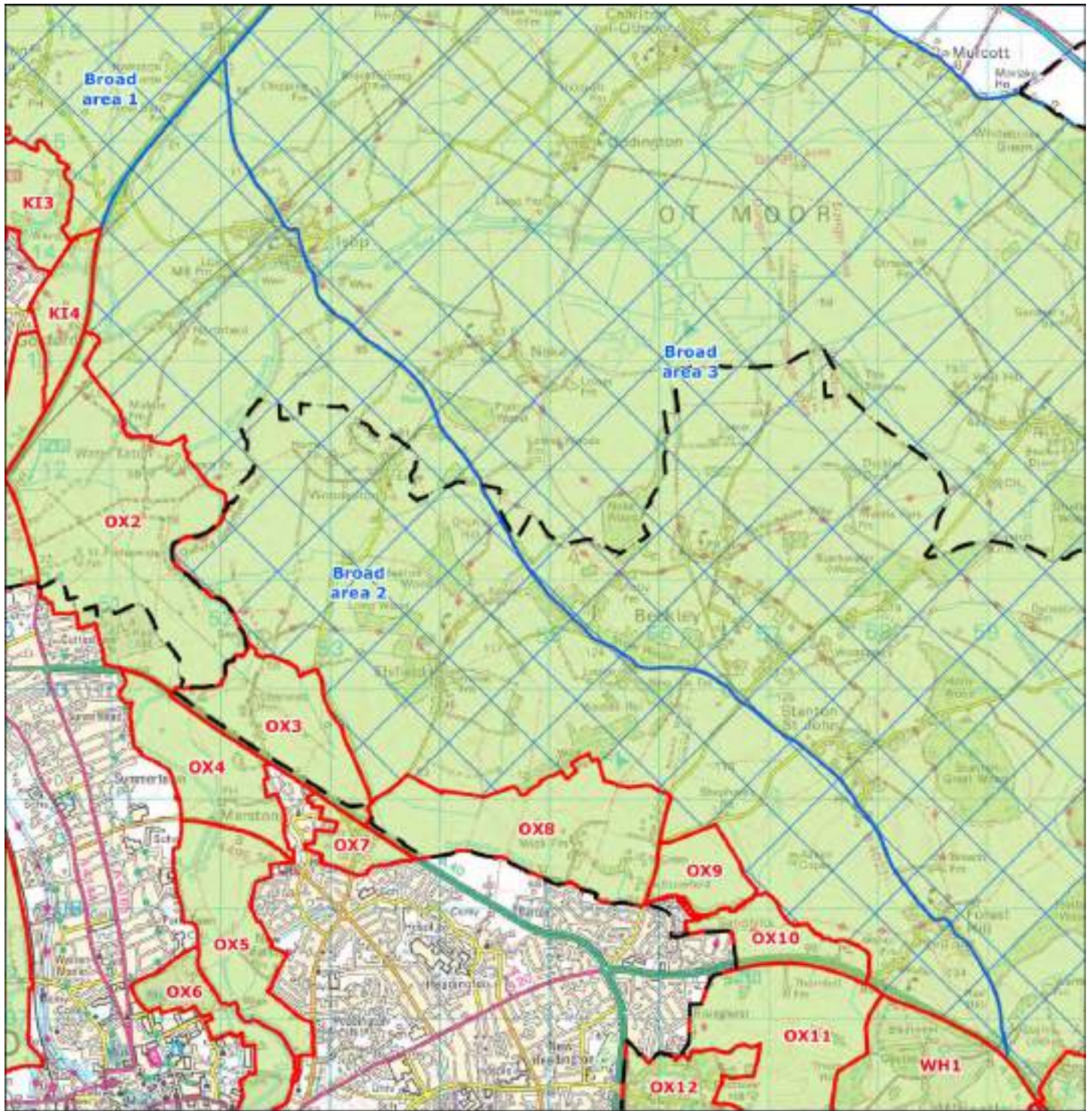
Rating: Low

Slopes on the north side of Cherwell Valley provide long views over rural landscape - e.g. from Bletchingdon area - but not with any clear visibility of the Oxford spires. Likewise the higher ground in the parcel forms part of a distant backdrop in views from the highest points in Oxford (such as the University Church of St Mary). The rural character of the Cherwell Valley which persists all the way into central Oxford is an important aspect of the city's historic character, so this area makes a contribution to that despite its distance. The area around Thrupp and Shipton-on-Cherwell, where the Oxford Canal and the river run together, is significant in terms of historic character and linkage to Oxford (a long distance route follows the canal).

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 2

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Broad area



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Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Other Authorities: Cherwell

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 2

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Broad area

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

The broad area does not lie adjacent to a large built-up area.

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another or into neighbouring smaller settlements

Does the Broad Area prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between the following settlements; Abingdon on Thames, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington, Radley, Wooton, Appleton, Eynsham, Oxford (including urban villages and settlements within Oxford), Kidlington (including Oxford Spires Business Park), Begbroke, Yarnton, Wheatley (including Littleworth) and Berinsfield?

Rating: Low

The southern area of the Broad Area is located to the north of Oxford and Wheatley, and the northern area is situated to the east of Kidlington. The Broad Area is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose, with the exception of the area around Forest Hill in the south eastern corner being located between Oxford and Wheatley, so overall it makes only a small contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements. The Broad Area does however include the settlements of Elsfield in the central area of the Broad Area, and Forest Hill in the eastern area, both of which are in relatively close proximity to Oxford, and Forest Hill is also in close proximity to Wheatley. Both settlements, due to their elevated positions, have views between their respective settlements and Oxford. The Green Belt therefore plays a role in preventing the reduction of the physical and visual gap between these settlements and Oxford/Wheatley. The Broad Area also includes the settlements of Woodeaton and Islip to the northern area of the Broad Area, which are in close proximity to Kidlington and Oxford respectively. Due to the proximity and the views that are present between these two settlements, and between themselves and Kidlington and Oxford, the Green Belt plays a role in preventing the reduction of the physical and visual gap between these settlements.

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Does the Broad Area have the characteristics of countryside or has it been significantly affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

The broad area contains four villages – Islip, Woodeaton, Elsfield and Forest Hill. All are rural in character; however the size and density of Islip compared to the other settlements makes it more of an urbanising influence. The River Cherwell and its floodplain flow through the northern half of the broad area. The rest of the broad area is made-up of open agricultural fields, typically with open views of the surrounding countryside.

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

Does the Broad Area contribute to the setting and special character of Oxford?

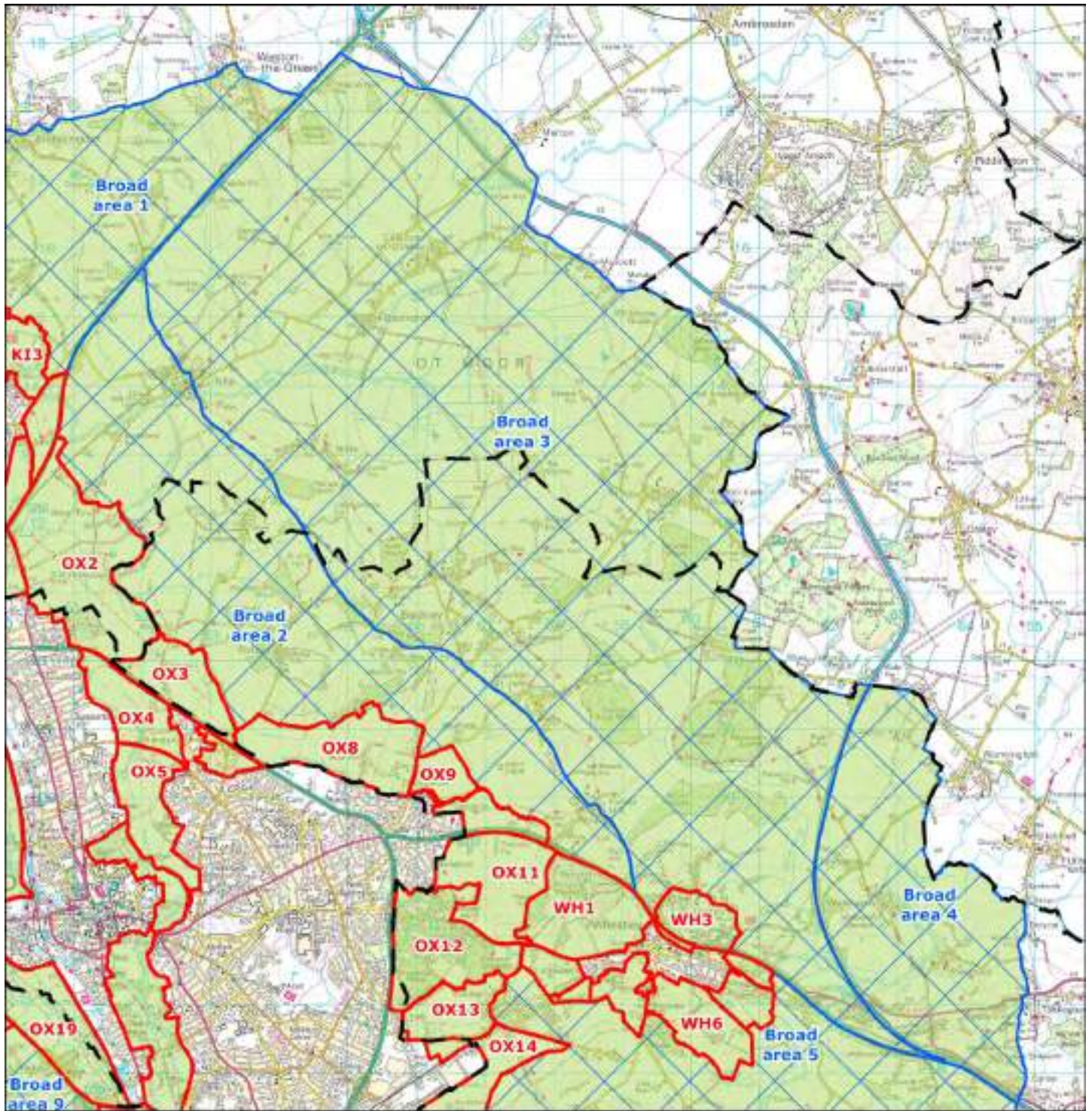
Rating: High

The northern end of the parcel forms the eastern side of the Cherwell Valley, rising up to the hilltop north of Woodeaton that provides a distinctive marker of the edge of Oxford's visual setting. The ridge and slopes to the south provide a backdrop to views out from Oxford, and to views from the hills to the west of the city. Elsfield provides one of the key viewpoints over Oxford featured in the 'viewcones' policy.

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 3

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Broad area



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Main Authority: Cherwell

Other Authorities: South Oxfordshire

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 3

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Broad area

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

The broad area does not lie adjacent to a large built-up area.

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another or into neighbouring smaller settlements

Does the Broad Area prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between the following settlements; Abingdon on Thames, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington, Radley, Wooton, Appleton, Eynsham, Oxford (including urban villages and settlements within Oxford), Kidlington (including Oxford Spires Business Park), Begbroke, Yarnton, Wheatley (including Littleworth) and Berinsfield?

Rating: N/C

The Broad Area is a large expanse of land with the main area of the Broad Area located to the north of Oxford, the southern area located north of Wheatley and the northern area located to the northeast of Kidlington. The Broad Area has a strong sense of openness throughout its landscape, including the flatter lower lying topography in the northern area and the more undulating southern topography. The Broad Area is not, however, in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose and makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements.

The northern area of the Broad Area includes Islip and Charlton-on-Otmoor which are in relatively close proximity of one another and on relatively flat topography providing limited views between one another. Beckley is located in the southern central area of the Broad Area in close proximity to Horton-cum-Studley, both of which are located within undulating topography thereby limiting views between the settlements. The Green Belt therefore plays a limited role in preventing the reduction of the physical and visual gap between these settlements.

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Does the Broad Area have the characteristics of countryside or has it been significantly affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

The broad area contains none villages: Islip, Noke, Beckley, Oddington, Charlton-on-Otmoor, Fencott, Murcott, Horton cum Studley and part of Forest Hill. All are rural in character; however the size and density of Islip and Charlton-on-Otmoor compared to the other settlements makes them more urbanising influences. The most urbanised area of the broad area is located at its southern tip in between the M40 and A40. This thin strip of land contains a gypsy and traveller site, an open-air depot and Wheatley Service Station, which in combination with the two major roads represents a significant urbanising influence on the Green Belt within the surrounding area. Other significant features within the broad area include Otmoor, the River Ray and Holton Brook and their associated floodplains. There are several SSSI scattered throughout the broad area on the moor and in ancient woodlands. The rest of the broad area is made-up of open agricultural fields with excellent views of the surrounding countryside.

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

Does the Broad Area contribute to the setting and special character of Oxford?

Rating: Low

The northern end of parcel, around Otmoor, is a very open, sparsely settled, low-lying landscape alongside which the A34 Bicester-Oxford road passes before entering the Cherwell Valley on the approach to Oxford. The ridge along the south-western side of the parcel provides extensive views across a very wooded, rural landscape to the east which, in the absence of any visual relationship with Oxford, or any major routes towards it, feels less connected in terms of setting but nonetheless

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 3

Main Authority: Cherwell

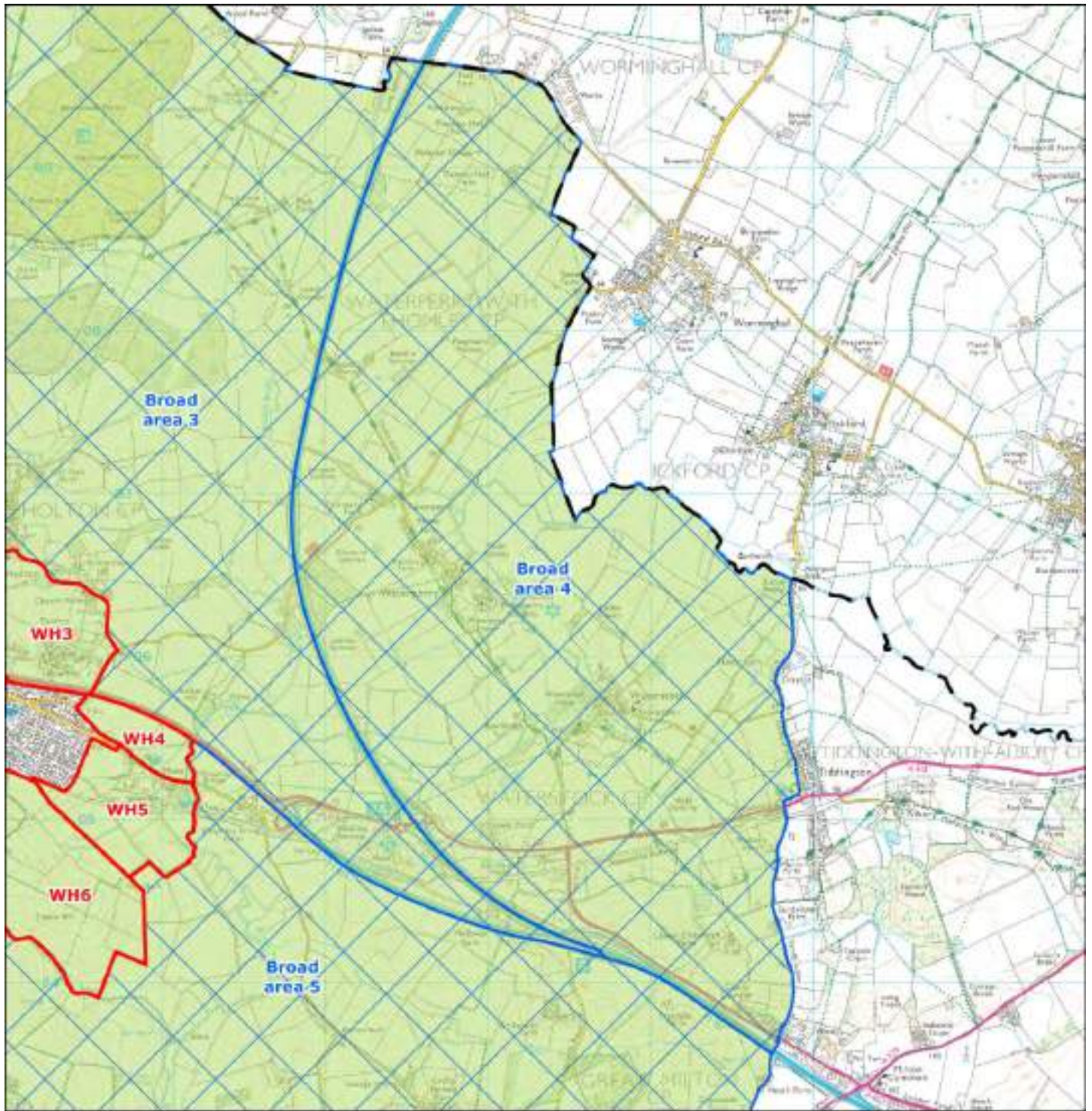
Parcel Type: Broad area

contributes to the city's wider rural context.

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 4

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Broad area



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Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 4

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Broad area

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

The broad area does not lie adjacent to a large built-up area.

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another or into neighbouring smaller settlements

Does the Broad Area prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between the following settlements; Abingdon on Thames, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington, Radley, Wooton, Appleton, Eynsham, Oxford (including urban villages and settlements within Oxford), Kidlington (including Oxford Spires Business Park), Begbroke, Yarnton, Wheatley (including Littleworth) and Berinsfield?

Rating: N/C

The Broad Area is located to the east of Wheatley and the M40 Motorway. The Broad Area is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose and makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements. The Broad Area includes the small settlements of Waterperry and Waterstock which are situated amongst open, flat land with views between one another. The settlements are in close proximity of one another. Therefore, the Green Belt therefore plays a role in preventing the reduction of the physical and visual gap between these settlements.

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Does the Broad Area have the characteristics of countryside or has it been significantly affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

The broad area contains three villages – Tiddington, Waterstock and Waterperry. All are rural in character. Waterstock lies adjacent to a large golf course – Waterstock Golf Course. The River Thames and its floodplain flow through the centre of the broad area. The rest of the broad area is made-up of open agricultural fields with excellent views of the surrounding countryside.

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

Does the Broad Area contribute to the setting and special character of Oxford?

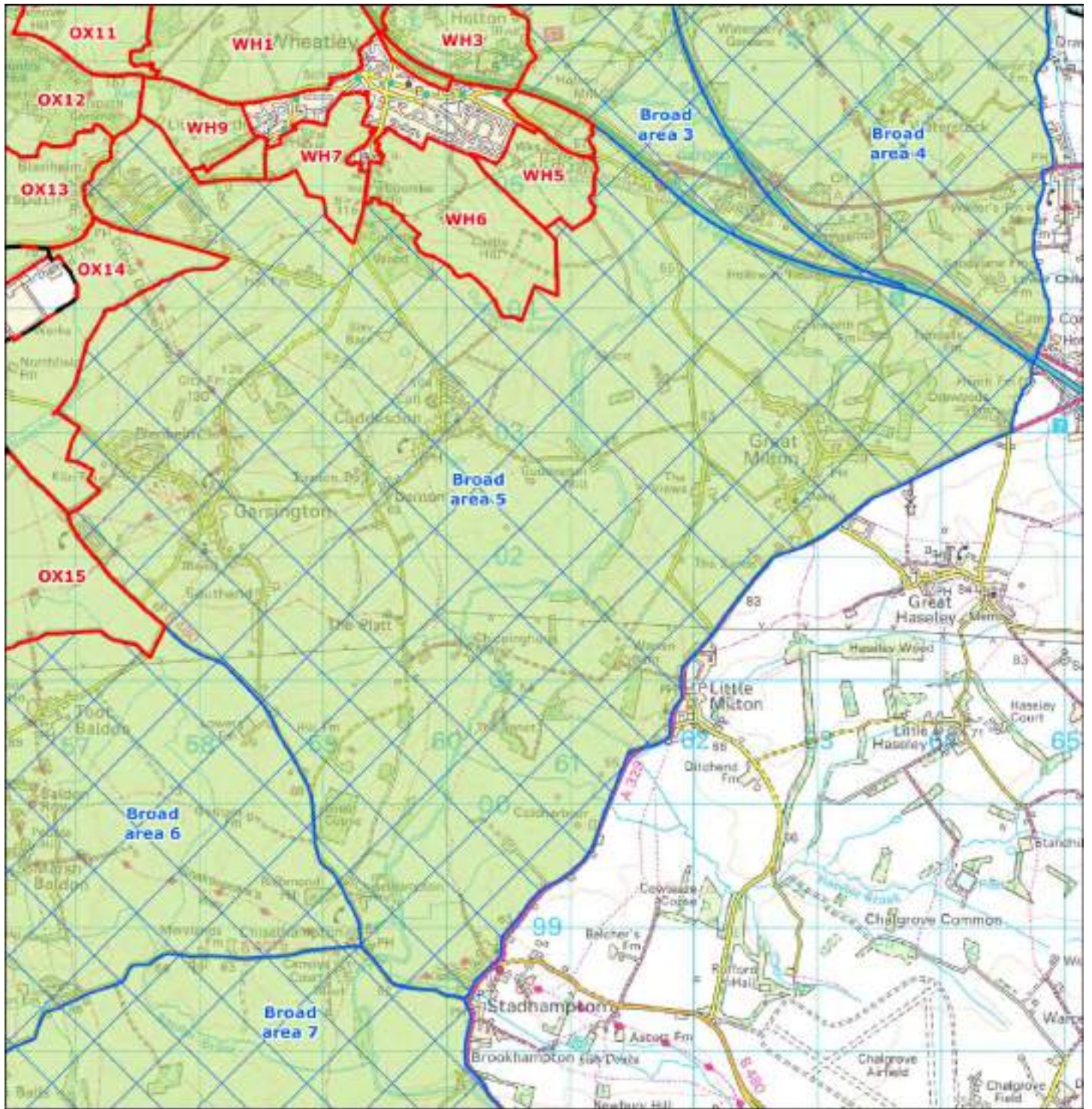
Rating: Low

The parcel is physically and visually detached from Oxford. It contributes to the general rural character of the city's surroundings, experienced on approaching from the M40/A40, but there is no great sense of being in Oxford's setting. The River Thames, which passes through the area, joins the Thames some way south of the city, at Dorchester, and so does not provide a strong landscape connection.

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 5

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Broad area



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 5

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Broad area

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

The broad area does not lie adjacent to a large built-up area.

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another or into neighbouring smaller settlements

Does the Broad Area prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between the following settlements; Abingdon on Thames, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington, Radley, Wooton, Appleton, Eynsham, Oxford (including urban villages and settlements within Oxford), Kidlington (including Oxford Spires Business Park), Begbroke, Yarnton, Wheatley (including Littleworth) and Berinsfield?

Rating: Medium

The Broad Area is located to the south of Wheatley and southeast of Oxford. The Broad Area plays some role in preventing the reduction of the visual and physical gap between Oxford and Wheatley as it encompasses most of the village of Horspath, together with some open land to the east which constitutes part of the gap between Horspath and Littleworth (which adjoins and is therefore considered to form part of Wheatley). The loss of this open land would be perceived as reducing the gap between the settlements. In isolation the section of the Broad Area could be rated as high against Purpose 2. The Broad Area also includes the settlements of Garsington and Cuddesdon which are in close proximity of one another and close proximity of Oxford and Wheatley respectively. The elevated positions of Garsington and Cuddesdon, in relation to the surrounding landscape, provide views between them and the surrounding settlements across the areas of open land. The openness of the parcel therefore plays a role in preventing the reduction of the physical and visual gap between these settlements and between the settlements and Oxford and Wheatley, but these are not assessed against Purpose 2.

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Does the Broad Area have the characteristics of countryside or has it been significantly affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

The broad area contains seven villages – Horspath, Garsington, Denton, Cuddesdon, Great Milton, Little Milton and Stadhampton. All are rural in character; however the size and density of Horspath, Garsington and Stadhampton make them more urbanising influences. The River Thames and its floodplain flow through the centre of the broad area. The rest of the broad area is made-up of open agricultural fields with excellent views of the surrounding countryside.

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

Does the Broad Area contribute to the setting and special character of Oxford?

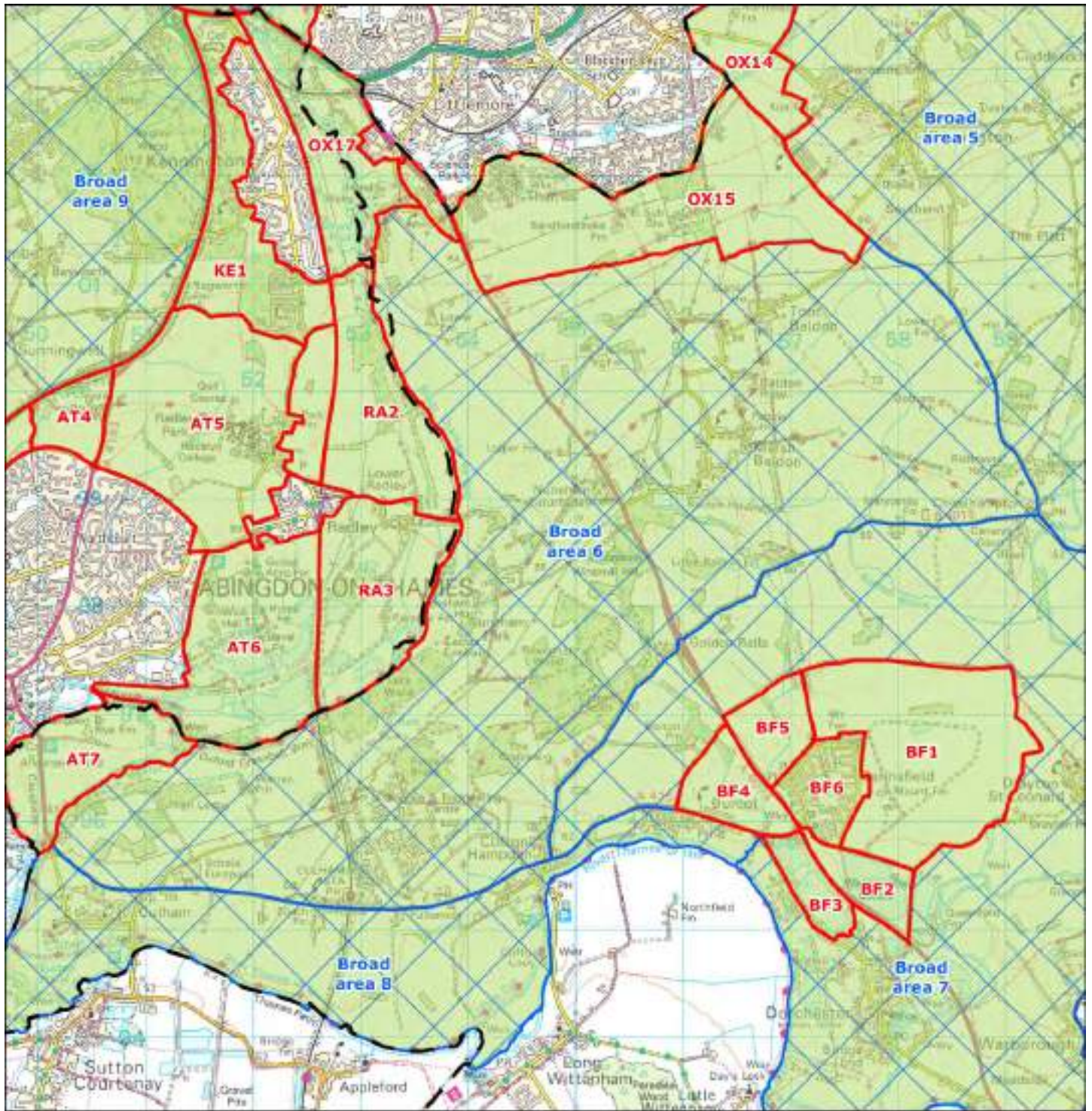
Rating: High

The western part of the broad area includes high ground which forms part of the ring of hills that encompasses much of Oxford's immediate visual setting. The Broad Area is only a short distance from the fringe of Oxford, but in area that has a modern, urban edge character (Blackbird Leys and the Mini plant at Cowley) rather than any sense of association with the historic city. There is visibility of the City centre spires from the vicinity of Garsington, although Cowley dominates these views, but the hills around Garsington and also above Horspath form part of the green backdrop to views from towers in the City centre (views in which buildings in Cowley are barely visible). To the east the area comprises the valley of the River Thames, a broad, open valley in which the agricultural surrounds of Oxford, and the role of the hills that frame the city, can be appreciated on approaching along the B480. There is less of a sense of relationship with Oxford's setting where the landform and roads relate more to the River Thames and its tributary brooks (e.g. around Cuddesdon and Great Milton).

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 6

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Broad area



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 6

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Broad area

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

The broad area does not lie adjacent to a large built-up area and so is not assessed against this Purpose; however, the northernmost part of the broad area lies close to the existing urban edge of Oxford. The southern sprawl of Oxford in to the village of Sandford-on-Thames could be facilitated through ribbon development along Henley Road, so the broad area could in the future contribute to preventing sprawl of Oxford from the south, were development to occur in this area.

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another or into neighbouring smaller settlements

Does the Broad Area prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between the following settlements: Abingdon on Thames, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington, Radley, Wooton, Appleton, Eynsham, Oxford (including urban villages and settlements within Oxford), Kidlington (including Oxford Spires Business Park), Begbroke, Yarnton, Wheatley (including Littleworth) and Berinsfield?

Rating: Low

The Broad Area is located to the south of the Oxford urban area (including Kennington), to the southeast of Radley and to the north of Berinsfield. All of the settlements are relatively distant from one another other than Radley and Kennington, but the Broad Area lies on the opposite bank of the Thames to these and so is not considered to make more than a low contribution to settlement separation.

The Broad Area also includes the smaller unassessed settlements of Toot Baldon and Marsh Baldon which are in close proximity to one another, and in relatively close proximity to the south of Oxford. The two settlements are on elevated ground in comparison to their surroundings and have limited views between one another, and towards Oxford. The Broad Area therefore plays some role in preventing the reduction of the physical and visual gap between these settlements, and between them and Oxford.

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Does the Broad Area have the characteristics of countryside or has it been significantly affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

The broad area contains five villages – Sandford-on-Thames, Nuneham Courtenay, Toot Baldon, Marsh Baldon and Clifton Hampden. All are rural in character. To the west of Clifton Hampden is a large estate of science and engineering buildings, government buildings and a sewage treatment works. This large concentration of buildings, car parks and street lighting has a significant urbanising influence on the Green Belt within the southern portion of the Broad Area. The centre of the parcel contains the large Grade I listed Nuneham Courtenay Registered Park and Garden with its large ancient woodlands and open fields. The River Thames and its floodplain flows along the western edge of the broad area. The rest of the Broad Area is made-up of open agricultural fields with open views of the surrounding countryside.

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

Does the Broad Area contribute to the setting and special character of Oxford?

Rating: High

The hills to the south of Oxford are for the most part lower than those that frame the city to the east and west, but they provide important vistas along the Thames Valley approach to the city, in particular from Nuneham Park (one of the viewpoints in Oxford's viewcones policy). Nuneham House in its parkland setting, and the wooded ridgeline above the valley, are an important element of the city's setting. The river valley itself, on the western edge of the parcel, provides an important link between the city centre and the countryside, and although the importance of this reduces to the south of

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 6

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

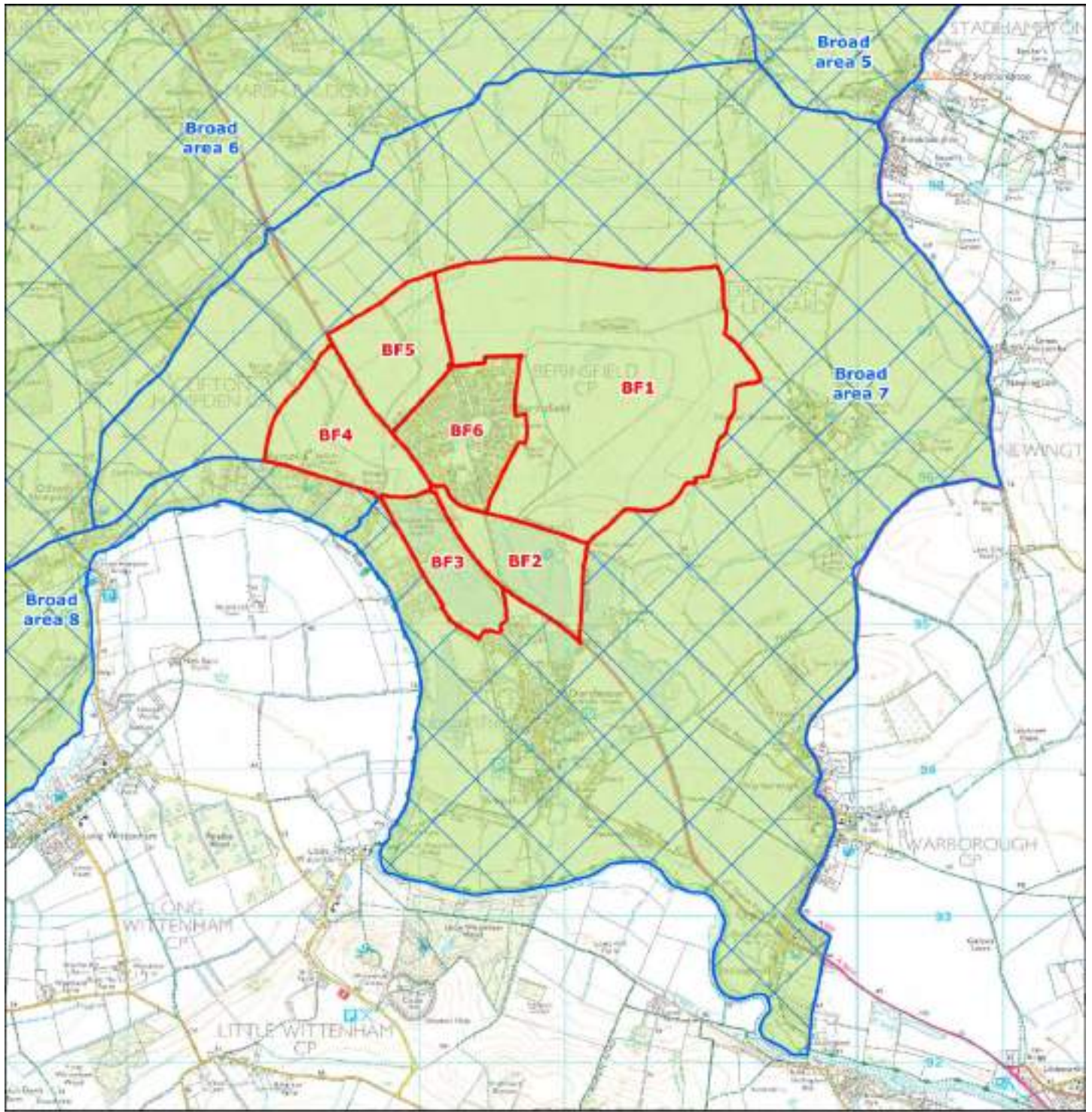
Parcel Type: Broad area

Abingdon the distinctive meanders and historic riverside settlements can still be seen to contribute to the Oxford's historic character, and are seen in context with Oxford by those approaching by river or on the Thames Path. Away from the Thames and the higher ground facing Oxford, to the south east, the broad area plays a less direct role in the city's setting but still provide a rural setting that can be appreciated on approach along the A4074 and B480. The 'high' rating relates to the Thames Valley approach to Oxford, whilst the rest of the parcel is considered to make a 'medium' contribution.

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 7

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Broad area



District boundary
 Green belt parcel
 Broad area
 Green belt

0 | 0.9 km

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Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 7

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Broad area

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

The broad area does not lie adjacent to a large built-up area.

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another or into neighbouring smaller settlements

Does the Broad Area prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between the following settlements; Abingdon on Thames, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington, Radley, Wooton, Appleton, Eynsham, Oxford (including urban villages and settlements within Oxford), Kidlington (including Oxford Spires Business Park), Begbroke, Yarnton, Wheatley (including Littleworth) and Berinsfield?

Rating: N/C

The Broad Area surrounds Berinsfield and is located on the southern limits of the Green Belt. The nearest settlement considered under Purpose 2 is Radley, but this is a considerable distance away and separated by topography, woodland cover and the Thames. The Broad Area also includes several villages not assessed under Purpose 2: Drayton St Leonard, to the northeast corner, and Dorchester in the south. Both of these settlements are in relatively close proximity of Berinsfield but are more distant from one another. Due to the openness of the Broad Area and the flat topography, the Green Belt plays a role in preventing the reduction of the physical and visual gap between these settlements and Berinsfield (e.g. in views from Wittenham Clumps) just to the south of the Broad Area.

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Does the Broad Area have the characteristics of countryside or has it been significantly affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

The broad area contains four villages – Dorchester, Drayton St Leonard, Warborough and Shillingford. All are rural in character; however the size and density of Dorchester make it more of an urbanising influence. There are several large Scheduled Monuments within the parcel. The River Thames follows the southern border of the broad area with a significant area of its floodplain spilling in to the southern portions of the parcel. The southern bank of the river Thames marks the northernmost extend of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The River Thame runs through the centre of the parcel, joining the River Thames at the southern border of the broad area. The rest of the broad area is made-up of open agricultural fields with excellent views of the surrounding countryside.

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

Does the Broad Area contribute to the setting and special character of Oxford?

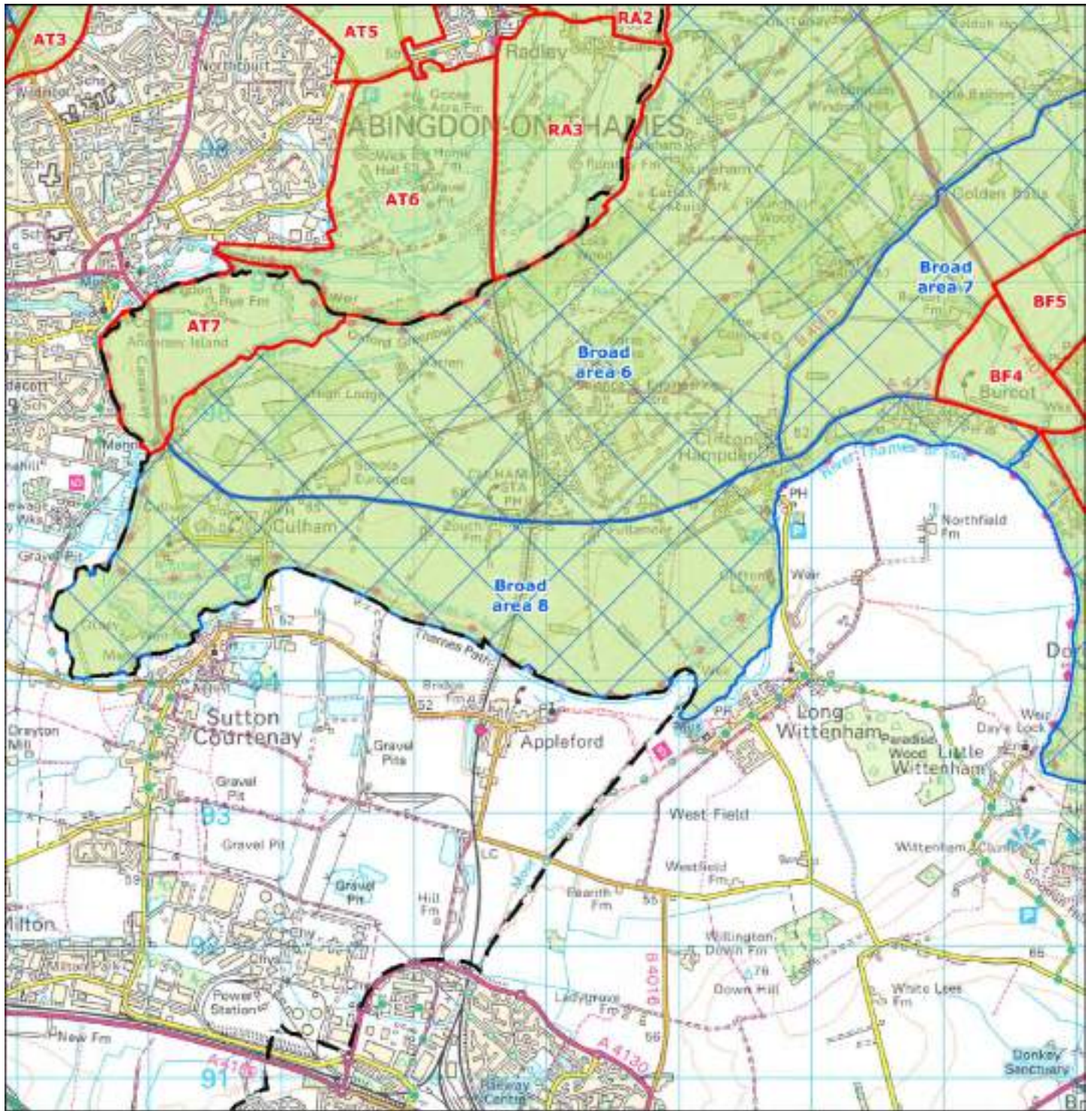
Rating: Low

The parts of this Broad Area close to the Thames, where it cuts a distinctive course in the vicinity of Shillingford, Dorchester, Burcot and Clifton Hampden, play some role contributing to Oxford's setting and special character. Whilst there is no visual connection with Oxford, the historic riverside settlements set the scene for those approaching the city by boat, along the Thames Path or on the A4074. This creates a perception of rural tranquillity which along the river is largely preserved all the way into the city centre, although distance does limit the extent of this contribution. Further north, the valley of the River Thame (around Drayton St Leonard), its tributary Baldon Brook, and the open, large-scale arable landscape contributes to Oxford's wider rural setting but is less significant than the Thames-side areas, being less directly linked to the city.

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 8

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Broad area



--- District boundary Green belt parcel Broad area Green belt 0 1 km

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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 8

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Broad area

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

The broad area does not lie adjacent to a large built-up area.

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another or into neighbouring smaller settlements

Does the Broad Area prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between the following settlements; Abingdon on Thames, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington, Radley, Wooton, Appleton, Eynsham, Oxford (including urban villages and settlements within Oxford), Kidlington (including Oxford Spires Business Park), Begbroke, Yarnton, Wheatley (including Littleworth) and Berinsfield?

Rating: Low

The Broad Area is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose, but it includes smaller settlements which form a loose chain between Abingdon and Berinsfield. The land between these settlements is relatively open with views between one another, but can be considered to perform a minor role in separation between Abingdon and Berinsfield.

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Does the Broad Area have the characteristics of countryside or has it been significantly affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

The broad area contains three villages – Clifton Hampden, Burcot and Culham. All are rural in character. The River Thames follows the southern border of the broad area with a significant area of its floodplain spilling in to the southern portions of the parcel. The rest of the broad area is made-up of open, relatively flat agricultural fields with open views of the surrounding countryside.

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

Does the Broad Area contribute to the setting and special character of Oxford?

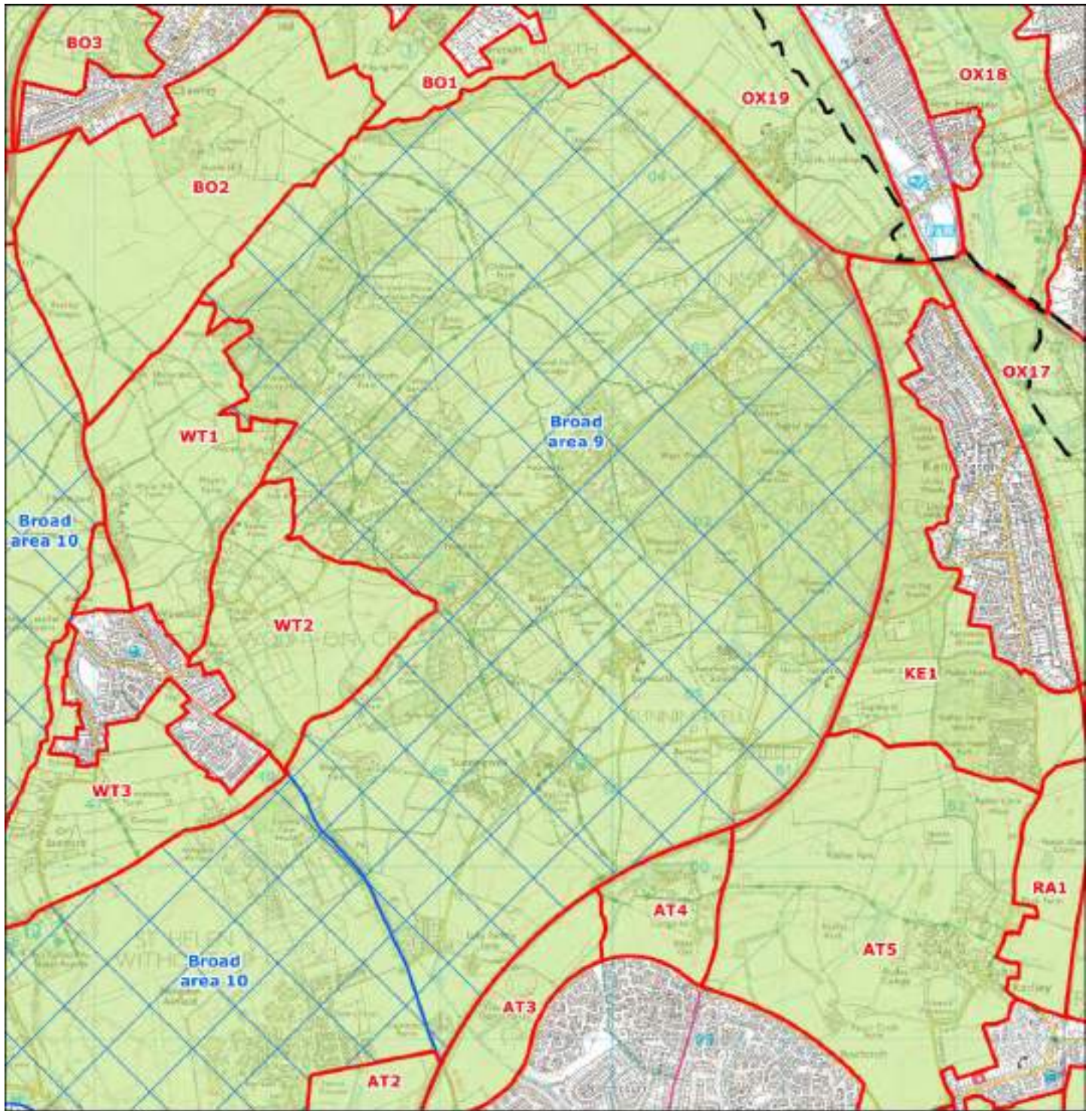
Rating: Low

This broad area encompasses the river terrace and meadows along the north side of the Thames between Burcot and Abingdon. The link between historic Oxford and its surroundings is stronger along the river valleys that penetrate into the heart of the city, than in the rural area in general. Historic riverside settlements like Culham and Clifton Hampden contribute to this, but distance does reduce the importance below that of the areas in which the valley can be viewed in a more direct context with Oxford, north of Abingdon.

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 9

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Broad area



--- District boundary Green belt parcel Broad area Green belt 0 0.75 km

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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 9

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Broad area

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

The broad area does not lie adjacent to a large built-up area.

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another or into neighbouring smaller settlements

Does the Broad Area prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between the following settlements; Abingdon on Thames, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington, Radley, Wootton, Appleton, Eynsham, Oxford (including urban villages and settlements within Oxford), Kidlington (including Oxford Spires Business Park), Begbroke, Yarnton, Wheatley (including Littleworth) and Berinsfield?

Rating: Low

The Broad Area is surrounded by the settlements of Oxford, Kennington, Abingdon, Wootton and Botley, which are all relatively distant from one another. The broad area plays a minor role in preventing the reduction of the physical gap between the settlements. The broad area includes smaller villages to the south, including Sunningwell and Bayworth, which are in close proximity to one another and Wootton to the west but are not assessed against this Purpose. The land between these villages and Wootton is relatively open with views between the settlements. Therefore the broad area also plays a role in preventing the reduction of the physical and visual gap between these settlements.

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Does the Broad Area have the characteristics of countryside or has it been significantly affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

The broad area contains a several small, linear rural settlements made-up of large detached residential dwellings in wooded settings. Open agricultural fields with views of the surrounding countryside sit in between the pockets of woodland. There are no significant urbanising influences within the Broad Area which represent significant encroachment of the countryside.

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

Does the Broad Area contribute to the setting and special character of Oxford?

Rating: High

The Broad area contains a number of linear, dispersed settlements in wooded settings. The higher east-facing slopes are important as a green backdrop to views from high points in Oxford centre, and in views from high ground to the east of the City (e.g. Elsfield). The presence of trees dominate over built development with some distinctive ornamental planting (e.g. Scots pine) but this doesn't detract from impression of a rural setting.

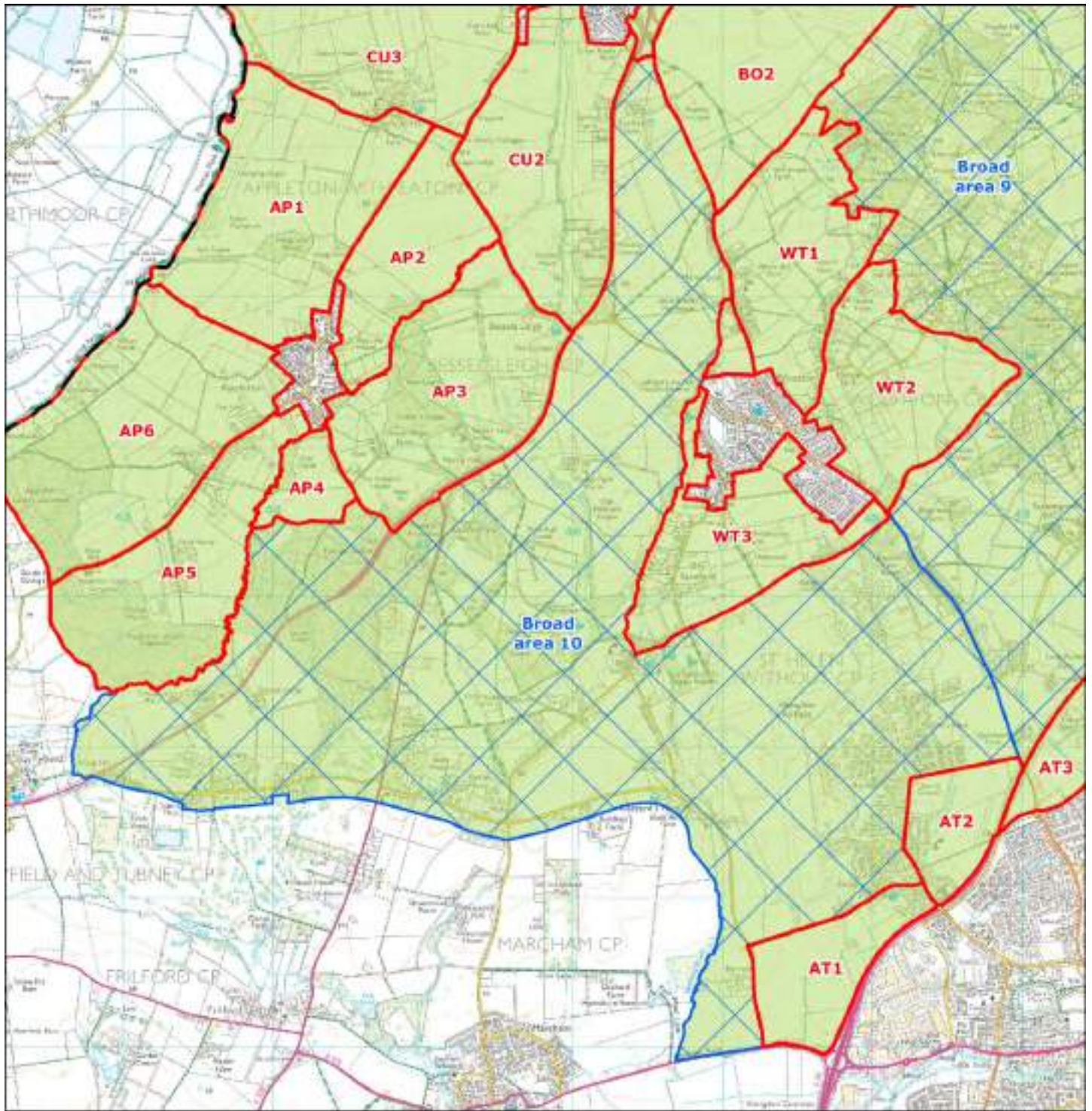
The Broad Area includes some locations with key views: Jarn Mound and the Oxford Preservation Trust monument at Boars Hill (to which open foreground slopes make an important contribution) and the A34 at Hinksey Hill. A number of rights of way from the City also pass through this area.

There is no visual relationship between land to west of hilltops and Oxford, but open slopes up to wooded high ground contribute to the perception of Oxford's historic rural setting on approach, including from the A34.

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 10

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Broad area



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 10

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Broad area

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

The broad area does not lie adjacent to a large built-up area. Therefore, the broad area is not considered to make a contribution to purpose 1.

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another or into neighbouring smaller settlements

Does the Broad Area prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between the following settlements; Abingdon on Thames, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington, Radley, Wootton, Appleton, Eynsham, Oxford (including urban villages and settlements within Oxford), Kidlington (including Oxford Spires Business Park), Begbroke, Yarnton, Wheatley (including Littleworth) and Berinsfield?

Rating: Medium

The northern portion of the Broad Area is surrounded by the settlements of Cumnor, Appleton and Wootton. While the south eastern portion of the Broad Area is situated between Abingdon and Wootton.

The Broad Area also includes Shippon in the south eastern corner which is in relatively close proximity to Abingdon and Wootton. The land between these settlements is open and relatively flat with views between the settlements. Therefore the Green Belt plays a role in preventing the reduction of the physical and visual gap between these settlements.

The settlement of Tubney, not assessed against this Purpose, is located on the southernmost boundary of the Broad Area and is relatively distant from other settlements with rising topography to the north separating it from settlements such as Appleton. The broad area plays a limited role in preventing the reduction of the physical and visual gap between these settlements.

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Does the Broad Area have the characteristics of countryside or has it been significantly affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

The broad area contains four villages – Shippon, Dry Sandford, Cothill and Tubney. Dry Sandford, Cothill and Tubney are rural in character; however Shippon and the neighbouring Abingdon Airfield are urban in character and represent significant urbanising influences on the Green Belt within the eastern portion of the parcel. Indeed, the airfield contains several large hangars, two runways and some significant areas of hardstanding. In addition to this, there is a large facility (Oxford Instruments) in Tubney Woods. The influence of this urbanising feature on the surrounding Green Belt is significantly reduced by its location in the wood. Other significant features within the broad area include Frilford Heath, Ponds and Fens SSSI and the large wood of Tubney Wood, including ancient woodlands. The rest of the broad area is made-up of open agricultural fields with open views of the surrounding countryside.

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

Does the Broad Area contribute to the setting and special character of Oxford?

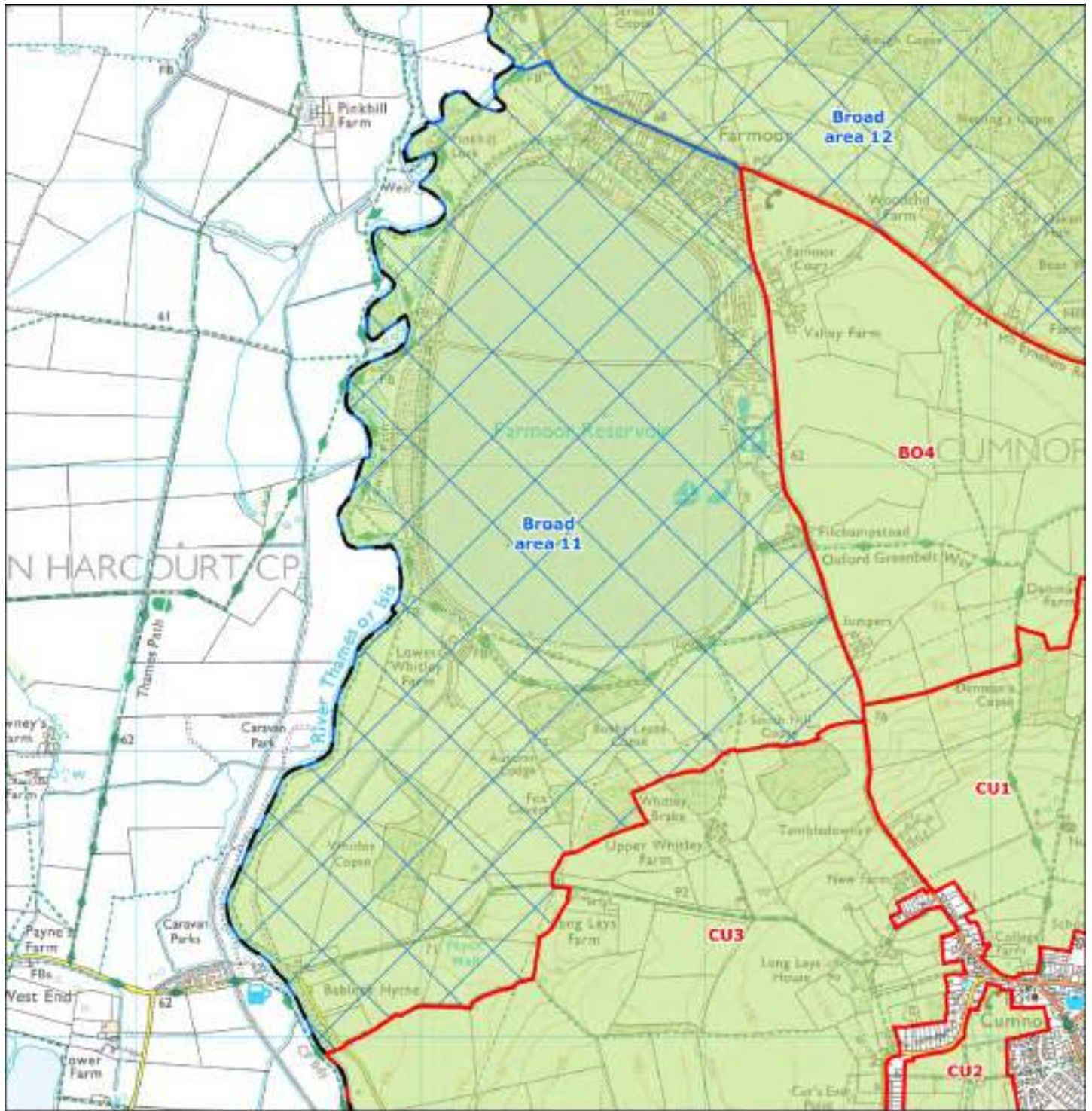
Rating: Low

Gently undulating landform, generally falling in a southerly direction, bisected by several shallow stream valleys. Well wooded to the south-west, with smaller fields, and more open and arable to the north towards Cumnor. The lower, flatter south-east area is occupied by Abingdon Airfield. There are no visual links with Oxford, and there is little sense this area having any connection to the city through its landscape character. However, the hills that form the western side of the ring around Oxford are more evident from the open, arable landscape in the north, including from the A420 approaching Cumnor and Botley, and this makes a contribution to the perception of the wider rural setting of Oxford.

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 11

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Broad area



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 11

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Broad area

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

The broad area does not lie adjacent to a large built-up area.

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another or into neighbouring smaller settlements

Does the Broad Area prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between the following settlements; Abingdon on Thames, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington, Radley, Wooton, Appleton, Eynsham, Oxford (including urban villages and settlements within Oxford), Kidlington (including Oxford Spires Business Park), Begbroke, Yarnton, Wheatley (including Littleworth) and Berinsfield?

Rating: N/C

The Broad Area is adjacent to the western most limits of the Green Belt, to the west of Botley and Cumnor. The Broad Area is not however in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose and makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements.

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Does the Broad Area have the characteristics of countryside or has it been significantly affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

The broad area contains the village of Farmoor and the large Farmoor Reservoir. Farmoor is rural in character; however, the eastern bank of the reservoir contains a large sewage treatment works and recreation facilities linked to the reservoir. These features represent the only significant urbanising influences on the countryside within the parcel. The River Thames follows the western border of the broad area with its floodplain spilling in to the western portions of the parcel. The rest of the broad area is made-up of open, relatively flat agricultural fields with open views of the surrounding countryside.

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

Does the Broad Area contribute to the setting and special character of Oxford?

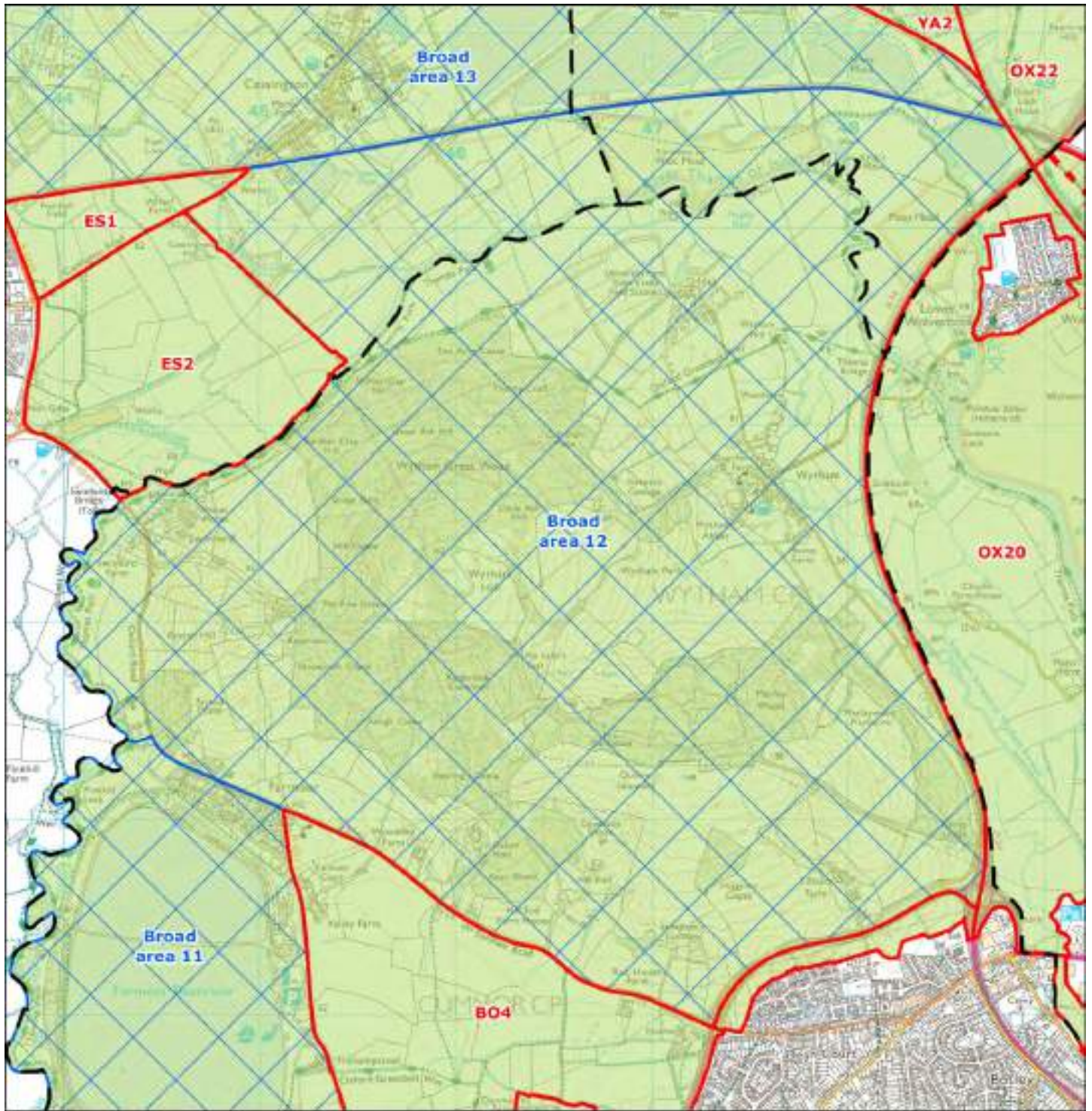
Rating: Medium

Farmland with woodland blocks at the southern end of the area slope down westward towards the Thames, and to Farmoor reservoir, which occupies much of the broad area. Despite being close to Botley and the A420 the screening effect of trees means that the area retains a rural character. There is no intervisibility with Oxford, but the proximity of this area to the City and to the Thames, and its links to the city in terms of recreational use (water sports and walking) add value in terms of setting.

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 12

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Broad area



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: West Oxfordshire & Cherwell

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 12

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Broad area

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

The broad area does not lie adjacent to a large built-up area.

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another or into neighbouring smaller settlements

Does the Broad Area prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between the following settlements; Abingdon on Thames, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington, Radley, Wooton, Appleton, Eynsham, Oxford (including urban villages and settlements within Oxford), Kidlington (including Oxford Spires Business Park), Begbroke, Yarnton, Wheatley (including Littleworth) and Berinsfield?

Rating: Low

There are no settlements apart from Oxford suburbs (which are not assessed separately against this purpose) close to this parcel other than Eynsham. The topography of the Broad Area limits the potential for settlement merger.

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Does the Broad Area have the characteristics of countryside or has it been significantly affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

The broad area contains the village of Wytham which is rural in character. The only urbanising influence within the broad area is the Swinford Water Works next to the River Thames at the western edge of the broad area. The River Thames follows the western edges of the broad area with its floodplain spilling in to the northern and western portions of the parcel. Wytham Woods, some of which is ancient woodland, sits on top of Wytham Hill which rises steeply from the floodplain of the River Thames and has open views of Oxford and the surrounding countryside. The portions of the broad area that are not wooded or flood plain are open agricultural fields.

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

Does the Broad Area contribute to the setting and special character of Oxford?

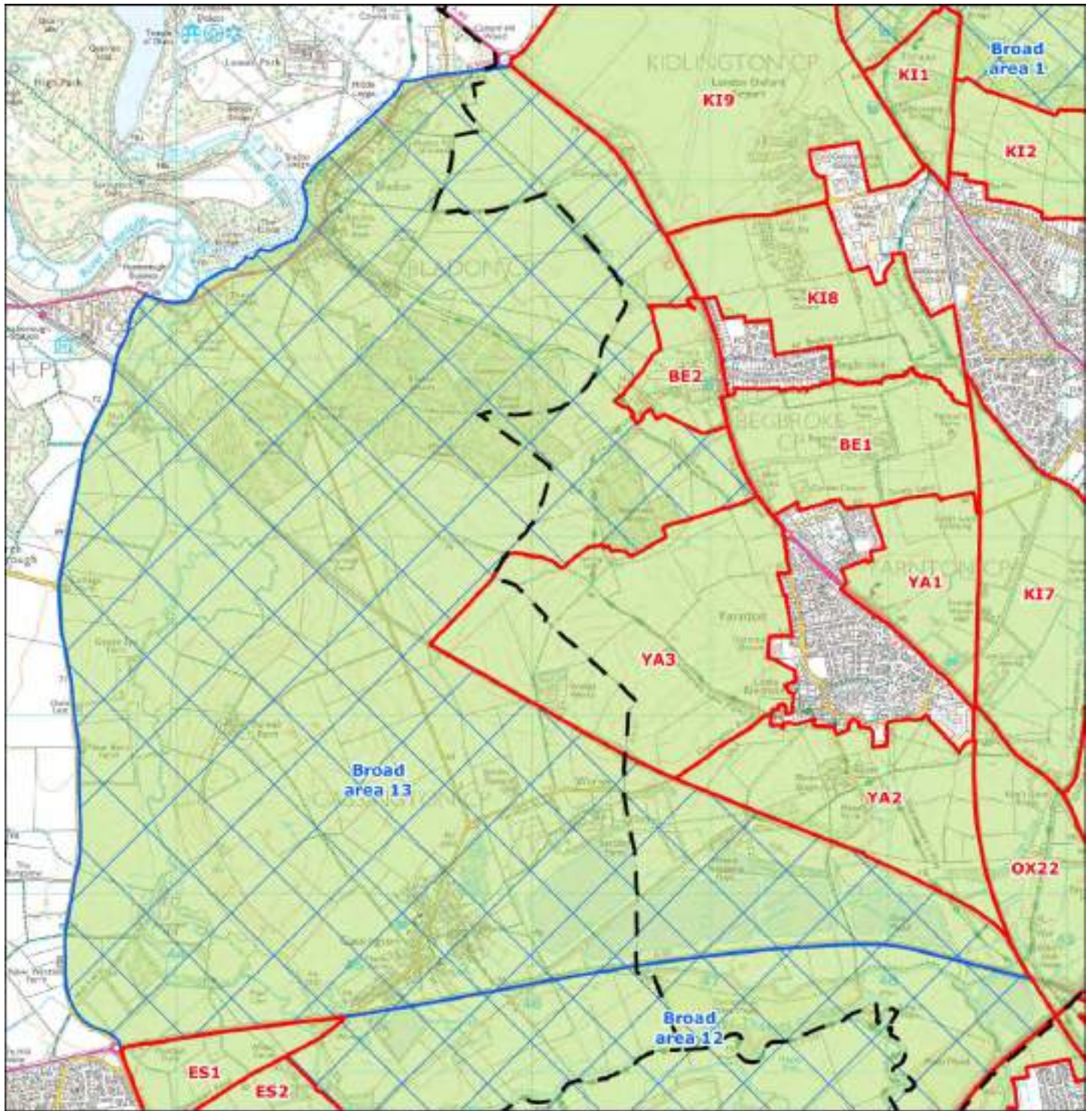
Rating: High

Wytham Hill with its associated woodland forms the bulk of the broad area. This is an important landscape feature, forming a green backdrop to views from the city and from viewpoints to the east. The Thames flows through the northern part of the area as it turns east then south towards Port meadow and the central area of the city, so this too forms a key element of Oxford's setting. Whilst the western side of the area lacks intervisibility with Oxford, the wooded hillside and the gap through which the Thames passes are nonetheless distinctive landscape features closely associated with the City.

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 13

Main Authority: West Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Broad area



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: Broad area 13

Main Authority: West Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Broad area

Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

The broad area does not lie adjacent to a large built-up area.

Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another or into neighbouring smaller settlements

Does the Broad Area prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between the following settlements; Abingdon on Thames, Botley, Cumnor, Kennington, Radley, Wooton, Appleton, Eynsham, Oxford (including urban villages and settlements within Oxford), Kidlington (including Oxford Spires Business Park), Begbroke, Yarnton, Wheatley (including Littleworth) and Berinsfield?

Rating: Low

The south eastern corner of the Broad Area plays a minor role in preventing the reduction of the physical and visual gap between Yarnton and Oxford, and partially separates land to the southwest of Begbroke and northeast of Yarnton.

The Broad Area also includes villages which aren't assessed against this Green Belt Purpose, such as Cassington to the south of the Broad Area and Bladon to the northern area of the Broad Area.

Cassington is in relatively close proximity to Eynsham and Yarnton, with the land in between being relatively open but with limited views between the settlements. Bladon is in close proximity to the northeast of Begbroke and Kidlington, with the land in between relatively open with views between the settlements. Therefore the Green Belt plays a role in preventing the reduction of the physical and visual gap between these settlements.

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Does the Broad Area have the characteristics of countryside or has it been significantly affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

The broad area contains the villages of Cassington and Bladon. While both are rural in character, Cassington is larger and denser and therefore represents the greater urbanising influence on the Green Belt. There are no other significant urbanising influences within the broad area. The River Evenlode (a tributary of the River Thames) flows through the western half of the broad area. Other notable features within the countryside include the ancient woodlands of Burleigh Wood, Blandon Heath and Begbroke Wood and the ongoing mineral extraction and restoration work, including reservoirs, north of the A40. The rest of the broad area is made-up of open agricultural fields with open views of the surrounding countryside.

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

Does the Broad Area contribute to the setting and special character of Oxford?

Rating: High

The hills above Yarnton and Begbroke, arable farmland with wooded high ground, form part of the green backdrop to Oxford in views from the city and high ground to the east. The steeper western side of the landform slopes down to the River Evenlode, which joins the Thames south of Cassington, so this contributes to Oxford's special character in terms of the connectivity watercourses provide between the wider rural area and the city centre but is less important than the area visible from, or in the context of views towards, the historic centre.

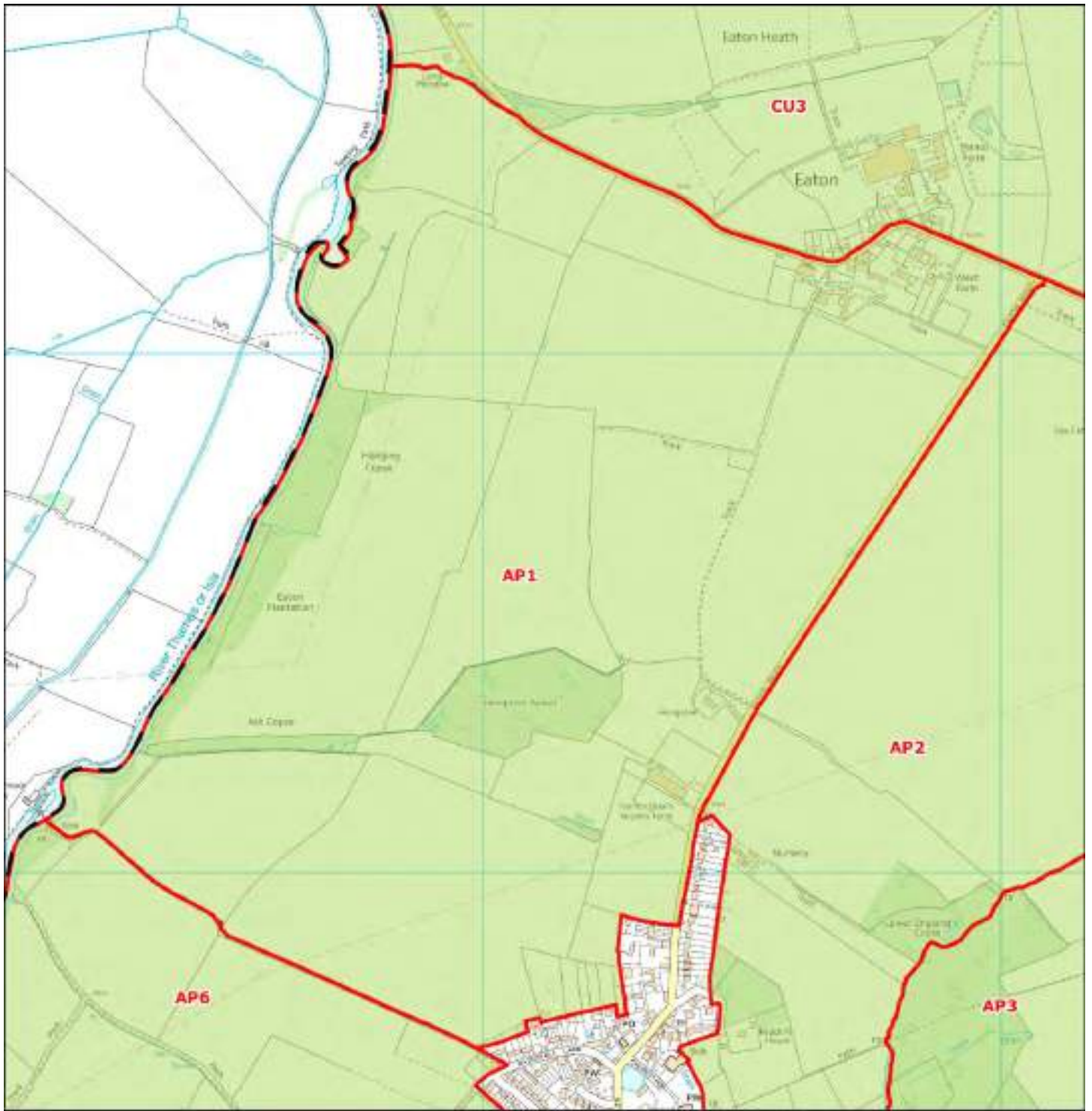
APPENDIX 2:

Detailed assessment findings for individual parcels

Land Parcel Ref: AP1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: AP1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Appleton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Appleton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The south eastern corner of the parcel borders Appleton and the northern boundary passes through the small village of Eaton, which in turn is in relatively close proximity to Cumnor. Appleton and Cumnor are considered as settlements under Purpose 2 for this study. The parcel is an area of mostly arable land with some strong hedgerows and woodland blocks, but the size of the arable fields in the east of the parcel and the falling topography towards the River Thames to the west give it an open character. Close to Appleton, smaller pastures with strong tree cover predominate. The proximity of Cumnor and Appleton means that any encroachment along Eaton Road from Eaton, which sits midway between Appleton and Cumnor, could result in a perceived reduction of the rural settlement gap. Loss of openness in the immediate vicinity of Appleton, to the south of Hengrove, would have less impact in this respect and the western part of the parcel also plays less of a role in terms of settlement separation.

Land Parcel Ref: AP1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is predominantly made-up of large regular-shaped agricultural fields on the eastern side of the River Thames. Sloping down the River Thames at the western edge of the parcel the open fields have excellent views of the wider countryside to the north west, west and south west. Two lines of pylons run through the parcel. The parcel contains two farms – one off Eaton Road at the eastern edge of the parcel and the other within the small village of Eaton in the north eastern corner of the parcel. In addition to the farm in Eaton, the parcel also contains a number of detached dwellings within the village. However, due to its size and the rural character of the buildings, these developments are not considered to be urbanising influences on the countryside within the Green Belt.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

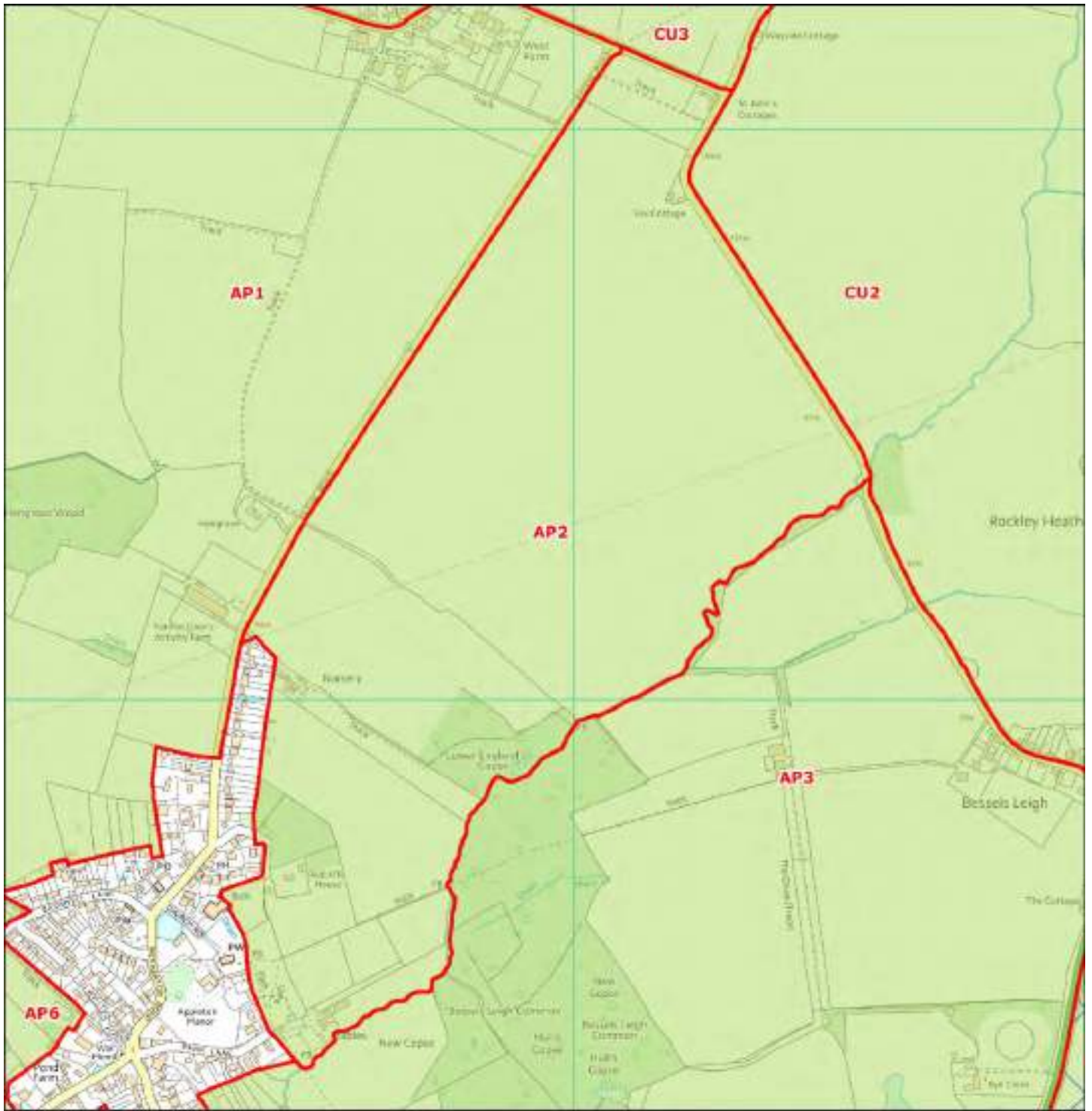
Notes:

The slope is west-facing, away from Oxford, and higher ground prevents any visual relationship. The continuity of the rural approach into the heart of Oxford along the Thames Valley does play a role in Oxford's special character, but the meandering form of the river valley means that this parcel is some distance from the City along that route.

Land Parcel Ref: AP2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: AP2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Appleton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Appleton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The south western corner of the parcel borders Appleton and the northern boundary is adjacent to Eaton, which in turn is in close proximity to Cumnor. Other than an area of small pasture fields alongside Cumnor, the parcel consists of large arable fields with a very open character, on topography which gently falls away to the southeast. Appleton is fairly well screened from view on approach from the north, but the proximity of the settlement to Cumnor means that any loss of openness along Eaton Road could result in a perceived reduction of the rural settlement gap. The fields in the immediate vicinity of Appleton, to the east of the village and the eastern part of the parcel, play less of a role in settlement separation.

Land Parcel Ref: AP2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is predominantly made-up of agricultural fields, with a very large regular-shaped and open field in the north and centre of the parcel and small irregular-shaped fields lined by trees adjacent to the edge of Appleton in the south of the parcel. There is a small pocket of allotments adjacent to the small village of Eaton at the northern tip of the parcel. The countryside is very open in the large field which makes-up the majority of the Green Belt parcel; views are also provided to the surrounding countryside particularly north and south along Eaton Road, between Appleton and Cumnor. The parcel contains a farm, stables and a few isolated dwellings, including a very small terrace at the northern tip of the parcel. The nature and disparate distribution of the development is common in the surrounding countryside and they are not considered to be urbanising influences.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: N/C

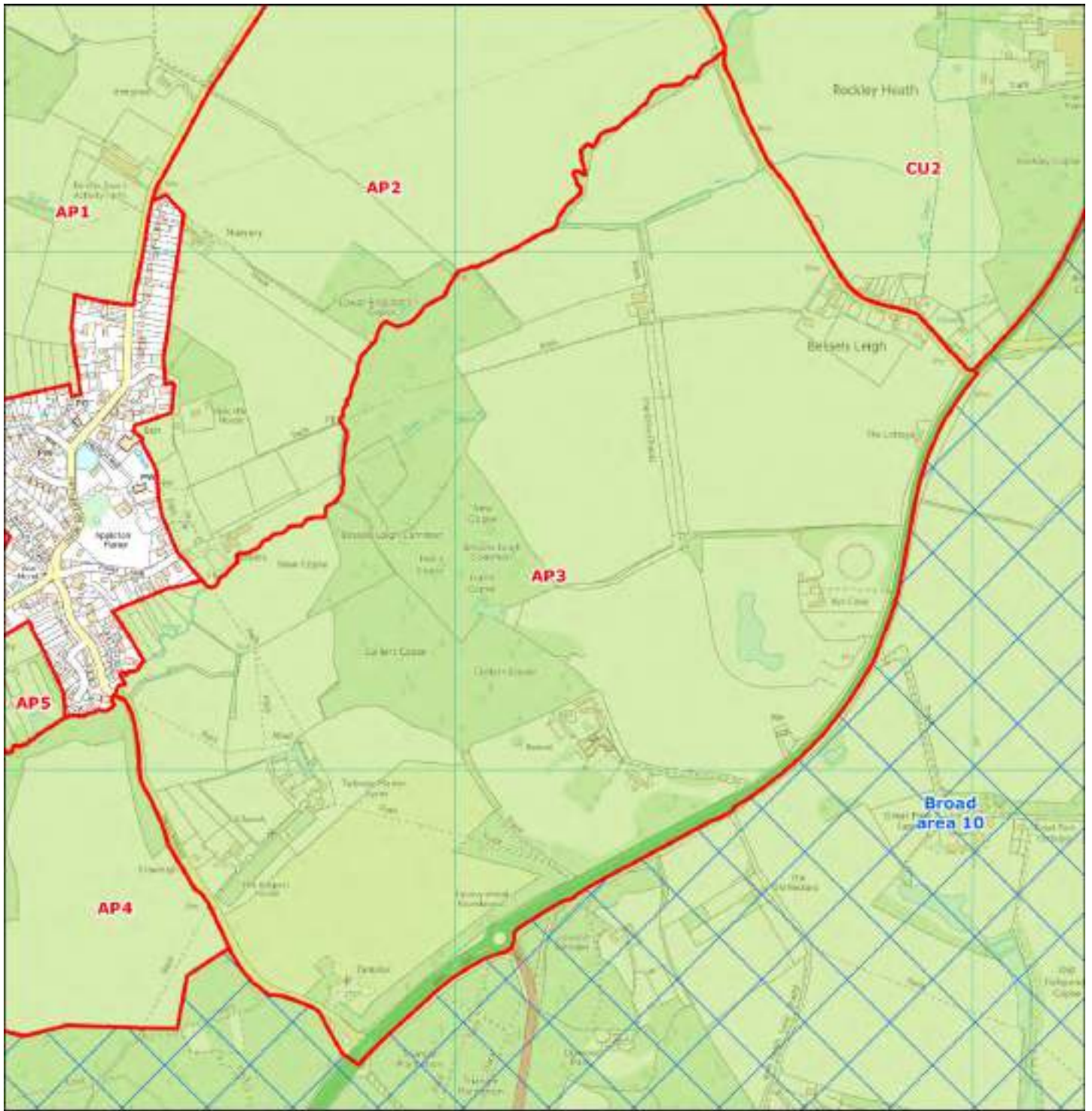
Notes:

Parcel comprises of open, evenly sloping arable farmland on the south-facing side of a broad valley between Eaton and Bessels Leigh. There is no intervisibility with Oxford, with well wooded and/or higher ground to the east and south, and no sense of this area forming part of Oxford's historic setting.

Land Parcel Ref: AP3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: AP3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel abuts Appleton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel abuts Appleton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The western corner of the parcel borders Appleton and the eastern boundary borders the A420. The parcel has a strong sense of openness and includes areas of woodland, a sand pit and Bessels Leigh School. The eastern boundary is in relatively close proximity to Wootton, but terrain, extensive woodland, absence of direct road linkage and the intervening A420, with its bounding hedgerows, form a physical and visual barrier which create separation. The northern boundary is in relatively close proximity to Cumnor, but the juxtaposition of a large area of woodland screens views between this part of the parcel and Appleton. The parcel therefore plays only a limited role preventing the erosion of settlement gaps.

Land Parcel Ref: AP3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is well treed in character, including the large Bessels Leigh Common ancient woodland, vegetated stream channels and the parkland treescape around Bessels Leigh School. There are also some large regular-shaped agricultural fields which represent the most open areas of the parcel, with good views of the countryside immediately to the north. Developments are scattered throughout the parcel, but most are rural in character and not considered to be urbanising influences, for example, St Lawrence Church, Tubney Manor Farm and the large isolated dwellings, including those within the small village of Bessels Leigh in the northern corner of the parcel. There is a large sand extraction site in the southern corner of the parcel and there are relatively modern buildings and areas of hardstanding associated with Bessels Leigh School, but the extent of screening by large woodland blocks and belts means that these are not considered to be significant urbanising influences on the wider countryside.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: N/C

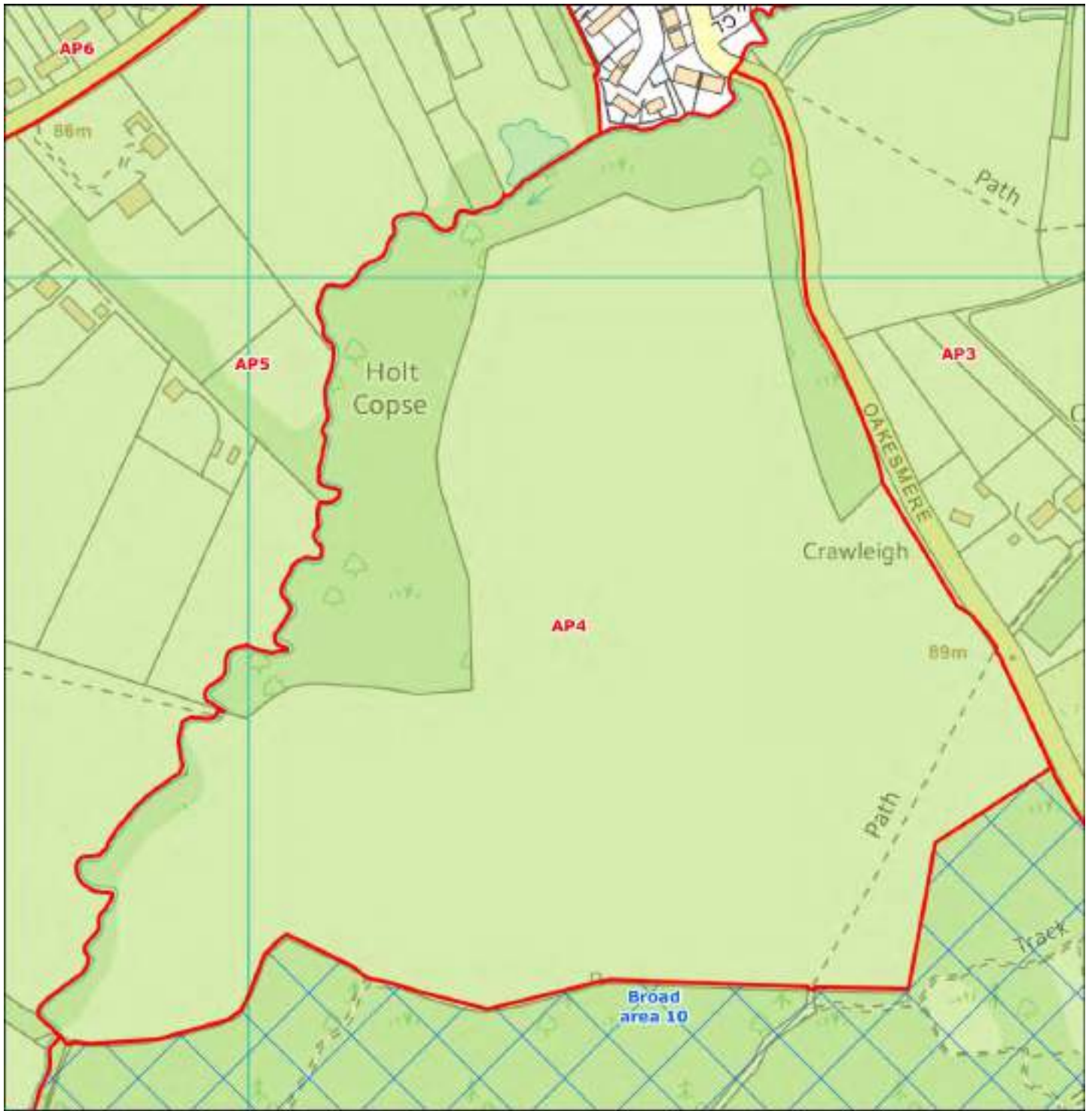
Notes:

The land parcel includes an elevated, undulating, well-wooded landscape, with parkland elements, sloping generally downhill to the west. There is no visual relationship with Oxford. The eastern fringes of the parcel contribute to perception of rural landscape on approach to Botley along A420, but most of the parcel lacks any intervisibility with the road.

Land Parcel Ref: AP4

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: AP4

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Appleton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Appleton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel is located to the south of Appleton, with the southern boundary bordering Tubney Wood. Hedgerows and associated trees close to the roadsides of the northern most boundaries of the parcel form a physical barrier creating visual separation from the parcel and its surroundings, whereas the south-eastern boundary is more open with partial views into parcel AP3. The parcel is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose, and Wootton which is the nearest settlement is quite distant. Due to the size and location of the parcel it makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between the inset settlements.

Land Parcel Ref: AP4

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is predominantly made-up of one large irregular-shaped field lined by woodland with the large Tubney Wood to the south. There is no development within the parcel and no urbanising influences.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: N/C

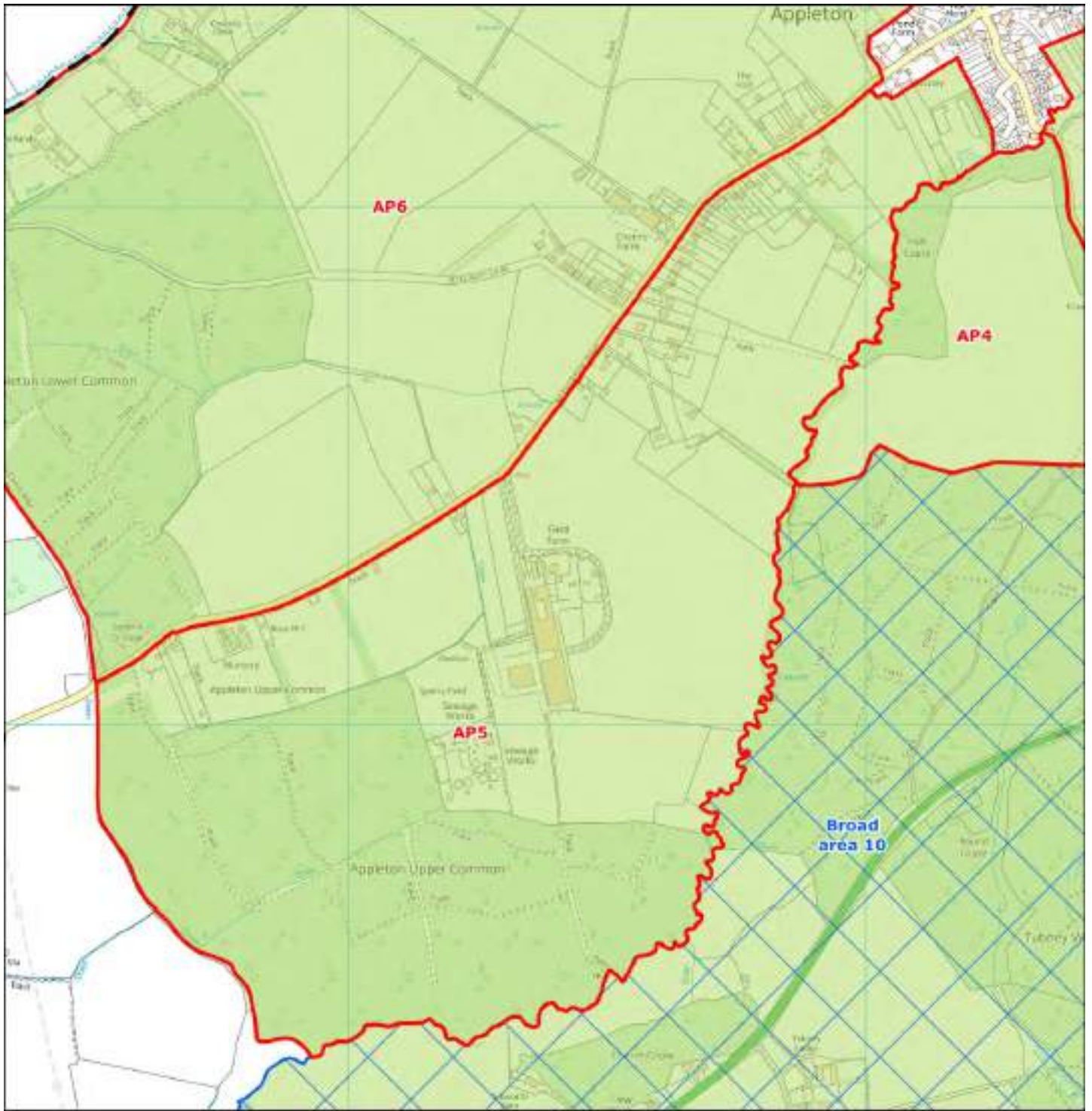
Notes:

This is a west-facing slope of a stream valley which feeds into the Thames west of Appleton Common. It is a very contained parcel, surrounded by woodland, with no sense of any relationship with either Oxford or the Thames Valley approach to Oxford.

Land Parcel Ref: AP5

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: AP5

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Appleton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Appleton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel is located to the south of Appleton, and is a large area of open land, with a gently sloping topography as you move south away from Appleton. The northern boundary of the parcel is bordered by Netherton Road, which provides open views across the parcel. The parcel is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose and makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements.

Land Parcel Ref: AP5

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is predominantly made-up of irregular-shaped fields lined by woodland to the south and east including Appleton Upper Common which sits in the parcel. There is a large open field adjacent to the very large Field Farm complex in the south of the parcel. There is a significant amount of development within the parcel but distinction can be made between the western part of the parcel, which retains an open, rural character, despite there being a number of scattered dwellings along Netherton Road and would score 'high' in its own right, and the eastern part, which is characterised by continuous sprawling development out from the historic core of Appleton. The sewage treatment works in the south of the parcel is well screened by trees and does not have a major impact on the character of the wider landscape.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: N/C

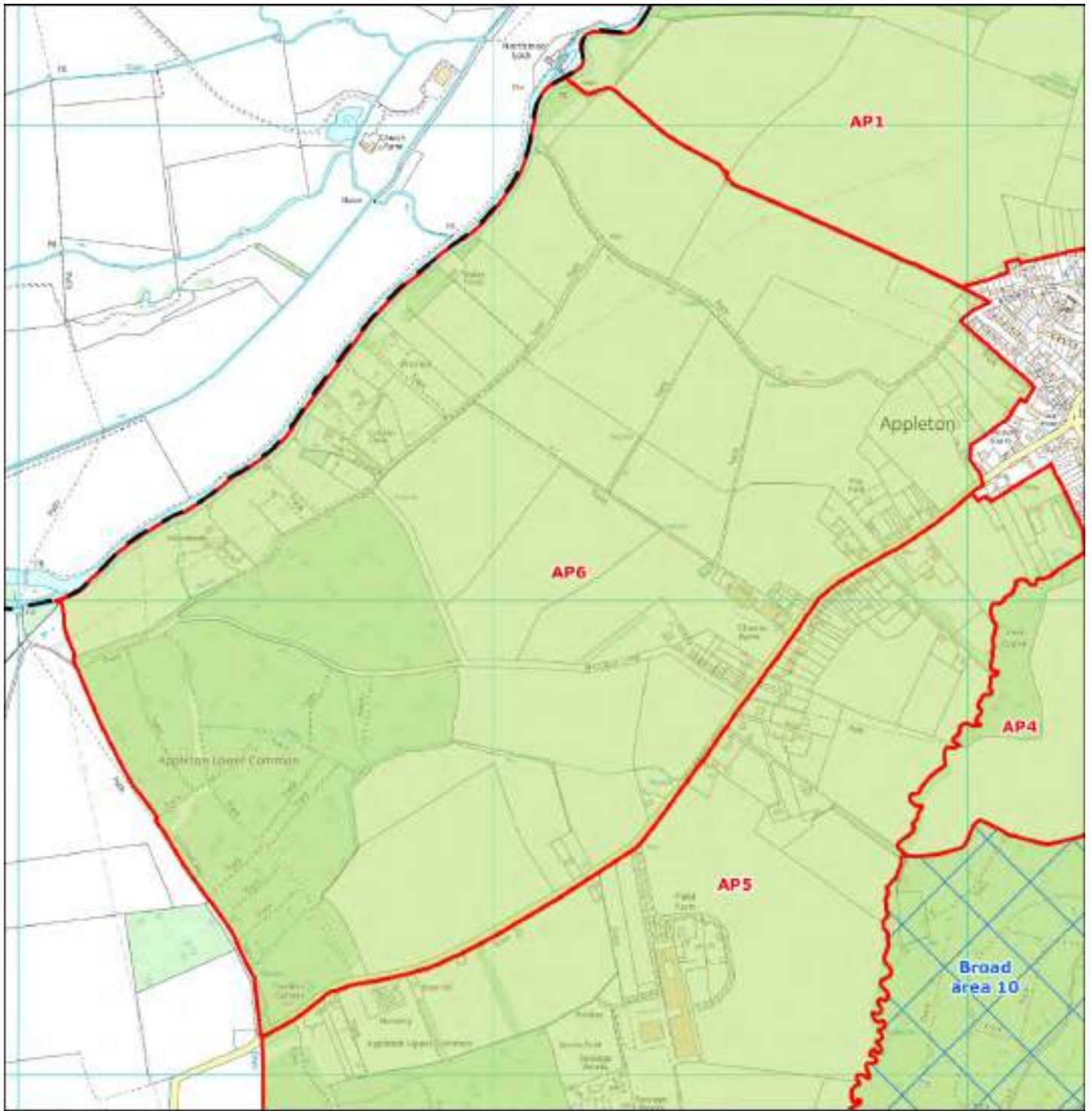
Notes:

The land parcel comprises of south-facing farmed slopes of a shallow valley which carries a stream into the Thames to the west of Appleton Common. The southern end of the parcel is woodland, and woodlands frame the shallow valley slopes to the east. There is no visual relationship with Oxford or the Thames Valley.

Land Parcel Ref: AP6

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: AP6

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Appleton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Appleton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is situated to the southwest of Appleton and is bordered by the River Thames on the western boundary and Netherton Road on the eastern/southern boundary. The parcel is a large area of open land with a gently sloping topography as you move southwest away from Appleton. The western and southern boundaries border the edge of the Green Belt and therefore the parcel is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose and makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements.

Land Parcel Ref: AP6

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is predominantly made-up of large regular-shaped agricultural fields on the eastern side of the River Thames. Appleton Lower Common Wood sits in the south western portion of the parcel. Sloping down to the River Thames at the western edge of the parcel, the open fields have excellent views of the wider countryside to the north west, west and south west. The parcel contains a farm (Cheers Farm) and surrounding linear development out from Appleton along Netherton Road and Millway Lane. There is also dispersed modern riverside development along the Thames, accessed via Millway Lane, but this is set in a well-treed landscape with little wider impact. Modern expansion of Appleton has an urbanising influence on the countryside in the vicinity, but much of the parcel still has a rural character, and the western part would in isolation rate as 'high' against this criterion.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

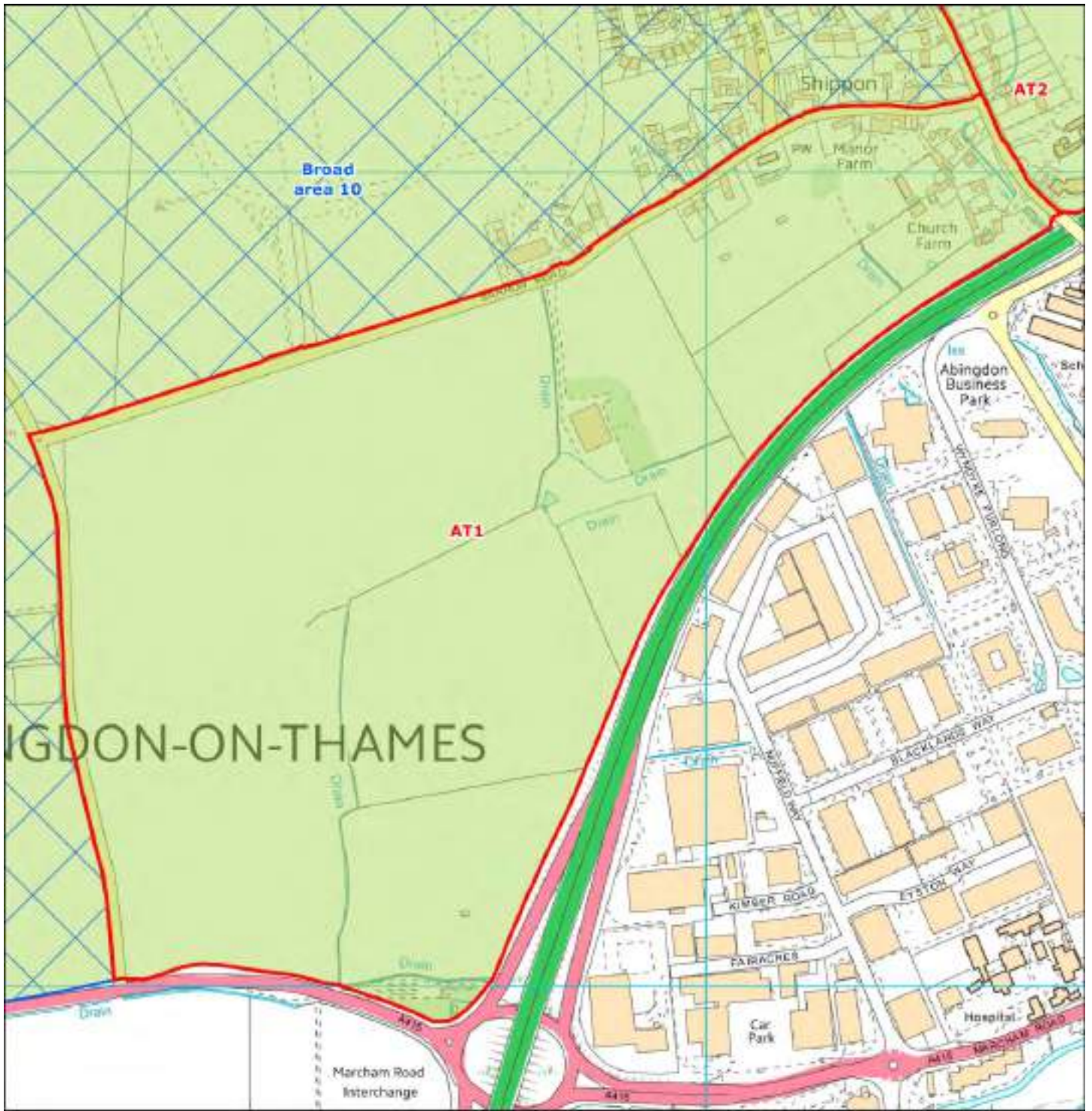
Notes:

The parcel lies c.9-10km from central Oxford. The slope is west-facing, away from Oxford, and higher ground prevents any visual relationship. The continuity of the rural approach into the heart of Oxford along the Thames Valley does play a role in Oxford's special character, and the parcel is crossed by several rights of way that link (across a footbridge) the Thames Path to Appleton. However the meandering form of the river valley means that this parcel is some distance from the city along that route.

Land Parcel Ref: AT1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: AT1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Abingdon-on-Thames which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Abingdon-on-Thames which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel is situated to the west of Abingdon, and is bordered by the A34 to the east, the A415 to the south and Shippon to the north. The parcel has a strong sense of openness and is a relatively flat area of land with views across it from the surrounding roads. The parcel is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose, but 20th century development has closed the gap between Abingdon and Shippon so that only the presence of the A34 constitutes a gap between the two. Loss of openness in this parcel could cause more of a merging of the two settlements, which would have some impact in terms of the gap between an enlarged Abingdon and Wootton, but this is limited by the location of this parcel to the west of Abingdon, away from the B4017 (which provides a direct link between the two settlements).

Land Parcel Ref: AT1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is predominantly made-up of large irregular-shaped agricultural fields. The open fields have excellent views of the countryside to the south, west and north. As well as lying adjacent to the town of Abingdon-on-Thames, the parcel also contains a portion of the neighbouring village of Shippon in its northern corner. Here the parcel contains the village church (St Mary Magdalene), Church Farm and a few isolated dwellings on the edge of the village. In addition, the parcel contains a large barn in the centre of the parcel and an area of hardstanding used as a lorry stop in the southern corner of the parcel. The lorry stop in the southern corner of the parcel is the only urbanising influence on the countryside within the parcel; however, there are street lights along Faringdon Road at the north eastern edge of the parcel. Due to the small proportion of the parcel that the lorry stop covers, it is not considered to be a significant urbanising influence.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: N/C

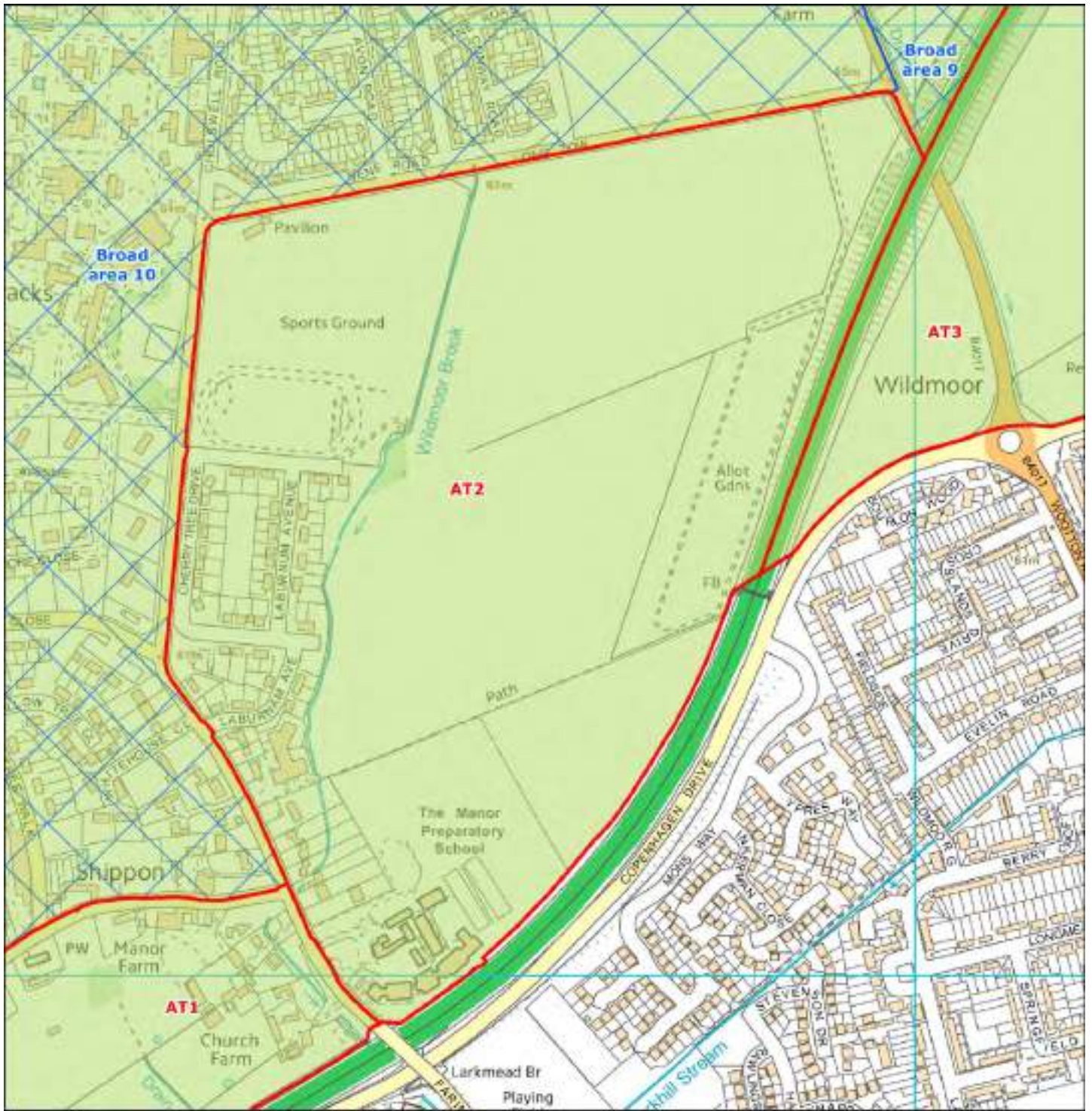
Notes:

There is no visual relationship with Oxford and it makes little contribution to the rural character of Oxford's wider setting, being related more closely to Abingdon.

Land Parcel Ref: AT2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: AT2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Abingdon-on-Thames which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Abingdon-on-Thames which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel lies to the north/west of the A34 and to the east of Abingdon Airfield. The parcel is predominantly open with some development to the western side of the parcel which includes residential housing and Manor Preparatory School. The parcel is also relatively flat with views across it from the bordering roads (e.g. A34). 20th century development has closed the gap between Abingdon and Shippon so that only the presence of the A34 constitutes a gap between the two. Loss of openness in this parcel could cause more of a merging of the two settlements. Although Shippon is not considered against this Green Belt Purpose, closer association with Abingdon would in effect reduce the gap to Wootton, where linear development at Whitecross on the B4017 is already close to Shippon and to the edge of this parcel.

Land Parcel Ref: AT2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel is predominantly made-up of large regular-shaped agricultural fields and a large allotment at its eastern edge. The open fields have some views of the countryside to the west and north. However, it is bordered by the A34 to the east, including an elevated section crossing the B4017, and by the built-up areas of the village of Shippon to the north, west and south and as such it is considered the countryside within the parcel is relatively enclosed. As well as abutting the town of Abingdon-on-Thames, the parcel also contains a significant portion of the neighbouring village of Shippon along its western edge. Here the parcel contains a large outdoor sports ground in the north west corner, a large school with associated outdoor sports facilities (some of which are hardstanding) in the southern corner of the parcel and three residential streets complete with street lighting – Faringdon Road, Laburnum Avenue and Cherry Tree Drive. These urbanising influences compromise the openness of the countryside.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating:

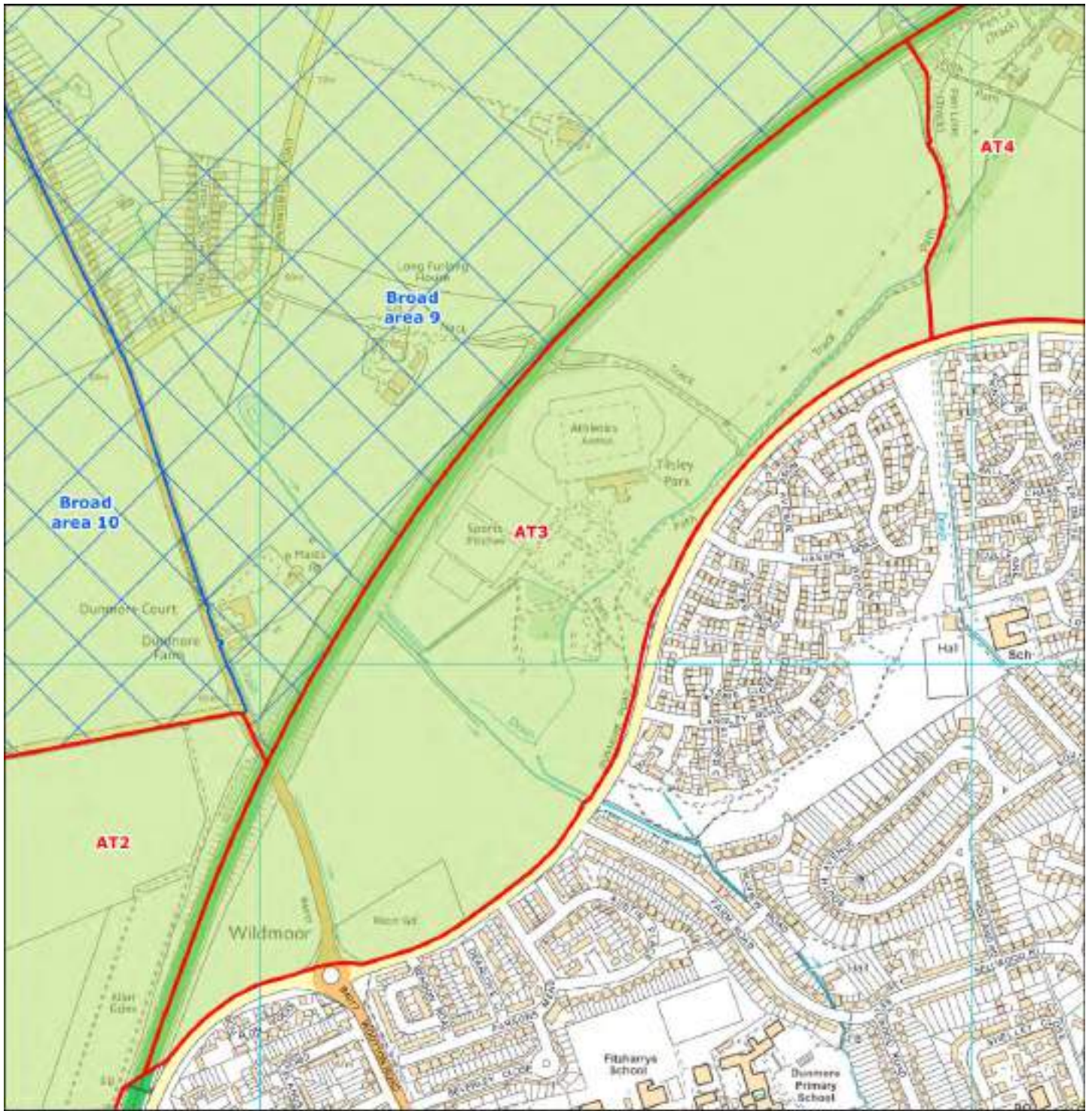
Notes:

There is no visual relationship with Oxford and little sense of being part of the city's wider rural surrounds, despite its proximity to the A34. In terms of setting the parcel is more associated with Abingdon.

Land Parcel Ref: AT3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: AT3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Abingdon-on-Thames which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Abingdon-on-Thames which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel lies to the north of Dunmore Road and Copenhagen Drive, with the northern/western boundaries of the parcel adjacent to the A34. The parcel is a relatively flat area of land, with open fields to the west and east, and Tilsley Park Sport Complex in the centre. The parcel is relatively distant from Wootton and is contained by the elevated A34 and therefore plays a very limited role in preventing the merging or erosion of the visual and physical gap between Wootton and Abingdon-on-Thames.

Land Parcel Ref: AT3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel largely consists of a sizeable sports centre, which contains a large building adjacent to a large floodlit car park, surrounded by several floodlit outdoor sports pitches and an athletics track. All of these features are considered to be significant urbanising influences on the countryside within the Green Belt. To the north and south of the sports centre are two large open fields; however these fields are relatively enclosed by the urban edge of Abingdon-on-Thames to the east and the elevated banks of the A34 to the west. There is a limited relationship between the parcel and the wider countryside, with the exception of long range views to the south west.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating:

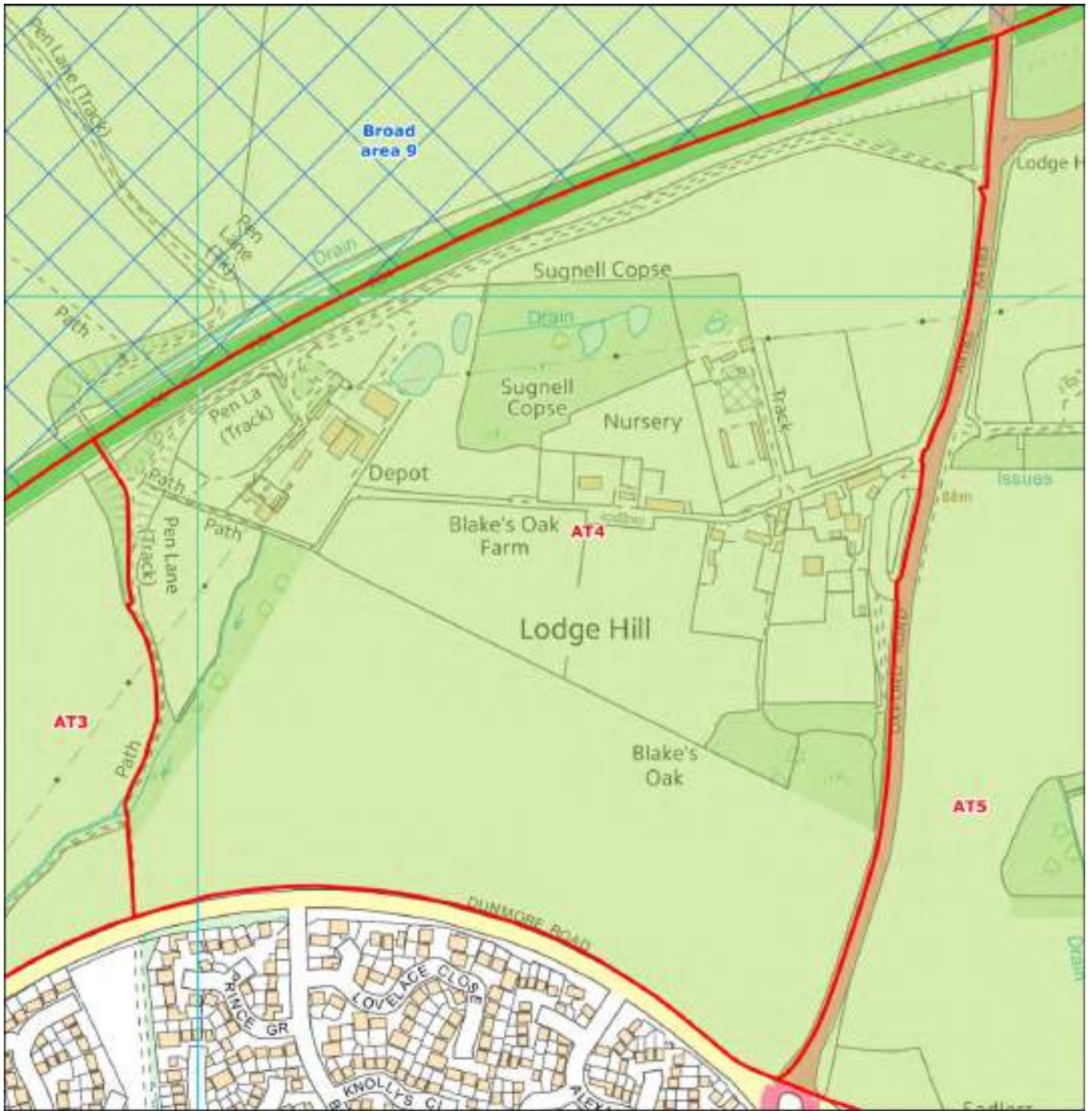
Notes:

This parcel is located between the A34 and Abingdon, and consists of arable fields to either side of a sports centre. There is no intervisibility with Oxford. As views open out from the A34 across farmland towards the wooded hills that abut the south-western edge of Oxford there is a greater sense of the City's wider rural setting; the parcel contributes only a little to this, being to the south and east of the A34.

Land Parcel Ref: AT4

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: AT4

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Abingdon-on-Thames which is not considered to be a large built up area. The parcel is not therefore considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Abingdon-on-Thames which is not considered to be a large built up area. The parcel is not therefore considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel lies to the north of Dunmore Road, with the northern boundary of the parcel adjacent to the A34 and the eastern boundary adjacent to the A4183. The parcel is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose but lies adjacent to parcel AT5 which plays a key role in preventing the merging of Abingdon with Kennington. The topography towards the northern area of this parcel gently rises in elevation creating a visual separation between the opposing sides of the parcel.

Land Parcel Ref: AT4

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel contains a band of development running east west through its centre along Lodge Hill road. The development includes several large detached dwellings, a car showroom, and an open-air depot containing construction machinery and large warehouse buildings. This band of development has an urbanising influence on the Green Belt within the parcel. The parcel contains open farmland to the north and south, with the latter forming a rural setting to the northern side of Abingdon.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

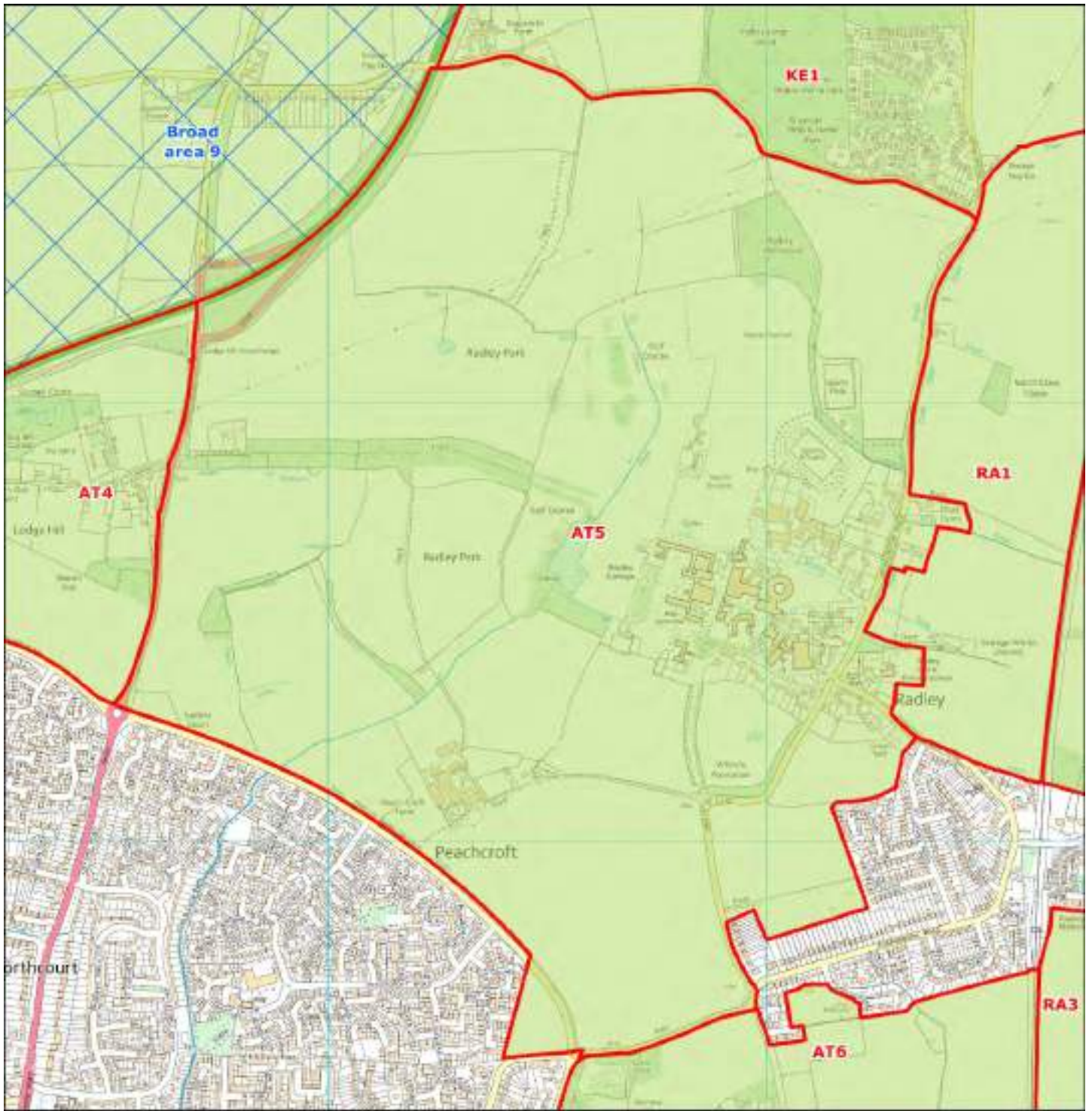
Notes:

There is no intervisibility with Oxford and there are unlikely to be any locations where parcel would be viewed in same visual context as Oxford. Its proximity to A34 and the screening of development from this direction by tree cover means that it makes some contribution to the generally rural character of the landscape on approach to Oxford, especially as it is on elevated ground (Abingdon already abuts the A34 to the south-east, but on lower ground than Lodge Hill).

Land Parcel Ref: AT5

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: AT5

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Abingdon-on-Thames which is not considered to be a large built up area. The parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Abingdon-on-Thames which is not considered to be a large built up area, i.e. Oxford. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The southern area of the parcel separates the settlements of Abingdon-on-Thames and Radley which are in close proximity to one another. The parcel plays an essential role in preventing the merging or erosion of the physical gap between the two settlements, particularly as the parcel occupies the whole width of the settlement gap. The land between the two settlements in the parcel has a strong sense of openness and the topography is relatively flat, with limited intervening vegetation on the boundaries of the parcel, thereby providing views between the settlements. The parcel therefore plays a strong role in preventing the merging of the two settlements, as any encroachment by either settlement would be clearly result in reduction of the gap.

The northern and southern boundaries of the parcel are also positioned between Abingdon (to the south) and Kennington (to the north). While the gap between the settlements is larger than that between Abingdon and Radley, the settlements are still in relatively close proximity to one another, but elevated ground at the centre of the parcel reduces the importance of the northern and southern fringes by blocking intervisibility.

Land Parcel Ref: AT5

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The majority of the parcel is free from built development, with open, regular, arable fields to the north, west and south, but the central-eastern part of the parcel contains Radley College. This is a large, independent boarding school with a significant number of modern buildings and associated infrastructure, including floodlit sports pitches and car parks. These constitute an urbanising influence on the Green Belt, but only to a limited extent due to the extent of tree cover (including parkland planting) screening them from views from the wider area. The only prominent building in views from the edge of Abingdon (Twelve Acre Drive) is Radley Hall, the early 18th century house which formed the original core of the College, so its character in external views is principally rural. The parcel also includes the College's golf course, a couple of small, isolated dwellings and a large farm; however, these developments are not considered to have a significant urbanising influence on the countryside within the parcel as a whole.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

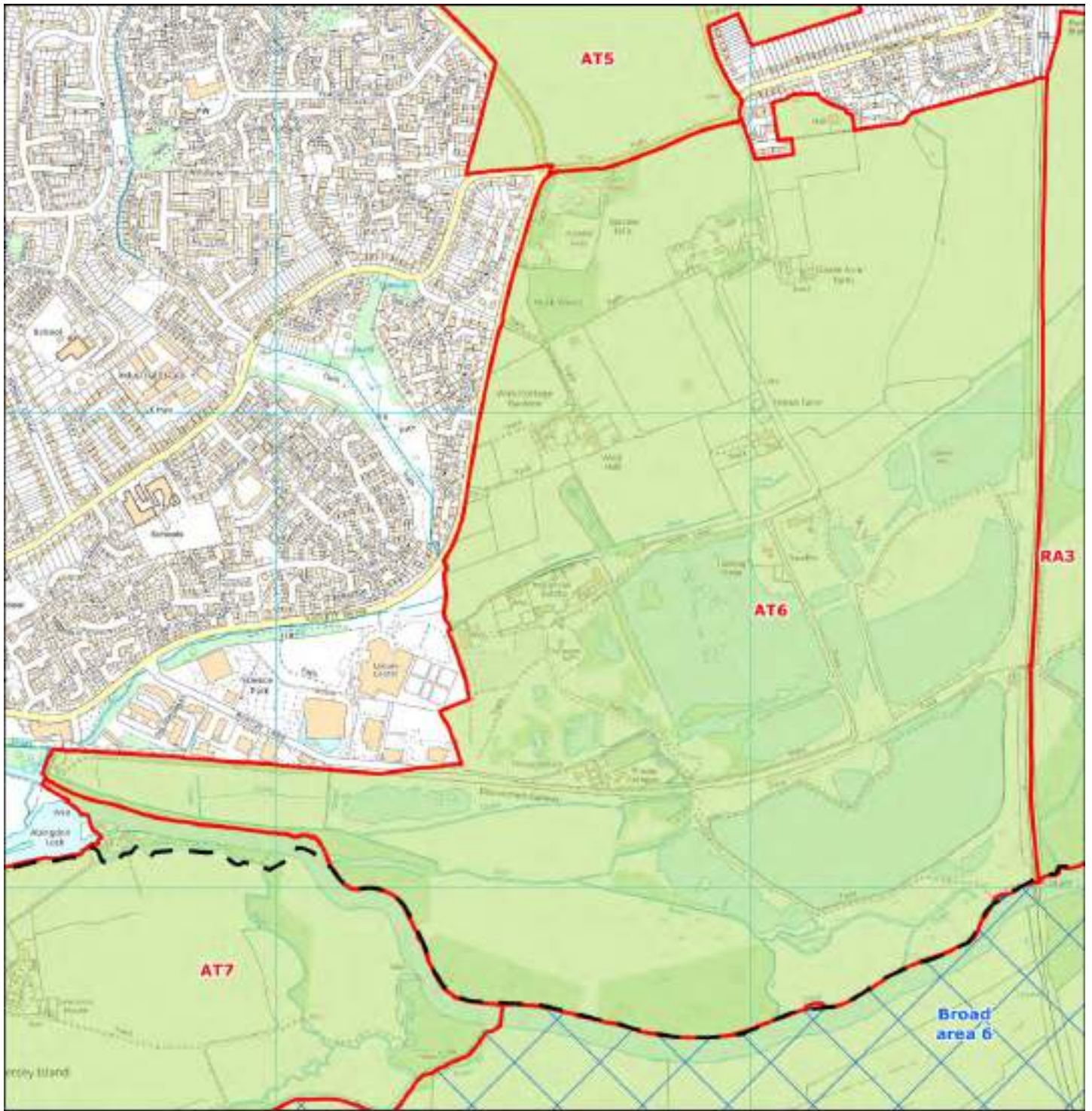
Notes:

Largely occupied by Radley College and Park, with arable farmland to north and south. The well-treed landscape hides most buildings from the wider view, even though on rising ground above Thames terrace. There is no intervisibility with the historic core of Oxford. Although not as prominent as the higher hills to the north (Boars Hill, Bagley Wood), these slopes constitute part of the rural ring around Oxford, which drops down to the Thames Valley at Radley but climbs up again at Nuneham Cortenay to the south-east. The rural character is important as backdrop to the undeveloped Thames Valley, viewed on approach to Oxford along A4074. Lower ground at the southern end of the parcel, between Abingdon and Radley village, is less sensitive in terms of Oxford's historic setting.

Land Parcel Ref: AT6

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: AT6

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Abingdon-on-Thames which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Abingdon-on-Thames which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The north-western area of the parcel separates the settlements of Abingdon-on-Thames and Radley which are in close proximity to one another, and the land between the two settlements has a strong sense of openness and the topography is relatively flat. This part of the parcel therefore plays a strong role in preventing the merging of the two settlements and is rated 'High', as any encroachment by either settlement would clearly result in closing the gap. The southern and eastern parts of the parcel however are less important in this respect and in isolation would rate lower.

Land Parcel Ref: AT6

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

Much of the parcel sits within the flat and open flood plain of the River Thames which follows the southern border of the parcel. Most of the southern two thirds of the parcel are functional wetlands with large areas of standing water associated with historic gravel extraction within the parcel. The remaining areas are scrubland and woodland on the edge of the River Thames and large regular-shaped agricultural fields in the north of the parcel. In the middle of these fields in the northern third of the parcel is a large coal storage and distribution centre. Further south, amongst the wetlands, is a gravel extraction facility and an industrial area containing a haulage vehicle mechanics and other aggregate processing facilities. These three facilities represent urbanising influences on the countryside within this parcel of Green Belt; however the parcel still retains the characteristics of countryside and has a significant amount of woodland within the parcel. In addition, there is a farm and a large country house (Wick Hall). The vegetation and low topography, in combination with the raised railway line running along the eastern edge of the parcel, screen views of the wider countryside from large areas of the parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

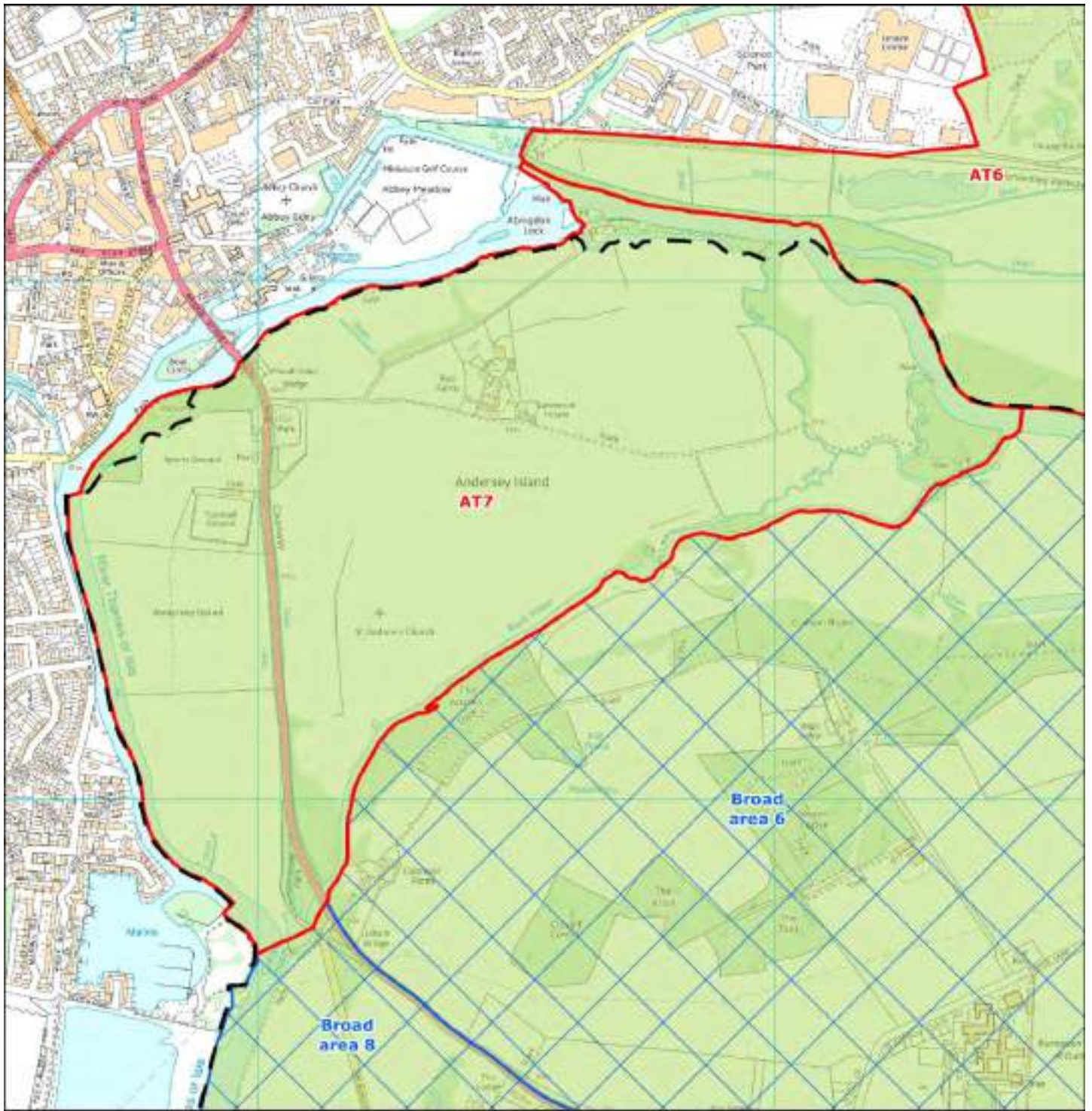
Notes:

There is no visual relationship with Oxford but its role in setting relates to the continuity of landscape character along the riverside extending all the way into the heart of Oxford. This is experienced by users of the Thames Path approaching Oxford along the Thames Valley. The extent of riverside tree cover, much of it 20th century planting in regular forms, reduces the setting significance of the central and northern parts of the parcel.

Land Parcel Ref: AT7

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Other Authorities: Vale of White Horse

Land Parcel Ref: AT7

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Abingdon-on-Thames which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Abingdon-on-Thames which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is located to the south of Abingdon-on-Thames and includes Andersey Island, and is bordered by the River Thames on the northern and western boundaries. The parcel is an area of flat low lying land, which has a strong sense of openness. However, the parcel is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose and makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements.

Land Parcel Ref: AT7

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The entire parcel sits within the flat and open flood plain of the River Thames which follows the northern, eastern and western borders of the parcel. The southern border of the parcel follows another smaller watercourse – Back Water. The parcel contains areas of scrubland and woodland on the edges of the watercourses and large irregular-shaped agricultural fields. There are two developments within the parcel: Rye Farm and two outdoor sports pitches for Abingdon Town Football Club and Abingdon Vale Cricket Club. There is a large floodlit car park adjacent to the sports facilities and the football ground is also floodlit. The football ground and car parks are the only urban features within the parcel and have a very limited urbanising influence over the parcel as a whole.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

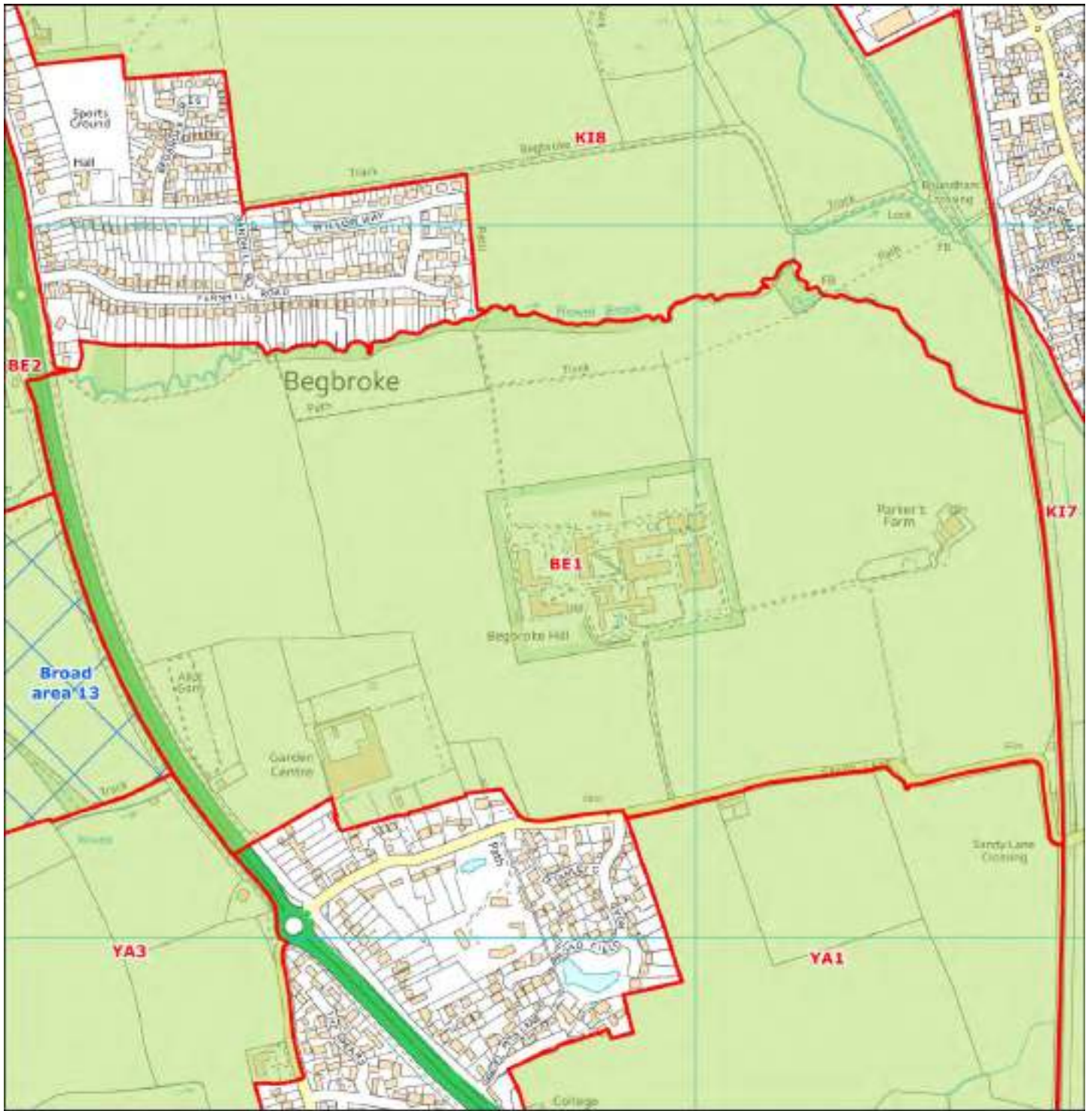
Notes:

The parcel consists of Thames-side meadowland, largely surrounded by tree belts. There is no intervisibility with Oxford but it forms part of the undeveloped Thames Valley landscape that extends all the way into the centre of the city, thus giving it a relationship with Oxford that relates to one of the key elements of its special character. However distance does limit the extent of this contribution. The riverside long distance path is well used and a popular riverboat service links Oxford and Abingdon, so the landscape between the two historic towns is viewed as a sequence.

Land Parcel Ref: BE1

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Cherwell

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: BE1

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Begbroke and Yarnton neither of which is considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Begbroke and Yarnton neither of which is considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel occupies the whole of the settlement gap between Begbroke and Yarnton. The parcel includes areas of open land to the west which is bordered by Woodstock Road, and to the east which is bordered by a railway line that runs to Oxford. The parcel includes Begbroke Science Park in the centre of the parcel. The parcel is a relatively flat area of land with low roadside vegetation on the southern and western boundaries which provide views across the parcel. The eastern boundary is also within very close proximity of Kidlington. The parcel therefore plays a strong role in preventing the merging of the settlements, as any encroachment by either settlement would clearly result in reducing the settlements gap.

Land Parcel Ref: BE1

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel is relatively open being predominantly made-up of large agricultural fields with views of the countryside to the north east and south west. However, the parcel contains the Begbroke Science Park, Yarnton Nurseries and an allotment. The Science Park in particular, occupying a central, hill-top location within the parcel, represents a significant urbanising influence on the Green Belt within the parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating:

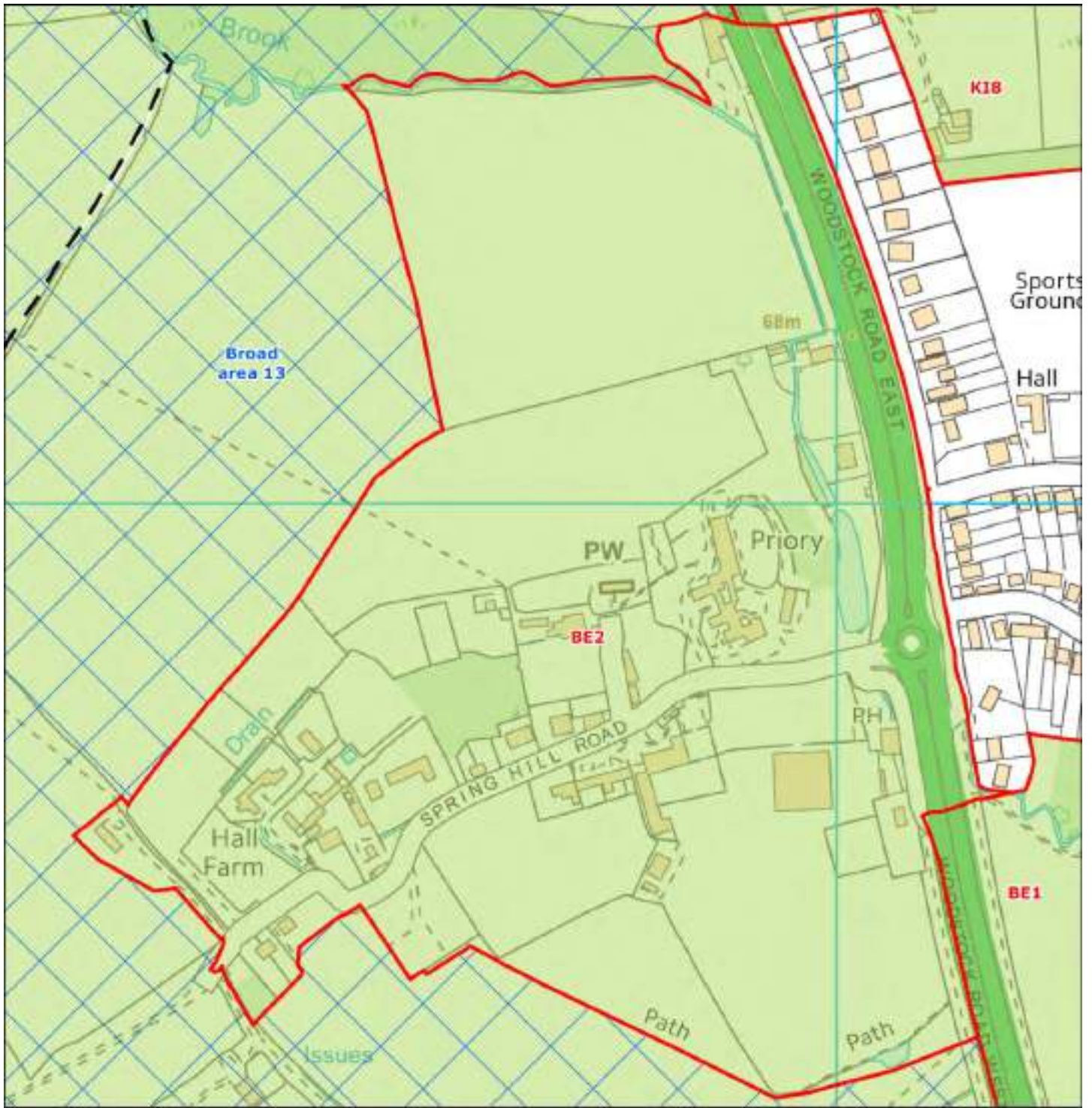
Notes:

Intervisibility with central Oxford is very limited at this distance, so this parcel's role as a gap between Yarnton, Begbroke and Kidlington makes only a minor contribution to setting in terms of the general rurality of Oxford's surroundings. The parcel is too far north of the principal views into Oxford to be seen in direct context with the Oxford's historic setting.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: BE2

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Begbroke which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Begbroke which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel contains the pre-20th century village of Begbroke, along with some modern infilling, which is separated from the more urban 20th century settlement by the A44. None of the remaining boundaries are in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose. The parcel includes open areas of land to the south and north, and low lying vegetation on its eastern boundary which provides views to the northeast and southeast. While the parcel is not adjacent to other settlements considered under this purpose, loss of openness could potentially move development slightly closer to Yarnton to the south, or extend the visible size of the higher part of the settlement. The parcel therefore plays a very limited role in preventing the merging of the settlements.

Land Parcel Ref: BE2

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel contains the older, western half of the village of Begbroke and the fields immediately to the north and south. While the agricultural fields are open with views of the wider countryside to the east and immediately to the west and south west, the majority of the land within the parcel has been developed along Spring Hill Road. Many of the developments, such as the village church and Hall Farm, are not considered to be urbanising influences, but the offices and associated car parking close to the main road have a moderate urbanising influence on the parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

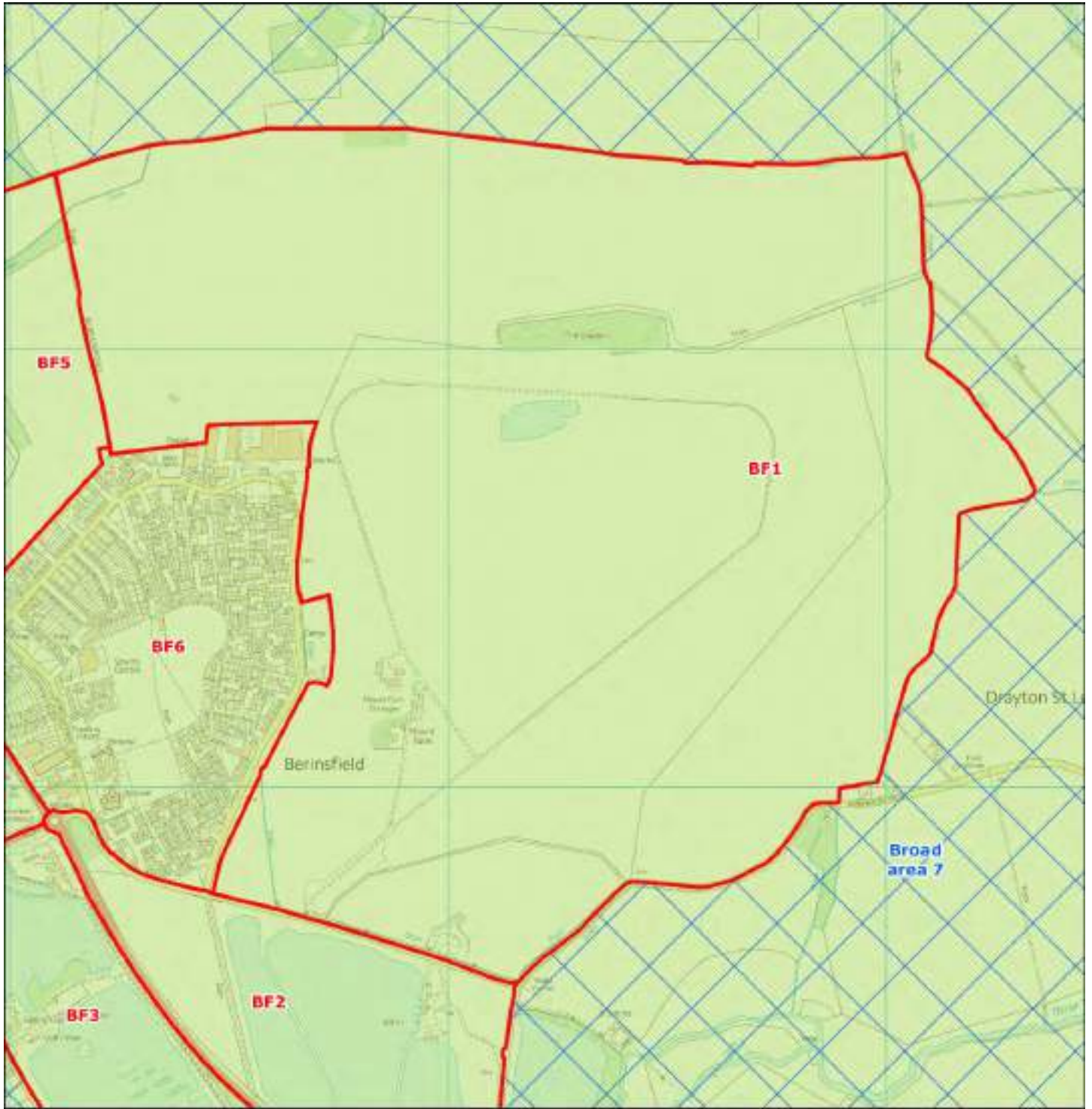
Notes:

Begbroke Wood, on high ground beyond the western edge of this parcel, is potentially prominent but there is no significant intervisibility between the older, western part of the village of Begbroke, which occupies most of the parcel, and Oxford. The parcel can be considered to contribute to Oxford's wider rural setting.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: BF1

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Berinsfield which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Berinsfield which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is a large area of flat land that has a strong sense of openness. Its western boundary borders Berinsfield. The parcel play a role in preventing the merging of the gap between Drayton St Leonard and Berinsfield, but is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose.

Land Parcel Ref: BF1

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel contains very large and open agricultural fields in relatively flat land adjacent to the floodplain of the River Thame, which is located to the south of the parcel. With the exception of 'The Copse' in the centre of the parcel, there is very little woodland within the parcel. There are good views of the surrounding countryside. There is very little development within the parcel. A small farm is located near the western border of the parcel, but it is not considered to have an urbanising influence over the countryside characteristics within the parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

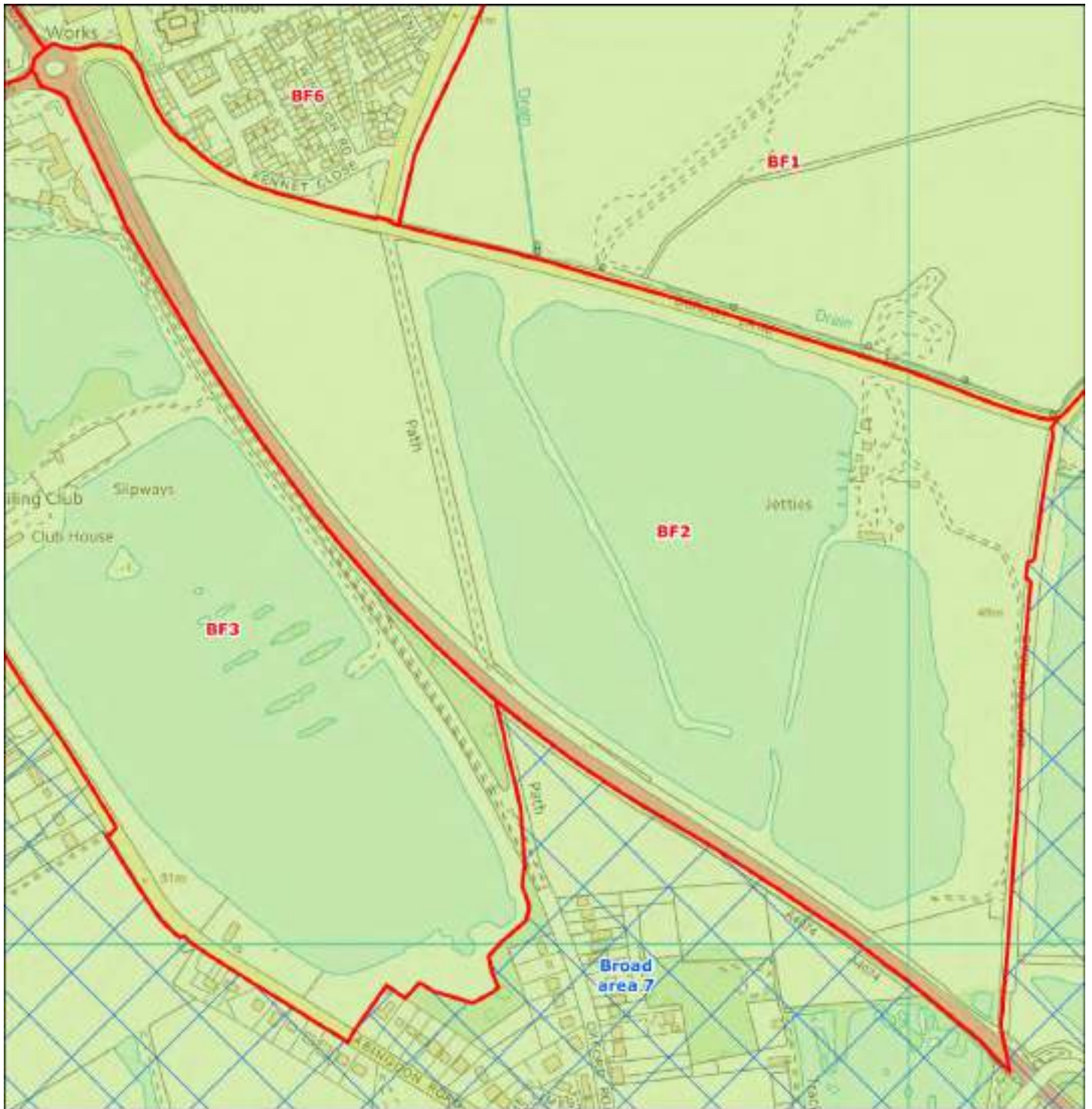
Notes:

Over 11km from central Oxford, with no visual relationship, but the distinctive form of the wider landscape in this area gives it some setting significance in relation to Oxford. The loop of the Thames between Long Wittenham and Dorchester, the surrounding arable landscape, and the hills to the north which hide Oxford, are all exposed to view from high ground to the south (e.g. Wittenham Clumps), and the open character of the Thames Valley extending all the way into the heart of Oxford is one of the special qualities of the City's setting.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: BF2

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Berinsfield which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Berinsfield which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is located to the south of Berinsfield and includes a small area of open land in its western portion and a water sports lake in its eastern portion. It is flat in topography and is bordered by the A4074 to the south, Burcot Lane to the north, and Drayton Road to the east. The parcel does play a key role in preventing the merging of Dorchester with Berinsfield, but is not in close proximity to any settlements considered against this purpose. It therefore makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between inset settlements.

Land Parcel Ref: BF2

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel contains one agricultural field in its western third and two water bodies associated with former gravel extraction adjacent to the floodplain of the River Thame to the east of the parcel. Intervisibility with the surrounding landscape is limited by perimeter tree planting. The only development within the parcel is a collection of small buildings used by the Oxford Wakeboard and Ski Club. These small buildings are not considered to have an urbanising influence on the countryside characteristics of the parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

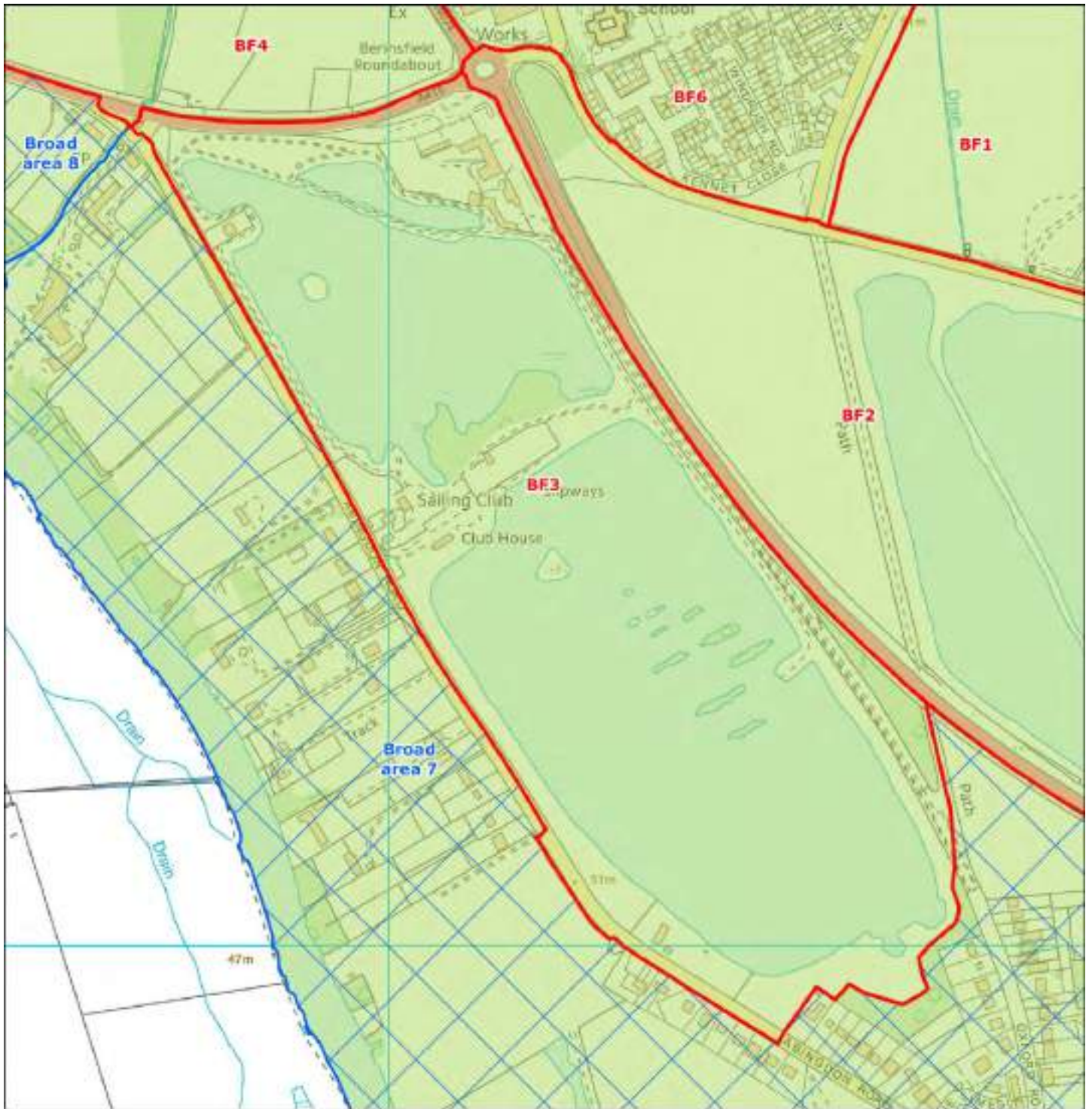
Notes:

Over 11km from central Oxford, with no visual relationship, but the distinctive form of the wider landscape in this area gives it some setting significance in relation to Oxford. The loop of the Thames between Long Wittenham and Dorchester, the surrounding arable landscape, and the hills to the north which hide Oxford, are all exposed to view from high ground to the south (e.g. Wittenham Clumps), and the gravel pits are also distinctive landscape features. The open character of the Thames Valley extending all the way into the heart of Oxford is one of the special qualities of the City's setting, although proximity to existing housing limits the importance of the parcel in this respect.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: BF3

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Berinsfield which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Berinsfield which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is located to the south of Berinsfield and includes two lakes which are used by Dorchester Sailing Club. The parcel is flat in topography and is bordered by the A415 to the north, A4074 to the east and Abingdon Road to the west. The parcel does play a key role in preventing the merging of Burcot and Dorchester with Berinsfield, but it does not play a role in preventing the merging of any inset settlements considered under Purpose 2.

Land Parcel Ref: BF3

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel contains two water bodies associated with the floodplain of the River Thames to the west of the parcel. Consequently, the land within the parcel has views of the surrounding countryside. There are two pockets of development within the portions of the parcel not occupied by the water bodies: a collection of retail facilities in the north eastern corner of the parcel, including a café and large car sales lot; and the Dorchester Sailing Club in the centre of the parcel. The buildings and areas of hardstanding associated with these uses have a degree of urbanising influence over the parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel consists of flooded gravel pits used for water sports. Over 11km from central Oxford, with no visual relationship, but the distinctive form of the wider landscape in this area gives it some setting significance in relation to Oxford. The loop of the Thames between Long Wittenham and Dorchester, the surrounding arable landscape, and the hills to the north which hide Oxford, are all exposed to view from high ground to the south (e.g. Wittenham Clumps), and the gravel pits are also distinctive landscape features. The open character of the Thames Valley extending all the way into the heart of Oxford is one of the special qualities of the City's setting, although the proximity to existing housing limits the importance of the parcel in this respect.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: BF4

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Berinsfield which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Berinsfield which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating:

Notes:

The south-eastern boundary of the parcel is adjacent to Berinsfield, with the western boundary adjacent to the A415 and the eastern boundary adjacent to the A4074. The parcel has a strong sense of openness and is a flat area of land. The boundaries are well screened with roadside vegetation including hedgerows and trees. The parcel is not in close proximity to an inset settlement considered against this purpose, but does play a key role in preventing the merging of Burcot and Berinsfield.

Land Parcel Ref: BF4

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel contains five irregular-shaped fields and some small pockets of woodland. The open agricultural fields have excellent views of the surrounding countryside. The only development within the parcel is located along the southern edge of the parcel on Abingdon Road: a small sewage treatment works within woodland and the Balfour cottages within the village of Burcot. The cottages are semi-detached dwellings set back from the road and not considered to be significant urbanising influences on the countryside within the parcel. While the sewage treatment works is considered to be an urbanising influence, its location within woodland significantly reduces this influence on the countryside within the surrounding Green Belt.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

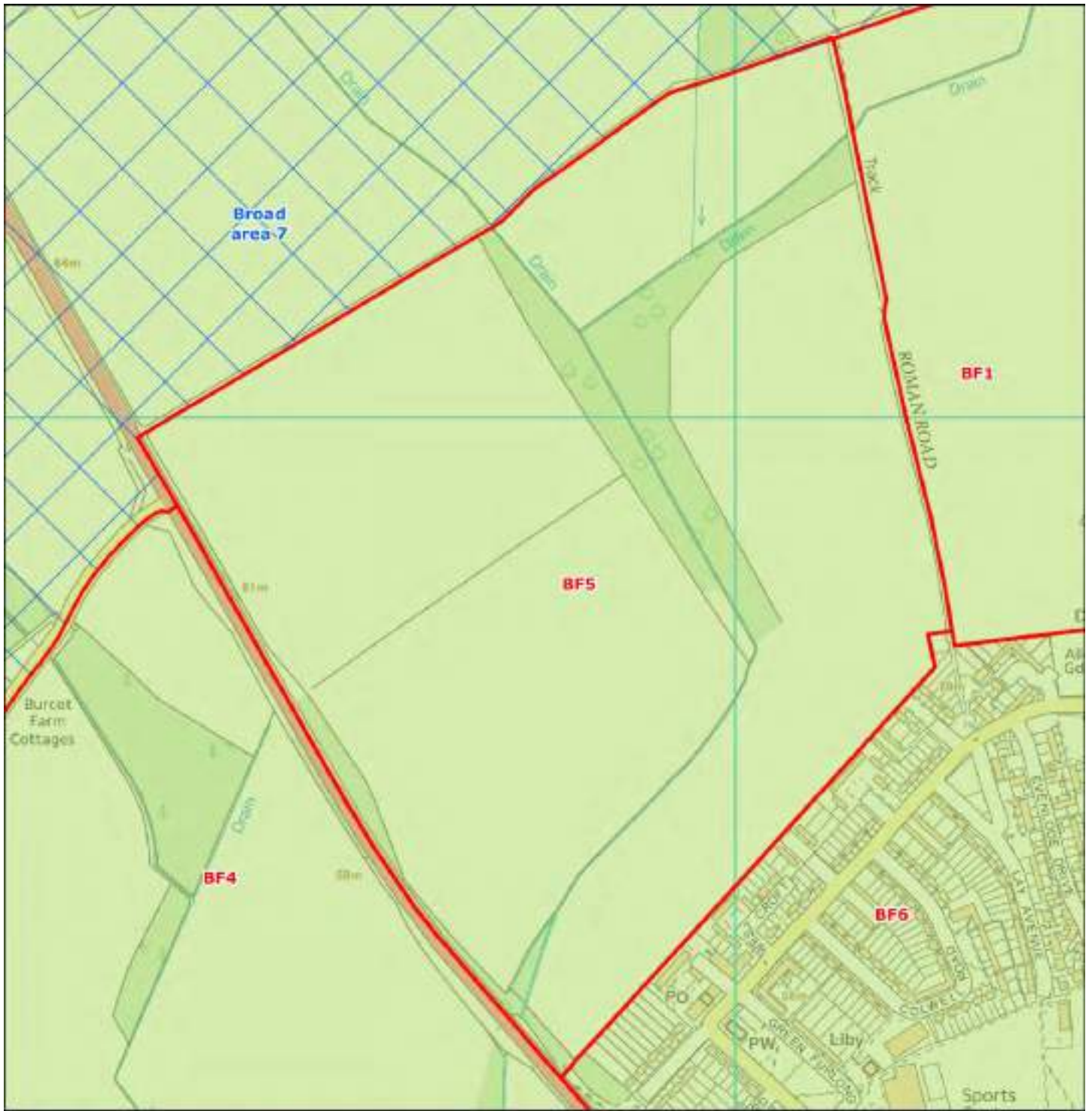
Notes:

There is no visual relationship with Oxford, but the distinctive form of the wider landscape in this area gives it some setting significance in relation to Oxford. The loop of the Thames between Long Wittenham and Dorchester, the surrounding arable landscape, and the hills to the north which hide Oxford, are all exposed to view from high ground to the south (e.g. Wittenham Clumps). The open character of the Thames Valley extending all the way into the heart of Oxford is one of the special qualities of the city's setting, although proximity to existing housing limits the importance of the parcel in this respect.

Land Parcel Ref: BF5

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: BF5

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Berinsfield which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Berinsfield which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The southern boundary of the parcel is adjacent to Berinsfield, with the western boundary adjacent to the A4074. The parcel has a strong sense of openness and is a flat area of land. The boundaries are well screened with vegetation including hedgerows and trees. The parcel is not in close physical or visual proximity to another settlement considered against this purpose.

Land Parcel Ref: BF5

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel contains five regular-shaped fields and some small pockets of woodland. The open agricultural fields have excellent views of the surrounding countryside. There is no development within the parcel and therefore no urbanising influences on the countryside within this parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

Notes:

There is no visual relationship with Oxford, but the distinctive form of the wider landscape in this area gives it some setting significance in relation to Oxford. The loop of the Thames between Long Wittenham and Dorchester, the surrounding arable landscape, and the hills to the north which hide Oxford, are all exposed to view from high ground to the south (e.g. Wittenham Clumps). The open character of the Thames Valley extending all the way into the heart of Oxford is one of the special qualities of the city's setting, although proximity to Berinsfield limits the importance of the parcel in this respect.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: BF6

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel contains Berinsfield which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel contains Berinsfield which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel consists of the village of Berinsfield, and is therefore not situated in a position to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.

Land Parcel Ref: BF6

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel contains the village of Berinsfield, which is urban in character. With the partial exception of the sports fields in the centre of the village, there is no land within the parcel which has the characteristics of countryside. The sports fields are surrounded by dense development, with which they are functionally associated, and are therefore not considered to be sufficiently rural in character to contribute to the Green Belt under Purpose 3.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating:

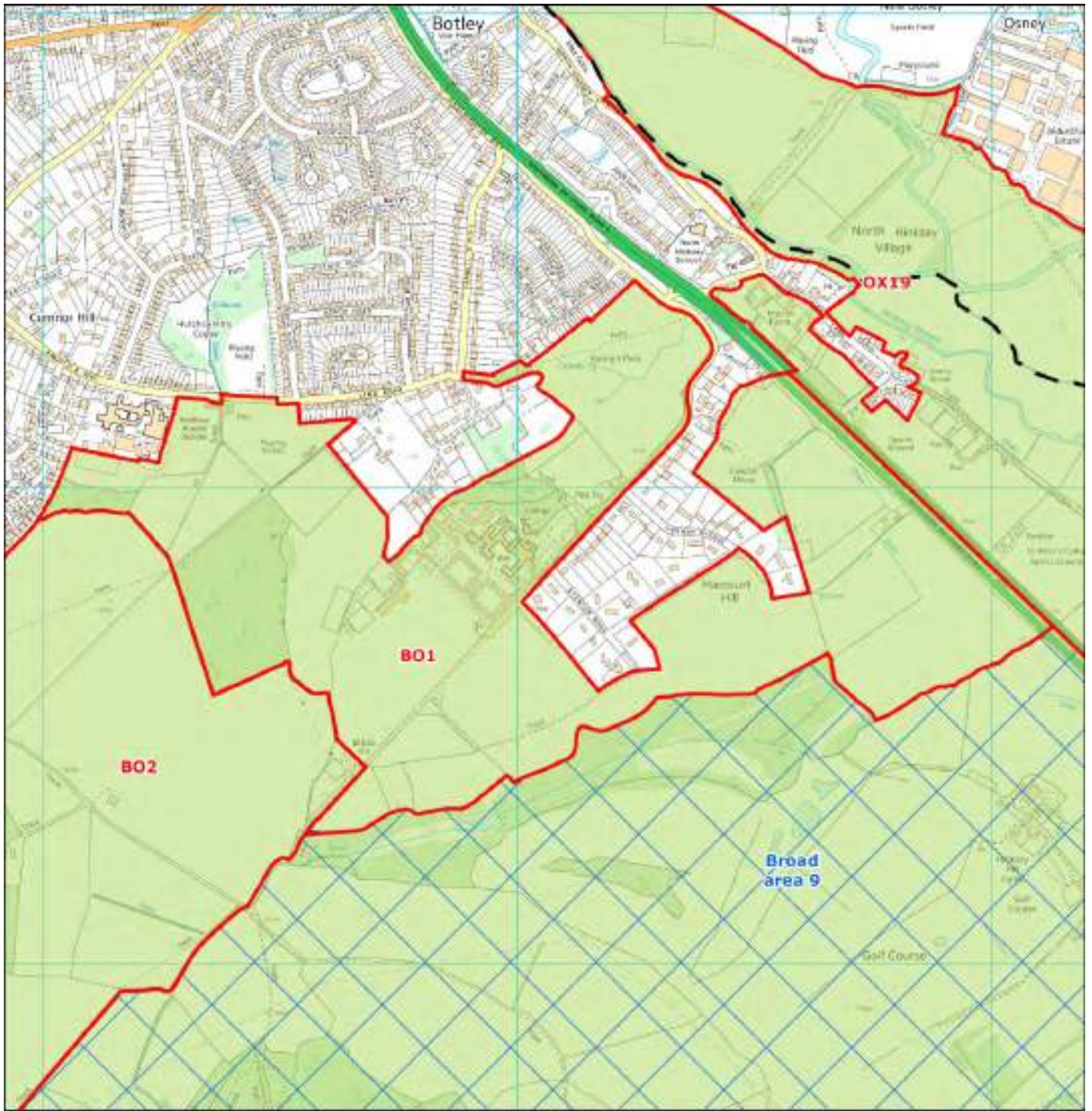
Notes:

Parcels consists of the village of Berinsfield (developed on the site of an air base from 1959). The form of the village contrasts with the linear settlements that follow the course of the Thames to the south, and as a modern settlement it cannot be considered to contribute to the historic character of Oxford's setting. There is no intervisibility with Oxford.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: BO1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel sits to the south of Botley, which is considered to be part of the large built-up area of Oxford in the study. The Southern By-pass Road (A34 dual-carriageway) follows the north eastern edge of the parcel. At the northern tip of the parcel. The centre of the parcel contains a higher education college - the Harcourt Hill campus of Oxford Brookes University - with several large buildings, associated floodlit sports facilities and car parks; these have an urbanising influence on the parcel. Housing development on Harcourt Hill and to the south of Lime Road combine with the University buildings to almost split the parcel in two in terms of open space. Much of the western part of the parcel is occupied by sports pitches and a short golf course associated with the College and with Matthew Arnold School, but there is late 20th century woodland plantation on the western boundary, pasture fields to the south of Harcourt Hill and the wooded Raleigh Park to the east. The elevation of the open ground to the west of the developed area, which provides some long views over the north part of Oxford and to the south, means that a relatively strong sense of openness is retained.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

There are no significant or durable boundary features to prevent the continued spread of development within this parcel. Harcourt Hill and side roads with existing development provide ready access to open land in the south of the parcel, and the existing urban edge is uneven in form, so the Green Belt is contributing to preventing further sprawling ribbon development from North Hinksey along the portion of Harcourt Hill which is a dirt track.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel is predominantly an open area situated on elevated topography that reduces in elevation from Cumnor Hill in the northwest towards the A34. Botley and the suburb of New Botley are separated by a very narrow gap in parcels OX19 and OX20, so BO1 located to the south-east of Botley, makes a more limited contribution to settlement separation. The presence of existing development within the parcel, on elevated ground visible from Oxford but separated by the A34 and Thames corridor, also limits the extent to which further development would result in perceived erosion of the settlement gap. The parcel does not contribute significantly to separation between Botley any other settlements considered under this Green Belt Purpose, with wooded hills providing clear separation to the south and west.

Land Parcel Ref: BO1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The centre of the parcel contains a higher education college with several large buildings, associated floodlit sports facilities and car parks, and development immediately to the north and south of the College combines with this to have an urbanising influence on the rest of the countryside within the parcel. However, the elevated landscape to the west provides long views encompassing the higher ground around Oxford, and the wooded Raleigh Park and proximity to the wooded stream valley to the south of Harcourt Hill add rural character.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

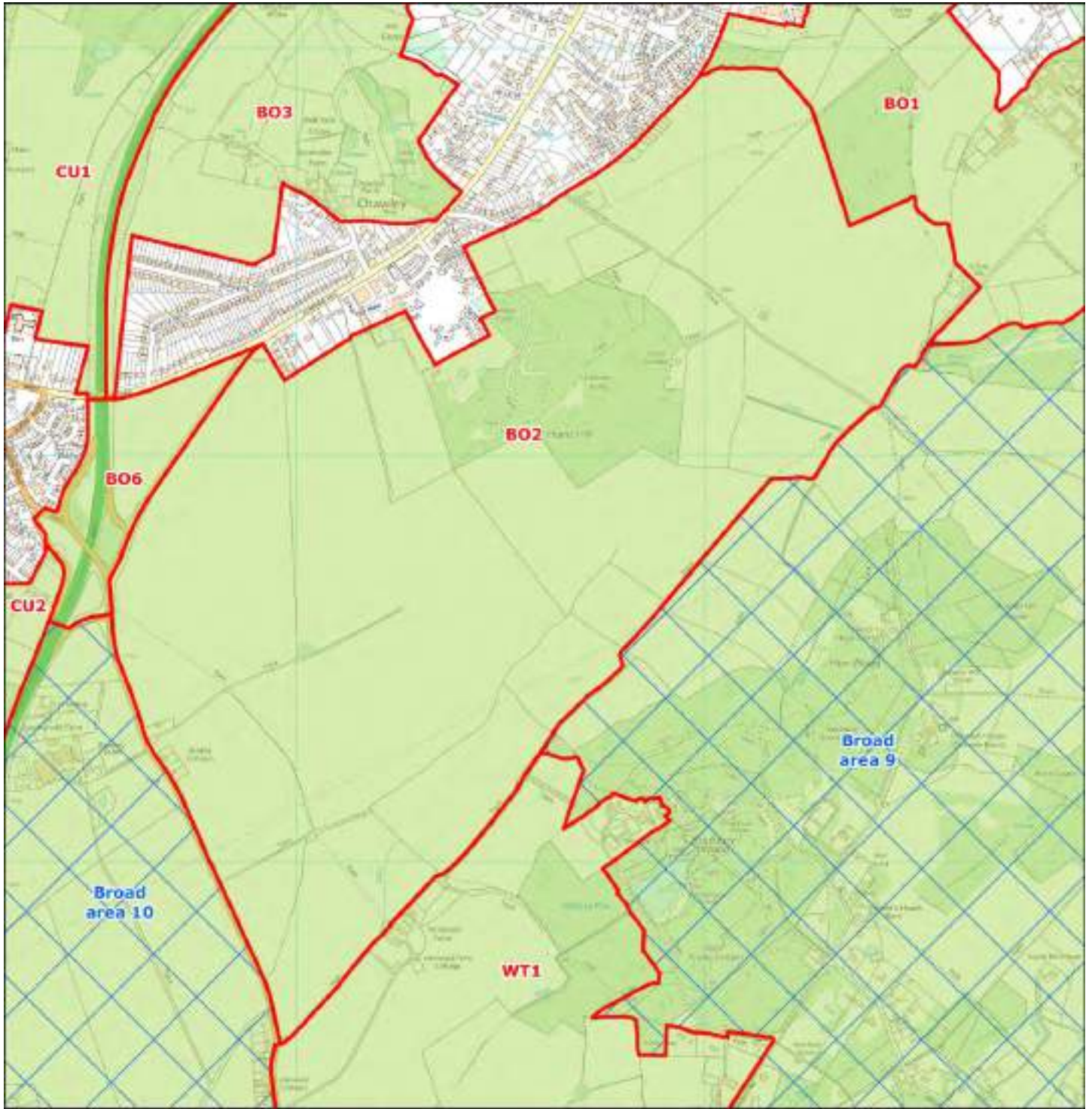
Notes:

The parcel is urban-edge in character, being largely occupied by sports pitches associated with the Harcourt Hill campus of Oxford Brookes University and Matthew Arnold School, but its largely green space contains Harcourt Hill and Cumnor Hill, which form part of the green backdrop to Oxford as seen in views from the city centre and high ground to the east. Raleigh Park, on the lower slopes of the area, provides one of the key views into central Oxford identified in the 'viewcones' policy. The rights of way through the parcel, leading from the city centre through North Hinksey to Hurst Hill and Youlbury, add to its significance, as does the presence of one of the conduit houses built in the early 17th century to supply water to Oxford.

Land Parcel Ref: B02

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: BO2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel sits to the south of Botley, which is considered to be part of the large built-up area of Oxford in the study. The parcel contains two areas of high ground: Cumnor Hill in the northern third of the parcel and the largely wooded Hurst Hill in the centre of the parcel. Most of the land within the parcel has been divided up into large irregular-shaped and open agricultural fields. There is very little development within the parcel – just a few small isolated dwellings and the parcel has a strong sense of openness.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to the urban edge at Cumnor Hill, where 20th century ribbon development has led to the formation of a continuous urban area along the road out from Oxford to the original village of Cumnor. There are no significant and durable boundary features to prevent expansion southwards from Cumnor Hill (where a former industrial site was recently redeveloped as housing), westwards from Harcourt Hill or eastwards from the B4017 at the western edge of the parcel, so the Green Belt is making a major contribution to preventing urban sprawl.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The northern boundary of the parcel runs along the southern settlement limits of Cumnor Hill, and the eastern boundary is also in close proximity to the southern end of Botley. The western edge is separated by only a narrow belt of land from the village of Cumnor, although the A420, which is dual carriage way at this point with strong boundary tree/hedge lines, runs through it. The parcel is a relatively large area of open land that is undulating in topography, including the elevated points of Hurst Hill and part of Cumnor Hill which provide strong views. The openness of the fields to the west of Hurst Hill makes a contribution to the sense of separation between Cumnor Hill and the village of Cumnor, but the extent of screening between the two limit the extent to which this contributes to Cumnor's distinct character. More significantly, the western slopes of Hurst Hill also contribute to visual separation between Cumnor/Cumnor Hill and Wootton, where the linear settlement of Henwood already occupies much of the physical gap between the two along the B4017. The parcel therefore plays an essential role in preventing the loss of open land which would cause the visual and physical coalescence of the settlements, and which would potentially be perceived as expansion of Oxford beyond its natural setting. On the eastern side of Hurst Hill there are no settlements considered under this Purpose for which the parcel functions as a gap.

Land Parcel Ref: BO2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel contains two areas of high ground: Cumnor Hill in the northern third of the parcel and the largely wooded Hurst Hill in the centre of the parcel. Most of the land within the parcel has been divided up into large irregular-shaped and open agricultural fields. From the summits and slopes of these hills there are excellent views of the surrounding countryside. There is very little development within the parcel – just a few small isolated dwellings which are not considered to be urbanising influences on the countryside within the land parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

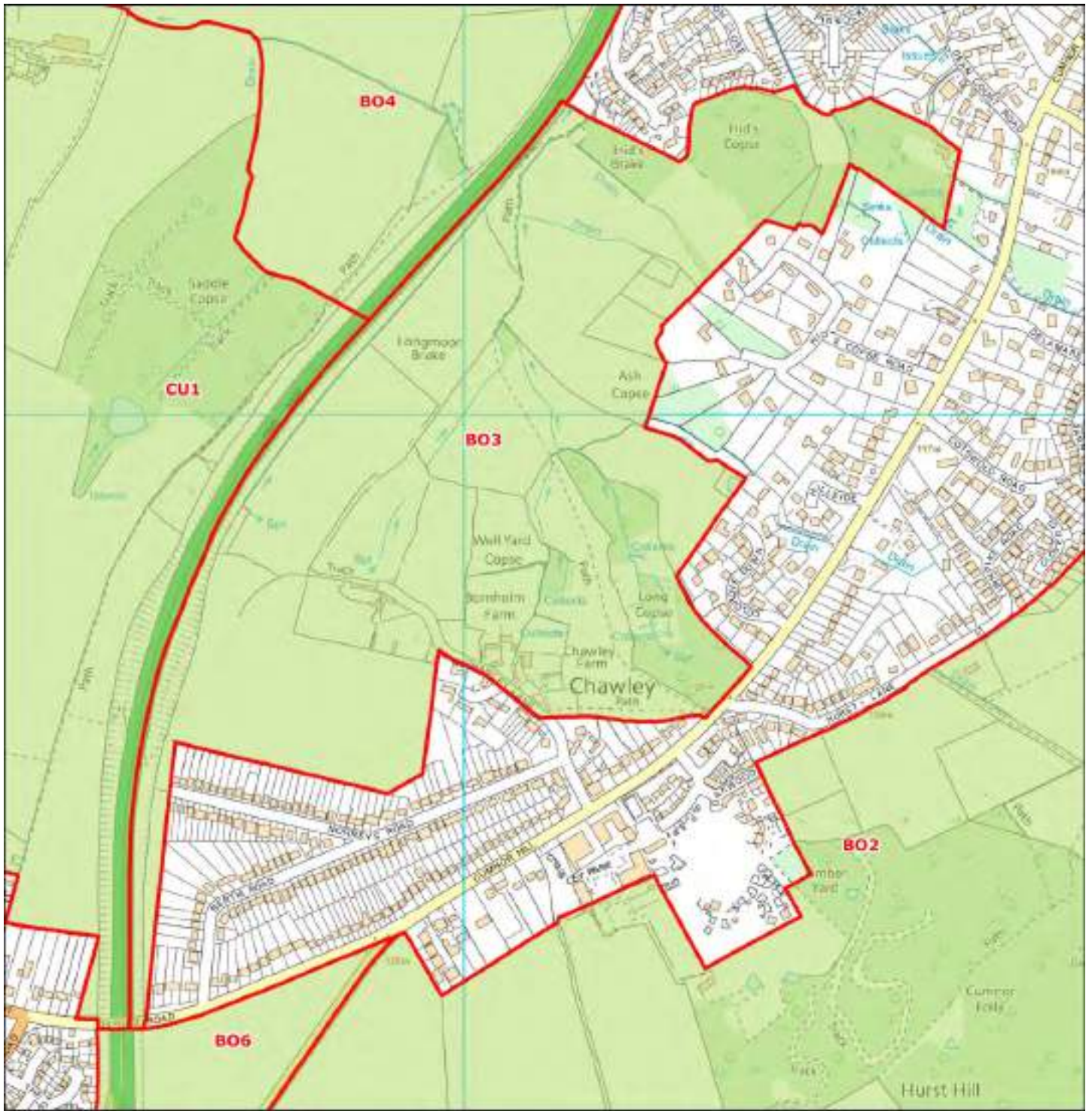
Notes:

The wooded Hurst Hill forms part of the green skyline backdrop to Oxford, as seen from parts of the city and from viewpoints on high ground to the east, and so is important as a setting. The area to the east, whilst screened from Oxford by Cumnor Hill, is still important as part of this 'inner ring', and its undeveloped character can be appreciated by users of the several rights of way that pass through the area. The western half of the parcel - open, relatively flat arable land between Cumnor and the ridgeline - is less important in this respect but does still contribute to Oxford's distinctive setting by emphasising the rural character of the hills that frame the city.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



 District boundary  Green belt parcel  Broad area  Green belt 0 0.15 km 

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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: BO3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel sits to the west of Botley, which is considered to be part of the large built-up area of Oxford in the study. The parcel is on relatively high ground. Most of the land within the parcel has been portioned up in to small irregular-shaped fields lined by mature woodland, screening views of the surrounding countryside. However, in the larger fields it is possible to see long range views of the countryside to the north and north west of the parcel. With the exception of a cluster of large largely detached dwellings in the south of the parcel off Chawley Lane there is very little development within the parcel. These dwellings are rural in character and are not considered to have a significant urbanising influence.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

There are no significant and durable boundary features to protect the area from further sprawling ribbon development to the west of Botley along both sides of Chawley Lane. The A420 represents a barrier to expansion beyond the parcel, but the urban settlement edge form, which to the north and south of the parcel reaches the A420, suggests that open spaces within the parcel would be vulnerable.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is situated between Botley to the north and Cumnor Hill to the south. These settlements are already joined along the B4044, but valley form of this parcel to the north of Chawley creates a separation which limits the sense of connection between them. The position of the parcel, and its enclosure to the west by the A420, means that it does not contribute to any sense of separation between the adjacent urban edge and any other settlements considered under this Purpose.

Land Parcel Ref: BO3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel to the north of Chawley Lane is on undulating ground, sloping relatively sharply down from south to north. Most of the land within the parcel has been portioned up in to small irregular-shaped fields lined by mature woodland, screening views of the surrounding countryside, although in the larger fields it is possible to see long range views of the countryside to the north and north west of the parcel. With the exception of a cluster of large largely detached dwellings in the south of the parcel off Chawley Lane there is little development within the parcel. Dwellings are rural in character and are not considered to have an urbanising influence on the countryside within the Green Belt parcel. The A420 is not a sufficiently strong presence in the landscape to detract from rural character. The flatter field at the south western corner of the site is more exposed to development with an urban character, and so would score less highly.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

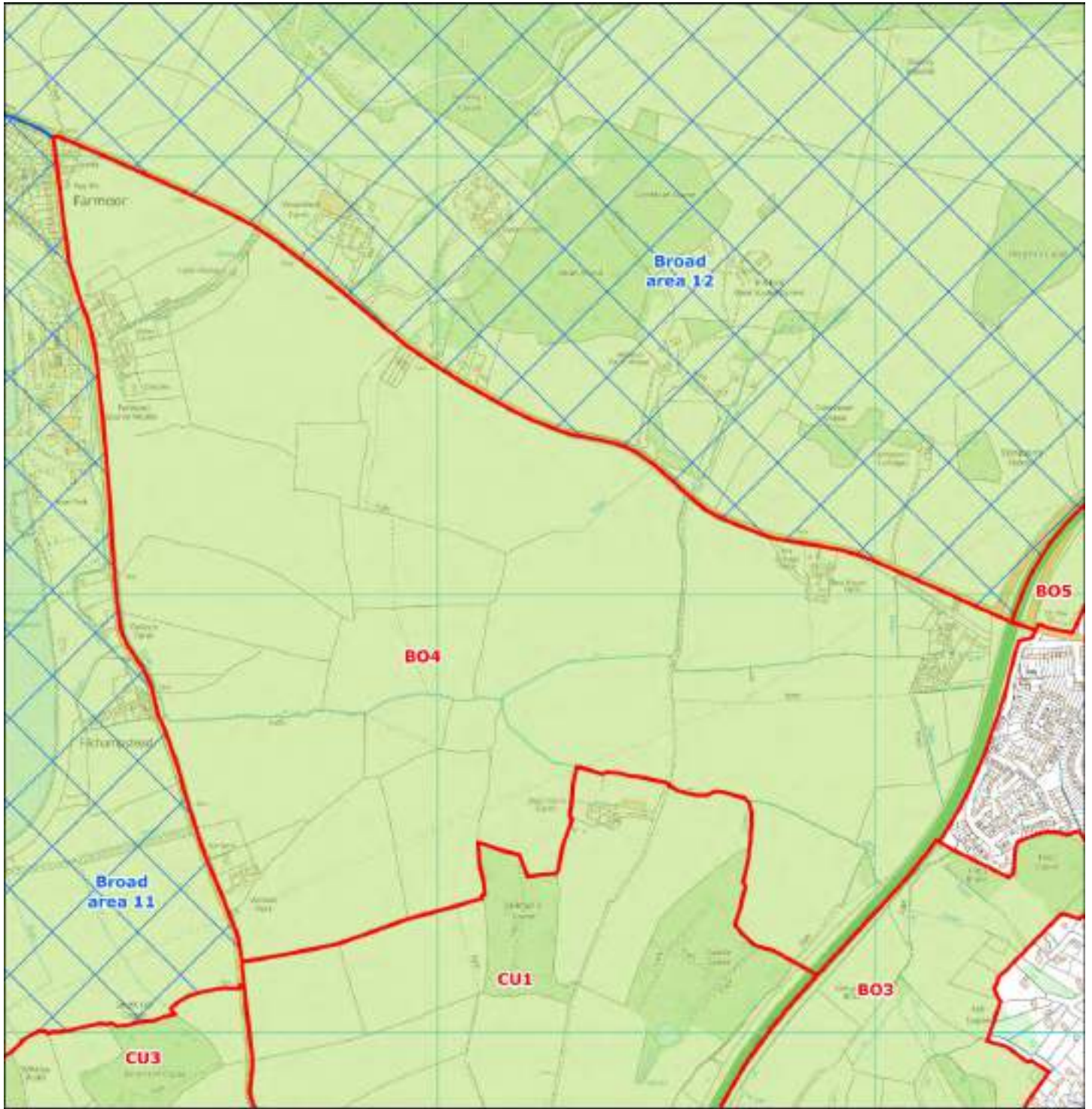
Notes:

These north and west-facing fields and woodland blocks have no intervisibility with Oxford, except potentially to a limited extent at the high, southern end of the parcel. The developed higher hillsides to the north (Dean Court), east and south present a surprisingly wooded appearance in views from lower ground to the west, to which the lower slopes within the parcel contribute only to a limited extent.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: B04

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel sits to the west of Botley (the Dean Court area), which is considered to be part of the large built-up area of Oxford in the study. The parcel contains relatively flat land in between the areas of high ground immediately to the north and south of the parcel. These areas of high ground limit the views of the wider countryside to the east across Farmoor Reservoir and the River Thames and beyond, but provide strong open views over the parcel (e.g. from the B4017). The parcel is made-up of large irregular-shaped agricultural fields. There are relatively few trees and buildings within the parcel adding to the sense of openness. There are two farms within the parcel – Valley Farm and Red House Farm – a few isolated dwellings and, in the far north eastern corner of the parcel, a small modern housing development on Nobles Lane. A line of pylons crosses the parcel and there are some buildings located in the village of Farmoor at the western edge of the parcel along Cumnor Road (Farmoor Court contains several medium-size buildings used as office space by local businesses). None of these are considered to be significant urbanising influences on the parcel as a whole, but there is localised impact on the north-east corner.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The A420 dual-carriageway constitutes a significant barrier to urban expansion across most of the parcel, but Eynsham Road (the B4044) crosses under it, creating an access which has already led to an element of urbanising development in the north-east corner of the parcel, along Nobles Lane. There is therefore considered to be some potential for further sprawl to occur.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel borders Botley on its eastern boundary, with Cumnor situated to the south. The A420 provides separation at present, but a loss of openness to the west of the main road could, due to the visibility of the parcel in the landscape, be viewed as a reduction in the extent of the settlement gap. There is however no significant intervisibility between the settlements. Eynsham, to the north west, has little visual relationship with the other settlements. Development along the B4044 would narrow the gap between Botley and Farmoor however Farmoor is not included as a inset settlement for the purpose of this assessment.

Land Parcel Ref: BO4

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is important as a very visible, open rural landscape close to the urban edge at Botley, with strong views from surrounding higher ground. In places these views also encompass the reservoir at Farmoor, which adds to the sense of openness. The impact of urbanising development in this context is currently small, and limited to the parcel's fringes.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

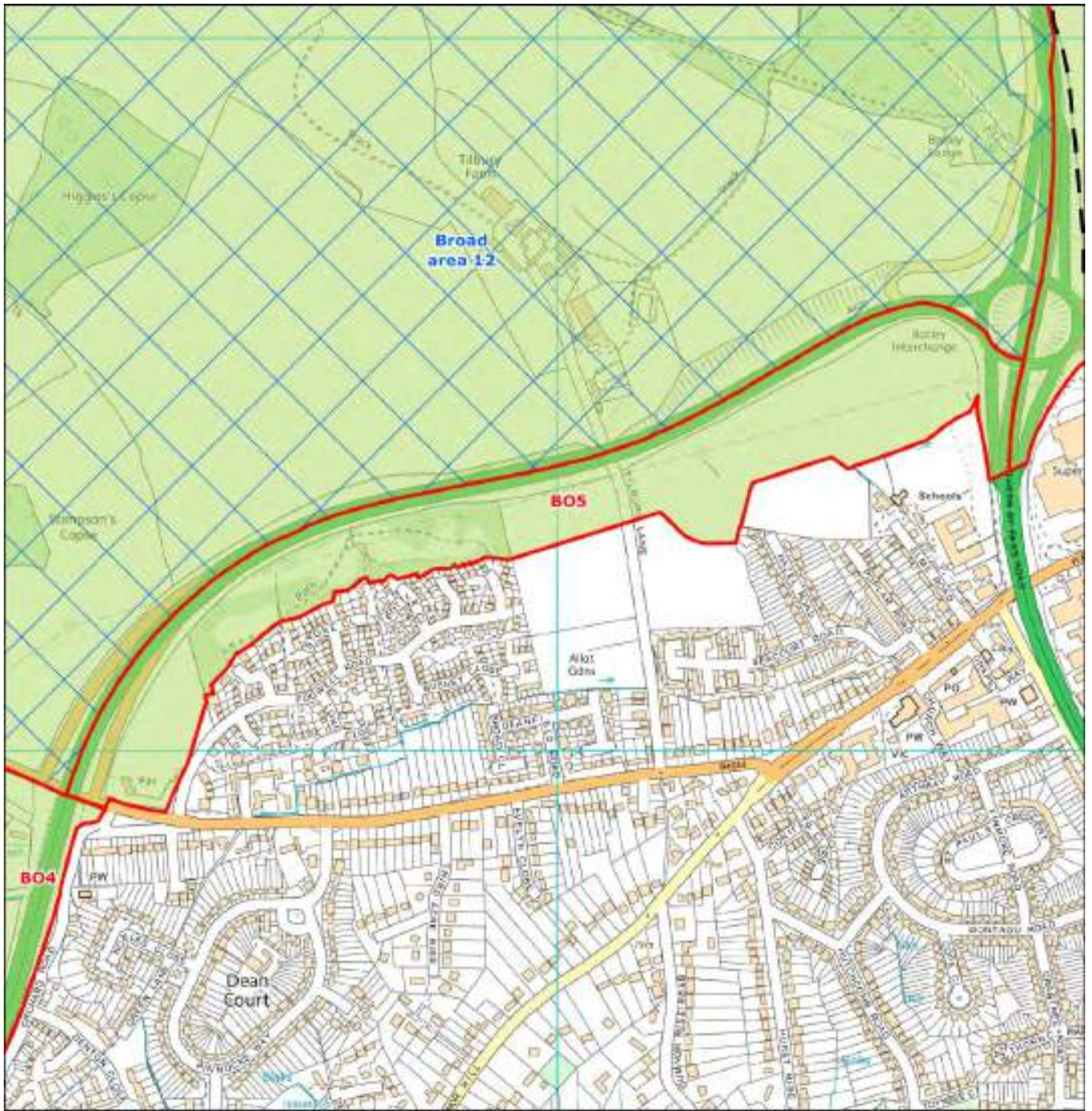
Notes:

This is an open, flat, agricultural landscape of large fields. There is no intervisibility with central Oxford, but heading towards the city from Eynsham/Farmoor, the character and form of the wooded hills that frame the west side of Oxford is apparent, with the Chawley/Dean Court/Botley urban area being well screened by tree cover. The fields in this parcel contribute to that rural setting, and are very open to view from the higher ground that surrounds them on three sides.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: BO5

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel sits to the north of Botley (which is considered to be part of the large built-up area of Oxford in the study) on the lower slopes of Wytham Hill, and contains a thin strip of undeveloped land in between the settlement edge and the A420. There are three open fields within the parcel and one thin pocket of woodland. Within the open fields it is possible to see out over the village of Botley to the south and Oxford to the east; however, there are relatively few views of the wider countryside from the parcel. A line of pylons runs through the thin parcel and a small community building sits in the western corner. Sandwiched between the village and the A420, the openness of this strip of ground is considered to be strongly affected by urbanising elements, even though it is largely undeveloped.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

Within the parcel there is no significant defensible boundary to prevent development extending out to the A420 dual-carriageway, which marks a clear settlement edge beneath the more sensitive higher slopes of Wytham Hill.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel plays no role in settlement separation, being contained within the A420, and from settlements to the north by Wytham Hill.

Land Parcel Ref: B05

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Low

Notes:

This narrow strip of land between Botley and the A420 is significantly affected by urban influences, and separated from the wider countryside by the dual-carriageway.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

Eynsham Road / West Way run through the lowest part of Botley, with most of the urban area rising upslope to the south. There is some limited development up from the valley floor to the north, but the undeveloped slopes up to Wytham Hill are a significant feature in the containment of Oxford within its 'ring' of hills. The location of the parcel to the south of the A420 suggests some separation from Wytham Hill, but this sloping land is potential visible from high points in central Oxford - e.g. the University Church of St Mary - as part of the rural backdrop to views across the city rooftops and spires. The pylons within and near the parcel already detract, and visible development set against a wooded backdrop (which hides the A420) would detract further.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



District boundary Green belt parcel Broad area Green belt 0 0.09 km

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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: BO6

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel abuts both Cumnor village and Cumnor Hill, encompassing the A420 which separates them and a road bridge which connects them. Cumnor Hill is considered to be part of the large built up area, so unlike the other Cumnor parcels this one is assessed against Purpose 1. A clear distinction can be made between the roads associated with the junction, the gaps between which are mostly wooded to provide screening, and the area to the east which is occupied by one large arable field, containing no development.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

Only the B4017 separates development in Cumnor Hill from the eastern part of the parcel. This is not a significant and durable boundary. The road along the southern edge of the parcel also provides ready access.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

There is a clear difference in character between the original village of Cumnor, to the west of the A420, and modern ribbon development in Chawley and Cumnor Hill to the east. Whilst there has been modern development close to the A420 on the western side of the road there is still a clear visual separation between the settlements on the two sides of the main road, despite their proximity. Distinction can be made between the western part of the parcel, including the trees and roads, which play an essential role in separating the settlements, and the arable field which in its own right would score 'medium'. Development in the latter would significantly increase the extent of the developed boundary between the two areas, but the A420 would still constitute a significant separator and there would be unlikely to be any great increase in intervisibility between them.

Land Parcel Ref: BO6

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

A clear distinction can be made between the roads associated with the junction, the gaps between which are mostly wooded to provide screening, and the area to the east which is occupied by one large arable field, containing no development. Although adjacent to the A420, and therefore influenced by traffic noise, the field has a strong visual attachment to the broader arable landscape to the east, from which it is separated only by a road with low hedges, running up the slopes of The Hurst and Youlbury to form an expansive open rural area.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

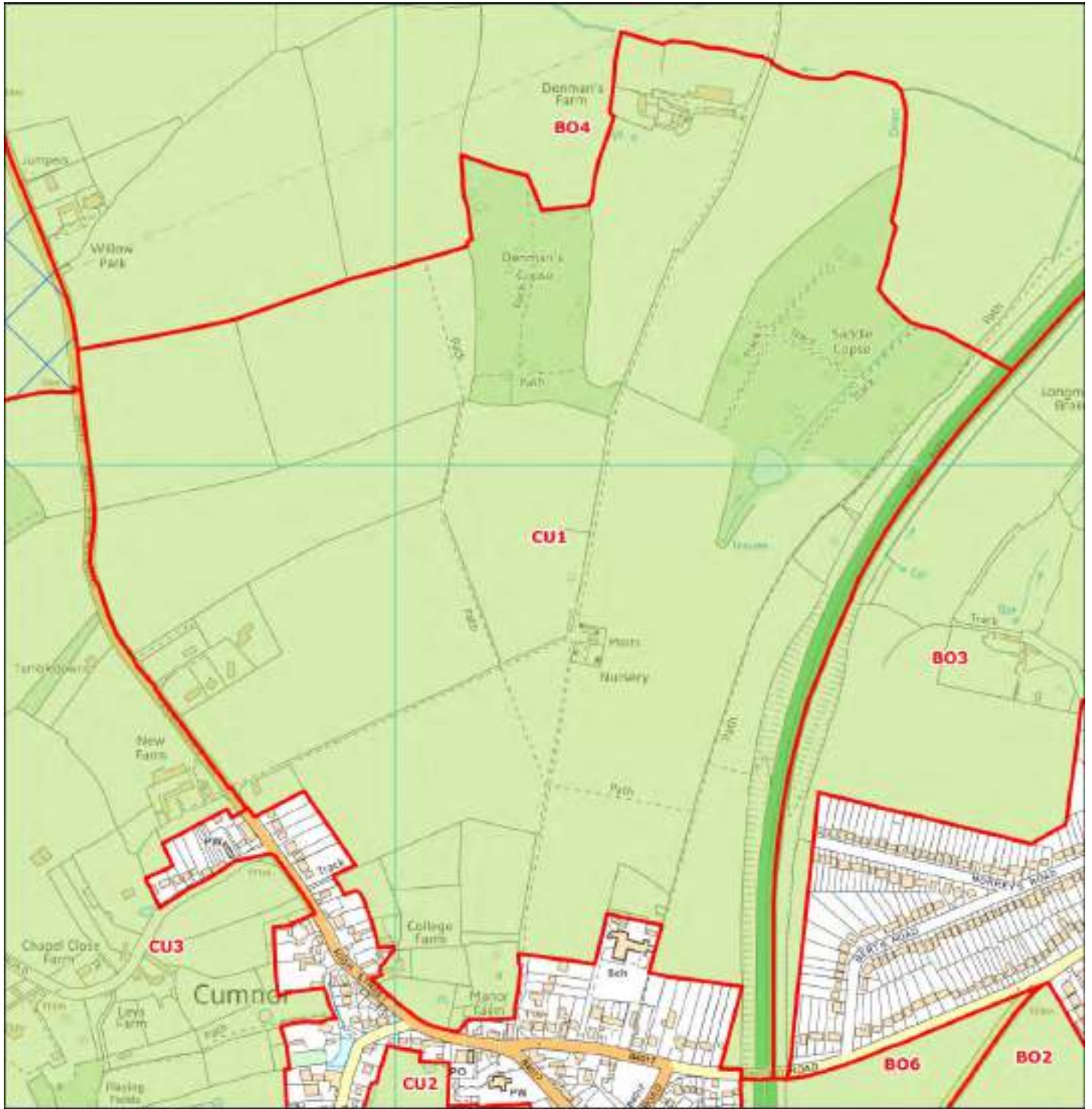
Notes:

The parcel is screened from Oxford and high ground to the east of the city by the wooded Hurst Hill and Youlbury. Open views across this parcel towards Youlbury and Hurst Hill contribute to the rural character of this area, which in turn generates a sense of the City being contained by a rural landscape, despite its proximity via the developed route through Cumnor Hill and Botley to the city centre. The small size of the parcel limits the extent to which the parcel contributes to this.

Land Parcel Ref: CU1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: CU1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Cumnor, which in turn, separated only by the A420, adjoins Cumnor Hill. The latter is considered to be part of the large built up area, demonstrating clear characteristics of ribbon development. The outer edges of Cumnor, other than where it faces the A420, retain a village character despite in places being subject to 20th century infill. Development around Cumnor would not therefore be considered to be a continuation of the urban sprawl of Cumnor Hill, so this parcel is not assessed against the purpose of checking the unrestricted sprawl of the large built-up area.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel abuts Cumnor which is not considered to be a large built up area, i.e. Oxford. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the potential future sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel is located to the north/northeast of Cumnor and is bordered by the A420 to the east and B4017 to the south/ southwest. The parcel is relatively open, and flat towards the southern half of the parcel before the landform falls away towards the north, so there is no intervisibility between Cumnor and parcel BO4 to the north. There is limited intervisibility across the A420 between this parcel and the Cumnor Hill urban area, so any loss of openness in the south eastern part of the parcel could be seen to play a minor role in reducing the perceived settlement gap, but the impact would principally be on settlement setting rather than any increased physical connection or reduced distance between the settlements.

Land Parcel Ref: CU1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel contains large irregular-shaped fields and two pockets of woodland – Denman’s Copse and Saddle Copse - on high ground overlooking Farmoor Reservoir and the River Thames valley. The southern half of the parcel sits on the relatively flat land upon which the village of Cumnor has been built, whereas the northern half of the parcel slopes down steeply towards Farmoor. The parcel contains a limited amount of development, none of which is considered to have an urbanising influence on the countryside within the parcel, namely Denman’s Farm, a plant nursery and a small collection of large detached dwellings on Cumnor Road.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and ‘special character’ of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

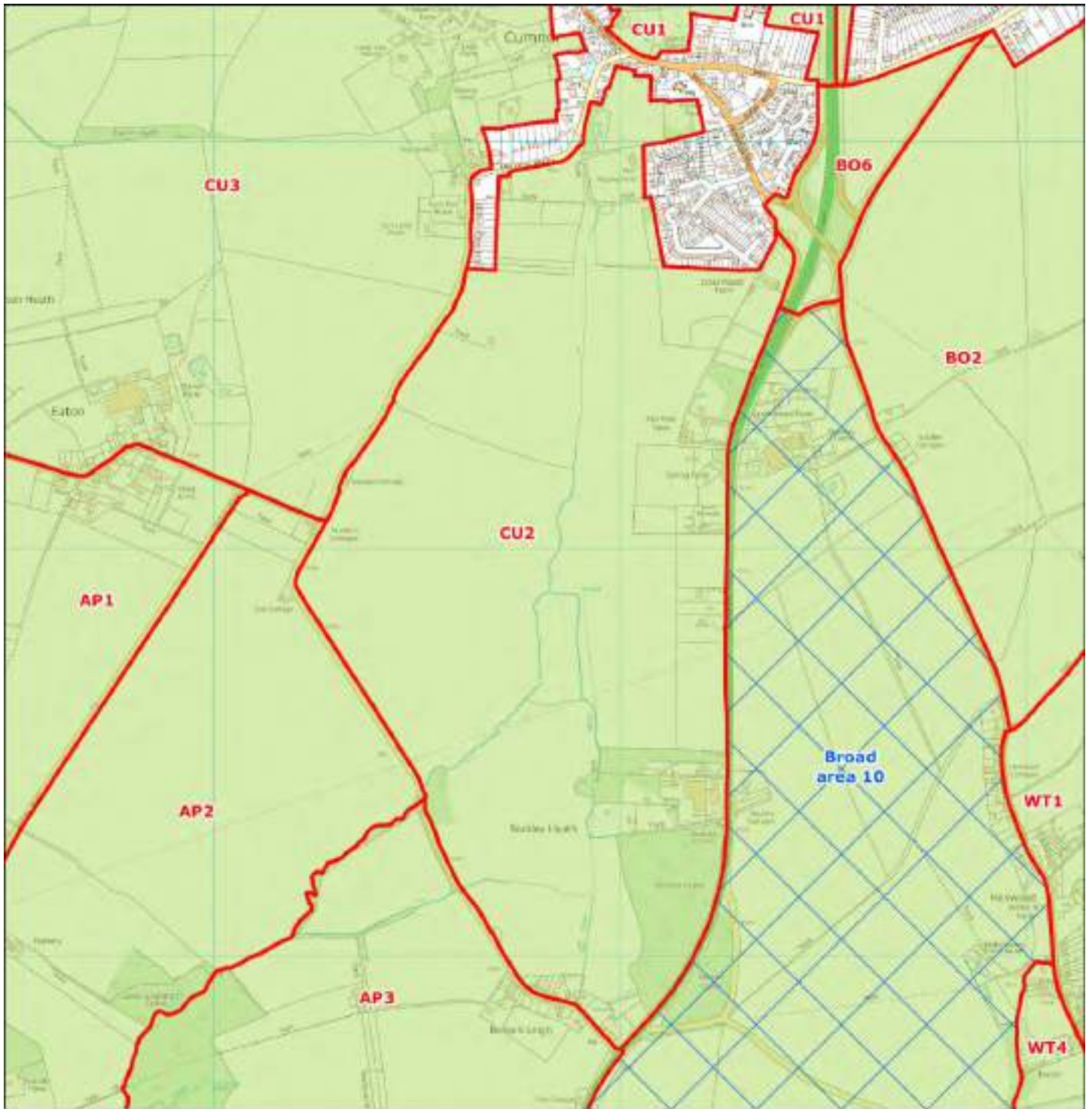
Notes:

The two woodland blocks in this parcel contribute to Oxford's setting when viewed from the high ground to the north east of the city (including Elsfield, a viewcones policy viewpoint), but any development in the area would be screened by Botley. There is no intervisibility with the historic centre of Oxford. The parcel is important in relation to Farmoor Reservoir, adjacent lower ground to the west of Botley and the wooded Wytham Hill to the north, as these landscape elements combine to form a distinctive and visually expansive rural area, the first arable farming landscape that is encountered on leaving the city via Botley.

Land Parcel Ref: CU2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: CU2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Cumnor, which in turn, separated only by the A420, adjoins Cumnor Hill. The latter is considered to be part of the large built up area, demonstrating clear characteristics of ribbon development, but the outer edges of Cumnor, other than where it faces the A420, retain a village character despite in places being subject to 20th century infill. Development around Cumnor would not therefore be considered to be a continuation of the urban sprawl of Cumnor Hill, so the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of the large built-up area.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel abuts Cumnor which is not considered to be part of a large built up area.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel spans an area between Cumnor to the north and the village of Bessels Leigh to the south, and the eastern boundary comes close to the village of Eaton. Wootton and Appleton are the nearest settlements to the south considered under Purpose 2: the A420 and associated hedgerows forms a physical and visual barrier between Wootton and Cumnor but there is less of a sense of separation between Wootton and Appleton. The parcel is relatively flat, with predominantly large, arable fields and a strong sense of openness. There are no direct views between the settlements, but any increase in settlement size at Cumnor would be perceived as reducing the distance between the two.

Land Parcel Ref: CU2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel contains open irregular-shaped agricultural fields which become the larger as the land moves south of the village of Cumnor. A small pocket of woodland – Rockley Copse – lies in the south eastern corner of the parcel. From the open fields it is possible to see out in to the wider open countryside immediately surrounding the parcel. A cricket pavilion and associated car park sit close to the village in the north of the parcel. To the south east along the western side of the A420 lie several isolated and detached dwellings, including those within the small village of Bessels Leigh on the southern border of the parcel. North of Bessels Leigh is the only significant urbanising feature within the parcel: a large office block and associated car park used by Ebbon-Dacs Ltd but this deemed to have a very limited urbanising influence on the parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

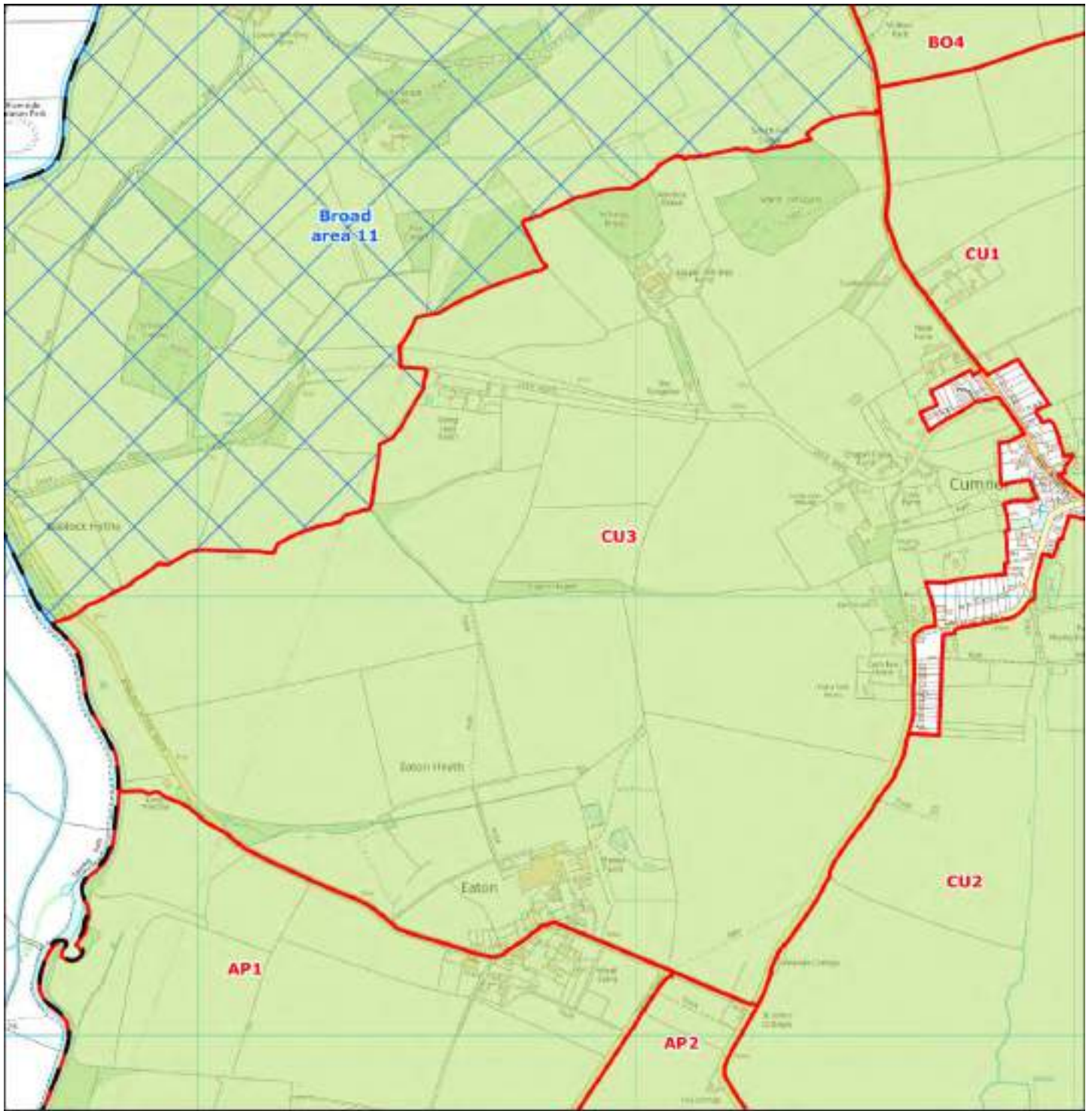
Notes:

There is no intervisibility with Oxford, with well wooded and/or higher ground to the east and south, and a limited sense of this area forming part of Oxford's historic setting. However, the presence of the A420 along the eastern edge of the parcel does add a little sensitivity in that the rural character of the area can be appreciated shortly before reaching the more developed area around Botley.

Land Parcel Ref: CU3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: CU3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel abuts Cumnor, which in turn, separated only by the A420, adjoins Cumnor Hill. The latter is considered to be part of the large built up area, demonstrating clear characteristics of ribbon development, but the outer edges of Cumnor, other than where it faces the A420, retain a village character despite in places being subject to 20th century infill. Development around Cumnor would not therefore be considered to be a continuation of the urban sprawl of Cumnor Hill, so the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel abuts Cumnor which is not considered to be part of a large built up area.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The eastern boundary of the parcel is adjacent to Cumnor. The mostly arable landscape has a strong sense of openness and is relatively flat where it is adjacent to Eaton Road, however the topography falls away the further west you go toward the River Thames. The southern boundary of the parcel runs through the village of Eaton, which is in relatively close proximity to Appleton and intervisible with Cumnor (which sits on higher ground) although not with Appleton. Loss of openness in the landscape between Cumnor and Eaton would be perceived as reducing the physical gap between Cumnor and Appleton.

Land Parcel Ref: CU3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel contains large regular-shaped agricultural fields and four small pockets of woodland. The south eastern half of the parcel is on higher ground which slopes away to the north and west towards Farmoor Reservoir and the River Thames, providing excellent views of the wider countryside to the west and north. A line of pylons runs through the centre of the parcel. There are also several large detached and isolated dwellings adjacent to the village of Cumnor in the eastern half of the parcel, three farms (Manor Farm, Long Leys Farm and Upper Whitely Farm) and a small collection of large detached dwellings along Bablock Hythe Road within the small village of Eaton. None of these developments are considered to be significant urbanising influences of the countryside within the Green Belt.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

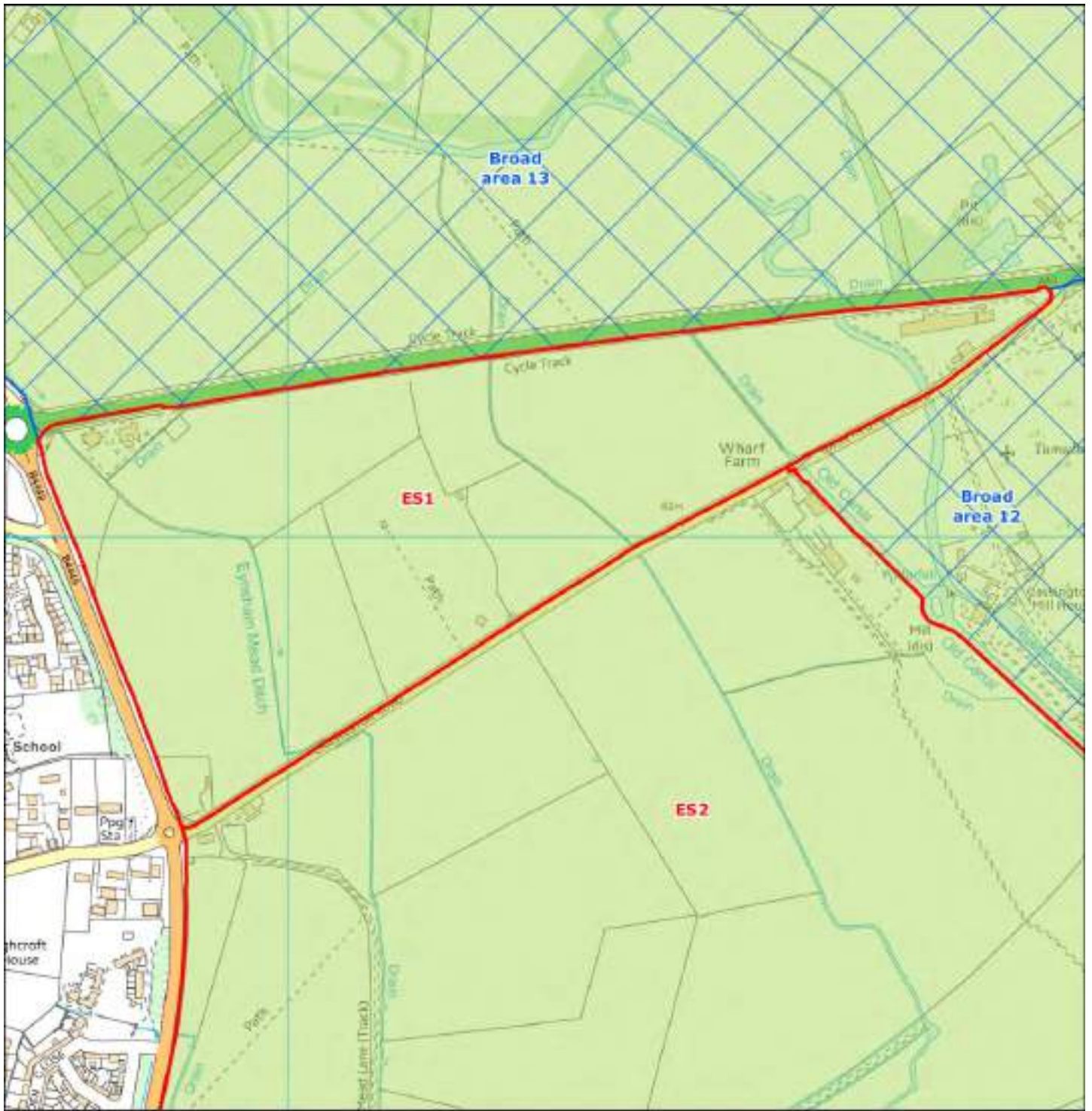
Notes:

This parcel comprises arable farmland to the west of Cumnor, sloping downhill to the Thames. The rural character of the Thames Valley as it approaches Oxford is important in that it provides a consistent character link all the way into the city centre, but at this distance from Oxford (along the river), the significance is lower than is the case where the city can be viewed in association with the river valley.

Land Parcel Ref: ES1

Main Authority: West Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: West Oxfordshire

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: ES1

Main Authority: West Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Eynsham which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Eynsham which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel is located on low lying, flat topography and is relatively open. The western boundary of the parcel borders Eynsham, and the northern boundary is adjacent to the A40 while the southern boundary is adjacent to Cassington Road. The parcel is relatively distant from all other settlements considered under this purpose, with Yarnton located to the northeast, Oxford to the east and Botley and Cumnor to the southeast. The parcel does play a key role in preventing the merging of Cassington and Eynsham, and the merger of these settlements would reduce the gap to Yarnton, but the intervening hills mean that there is little connection between Cassington and Yarnton.

Land Parcel Ref: ES1

Main Authority: West Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel contains a thin triangular strip of flat, open, irregular-shaped agricultural fields within the floodplain of the River Evenlode. These fields are fairly well enclosed, limiting views of the surrounding countryside. The parcel contains three pockets of development – a cricket pitch and associated pavilion in the centre of the parcel, a petrol station and forecourt facilities in the north western corner and a car showroom and other vehicle sheds in the eastern corner of the parcel. The petrol station, sheds and showroom represent urbanising influences on the countryside within the parcel, although both are relatively isolated and screened by woodland, and traffic noise from the A40 also intrudes on countryside character.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

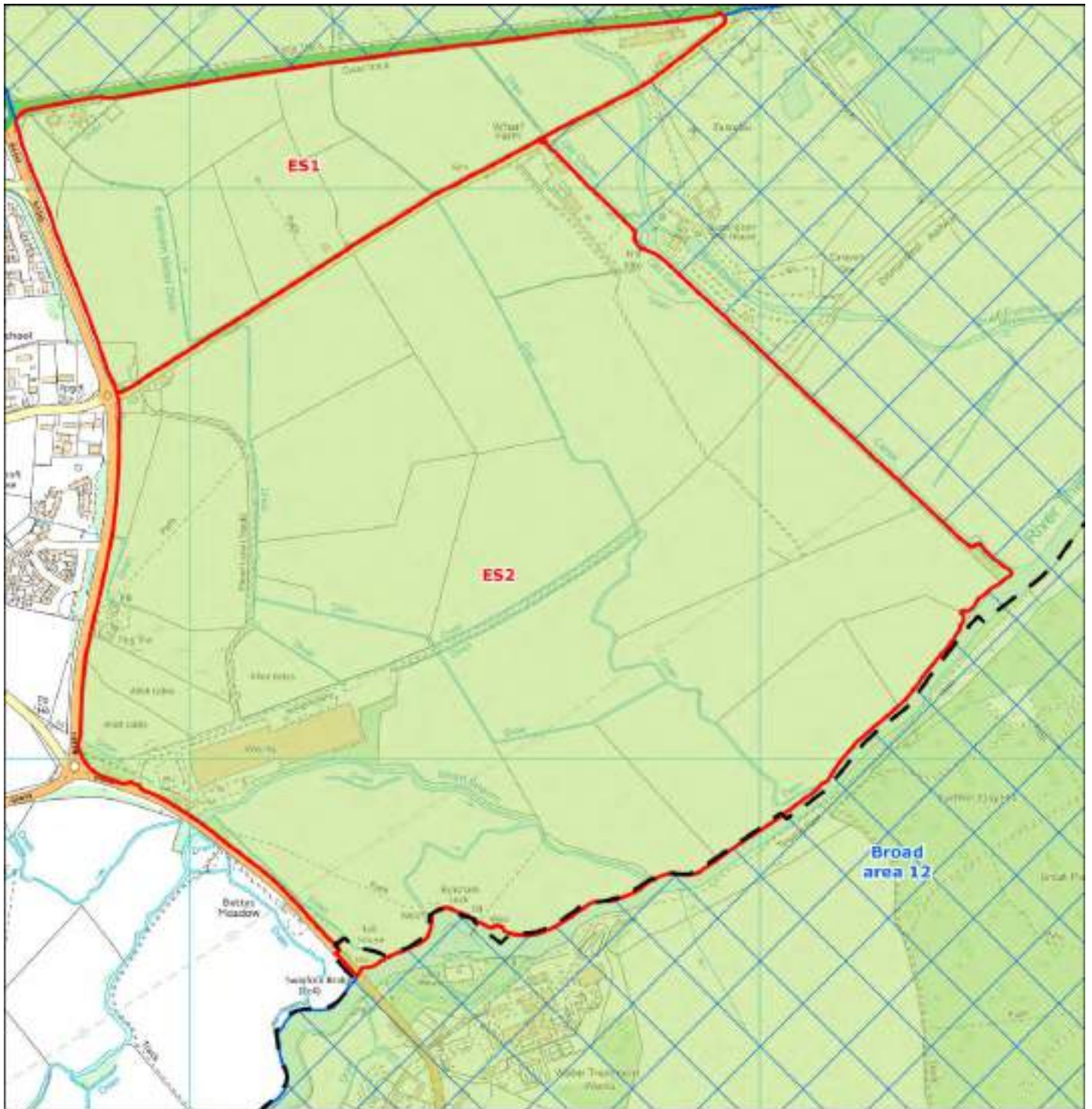
Notes:

The rural character of the river valleys in this area is an important aspect of the approach to Oxford along the Thames as it rounds Wytham Hill and heads towards Wolvercote, taking the countryside close to the heart of Oxford. The lack of intervisibility with the city centre, limited visibility along the well-treed valley floor, location of the parcel close to the M40 and lesser importance of the Evenlode to the Thames in terms of Oxford's historic character reduce this importance.

Land Parcel Ref: ES2

Main Authority: West Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: West Oxfordshire

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: ES2

Main Authority: West Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Eynsham which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Eynsham which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel is located on low lying, flat topography and is relatively open apart from the Siemens Technology Park located in the centre. The western boundary of the parcel borders Eynsham, and the northern boundary is adjacent to Cassington Road while the southern boundary is adjacent to the River Thames. The parcel is relatively distant from all other settlements considered under this purpose, with Yarnton located to the northeast, Oxford to the east and Botley and Cumnor to the southeast. The parcel therefore plays only some role in preventing the reduction of the physical gap between the settlements. The distances between the settlements are such that the parcel does not play an essential role in this respect.

Land Parcel Ref: ES2

Main Authority: West Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel contains flat, open, irregular-shaped agricultural fields within the floodplain of the River Evenlode and River Thames with good views of the surrounding countryside (including the prominent Wytham Hill). The northern corner of the parcel contains a collection of buildings and an area of hardstanding used by Cassington Autoworks. In the south western corner of the parcel is a large factory used by Siemens Ltd and a pub. Adjacent to the pub is an allotment. The development in the north and the Siemens Factory in the south represent significant urbanising influences on the countryside within the parcel, but visually their influence on the wider landscape is limited.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

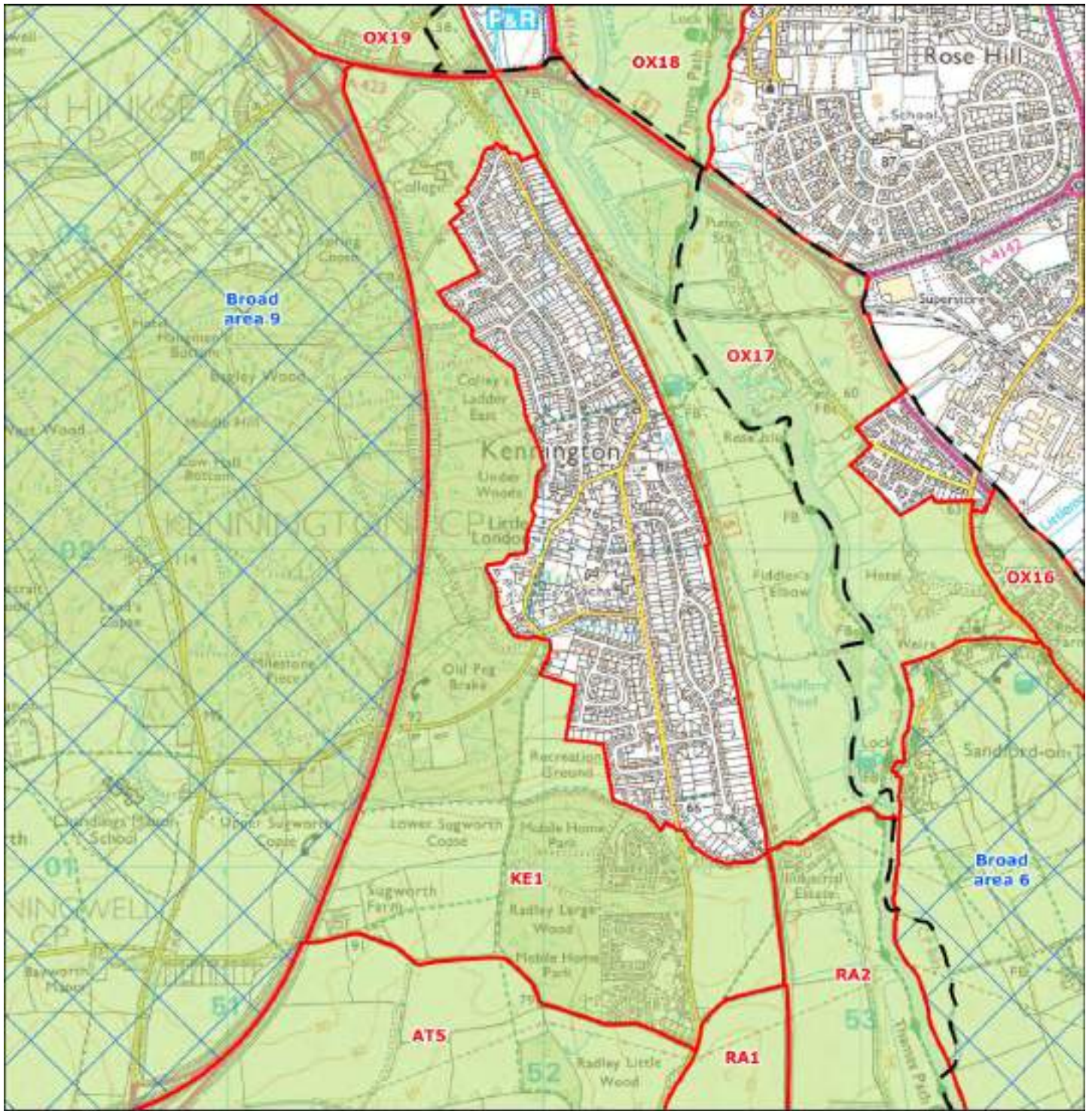
Notes:

Low-lying area along the north side of the Thames, with several watercourses joining the river. The confluence with the Evenlode is just to the east of the parcel. The undeveloped nature of the Thames Valley in this area, framed by hills to the north and south as it approaches the city at Wolvercote, is important to the character of Oxford, despite a lack of intervisibility from the city. The northern part of the parcel, away from the Thames, would score a lower rating.

Land Parcel Ref: KE1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: KE1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel sits in between the western urban edge of Kennington, which is considered to be part of the large built-up area of Oxford in the study, and the A34 dual-carriageway which joins the southern by-pass road at the northern tip of the parcel. The majority of the parcel contains the woodland from Bagley Wood. There are two breaks in the woodland in the south western and south eastern corners of the parcel. These breaks contain open agricultural fields with views to the countryside to the south and west. There are some significant developments within breaks in the wood, notably two large isolated dwellings to the west of Kennington, Templeton College to the north of Kennington, a very large mobile home park in woodland to the south of Kennington and housing along Sugworth Lane. In addition, in the south western corner of the parcel is a small business estate. With the exception of the large isolated dwellings, all are urbanising influences on the countryside within the Green Belt.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

There are open areas, e.g. in the vicinity of Little London and on the eastern side of Kennington Road to the south of Sandford Lane, where the Green Belt is essential in the protection of open land. Woodland is not considered to constitute a significant and durable boundary to urban expansion, so the Green Belt is also contributing to preventing further sprawling ribbon development to the south of Kennington along Bagley Wood Road, and other locations on the west side of Kennington.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The southern boundary of the parcel is in reasonably close proximity to Radley, with large, open arable fields separating the two. Existing development along Sugworth Lane already abuts a section of this boundary, but is fairly well contained by woodland in wider views. The open area in the south east of the parcel is more significant in terms of the perception of a gap between Kennington and Radley, and is visible in long views from high ground to the east. Development in this area would not remove the settlement gap but it would clearly reduce it.

Kennington is considered to be part of the large urban area for the purposes of this study. The gap between the northern edge of the settlement and the Redbridge Park and Ride being crossed by the A423 by-pass and a railway line, but the wooded character of the northern end of this parcel, and of the adjacent parcels OX17 and OX19, nonetheless create a sense of separation. From the by-pass there is no perception of the urban area spreading out beyond the road, so the northern end of this parcel is still considered to constitute a gap, and its elevated position means that there is potential for visual coalescence in some views. This northern part of the parcel in isolation would rate 'high'.

Land Parcel Ref: KE1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The majority of the parcel contains the woodland from Bagley Wood to the west of Kennington. There are two breaks in the woodland in the south western and south eastern corners of the parcel. These breaks contain open agricultural fields with views to the countryside to the south and west. There are some significant developments within breaks in the wood, notably two large isolated dwellings to the west of Kennington, Templeton College to the north of Kennington, a very large mobile home park to the south of Kennington and housing along Sugworth Lane. In addition, in the south western corner of the parcel is a small business estate. With the exception of the large isolated dwellings, they are significant urbanising influences on the countryside within the Green Belt. Aside from the business estate in the south western corner of the parcel, they all are surrounded by dense woodland, so their influence on the wider Green Belt is significantly less than it would be if they were in open countryside.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

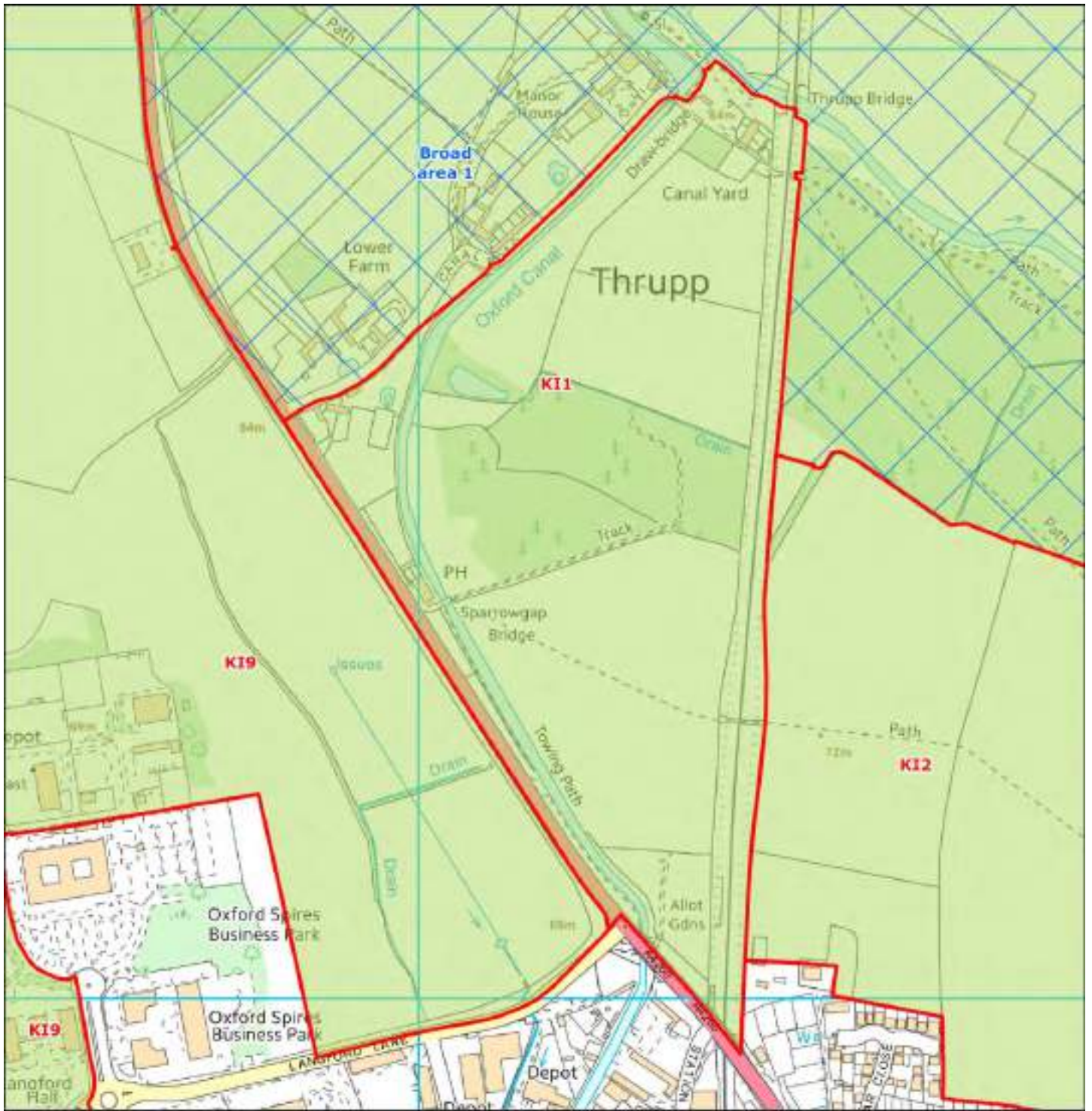
Notes:

Parcel is largely occupied by ancient woodland, on lower slopes of Corallian Ridge. Residential closes set within woodland towards the southern end have little effect on broader role of this area as part of the wooded backdrop to views westwards from Oxford and towards Oxford from the hills to the east. The woods are also important in screening the A34. The lower, eastern side of the parcel is less important in terms of setting.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: KI1

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is located to the north of Kidlington and is bordered by the A4260 on its south western boundary, the railway line which runs to Oxford on its eastern boundary and has the Oxford canal running through it. The parcel is relatively open and located on low lying, flat topography. The parcel is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose and makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements. The parcel does play a key role in preventing the merging of Kidlington and Thrupp but Thrupp is not considered as a settlement under Purpose 2 for this study.

Land Parcel Ref: KI1

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is largely free from development, containing a small wood and some large agricultural fields. The parcel is relatively open with long ranging views of the countryside, particularly to the east and north. A small allotment sits in the southern corner of the parcel; a few detached buildings sit around the edges of the parcel, including a pub with a small car park on Banbury Road. None of these developments have a significant urbanising influence on the countryside characteristics within the parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

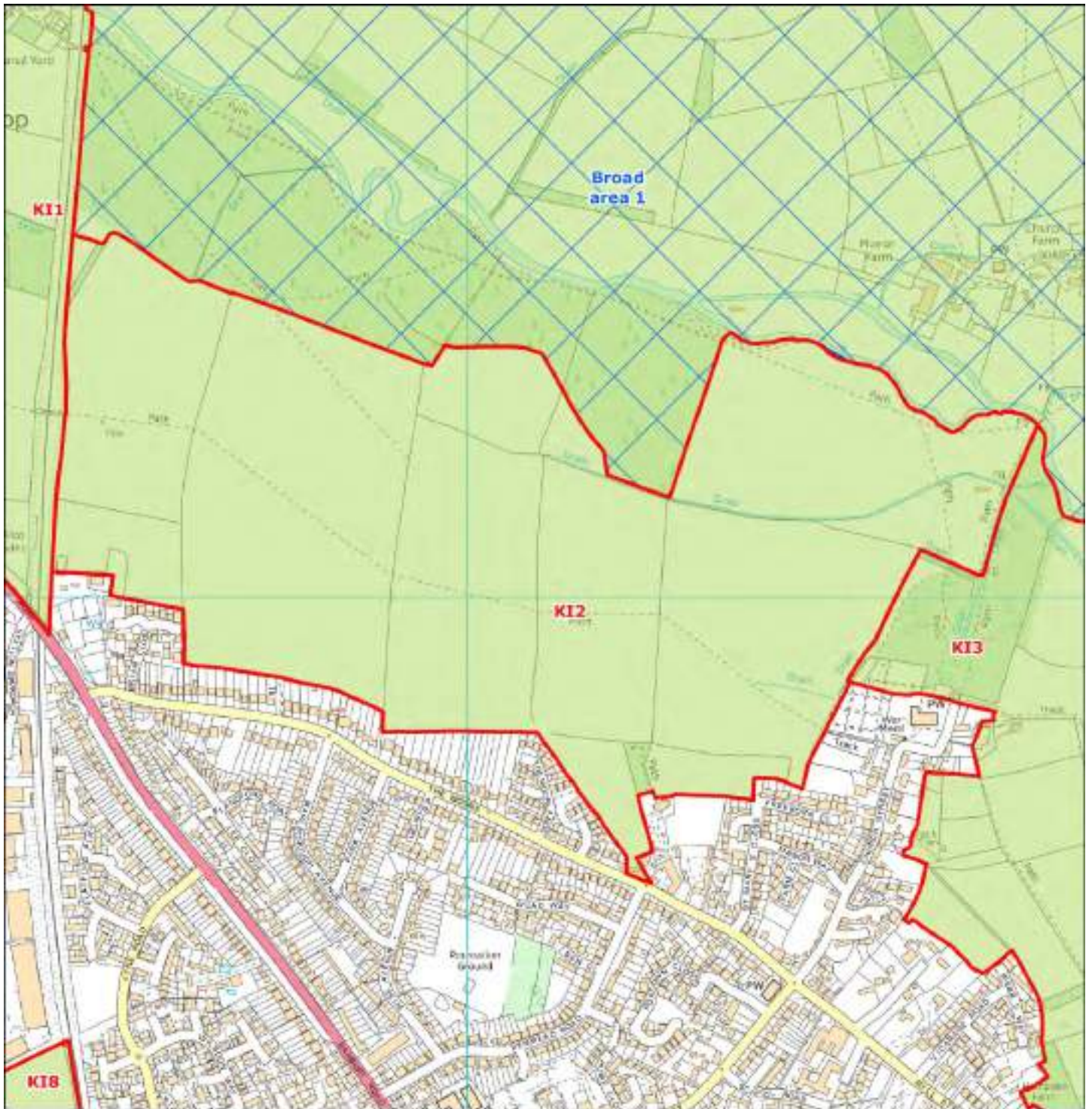
Notes:

There is no visual link to Oxford, but the valley contributes to Oxford's character in that it represents the continuation of a distinctive landform all the way to the centre of the city. The presence of the Oxford Canal in this parcel, and its associated long distance path, also adds linkage to Oxford.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: K12

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel is located to the north of Kidlington and has a strong sense of openness, sloping gently uphill away from Kidlington then gently downhill towards woodlands bordering the River Cherwell. The parcel is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose and makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements. The parcel does play a key role in preventing the merging of Kidlington and Hampton Poyle and Thrupp but these settlements are not considered as settlements under Purpose 2 for this study.

Land Parcel Ref: K12

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel contains several large, regularly shaped, agricultural fields lined by woodland to the north. The parcel contains no development. The parcel is relatively open with long ranging views of the countryside, particularly to the east and west.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

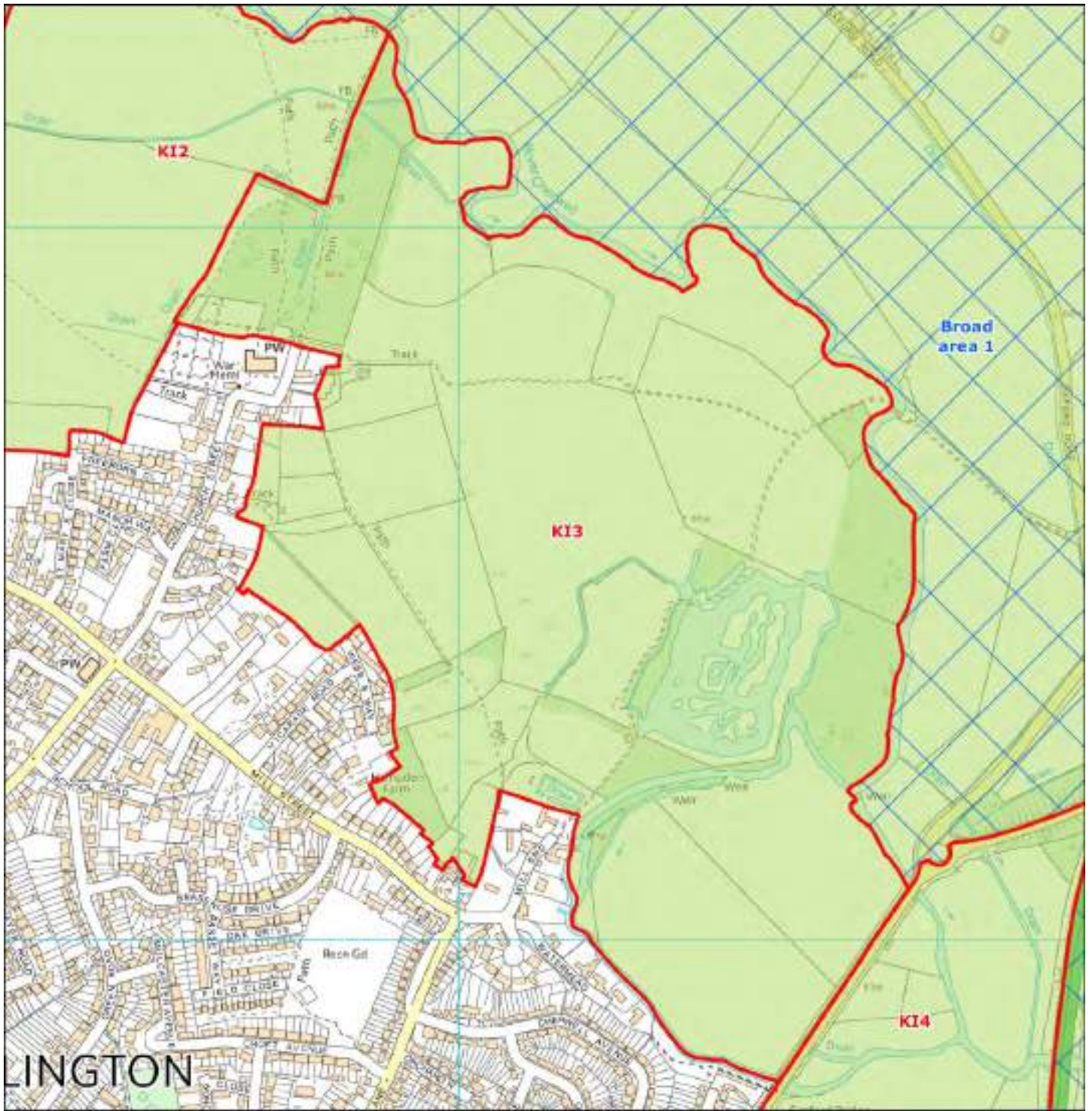
Notes:

This area is important as part of the historic setting of Kidlington, focused on St Mary's church, but there is no intervisibility with Oxford. As a low hill of open, arable farmland located between the northern part of Kidlington and the Cherwell Valley, this parcel contributes to the rural character of the valley, which in turn constitutes an element of Oxford's wider setting, but woodland between the river and the parcel reduces its visual contribution to the wider landscape. The north-eastern corner of the parcel contributes slightly more to Oxford's setting, due to its relationship with the River Cherwell, one of the key landscape corridors into the City.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: KI3

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel is located to the northeast of Kidlington and is bordered by Bicester Road to the east. The parcel has a strong sense of openness and is relatively flat in topography with the River Cherwell running through it. The parcel is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose and makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements. This land parcel does form part of the gap between Kidlington and Hampton Poyle but Hampton Poyle is not considered as a settlement under Purpose 2 for this study.

Land Parcel Ref: K13

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel sits within the floodplain of the river Cherwell which forms its northern and eastern edge. A large pond sits in the centre of the parcel, with a number of small fields enclosed by strong tree lines between the pond and Mill End, and adjacent to the Cherwell, and larger arable fields around these. The parcel has an undeveloped, rural character.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

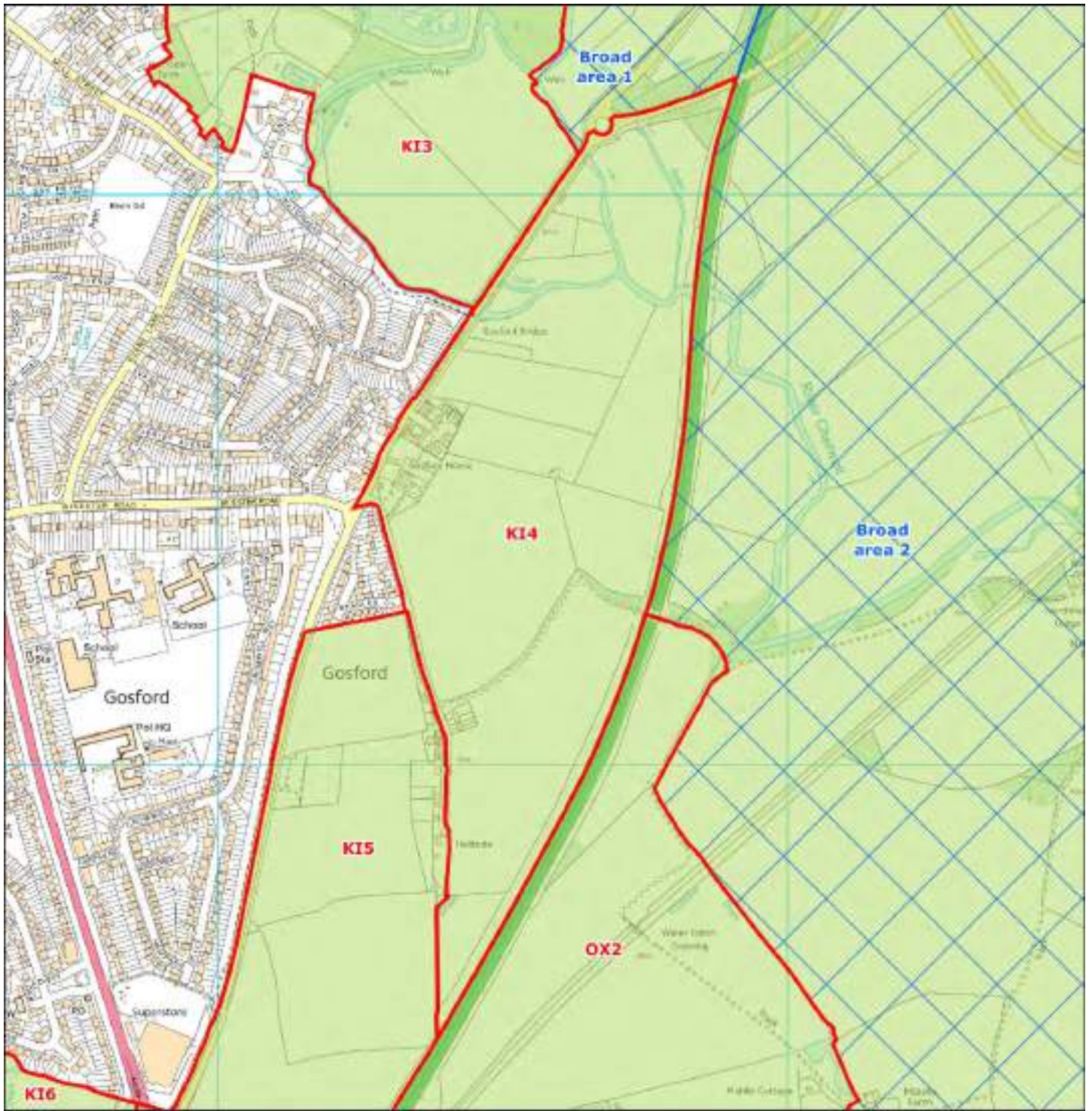
Notes:

This area is important as part of the historic setting of Kidlington, focused on St Mary's church, but there is no intervisibility with Oxford. Continuity of open, rural valley landscape all the way into central Oxford does however give it some setting value. Limited intervisibility with surroundings due to well-treed character of riverside makes the area to the west and south of the river less sensitive, but the more exposed eastern portion of the parcel makes a greater contribution with respect to its relationship with the approach to Oxford.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: KI4

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel borders the eastern boundary of Kidlington, with the eastern boundary of the parcel adjacent to the A34. The parcel is relatively flat in topography and has a sense of openness. The parcel is more distant from Oxford to the south than neighbouring parcels such as KI5, and therefore the parcel plays a limited role in preventing the merging or erosion of the visual and physical gap between the settlements. The loss of the openness of the parcel would not be perceived as reducing the gap between the settlements.

This land parcel does form part of the gap between Kidlington and Islip but Islip is not considered as a settlement under Purpose 2 for this study.

Land Parcel Ref: K14

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel contains several large irregular shaped fields between Bicester Road and the A34. It is relatively open with views of the countryside to the north east and south east. There is a small depot storing large vehicles at the northern end of the parcel. The buildings of Gosford Farm have recently been converted to residential use and a small housing development, Bramley Close, has been built alongside it. These developments in combination with the intrusive nature of the A34 and a sense of separation from the wider countryside (that results from the parcel's location between Kiddlington and the dual-carriageway) means the parcel has some urban influence.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

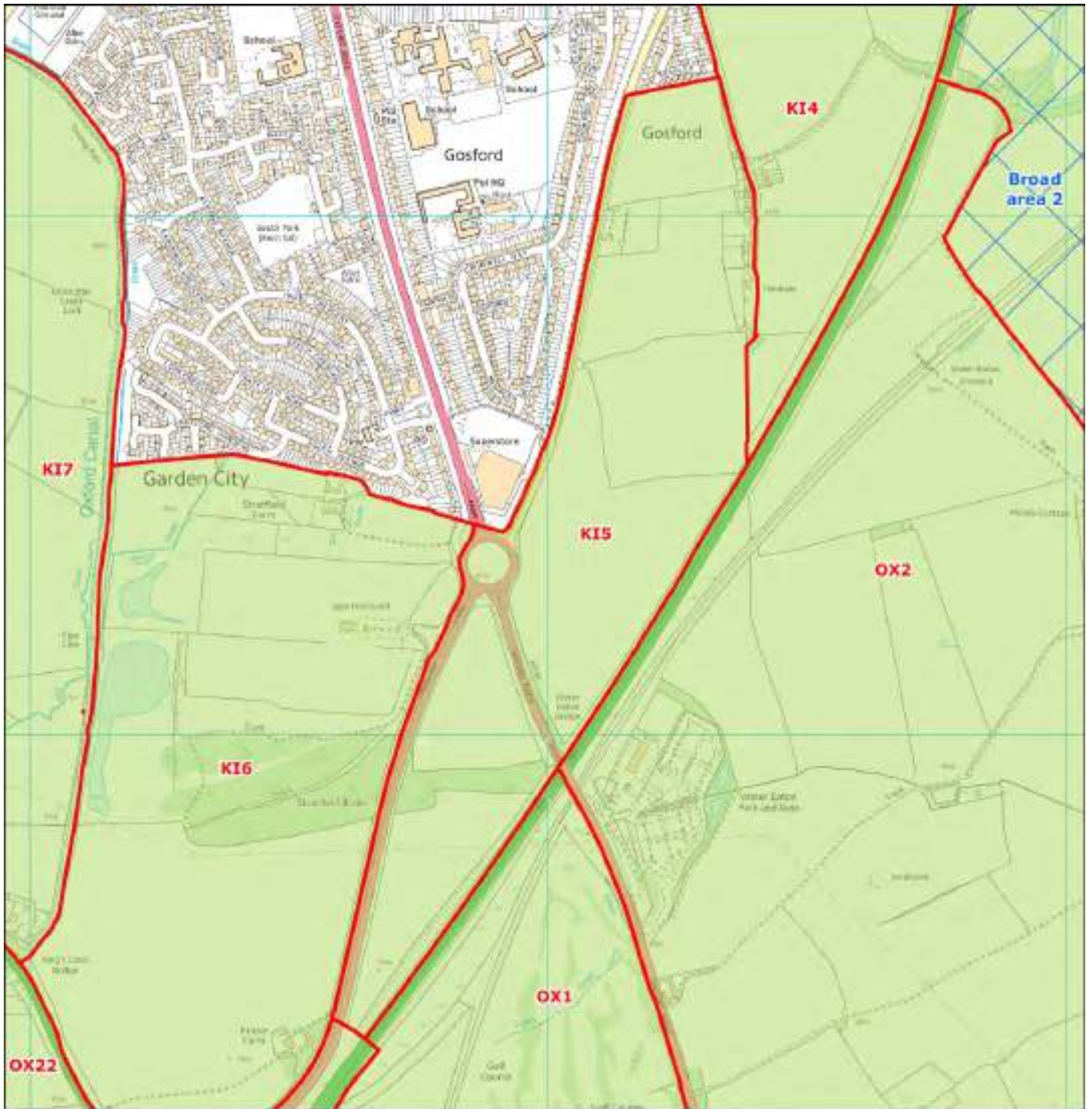
Notes:

There are views from the A34 in which the rural character of the landscape, screening Kidlington from view, contributes to the wider setting of Oxford, but the valley is wide in this area, and hedgerows provide some containment within the landscape. The riverside area at the northern end of the parcel is more significant in terms of setting.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



District boundary Green belt parcel Broad area Green belt 0 0.25 km

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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: KI5

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is located to the southeast of Kidlington, with the southern area of the parcel in close proximity to Oxford. The parcel is bordered by Kidlington on the western boundary and the A34 on its eastern boundary. The parcel is relatively flat in topography and has a sense of openness. Elevated topography at the southern end of the parcel, and in adjacent parcels OX1 (Pear Tree Hill) and OX22 (North Oxford Golf Club), together with the Stratfield Brake woodland, restrict intervisibility, and within the wider landscape this area is relatively well screened from view, but loss of openness would substantially reduce the physical gap between Kidlington and Oxford as experienced when travelling along the A4260 or A4165.

Land Parcel Ref: K15

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel contains large regular shaped agricultural fields between Bicester Road and the A34, and is open in character, although well-treed boundary hedgerows limit the availability of longer views. The parcel contains several large isolated dwellings lining Water Eaton Lane. While in isolation, such developments are not considered to have a significant urbanising influence, together with the road they are considered to contribute to urbanising the north eastern part of the parcel. Furthermore, the south of the parcel comprises a relatively thin strip of land in between two busy roads.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

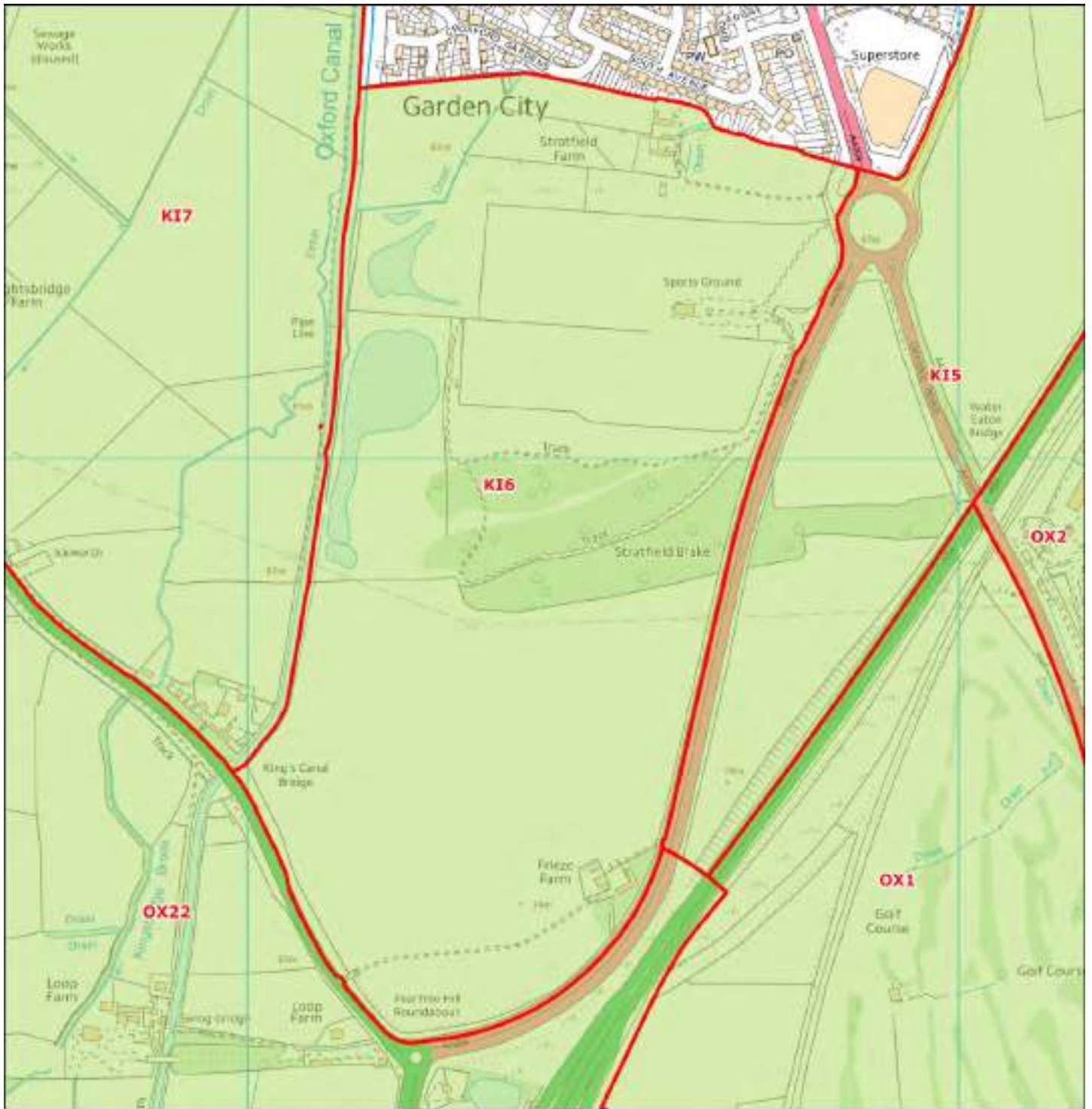
Notes:

There is no intervisibility with central Oxford. The Cherwell valley is wide in this area, so the parcel doesn't play a critical role in the rural approach to Oxford from the north, but the proximity to A34 adds some sensitivity in this respect. The central-southern portion of the parcel, in the vicinity of Sainsbury's and the Kidlington Roundabout, can also be considered more sensitive as it sits more distinctly between Oxford and Kidlington. The southern end of the parcel to the south of the Stratfield Brake woodland belt is on rising ground, and in that respect can be associated with the northern part of Oxford, but it is well screened by boundary tree lines in wider views.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: KI6

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel abuts Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area, but at its southern end it is less than 200m from what has been defined in this study as the urban edge of Oxford (The Holiday Inn at the Peartree Roundabout). Any development at this southern end would be perceived as relating to Oxford rather than to Kidlington, so the parcel has been considered against Purpose 1. Some distinction can be made between the southern and northern parts of the parcel: to the north and east of the Stratfield Brake Nature Reserve the sports ground, with building and associated floodlighting, represents an urban intrusion, although its landscape setting is surprisingly rural with tree lines screening the nearby roads but leaving long views towards Wytham Hill. To the south of Stratfield Brake, a woodland block which plays a key screening role, the parcel consists of one, large open arable field. The only built development is the former Frieze Farm buildings, which have been converted to office space; these are not considered to be a significant urbanising influence. The 'high' rating given for this parcel relates to its southern part; the northern section considered separately would score 'medium' were it to be rated (although in isolation it is considered to relate more to Kidlington than to Oxford).

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is bounded to the south by the A4260 Frieze Way. Dual carriage-ways are considered to be significant and durable boundaries to urban sprawl, but the presence of a roundabout permitting ready access to the parcel from the A44 Woodstock Road, together with the entrance road to the Frieze Farm offices, to an extent negates this.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is located between the south of Kidlington and the north of Oxford, whereby the parcel is adjacent to Kidlington and in very close proximity to Oxford. It is bordered by the A4260 on its eastern and southern boundaries, and the Oxford Canal and A44 on its western boundary. The eastern and southern boundaries are screened by roadside vegetation which forms a barrier creating visual separation from the parcel but there are clear views from a short stretch of the Oxford Canal across the area to the south of Stratfield Brake, and longer views into both areas from high ground to the west (Wytham Hill). Due to the close proximity of the settlements, loss of openness would substantially reduce the gap.

Land Parcel Ref: KI6

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The community building, car park, outdoor sports pitches and lighting in the northern half of the parcel represent a moderate urbanising influence on the countryside. A small cluster of farm buildings lies in woodland close to the northern border of the parcel. Development in the southern area is limited to the Frieze Farm buildings, converted to office use, which aren't considered to be a significant urbanising influence. Roads have an urbanising influence, more so at the southern end, but the parcel is relatively large and open with views of the countryside to the north and west.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

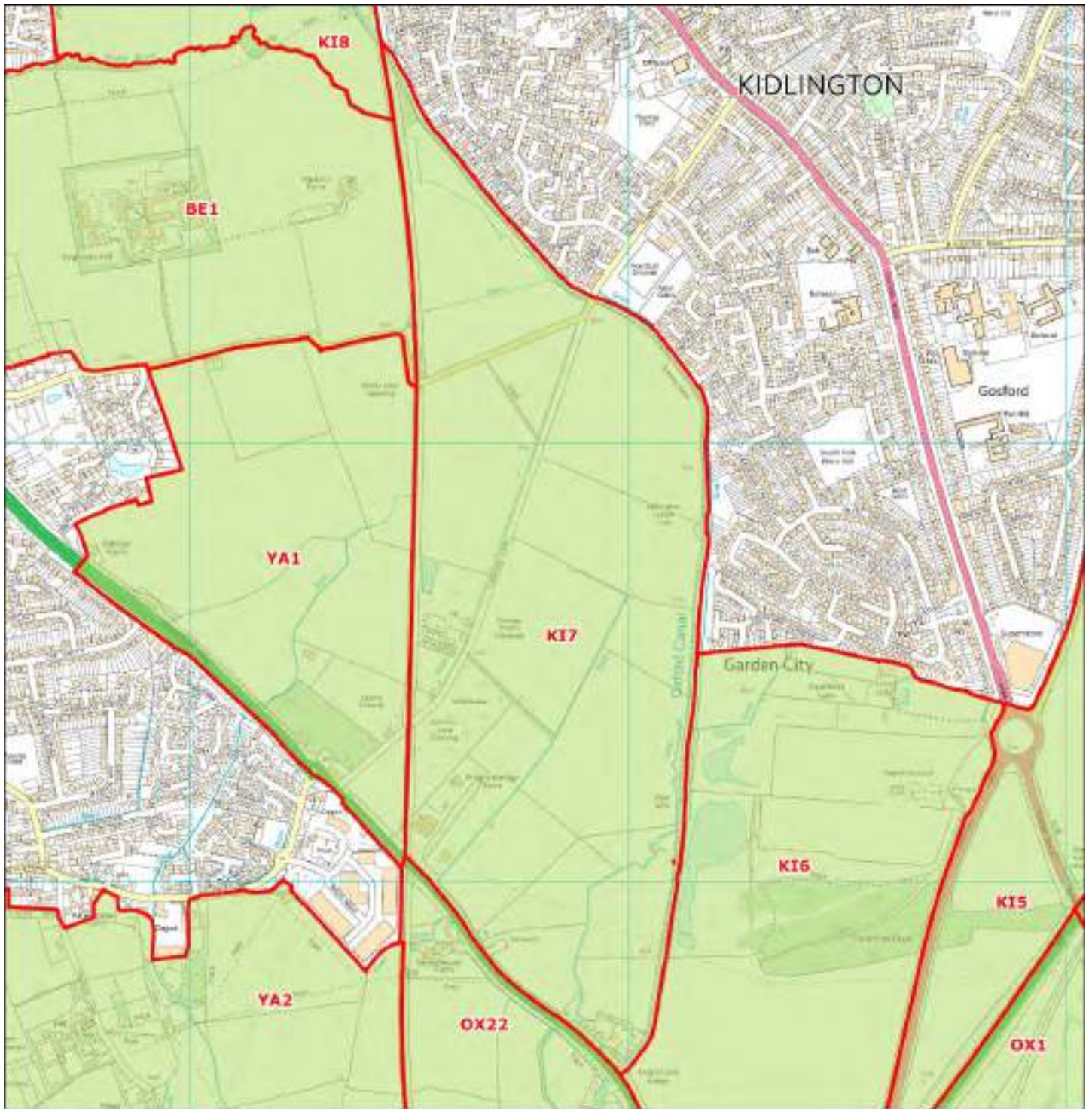
Notes:

There is no intervisibility with central Oxford or historic 'urban villages', but the arable farmland to the south of the Stratfield Brake woodland belt is on rising ground up towards Peartree Hill, which is more closely associated with Oxford than the lower ground to the north. This sloping farmland is an important element of the rural setting to Oxford as viewed on approaching the city along the Oxford Canal and from higher ground to the west of Yarnton. The northern end of the site, other than the wetland area adjacent to the canal, is less important in terms of its relationship with Oxford, being screened by Stratfield Brake.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: KI7

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lie adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is located between Kidlington and Yarnton, bordered by Woodstock Road to the south and the railway line which runs to Oxford to the west. The parcel has a strong sense of openness and occupies the full width of the gap between the settlements. Due to their close proximity, particularly at the southern end of the parcel, the parcel plays an essential role in preventing the merging and erosion of the physical gap between the two settlements.

Land Parcel Ref: K17

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is relatively large and open with views of the countryside within the parcel and immediately to the east and west. It is largely made up of large regularly-shaped agricultural fields. All the development within the parcel is concentrated in the southern half of the parcel. A large area of broken hardstanding sits between the railway line that forms the western edge of the parcel and Green Lane. To the south of this previously developed land is a large depot off Woodstock Road, containing a large area of hardstanding and some large industrial buildings. Another open-air depot sits at the southern tip of the parcel. This depot also contains a large area of hardstanding and industrial buildings, although both are smaller in size. These areas of hardstanding and industrial buildings represent significant urbanising influences on the countryside within their immediate vicinity, but as they are concentrated in one part of the parcel and well contained by vegetation they are considered to have a limited urbanising effect on the entire parcel. To the east of the depot, over 18 hectares of land are in the process of being developed as a solar farm. This also has a limited visual impact on the wider landscape, with trees and hedges retained and with solar panels being considered a temporary use (permission was granted for 25 years) rather than permanent structures.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

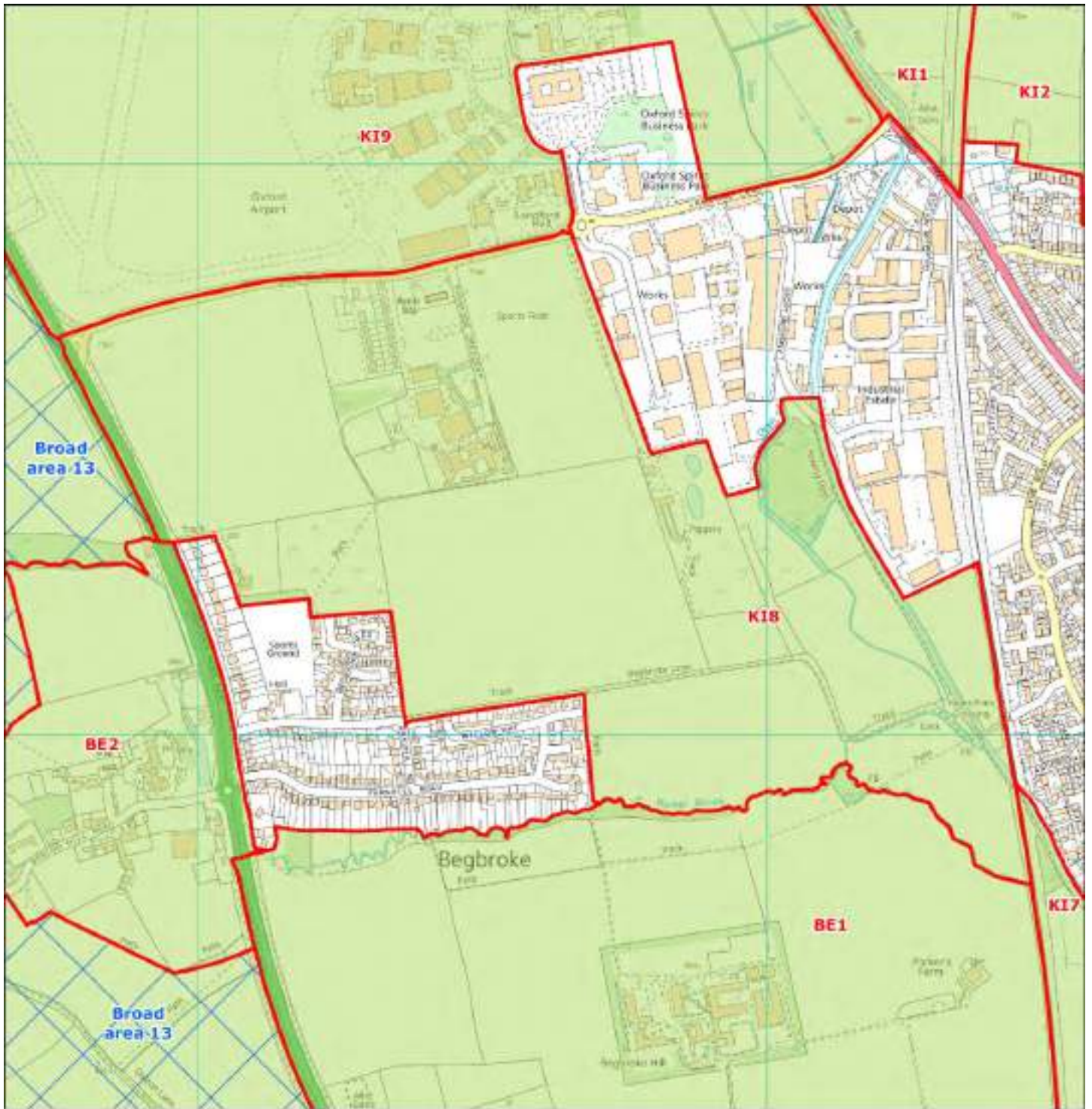
Notes:

There is no significant intervisibility with Oxford from this low-lying parcel, which forms part of the valley that marks a clear rural edge to Oxford but is less significant than the valley floor associated with the Thames as it cuts through the hills between Yarnton and Wytham and turns south towards central Oxford. However, there is visibility into the area from the Oxford Canal, which is considered to be an important historic route into the City and for which its rural character, which persists to a degree even in close proximity to the urban edge, is an important characteristic.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: K18

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel occupies the entire width of the gap between Kidlington to the east and Begbroke to the west, and is largely open, arable farmland. The parcel therefore plays a strong role in preventing the merging of the two settlements, as any encroachment by either settlement would be likely to result in a significant physical and visual reduction in the gap.

Land Parcel Ref: K18

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating:

Notes:

The majority of the parcel is open farmland, but it is largely ringed by development with Begbroke to the south west, Oxford Motor Park (Kidlington) to the east and London-Oxford Airport and Oxford Spires Business Park to the north. Within the parcel itself the northern central area has been wholly developed and represents a significant urbanising influence on characteristics of the countryside within the parcel. The parcel contains residential dwellings along Evenlode Crescent, an ambulance station and a cluster of large buildings used as an immigration detention centre. A small cluster of industrial buildings also lie within the eastern edge of the parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating:

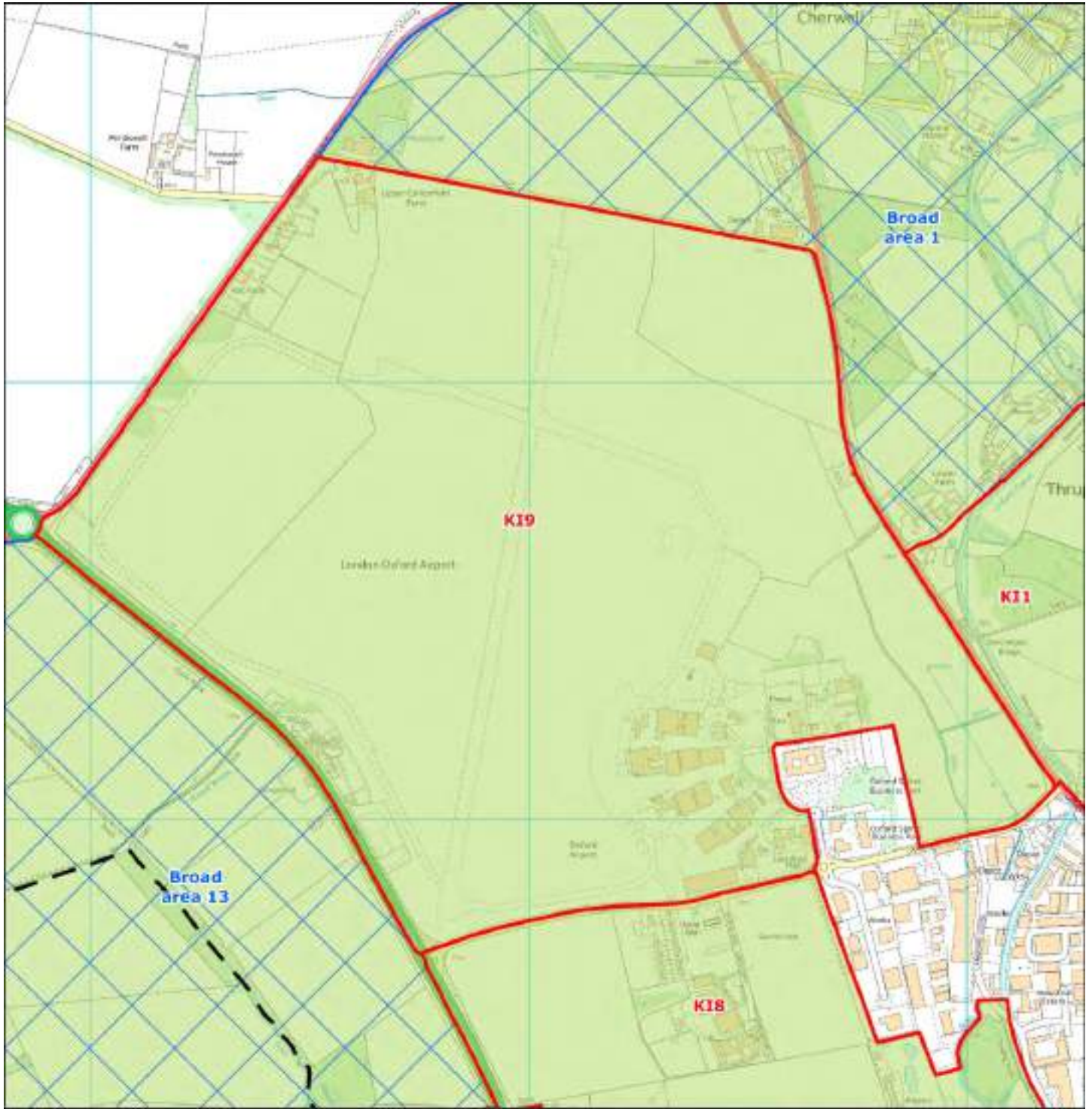
Notes:

Open fields backed by strong tree lines help to retain rural character, but there is no intervisibility with Oxford. The rural character makes no contribution to Oxford's historic setting as experienced en route from Woodstock, given the extent of development in Begbroke and Yarnton that follow further along the route.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: K19

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel lies adjacent to Kidlington which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The southeast corner of the parcel is adjacent to the northern area of Kidlington, while the northern boundary forms the outer edge of the Green Belt. The parcel is relatively flat in topography and in landscape terms has a largely open character, but the south eastern corner is occupied by numerous buildings forming London-Oxford Airport, and the runway occupies the central area. The southern end of the parcel lies adjacent to parcel K18, which plays a key role in preventing the merging of Begbroke and Kidlington, so openness here makes a limited contribution to this. The parcel does play a role in preventing the erosion of the gap between Kidlington and Woodstock, which in landscape terms is narrower than distance might suggest because of the openness of this arable landscape, and the presence of a direct link along the A44. Woodstock lies outside of the Green Belt though, and is not considered as a settlement to be assessed against this criterion.

Land Parcel Ref: K19

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel contains London-Oxford Airport, including the large hangars, terminal building and extensive areas of hardstanding, such as the runways, but buildings are clustered in one corner of this large area. The land within the parcel is very open with views of the countryside within the parcel and the immediate vicinity and also long range views. Arable fields occupy the fringes of the airstrip, contributing to rural character. In addition to the urbanising influences associated with the airport development, clusters of residential dwellings line the route ways which form the edges of the parcel, e.g. Upper Campsfield Road and Wolsey Court.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: N/C

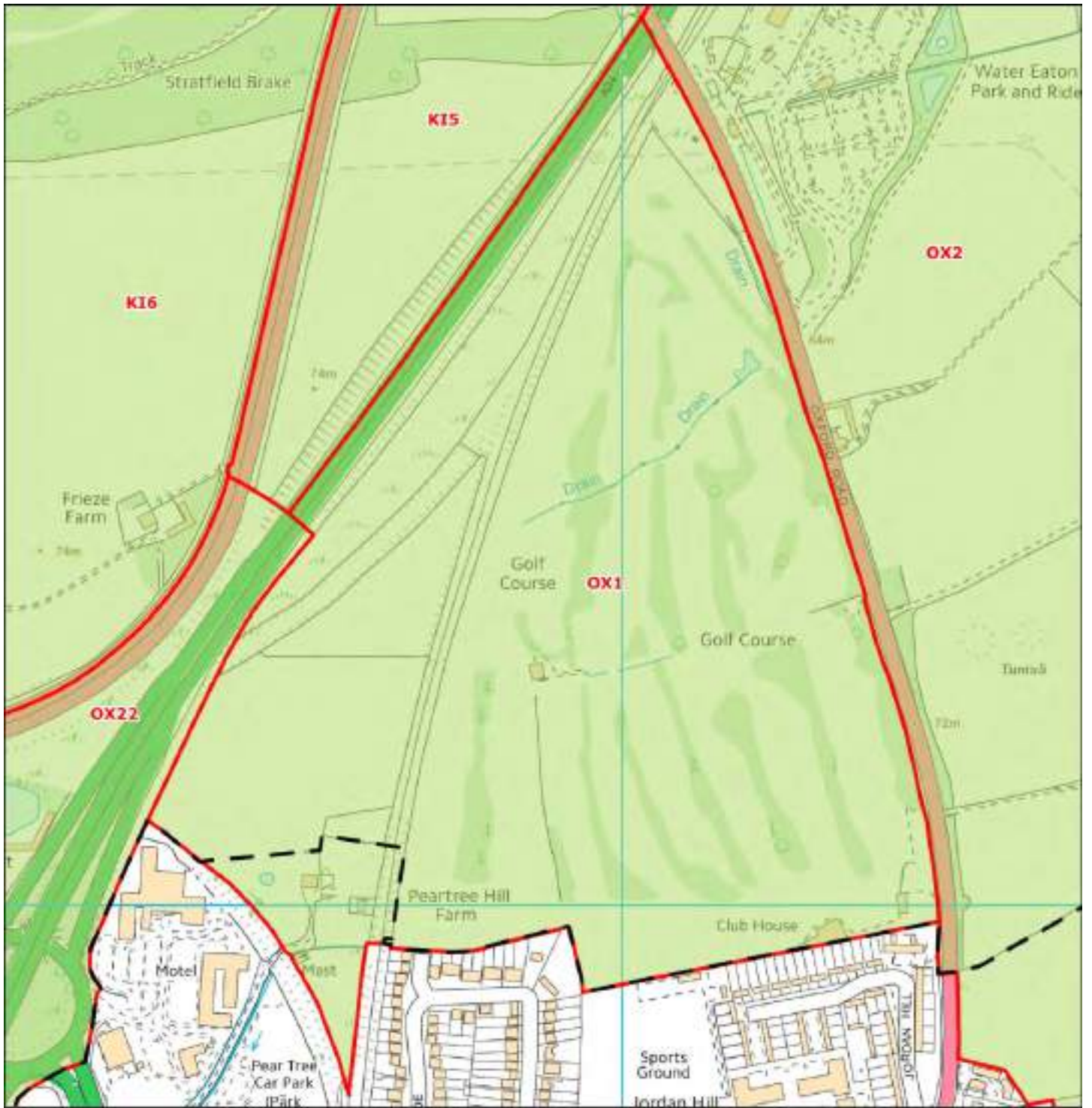
Notes:

Views towards Oxford are not significant. The parcel's location between Woodstock and Kidlington is too far removed from the City to contribute to the open, rural character of Oxford's wider setting, given that the A44 from Woodstock passes through several settlements with an urban character before reaching the large urban area.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: OX1

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to the large built-up area of Oxford. The parcel is predominantly made-up of the North Oxford Golf Course, which aside from the clubhouse and pro shop in the south eastern corner can be considered open in Green Belt terms, with extensive tree cover between fairways screening urban influences but also permitting some long views from higher parts of the course.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

A railway line runs along the western side of the Golf Course, and beyond a thin strip of greenfield land the A34 dual- carriageway forms the western boundary of the parcel. These significant and durable boundaries inhibit the potential for sprawling ribbon development from this direction, but there are no such boundaries to prevent expansion from the south, either along Banbury Road at the eastern edge of the parcel or via the Lakeside and Jordan Hill residential areas to the south.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel occupies most of the gap between the north of Oxford and the south of Kidlington, a gap which is already affected by the recent development of the Water Eaton Park and Ride and the Oxford Parkway railway station (currently under construction). The golf course provides screening at the northern end of the urban area, which increases its importance in perceived settlement separation. Due to the proximity of Kidlington to Oxford the parcel plays an essential role in preventing the erosion of the physical and visual gap between the settlements.

Land Parcel Ref: OX1

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is predominantly made-up of the North Oxford Golf Course. A railway line runs along the western side of the Golf Course, creating a thin strip of greenfield land in between the railway line and a dual carriageway (A34) which forms the western boundary of the parcel. As a man-made facility, with unnatural linear and mostly coniferous planting to define fairways, the golf course doesn't strongly display the characteristics of countryside, and it is also separated from the wider rural area by major transport routes. However, it has few built urbanising influences - just green keeping buildings and a small golf clubhouse which are both contained within the landscape - and does have some visual connections with the surrounding countryside.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

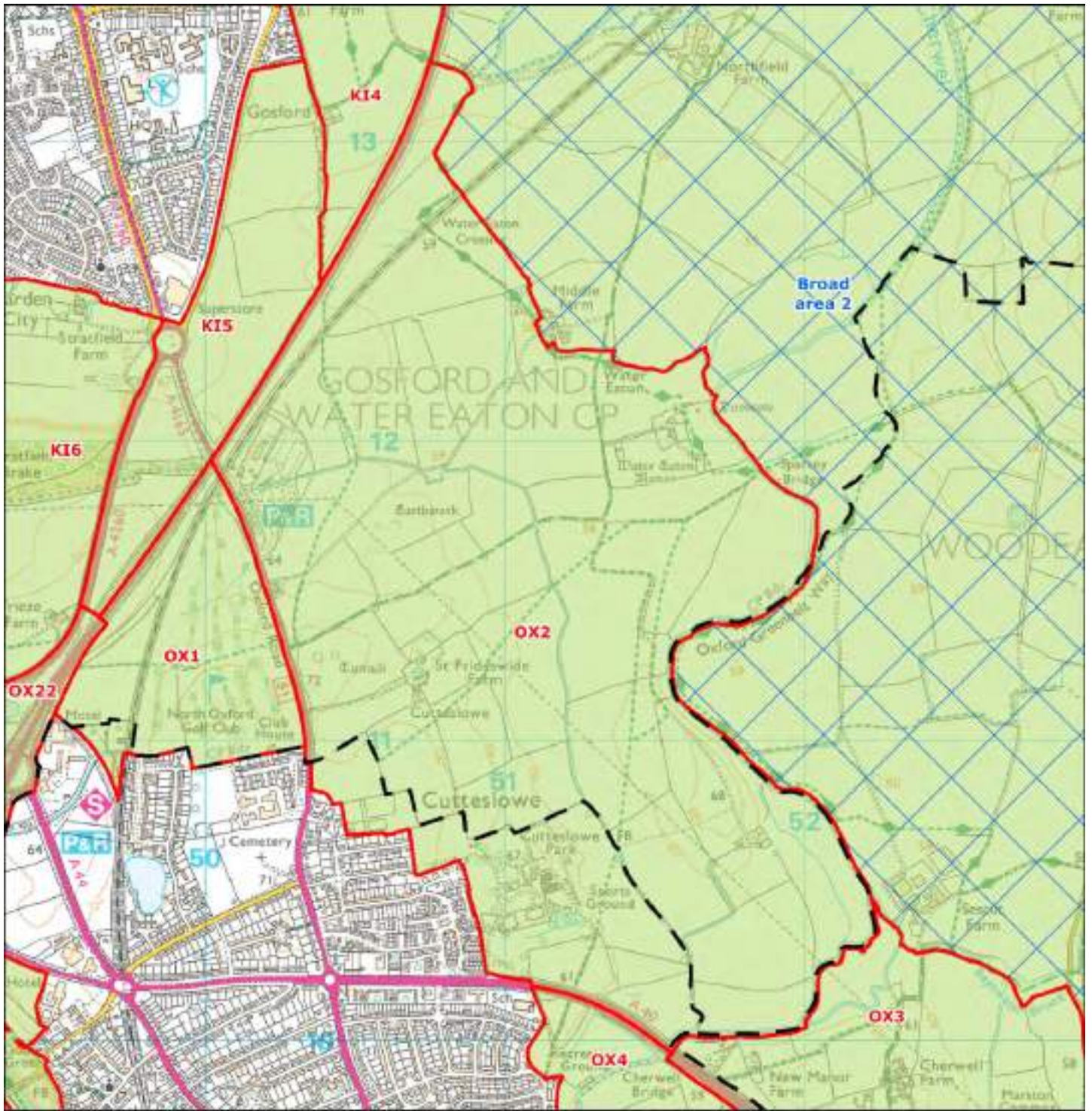
Notes:

There is no direct visual relationship with the historic core of Oxford, and the area is not elevated enough to form part of the green backdrop to views out from the City, but the parcel's low hilltop location and wooded character do provide a backdrop in views towards Oxford from the north, and from more distant high ground. This adds a rural character to Oxford's setting at close proximity to the City.

Land Parcel Ref: OX2

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Cherwell

Other Authorities: Oxford & South Oxfordshire

Land Parcel Ref: OX2

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to the large built-up area of Oxford. The parcel is predominantly made-up of large irregular shaped agricultural fields, many of which are in the floodplain of the River Cherwell. The land is flat and very open. There are two areas of urbanising influence within the parcel: the Water Eaton Park and Ride facility and Oxford Parkway Railway Station in the north west corner and the areas of hardstanding, greenhouses and floodlit sports pitches associated with Cutteslowe Park near the southern border of the parcel. The impact of these peripheral features on openness of the area as a whole, given its large size, is limited, but is greater in the vicinity of Water Eaton and Cutteslowe.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

There are no features considered to constitute significant and durable boundaries preventing further spread of development east from the A4165 or north from Cutteslowe. The Western By-pass road (A34) forms the north western boundary of the parcel and a railway line runs parallel with the (and adjacent to) A34. The River Cherwell forms the eastern boundary of the parcel. While these permanent and defensible boundaries would check the long term northwards sprawl of Oxford, they are a significant distance from the existing urban edge of the City.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel occupies a large proportion of the gap between Oxford and Kidlington to the east of the A4165, a gap which has in effect been narrowed by the construction of the Park and Ride and Station at Water Eaton. Loss of openness adjacent to the A4165 between Oxford and the Park and Ride would potentially reduce the gap significantly but would not cause coalescence. Development eastward in the parcel would have less effect.

Land Parcel Ref: OX2

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is predominantly made-up of large irregular shaped agricultural fields, many of which are in the floodplain of the River Cherwell. There are two farms within the parcel, neither of which are considered to be urbanising influences. The land is flat and very open, with excellent views of the surrounding countryside. Away from the Water Eaton developments and Cutteslowe Park, the eastern part of the parcel retains the characteristics of open countryside, but contribution to countryside character is reduced to 'medium' closer to the A4165, which is a lit road, and Cutteslowe.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

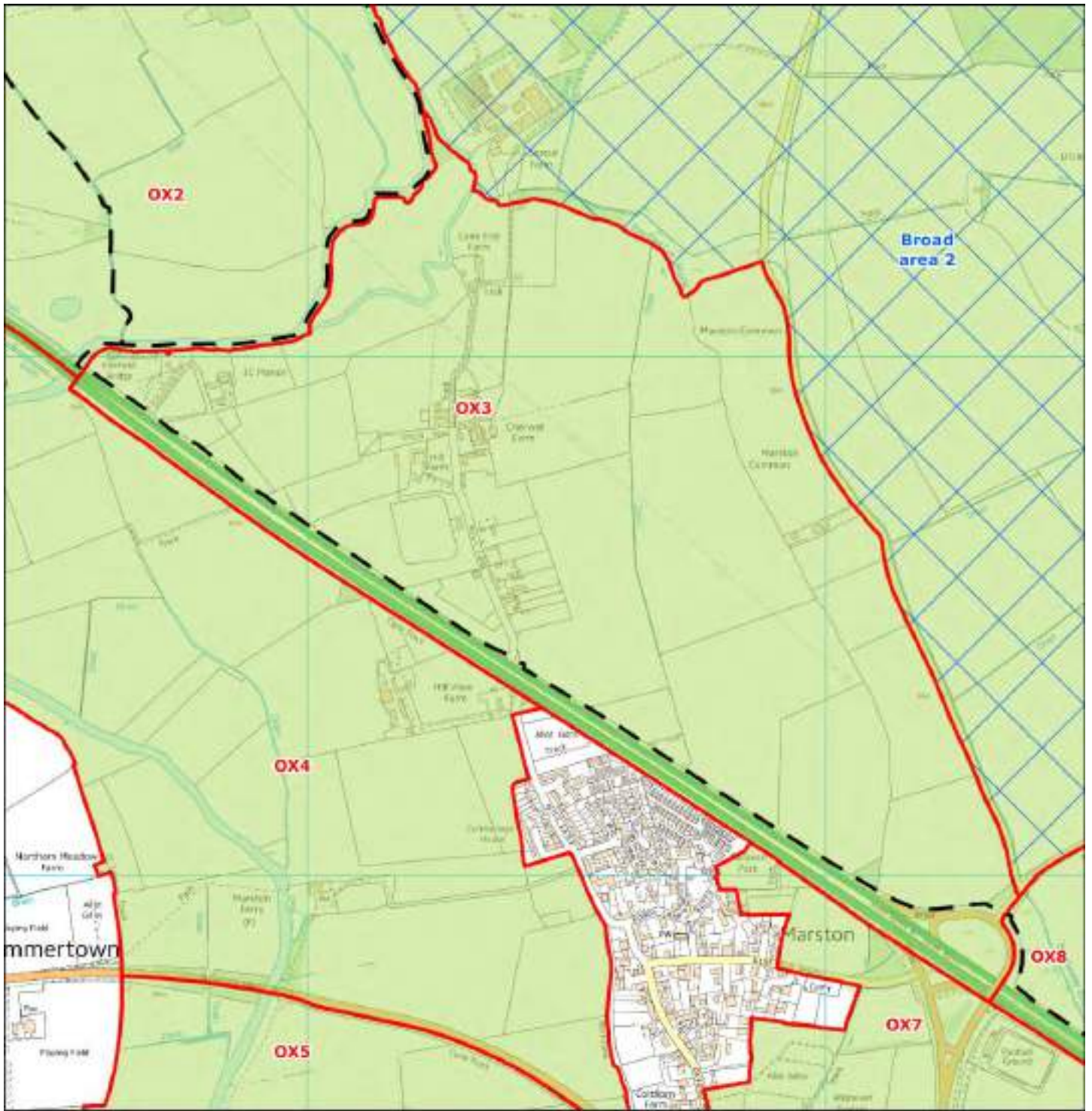
Notes:

The continuation of the open river valley beneath the A40 and into the heart of Oxford is an important element of Oxford's special character, but there is no intervisibility with central Oxford along the valley floor terrain, due to intervening vegetation and topography. The parcel's relationship with the city is evident from higher ground. The higher, south-western part of the parcel, adjacent to the northern edge of Oxford and further from the river, is less significant to setting, but the boundary area adjacent to the Cherwell is of higher significance to setting.

Land Parcel Ref: OX3

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Other Authorities: Oxford

Land Parcel Ref: OX3

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to the large built-up area of Oxford. The parcel is predominantly made-up of large regular shaped agricultural fields, many of which are in the floodplain of the River Cherwell and one of its tributaries. The land is flat and very open. There are several modern houses in the western corner of the parcel, accessed from the A40, and some of the dwellings and land uses on Mill Lane, and the no through road that gives access to the parcel, have an urbanising influence.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The Northern By-pass Road (A40) forms the southern boundary of the parcel and constitutes a significant defensible boundary. Access to Mill Lane from the A40 breaches it, reducing its role to a limited extent, but restricts access and egress to one direction. There is potential access both from the A40 and Marsh Lane, however, at the south-eastern corner of the parcel.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is located to the north of Oxford and borders the Northern Bypass Road. The parcel has a strong sense of openness but is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose. Therefore, the parcel makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements. This land parcel does form part of the gap between Oxford and Elsfield but Elsfield is not considered as a settlement under Purpose 2 as part of this assessment.

Land Parcel Ref: OX3

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is predominantly made-up of large regular shaped agricultural fields, flat and very open with excellent views of the countryside to the north, east and south east. However the amount and character of development within the parcel, and the proximity of the A40 are considered to constitute a minor urbanising influence on countryside character within the parcel, affecting the central and western parts of the parcel. Towards the eastern side of the parcel, and away from the A40, the parcel can be considered to have very little urbanising influence, as such the rating in this section of the parcel could be considered to be High if considered in isolation.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

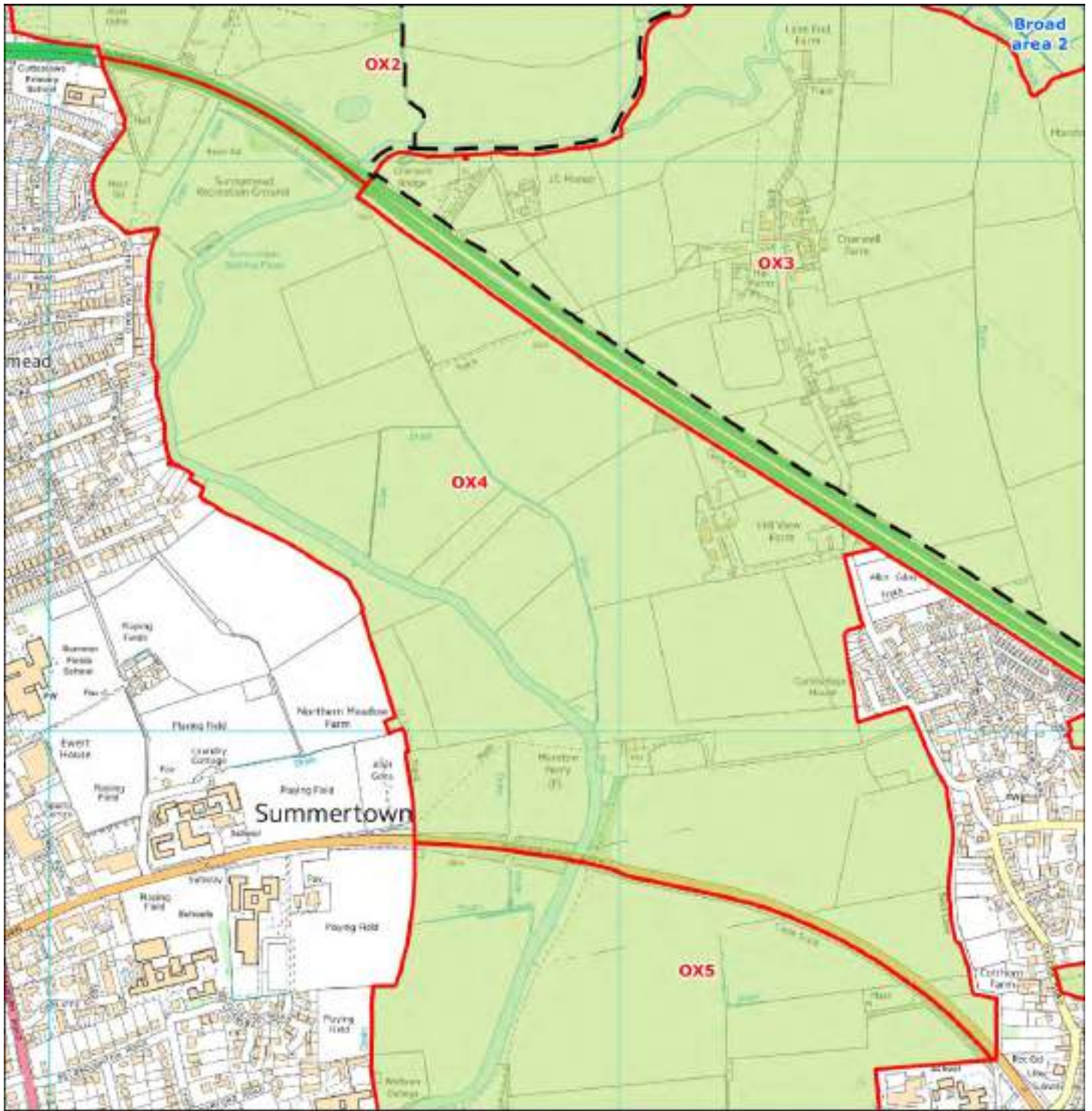
Notes:

Historically an outlying edge of Marston, this area was separated from the village core by the A40 by-pass. Whilst it has been breached in places, the A40 now forms a significant barrier to development on the north eastern side of Oxford, so any loss of openness beyond it would have an impact on the City's rural setting. The continuation of the open Cherwell river valley beneath the A40 and into the heart of Oxford makes a 'high' contribution to Oxford's special character, and loss of openness on the western side of parcel would compromise that continuity. This would be evident in some views from high ground. The contribution of other parts of the parcel to historic setting are limited by the fact that there is no intervisibility with central Oxford along the valley floor terrain, due to intervening vegetation, so a 'medium' rating would apply to the majority of the parcel.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: OX4

Main Authority: Oxford

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel sits within the Cherwell valley in between the western and eastern urban areas of Oxford. The land within the parcel is predominantly made-up of the flat floodplain of the river and contains portions of open pasture, the wooded banks of the river and outdoor sports fields associated with schools in neighbouring Summertown to the west. The parcel also contains a farm and pub. The only significant urbanising influence within the parcel is located to the north of the Cherwell River near the northern tip of the parcel – two areas of hardstanding, one of which is a floodlit sports pitch. Due to the flat nature of the land and the wooded banks of the river, the influence of this urban feature on the rest of the parcel is limited.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

There are no significant and durable boundaries preventing the spread of development out from Marston, Summertown and Sunnymead into the open river valley gap. The Green Belt is contributing to preventing sprawling ribbon development along Marston Ferry Road at the southern border of the parcel.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The Oxford urban area lies to both sides of the parcel, with Summertown and Sunnymead to the west and Marston to the east. Release of the Green Belt on either side of the River Cherwell could have a significant effect on the openness of this strategic gap, i.e. the development of one bank of the River Cherwell would significantly increase the importance of the Green Belt on the opposite bank in checking further sprawl.

Land Parcel Ref: OX4

Main Authority: Oxford

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

This area has a predominantly rural character, with tree cover providing screening of most of the urban area from much of the parcel. There are good views of the countryside within the Cherwell Valley and, in the areas of open pasture, the wider countryside to the north of the Northern By-pass road. The A40 has some impact on character at the northern end of the parcel, but little impact overall.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

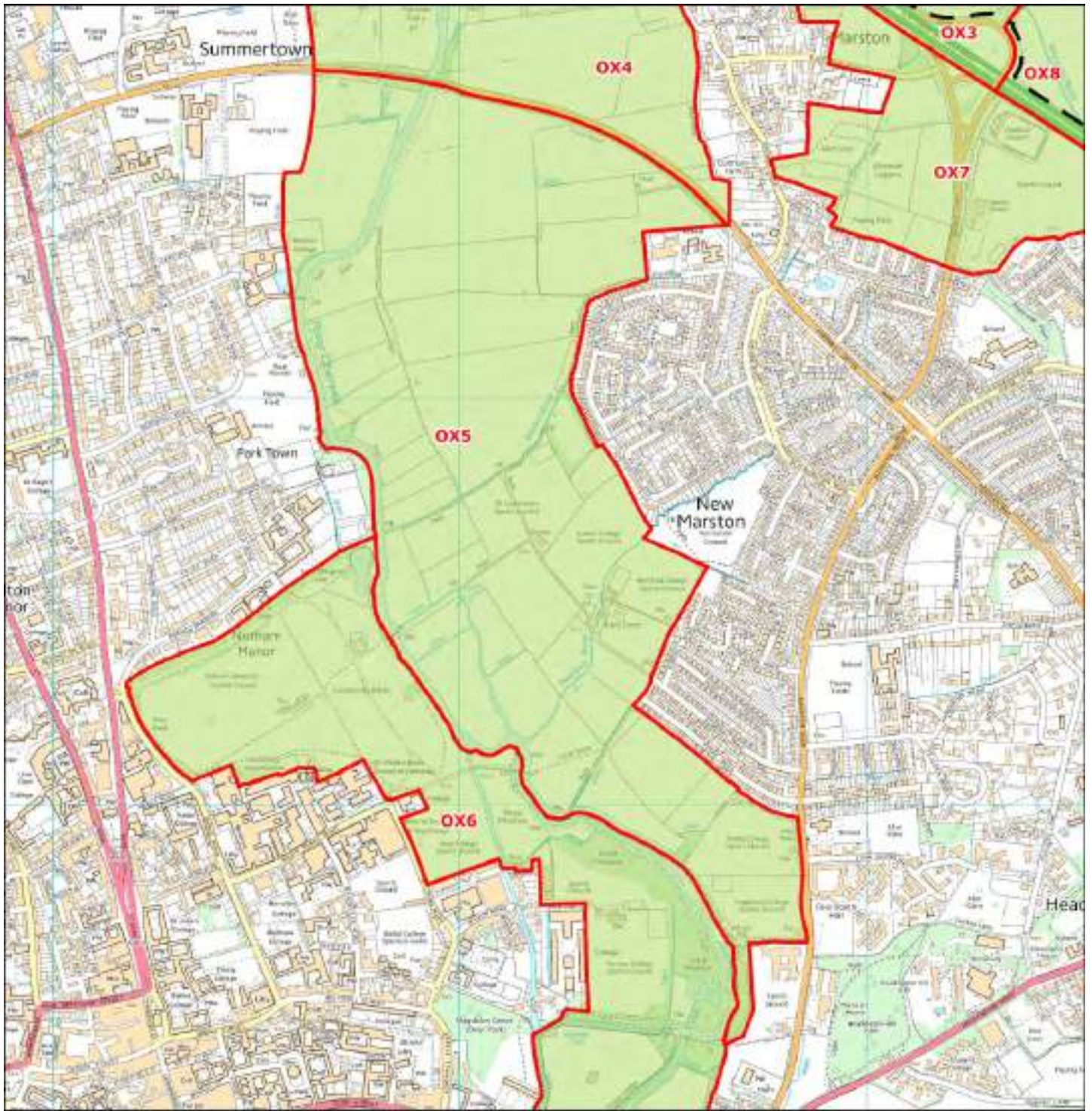
Notes:

The river valleys of the Thames and Cherwell function as green 'wedges' that link the broader open countryside with the historic core of Oxford, and as such are regarded as a key element of the City's setting and special character. This area of arable and pastures fields is also visible in views towards the City Centre from surrounding high ground, and the 'dreaming spires' can be glimpsed from some locations within the parcel. At a more local level, the Old Marston Conservation Area adjoins the southern half of the eastern boundary of the parcel, and the Spatial Analysis for the Conservation Area notes three locations from which there are significant public views across the parcel.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: OX5

Main Authority: Oxford

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel sits within the Cherwell valley in between the western and eastern urban areas of Oxford. The land within the parcel is predominantly made-up of the flat floodplain of the river and contains portions of open pasture, the wooded banks of the river and outdoor sports and open space facilities. The parcel does not contain a significant amount of development: a cricket pavilion and two semi-detached houses are located in the southern half of the parcel and a farm is located in the northern half of the parcel. There is a large building adjacent to the farm which represents the most significant urbanising influence within the parcel, and some areas of hardstanding used as tennis courts; however, in isolation, their urbanising influence is relatively minor. Furthermore, the flat nature of the land and the wooded banks of the river screen these urbanised areas from view.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

There are no significant and durable boundaries preventing the spread of development out from the urban area and into the open river valley gap from either east or west. Numerous residential roads offer potential access into the parcel. Therefore, it is considered that the Green Belt is an important contributor to maintaining the openness of this strategic gap by preventing sprawl within this portion of the Cherwell valley.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The Oxford urban area lies to both sides of the northern half of the parcel, with New Marston to the east and Park Town to the west. The parcel therefore constitutes an important gap preventing merging of these two historically separate suburbs. To the south the parcel combines with OX6 to form a gap between New Marston and the City Centre colleges, but much of this gap is no wider than that at the northern end of OX5 between New Marston and Park Town. The majority of the parcel therefore plays an essential role with regard to this purpose.

Land Parcel Ref: OX5

Main Authority: Oxford

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The land within the parcel is predominantly made-up of the flat floodplain of the River Cherwell and contains portions of open pasture, the wooded banks of the river and outdoor sports and open space facilities. The parcel does not contain a significant amount of development, and the flat nature of the land and the wooded banks of the river screen these urbanised areas from view.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

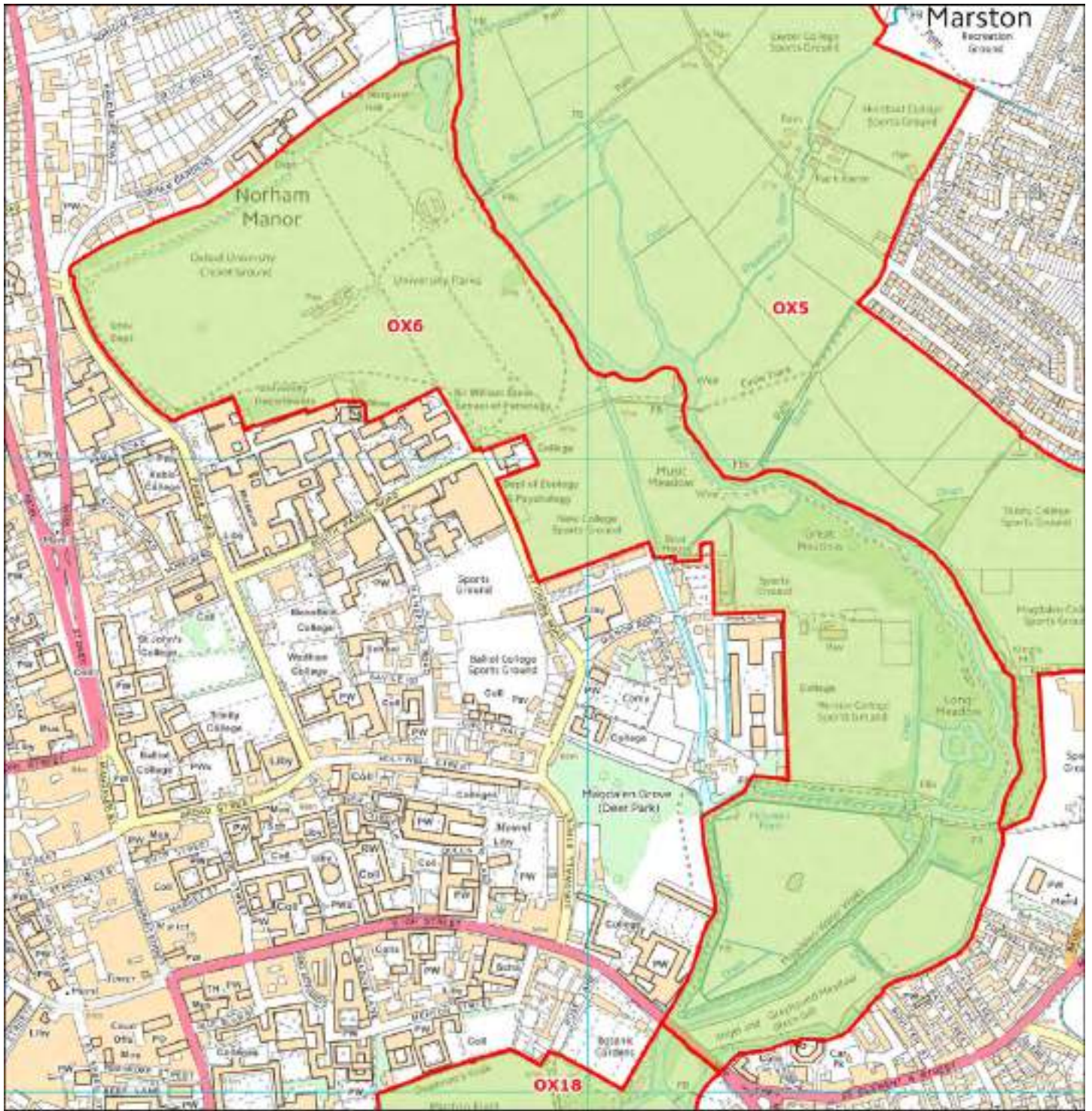
Notes:

The river valleys of the Thames and Cherwell function as green 'wedges' that link the broader open countryside with the historic core of Oxford, and as such are regarded as a key element of the City's setting and special character. South of the B4495 the Cherwell passes through a landscape of meadows and sports pitches, reflecting its recreational role in relation to the town and university. There are views towards the spires from some locations within the parcel, although strong tree and hedgerow field boundaries limit this. The parcel is adjacent to the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area, which contributes to historic character of Oxford as a whole.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: OX6

Main Authority: Oxford

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel sits within the Cherwell valley in between the western and eastern urban areas of Oxford. The land within the parcel is predominantly made-up of three Registered Parks and Gardens - the Grade II listed University Parks Registered Park and Garden in the north of the parcel, the Grade II listed St Catherine's Registered Park and Garden in the centre of the parcel and the Grade I listed Magdalen College Registered Park and Garden in the south of the parcel. The remaining areas are made-up of outdoor sports facilities, open pasture and the wooded banks of the river. The parcel contains very limited development. The only urbanising influences are a few university buildings located in the centre of the parcel adjacent to the St Catherine's Registered Park and Garden; however, in isolation, their urbanising influence is relatively minor, the flat nature of the land and the wooded banks of the river screening the urbanised areas from view.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

There are no strong physical boundaries to development from the urban edge to the north and west of the parcel, although in practice most of the developed parcel boundary consists of university buildings, much of the parcel is floodplain and/or Registered Parks and Gardens. The Cherwell forms the parcel boundary to the east.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The western boundary of the parcel is adjacent to Oxford University colleges while the south eastern boundary of the parcel is adjacent to central areas of Oxford City and in close proximity to Headington Hill Park. Release of the Green Belt on either side of the River Cherwell could have a significant effect on the openness of this strategic gap, i.e. the development of one bank of the River Cherwell would significantly increase the importance of the Green Belt on the opposite bank in checking further sprawl of this strategic gap.

Land Parcel Ref: OX6

Main Authority: Oxford

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel contains very limited development. The only urbanising influences are a few university buildings located in the centre of the parcel adjacent to the St Catherine's Registered Park and Garden; however, in isolation, their urbanising influence is relatively minor. The flat nature of the land and the wooded banks of the river screen them from the majority of the parcel. Due to the flat nature of the land within the parcel, views of the countryside are largely limited to within the valley.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

Notes:

The Cherwell Valley in this parcel is wholly contained within the Oxford Central Area Conservation Area, reflecting the extent to which the open river valley penetrates to the heart of the city and contributes significantly to its special character. This area to the west of the river includes the University Parks, several college sports grounds and the water meadow adjacent to Magdalen College. There are views towards the spires from the parcel.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: OX7

Main Authority: Oxford

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel borders the large built-up area of Oxford on three sides and is separated from the wider Green Belt by the Northern By-pass Road (A40) at its northern edge, which screens the parcel from the wider countryside. The parcel contains a large allotment to the west of Marsh Lane and the football ground and facilities of Oxford City Football Club to the east. The floodlit pitch, spectator stands and parking facilities constitute a significant amount of urbanising development, so the Green Belt makes a 'low' contribution in this area, but the allotments, whilst urban-edge in character, lack built development and so do not compromise the sense of openness.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

There are no defensible boundaries preventing urban sprawl within the parcel itself. The Northern By-pass Road (A40) at the parcel's northern edge is a permanent defensible boundary close to the existing urban edge of Oxford which would reduce the potential for northwards sprawl of the City and which screens the parcel from the wider countryside. The A40 forms the urban edge both to the east and west, increasing the likelihood of development within this parcel in the absence of the Green Belt designation, due to the potential for 'rounding off' of the urban area.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

Loss of any openness could substantially reduce the space between Marston and Northway, but the parcel's location on the edge of the City and the fact that the suburbs join immediately to the south reduces its significance as a gap.

Land Parcel Ref: OX7

Main Authority: Oxford

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Low

Notes:

Both sides of the parcel have characteristics which associate them with the adjacent urban area. The allotment area retains more of a sense of openness than the football club site, but any sense of connection with the wider rural landscape is limited by the presence of the A40.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

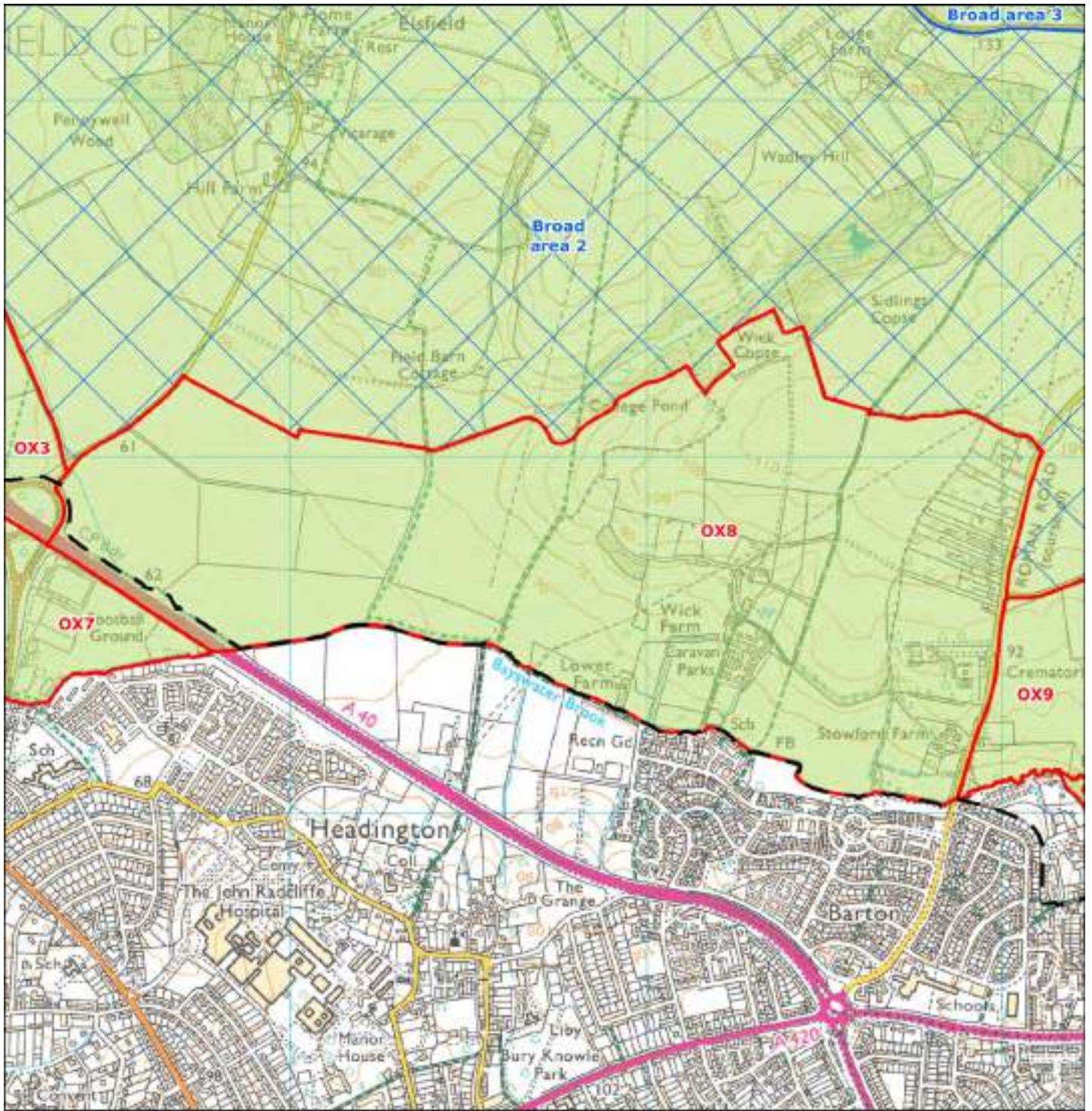
Notes:

This parcel consists largely of sports pitches and allotments on flat ground between Marston and Headington. Strong tree and hedge lines foster a sense of separation from the urban area, but the location's containment by the A40, and division by Marsh Lane (the B4150) limit any sense of it being part of the wider rural area in views into the area (e.g. from Elsfield or Headington Hill). However, it has importance as a setting for Old Marston, and the western half of the parcel is designated as part of the Old Marston Conservation Area. Surviving medieval field elements, including hedgerow boundaries and ridge and furrow remnants, and views up towards Elsfield and Headington are noted. The larger, western part of the parcel can therefore be considered of 'high' significance in relation to historic Oxford, but the eastern half is only considered to have 'low' significance.

Land Parcel Ref: OX8

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Other Authorities: Oxford

Land Parcel Ref: OX8

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to the large built-up area of Oxford. The parcel is predominantly made-up of large regular shaped agricultural fields, some of which, along the southern and western edges of the parcel are in the floodplain of the Bayswater Brook. The land within the parcel is open and rises to the north east from the Brook to the north eastern corner of the parcel where there are good views of the surrounding countryside. The urbanising influences in the parcel are concentrated in its eastern half; these include a caravan park adjacent to Wick Farm, the residential developments along Bayswater Road and adjacent to Stowe Farm, and buildings associated with the Oxford Crematorium. All are reasonably well contained within the wider landscape. Distinction can be made between eastern edge of the parcel, which is rated 'medium', and the central and western area which makes a 'high' contribution to openness.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

Bayswater Brook, which forms the southern boundary of the parcel where it abuts the urban area, is a distinct feature which has performed a role in limiting development, but there is considered to be potential for development spreading north from Barton, including along Barton Village Road (the existing access to Wick Farm) and from Bayswater Road on the eastern edge of the parcel and Elsfield Road on the western edge. The Brook is not physically a sufficiently prominent feature to be considered a significant and durable boundary in its own right, and whilst in places it has a strong buffer of associated vegetation, in others it is more exposed. The length of the Brook through this parcel can also be considered to increase the potential for future breaches.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is located to the north of Barton, adjacent to Bayswater Brook. The parcel has a strong sense of openness but is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose. Therefore, the parcel makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements. This land parcel does form part of the gap between Oxford and Stanton St John, Elsfield and Beckley but these settlements are not considered under Purpose 2 as part of this assessment.

Land Parcel Ref: OX8

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The land within the parcel is for the most part open and rural in character, and rises to the north from the Brook to provide good views of the City (dominated by Headington and Barton), from which a sense of separation is created by the elevation of the terrain, and surrounding countryside. The urbanising influences in the parcel are concentrated principally at its eastern end and their overall influence on countryside character within the Green Belt is considered to be limited.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

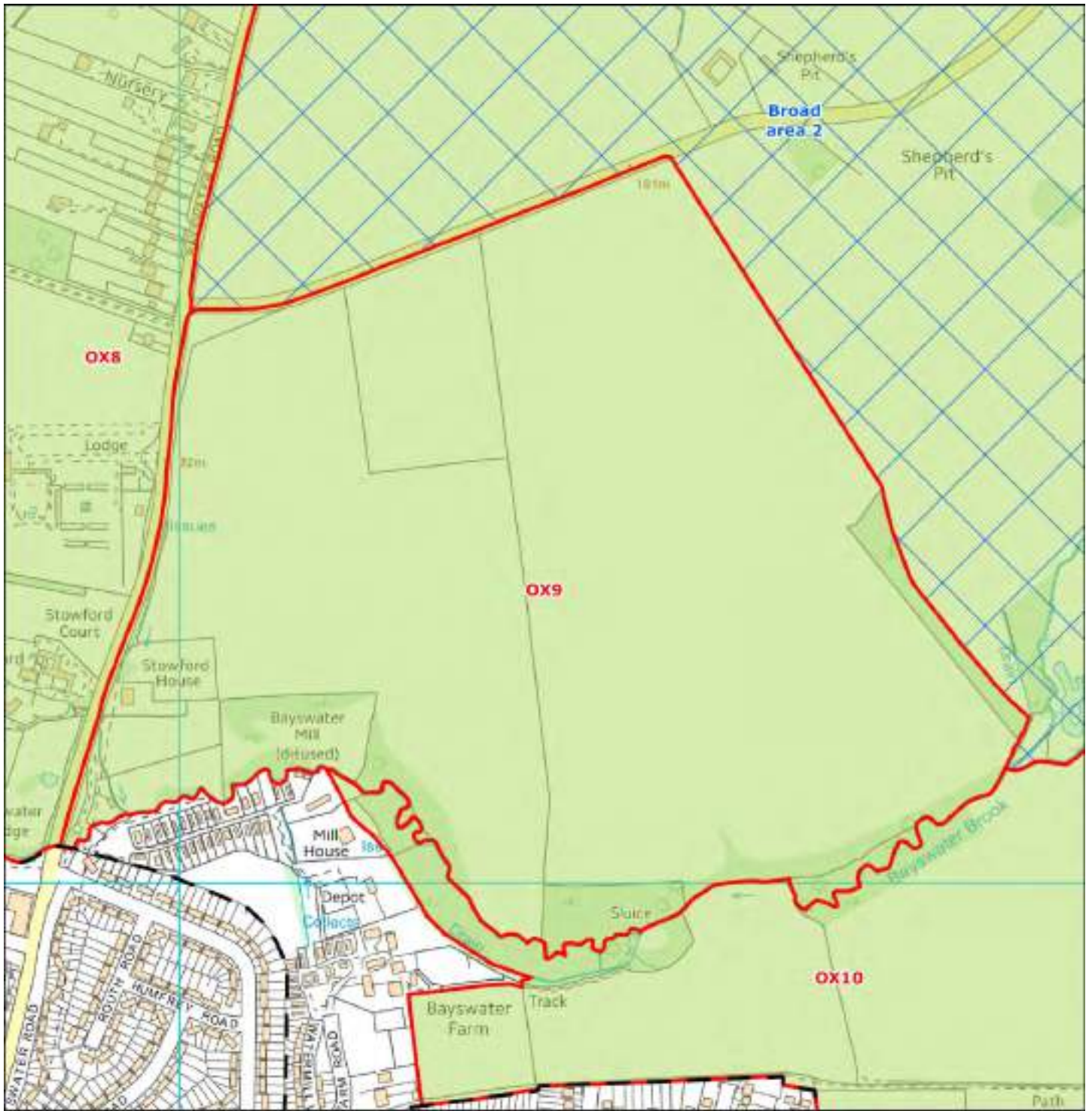
Notes:

The tree-lined Bayswater Brook, which runs through the valley between Headington and the ridge to the north on which Elsfield, Beckley and Stanton St John are located, forms a distinct boundary, with smaller, largely pastoral fields to the south and larger, arable fields to the north. This parcel lies to the north of the Brook and the A40, so development here would mask the presence of the watercourse as a natural boundary. The only residential development in Oxford which lies to the north of the A40 (and also predates it), at Barton and Sandhills, is contained in its northward extent by the Brook. There is some intervisibility with Oxford from higher ground within parcel, which forms a backdrop to views from the east and from the city centre, but whilst most of the parcel is too low-lying to be significant in this respect, it can be seen as an important foreground area which illustrates the immediate rural setting of Oxford from elevated viewpoints on the high ground to the north, such as Elsfield (important as one of the Oxford viewcone locations). There are three rights of way passing through the parcel between the City and Elsfield/Beckley, all of which provide views of the City's setting from high ground (although visibility of the historic centre is limited, and the hospital complex at Headington dominates the built form).

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: OX9

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to the large built-up area of Oxford. The parcel is predominantly made-up of two large regular shaped agricultural fields. The land within the parcel is open and rises to the north from Bayswater Brook. There are good views of the surrounding countryside to the south and east. The one dwelling in the parcel is not considered to constitute urban sprawl.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

Bayswater Brook, which has a dense associated tree belt, forms the southern boundary of the parcel and represents a boundary that in this area, as with much of parcel OX8, marks the principal edge of urban area. The Brook in its own right is not considered to constitute a strong defensible boundary to the northward sprawl of Oxford, but the extent of vegetation alongside the watercourse make the parcel less vulnerable than it would be were the Brook and trees not to exist. However, this defensibility is tempered by the potential that Bayswater Road offers for access to the western side of the parcel.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is located to the north of Barton, adjacent to Bayswater Road on the western boundary. The parcel has a strong sense of openness but is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose. Therefore, the parcel makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements. The land parcel does form part of the visible open gap between Oxford and Stanton St John but this settlement is not considered in this study under Purpose 2.

Land Parcel Ref: OX9

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is predominantly made-up of two large regular shaped agricultural fields. The land within the parcel is open and rises to the north from Bayswater Brook. There are good views of the surrounding countryside to the south and east. There is just one isolated dwelling in the parcel, which is not considered to be an urbanising influence on the countryside within the Green Belt.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

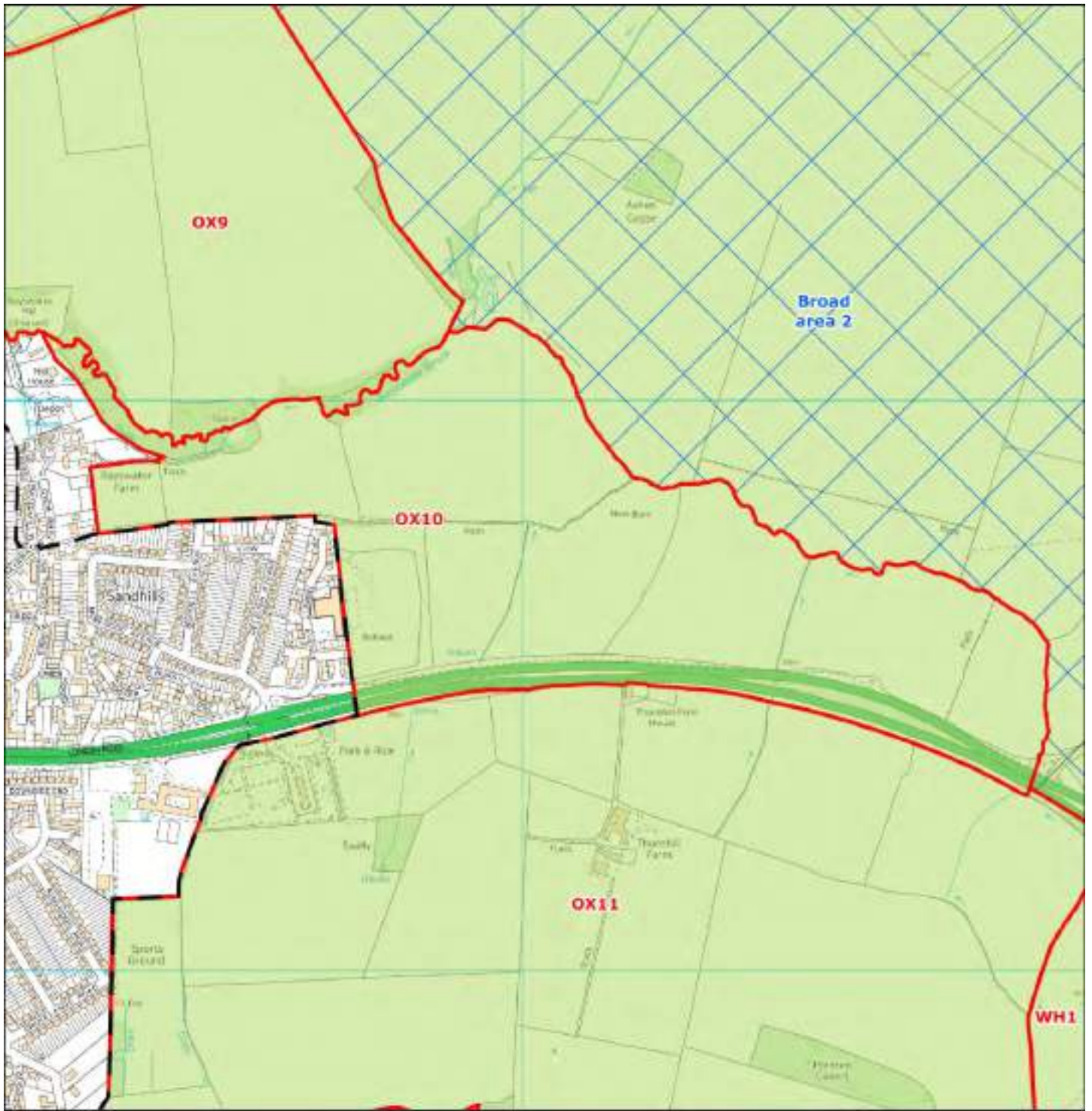
Notes:

Sloping arable fields to the north of Bayswater Brook, a watercourse with strong streamside vegetation which forms a distinctive boundary feature at the bottom of a valley. Looking south from the northern edge of the parcel the urban area is well screened and the hills to the east of Oxford (notably Shotover Hill) form a backdrop, giving this area a very rural character despite its proximity to the city's eastern suburbs. The rural character and distinctive hill and valley topography of the area around the head of the Bayswater Brook make it an important element in Oxford's setting, screened from views from the city centre but visible as part of the City's containing ring of hills in views from high ground to the west and visible from higher ground around Shotover, Forest Hill and to the north.

Land Parcel Ref: OX10

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



--- District boundary Green belt parcel Broad area Green belt 0 0.2 km

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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: OX10

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to the large built-up area of Oxford. The parcel sits in between London Road (A40) and Bayswater Brook. With the exception of an area of hardstanding used as a playground in the west of the parcel, there are no significant urbanising influences. The parcel is predominantly made-up of large regular shaped agricultural fields. The land within the parcel is open with good views of the surrounding countryside. Bayswater Brook forms the northern boundary of the parcel and London Road (A40) forms the southern boundary. Both are perpendicular to the existing urban edge of Oxford.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

Bayswater Brook and the A40 are perpendicular to the existing urban edge of Oxford and therefore play no role checking sprawl within the parcel. There are no features on the eastern edge of Sandhills to fulfil a barrier role, and whilst there is limited potential for ribbon development along the A40 dual carriageway it would nonetheless be possible to achieve access via the Thornhill junction. It is therefore the Green Belt which is the primary means of checking the eastwards sprawl of Oxford.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel has a strong sense of openness and whilst it is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose the A40 provides a rapid means of movement between Oxford and Wheatley. Therefore, whilst there is no visual link between Wheatley and this parcel it is still considered to make some contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements.

This land parcel forms a large part of the gap between Oxford and Forest Hill. This settlement is not considered under Purpose 2 for this study, but its elevated position and relationship with the ridge to the north and hills to the south west of Wheatley, linking through to Shotover, makes it distinctly separate from the urban area.

Land Parcel Ref: OX10

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is predominantly made-up of large regular shaped agricultural fields between London Road (A40) to the south and Bayswater Brook to the north. With the exception of an area of hardstanding used as a playground in the west of the parcel, there are no significant urbanising influences on the countryside. The land within the parcel is open with good views of the surrounding countryside, and the A40 is largely screened from view.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

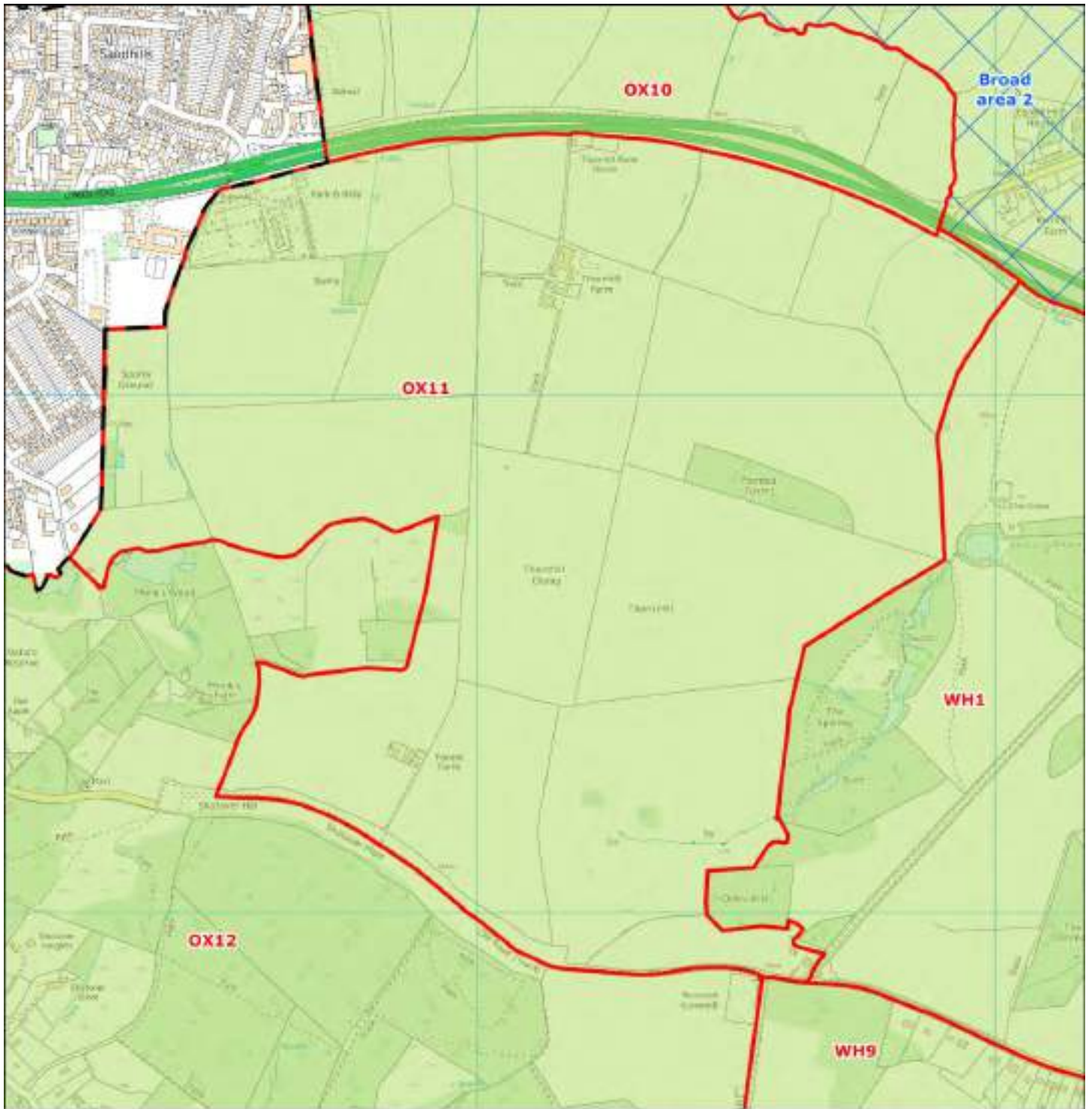
Notes:

Undulating, gently sloping arable land on southern slope of a tributary of Bayswater Brook. The landform, with views across the valley to wooded high ground around Beckley to north, and steeper slopes up to Shotover Hill to the south and Forest Hill to the east, exposes this area to view and makes it important as a rural edge to Oxford, even though there is no intervisibility with the city's historic centre. The continuity of landscape character to the north, south and east of the parcel, and the proximity of the A40, adds to this area's significance.

Land Parcel Ref: OX11

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



--- District boundary Green belt parcel Broad area Green belt 0 0.25 km

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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: OX11

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to the large built-up area of Oxford. With the exception of the floodlit Park and Ride facility in the north eastern corner of the parcel, and the adjacent A40, which are fairly well screened, the parcel contains no urbanising influences. The land within the parcel is largely made up of regular agricultural fields, two farms and woodland, and rises southward up the slopes of Shotover Hill.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

London Road (A40) forms the northern boundary of the parcel and is perpendicular to the existing urban edge of Oxford. It is therefore the Green Belt which is the primary means of checking the eastwards sprawl of Oxford. While there is limited potential for ribbon development along the A40 because it is a dual-carriageway there could be potential to access new development via the Thornhill Park and Ride junction, and there would also be potential to access the area via Risinghurst.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The northern boundary of the parcel is adjacent to the A40 while the western boundary is adjacent to Risinghurst, a suburb of Oxford. The parcel has a strong sense of openness and flat topography to the northern area of the parcel with the parcel rising in elevation towards its southern area. Littleworth, a ribbon development which has extended west from Wheatley onto higher ground along Old Road, is in relatively close proximity to the south eastern part of the parcel, but topography and intervening vegetation limit any views other than in the far south east corner, and the absence of a vehicular through-route also has an impact on sense of proximity. Although there is a greater distance between the parcel and the core of Wheatley, and a different landscape setting with the latter lying in a valley on the western side of the ridge that links Forest Hill and Red Hill to Thorn Hill and Shotover, the A40 provides a rapid means of movement between the two. Therefore, whilst there is no visual link, this parcel it is still considered to make some contribution to preventing the erosion of the physical gap between settlements.

Land Parcel Ref: OX11

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

With the exception of the floodlit Park and Ride facility in the north eastern corner of the parcel, the parcel contains no urbanising influences. The Park and Ride facility is bordered by vegetation, helping to mitigate its urbanising influence on the countryside within the wider Green Belt. The land within the parcel is largely made up of regular agricultural fields, two farms and woodland. The land rises to Thorn Hill in the centre of the parcel, and then up to Shotover Hill near the southern border of the parcel. From the slopes and summit of the hill there are excellent views of the surrounding countryside, particularly to the north and north east, adding to the sense of rurality despite proximity to the A40 and the urban edge.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

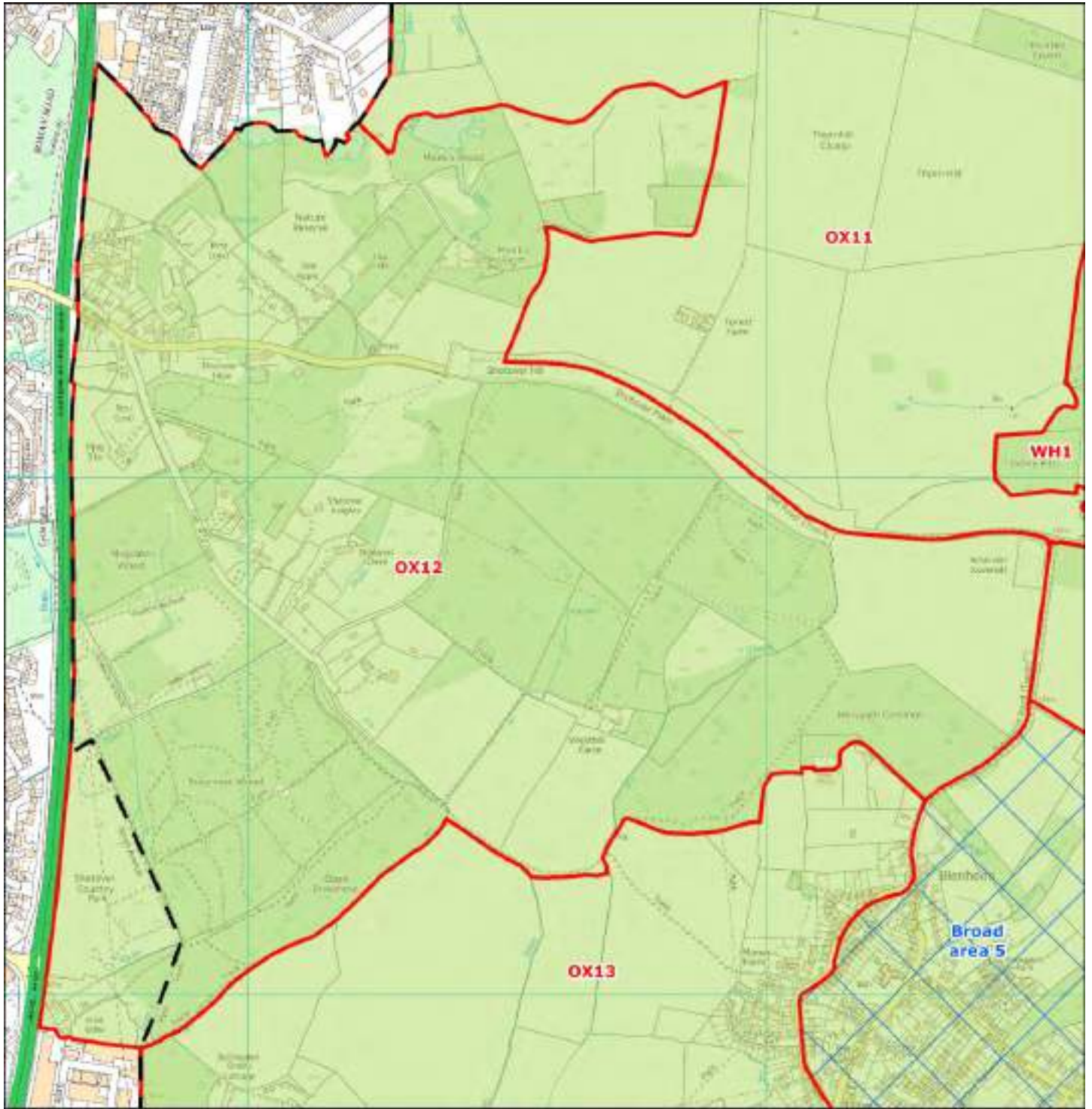
Notes:

There is no intervisibility with central Oxford but the parcel is adjacent to the Thornhill Park and Ride on the eastern edge of the city. Shotover Hill is a significant local landmark, abutting 20th Oxford to the west but open and rural to the east, with long views. The old London to Oxford Road, marking the southern boundary of the parcel, formerly ran over the top of the hill, and the A40, the modern approach from London, runs along the northern edge. The hill marks a clear edge to the city, and the northern slopes, visible from high ground to the north and east and in glimpsed views from the A40, form part of it. The lower slopes of the parcel are less significant than the higher ground to the south.

Land Parcel Ref: OX12

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: OX12

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to the large built-up area of Oxford. The majority of the parcel contains woodland associated with the Brasenose Wood and Shotover Hill SSSI. The southern half of the parcel is largely undeveloped. The northern half contains the small hamlet of Shotover Cleve on the upper southern slope of the Hill. The density of development increases to the north west of the hamlet into the north western corner of the parcel. The development along Shotover Kilns Road represents the only significant urbanising influence within the parcel. However, all built development within this parcel is set in well-wooded surroundings and, therefore, has a limited influence on the wider Green Belt.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

The Eastern By-pass Road forms the western edge of the parcel, retaining the majority of the existing urban edge of Oxford, but Old Road provides a link across this which has enabled development to take place to the east of the dual-carriageway, so the Green Belt is important in protecting from further development along Old Road and The Ridings. There would also be potential access from Risinghurst to the north. Further urbanising development within the parcel, particularly on the slopes of Shotover Hill would represent a more significant breach of this defensible boundary and, therefore, more significant sprawl. There are no other significant and durable boundaries within the parcel or immediately beyond its boundaries which could contribute to checking sprawl.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The western boundary of the parcel borders the A4142 which is adjacent to the eastern suburbs of Oxford, including Slade Park, Wood Farm and Lye Valley. The parcel is large, with high ground providing some long views but also extensive woodlands in which views are limited. Due to close proximity at its eastern end to Littleworth, which is considered as part of Wheatley, the parcel plays some role in preventing the erosion of the physical gap between the two settlements, but the lack of a through-route along Old Road limits connectivity. In practice the wooded nature of this parcels limits potential for any significant increase in development that might affect the relationship between Wheatley and Oxford.

Land Parcel Ref: OX12

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The majority of the parcel contains woodland associated with the Brasenose Wood and Shotover Hill SSSI. The southern half of the parcel is largely undeveloped. The northern half contains the small hamlet of Shotover Cleve on the upper southern slope of the hill. The density of development increases to the north west of the hamlet in the north western corner of the parcel and the development along Shotover Kilns Road represents the only significant urbanising influences within the parcel. However, these influences are surrounded by woodland and, therefore, have a limited influence on the wider Green Belt. Breaks in the woodland enjoy excellent views of the surrounding countryside and also the industrial edge of Oxford at Cowley, but elevation gives a sense of rural separation.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

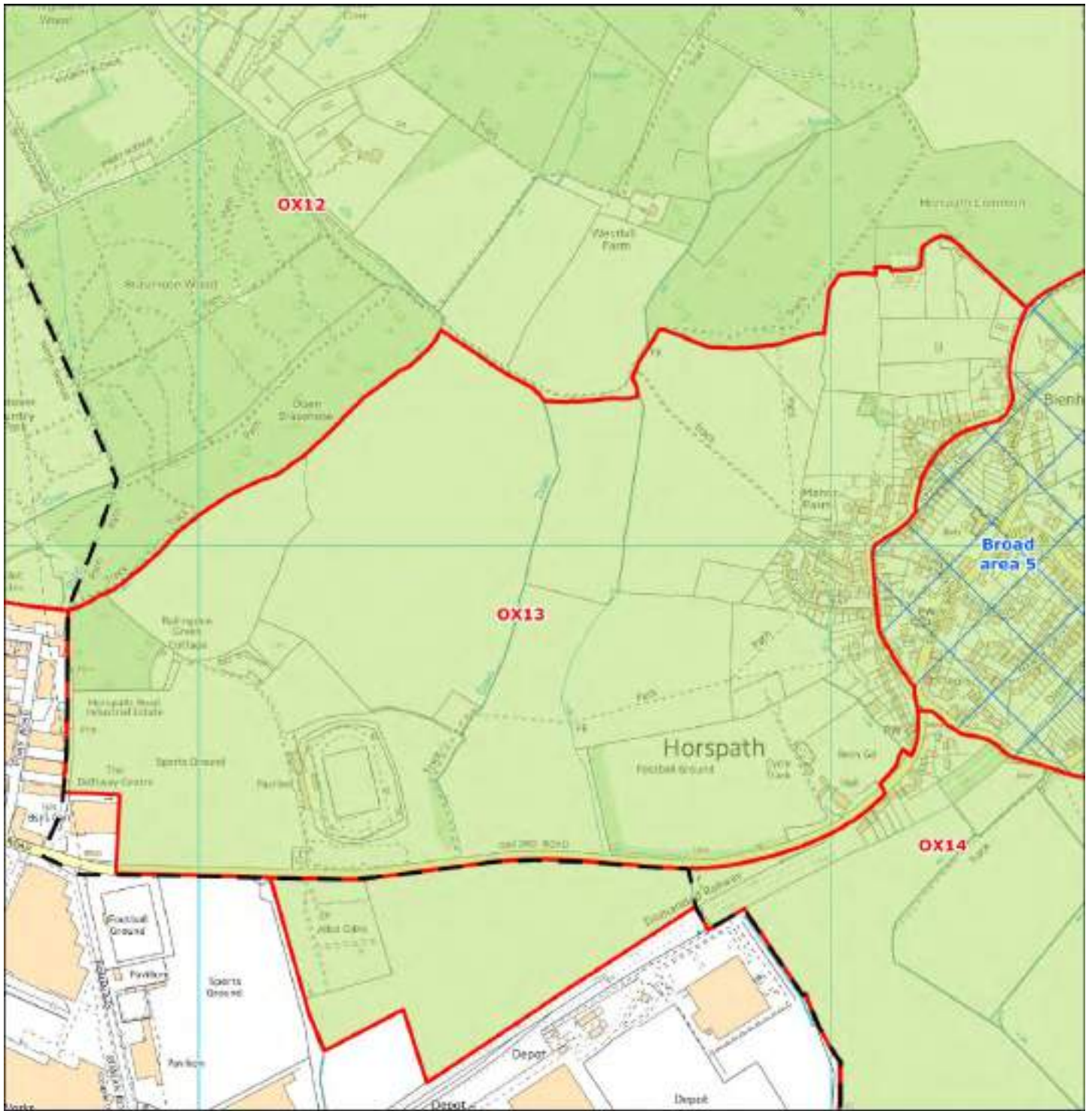
Notes:

The parcel consists of the wooded crest, western and southern slopes of Shotover Hill, a significant local landmark, abutting 20th Oxford to the west but open and rural to the east. Part of a royal forest in medieval times, the hilltop provides long vistas (although not towards central Oxford, due to screening from woodland) and forms an important green backdrop in views from and across the city.

Land Parcel Ref: OX13

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: OX13

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Cowley, which is notable for its industrial character including a number of large buildings with influence the character of the adjacent countryside. The south western corner of the parcel contains outdoor sports facilities, including an athletics track which is flood-lit, and there is street lighting and a pavement along Horspath Road / Oxford Road on the southern edge of the parcel. The eastern border of the parcel contains a significant portion of the village of Horspath, most of which is late 20th century development. The athletics track and the portion of Horspath which sits within the parcel represent significant urbanising influences on countryside within the parcel; however, there is a significant area of undeveloped and open countryside in the parcel, in particular the higher ground in the northern half of the parcel which, considered in isolation, would score 'high' in terms of openness.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

The Green Belt prevents ribbon development along the northern edge of Horspath Road / Oxford Road. There are no significant or durable boundaries within the parcel which could contribute to checking sprawl.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel lies to the east of the A4142 and the Oxford suburb of Cowley and to the west of Horspath. Apart from the inclusion of Horspath Sports Ground, the parcel has a strong sense of openness. Horspath lies between Oxford and the nearest settlement considered under Purpose 2 for this study, Wheatley (including Littleworth), but a loss of openness between Oxford and Horspath would push the urban edge out significantly. Horspath in turn has ribbon development along Gidley Way which leaves little physical distance to Littleworth. This would represent a sizeable reduction in the overall settlement gap between Oxford and Wheatley. Whilst most of Horspath is separated from Littleworth by intervening high ground, development along Gidley Way crosses over the southern side of the hill and so has intervisibility with Littleworth.

Land Parcel Ref: OX13

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

Considered overall, the outdoor sports facilities, street lighting and pavement on Oxford/Horspath Road constitute limited urbanising development, retaining a significant degree of openness. The higher, northern part of the site, with extensive southerly views and backing onto the Shotover Country Park, has a greater degree of separation from the urban area and would score 'high' in terms of countryside character.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

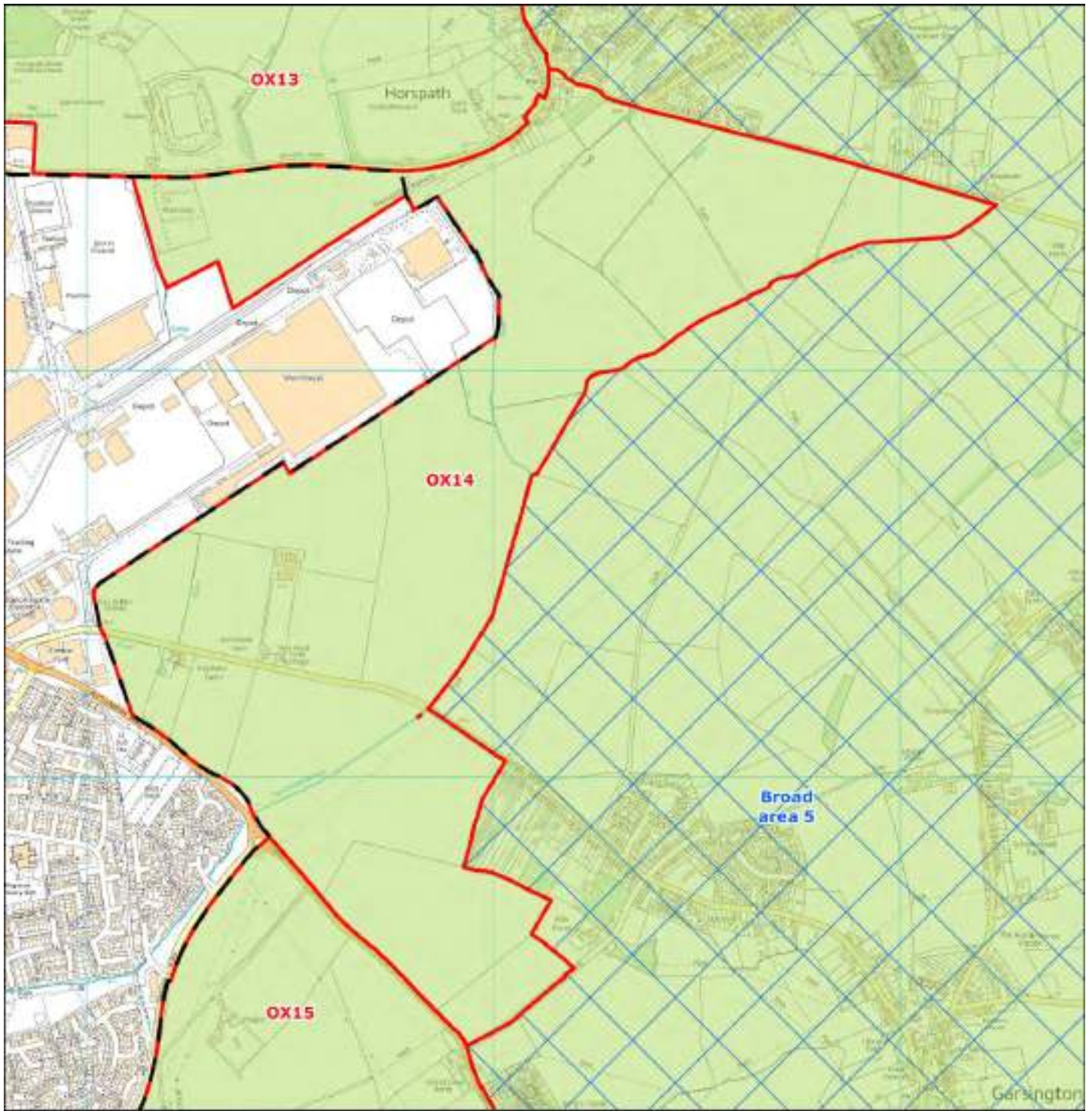
Notes:

The lower, southern slopes of Shotover Hill are abutted by development to the south and south-west (the motor works and industrial units at Cowley) and the east (Horspath), and include a sports pitch, but well-treed field boundaries, including along the north edge of the mini plant to the south, and the wooded heights of Shotover Hill, give the eastern part of the parcel a rural character. Approaching from the east (Cuddesdon Road) the area is screened from view by Horspath, and urban-edge influences in Cowley are evident across the open landscape. There is no intervisibility with Oxford's historic core. The upper slopes can be considered more sensitive in relation to Shotover Hill's role as a marker of the eastern extent of Oxford, and in views from the high ground - e.g. Horspath Common - but visibility of the lower area from the surrounding landscape is limited to locations in which the urban edge at Cowley is a dominant element of the landscape, detracting from Oxford's special character. The lower area represents the majority of the parcel.

Land Parcel Ref: OX14

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: OX14

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel contains a couple of farms and a small portion of the village of Horspath at the northern tip of the parcel; however none of these developments are considered to be significant urbanising influences on the countryside within the Green Belt. The rest of the parcel is made-up of large open irregular shaped agricultural fields with views of the immediate countryside around the parcel.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

There are no significant and durable boundaries to contain further urban expansion in this area. The County Trading Estate projects out eastwards to create an uneven, and therefore more vulnerable, settlement edge at the northern end of the parcel, the B480 Watlington Road provides a link out from the City on the southern edge and Oxford Road (from Garsington) passes through the parcel.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is located to the southeast of the Blackbird Leys, a suburb of Oxford. The parcel borders Northfield Brook on its southern boundary and Cuddesdon Road on its northeast boundary. The parcel has a sense of openness throughout and is located on relatively flat topography. The Littleworth area of Wheatley is relatively close to the northeast of the parcel. Due to the low topography and open character of the parcel, views of the suburbs of Oxford and of Littleworth are available from within the parcel, and the parcel can be clearly viewed from surrounding high ground - e.g. at Garsington. The parcel therefore plays some role in preventing the erosion of the physical and visual gap between the two settlements, but more so in the north than the south, where reduction or loss of the gap between Oxford and Garsington is not addressed under Purpose 2 for this study.

Land Parcel Ref: OX14

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is made-up of large open irregular shaped agricultural fields with views of the immediate countryside around the parcel. Development within the parcel includes a couple of farms and a small portion of the village of Horspath at the northern tip of the parcel. None of these developments are considered to be significant urbanising influences on the countryside within the Green Belt, but Cowley exerts an urbanising influence and compromises countryside character.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

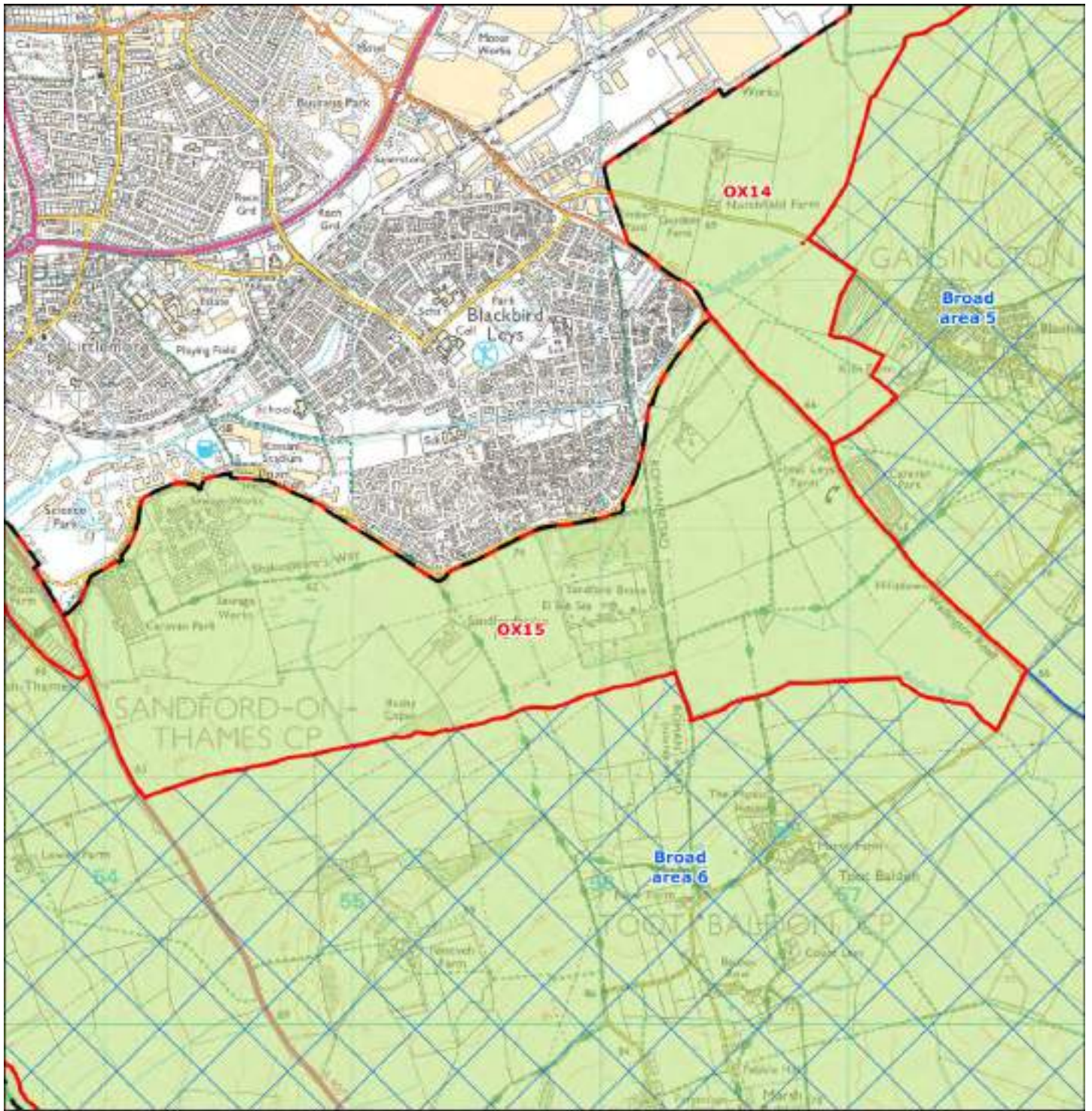
Notes:

Flat, low-lying land arable land alongside Northfield Brook. The character of this area is influenced by the adjacent Cowley works, urban edge at Blackbird Leys and transmission line to the south, and it is not intervisible with those parts of Oxford which contribute to the City's special character. The area is, however, very visible from higher ground to the south east, e.g. around Garsington, in the context of the hills which frame the City. Seen in this context, the parcel provides separation between the very prominent industrialised edge at Cowley - which lacks the screening tree cover that softens the urban edge alongside Blackbird Leys to the south and also the eastern end of the motor works - and the high ground to the south east, threatening in particular the settlement of Blenheim at the northern end of Garsington.

Land Parcel Ref: OX15

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: OX15

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to the large built-up area of Oxford. There are some significant urbanising influences within the parcel, namely a large caravan park and sewage works in the western half of the parcel and Sandford Brake substation in the eastern half of the parcel, although these are fairly well screened. Pylons cross through the parcel, converging on the substation, but much of the parcel contains undeveloped and open agricultural fields.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

There are no significant and durable boundaries within the parcel or directly to the south which would contribute to checking the southwards sprawl of Oxford. Grenoble Road forms a boundary at present, but is not considered to constitute a significant barrier. It is therefore the Green Belt which is the primary means of checking the southwards sprawl of Oxford, either south from Grenoble Road or along the B480 Watlington Road.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel is located to the south of Grenoble Road and the southern suburbs of Oxford. The parcel is relatively flat in topography, and strong tree lines largely screen the urbanising elements, giving the parcel a sense of openness. The southeast corner of the parcel is in relatively close proximity to Radley, but the Thames Valley, whilst allowing some intervisibility, represents in landscape terms a separating feature which limits the extent to which there would be any sense of potential merger between the two areas. The parcel forms part of the gap between Oxford and Toot Baldon but this settlement is not considered under Purpose 2 for this study.

Land Parcel Ref: OX15

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

There are some significant urbanising influences within the parcel, namely a large caravan park and sewage works in the western half of the parcel and Sandford Brake substation in the eastern half of the parcel, but these are relatively well screened by strong trees lines and woodland blocks. The rest of the parcel contains undeveloped and open agricultural fields with views to the wider countryside, including wooded high ground to the west (Bagley Wood), the distinctive partially wooded ridge to the south, running westwards from Toot Baldon, and to a lesser extent the hills to the east around Horspath and Garsington. Pylons converging on the substation add to urban-edge character, but there is sufficient undeveloped farmland and a relationship with the surrounding countryside to consider the parcel relatively open and rural. It is noted that there is some reduction in countryside character to the north, closer to the urban edge.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

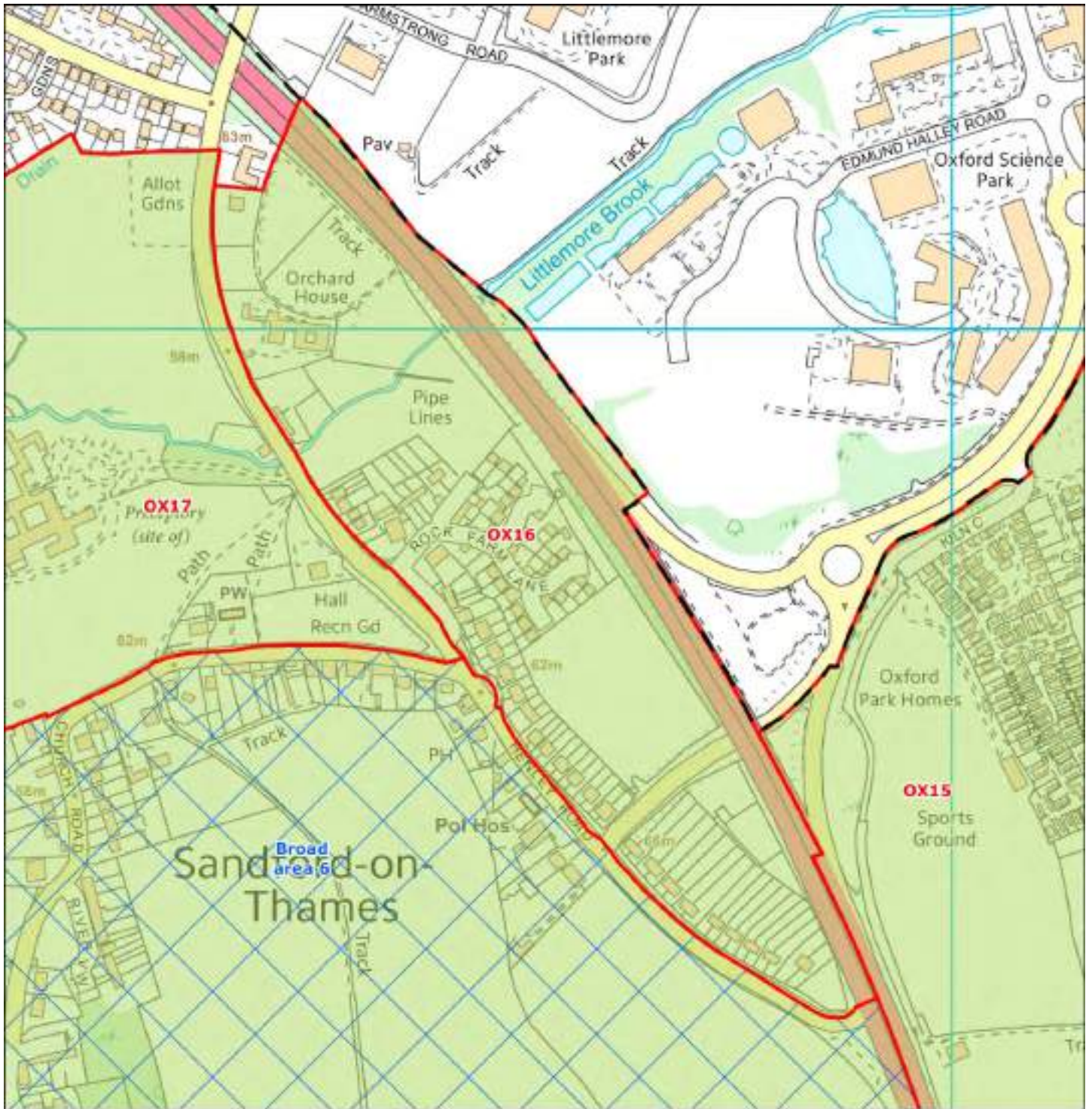
Notes:

Urbanising development extends south across Grenoble Road in places, and there is no distinct change in landform between Blackbird Leys and the arable farmland to the south, but the well treed northern boundary of the parcel still represents a fairly distinct edge to the urban area, with tree cover largely screening the urbanising elements from view. There is no visual relationship with historic areas of Oxford. Hedgerows and tree blocks screen views of the urban edge and give the landscape open, rural characteristics in views from lower ground, such as the B480 Watlington Road approach, although the transmission lines gathering at the Sandford Brake Substation are very evident. In views from higher ground to the south, e.g. Toot Baldon, the parcel is more visible but so is the large Blackbird Leys estate. There is a greater ('medium') setting significance associated with the southern parts of the parcel that are more prominent as a rural foreground landscape in views from the ridge to the south, the B480 to the east and the A4074 to the west, and also with the eastern end of the parcel (which forms part of a clear rural gap between Blackbird Leys and Blenheim/Garsington in views from Shotover Hill). This is also prominent open space in views from the northern edge of Toot Baldon. The fields in the northern part of the parcel, to the west of Sandford Brake do however rate 'low' in relation to their significance to the setting of Oxford.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: OX16

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to the large built-up area of Oxford. The parcel contains a significant proportion of the village of Sandford-on-Thames as well as some southern sprawl of Oxford along the eastern side of Sandford Road at the northern end of the parcel. This development leaves only relatively small areas undeveloped, and the proximity of the A4074 dual-carriageway is a limiting factor on openness. The less developed, more open character of the landscape to the west of Henley Road does combine with the remaining open spaces within the parcel to contribute to the retention of some sense of openness within the parcel, but this is compromised by the extent of development.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

The A4074 dual-carriageway doesn't function as a significant and durable barrier, as Henley Road provides ready access from Oxford to the north but it clearly defines the eastern edge of the settlement. There are gaps in the parcel which can be considered very vulnerable to development.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The open area of the parcel around Littlemore Brook also plays a key role in preventing the merging of Sandford with the modern urbanising development to the north of the brook (e.g. Vale House), and to a lesser extent in preventing merger with the edge of Oxford to the west, where the presence of the dual-carriageway and associated screening planting limits intervisibility. However, Sandford is not considered as a settlement under Purpose 2 for this study. The remaining open areas in the parcel do not play a significant role in separating any other settlements from Oxford.

Land Parcel Ref: OX16

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The village of Sandford does retain something of a rural character, and the remaining open areas contribute to this, but the less developed character of the western side of the road is also important in this respect, and lacks the containment created by the A4074 to the east. There is therefore some sense of openness, despite the extent of development.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

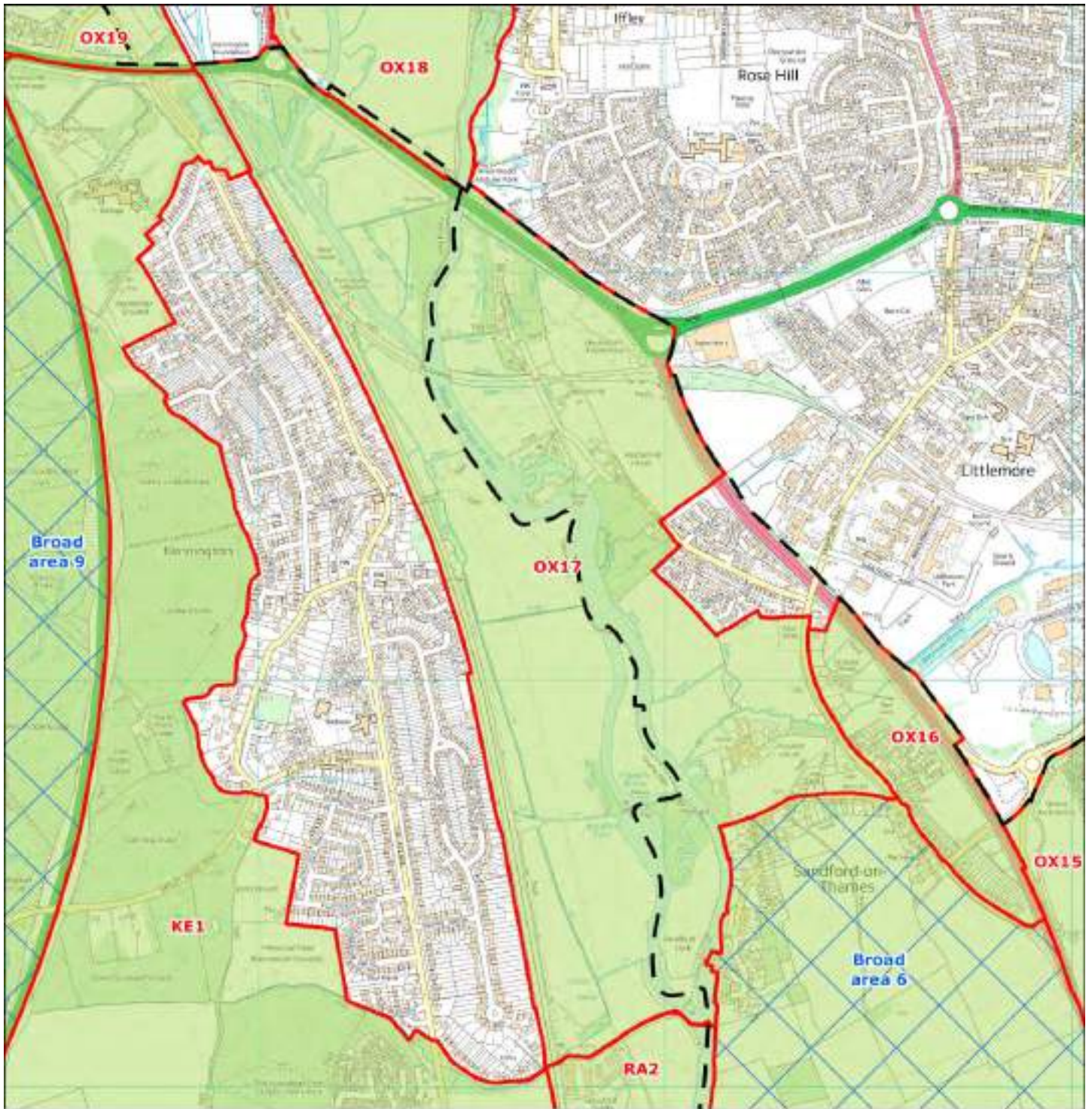
Notes:

This small parcel is already largely developed, leaving only small, isolated areas of open space between Sandford Road and the A4074 which are well screened from the latter by trees. It has no visual relationship with historic parts of Oxford and there are no significant views from the south, with land sloping downhill south to north and Sandford Hill screening views along the valley from Nuneham Park, or from the Thames. However, the rural character that the parcel retains, despite its proximity to the City, does make a contribution to Oxford's special character.

Land Parcel Ref: OX17

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: South Oxfordshire

Land Parcel Ref: OX17

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel sits within the Thames valley in between Kennington to the west and Oxford to the east. The land within the parcel is made-up of flat pastureland and woodland, largely in the floodplain of the river Thames. The western part of the parcel would rate 'high' in isolation but the eastern part contains some development, including a pumping station in the north of the parcel and a large hotel in the south of the parcel next to the village of Sandford-on-Thames, which is considered to have an urbanising influence.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The existing urban edge of Kennington is retained by a railway line which follows the full length of the western edge of the parcel, and the eastern edge of the parcel is bounded by dual-carriageway. The Thames runs north-south through the centre. These are considered to be significant and durable boundary features, but the eastern side of the parcel is compromised by Heyford Hill Lane, which provides access into the southern end and which already provides access to modern development (outside of the parcel) and to a small number of more isolated buildings within the parcel. The Green Belt is therefore contributing to preventing sprawling ribbon development along Heyford Hill Lane. Another railway line runs through the northern third of the parcel; however, its orientation perpendicular to the existing urban edges of Oxford and Kennington means that it has a limited role in the prevention of sprawl in the gap between the two settlements.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to both the western limits of Oxford on the eastern boundary of the parcel, and Kennington which is adjacent to the western boundary. The parcel is situated on an area of land that is low lying, flat and open due to its association with the floodplain of the River Thames and its tributaries. The parcel is also well screened in areas by vegetation, including hedgerows and trees, which create visual separation between the neighbouring settlements. The parcel therefore plays an essential role in preventing the merging or erosion of the visual and physical gap between the settlements, as any encroachment by either settlement would clearly result in closing the gap. The parcel also plays a key role in preventing the merging of Sandford-on-Thames and Kennington but Sandford-on-Thames, although the latter is not considered as a settlement under Purpose 2 for this study.

Land Parcel Ref: OX17

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel sits within the Thames valley and is made-up of flat pastureland and woodland in the floodplain of the river Thames. The eastern part of the parcel contains sufficient development, including a pumping station in the north of the parcel and a large hotel in the south of the parcel next to the village of Sandford-on-Thames, to warrant an M rating, and whilst the western part is open and has less built development, the riverside pylon line and proximity of major road and rail links have some adverse effect on rural character.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

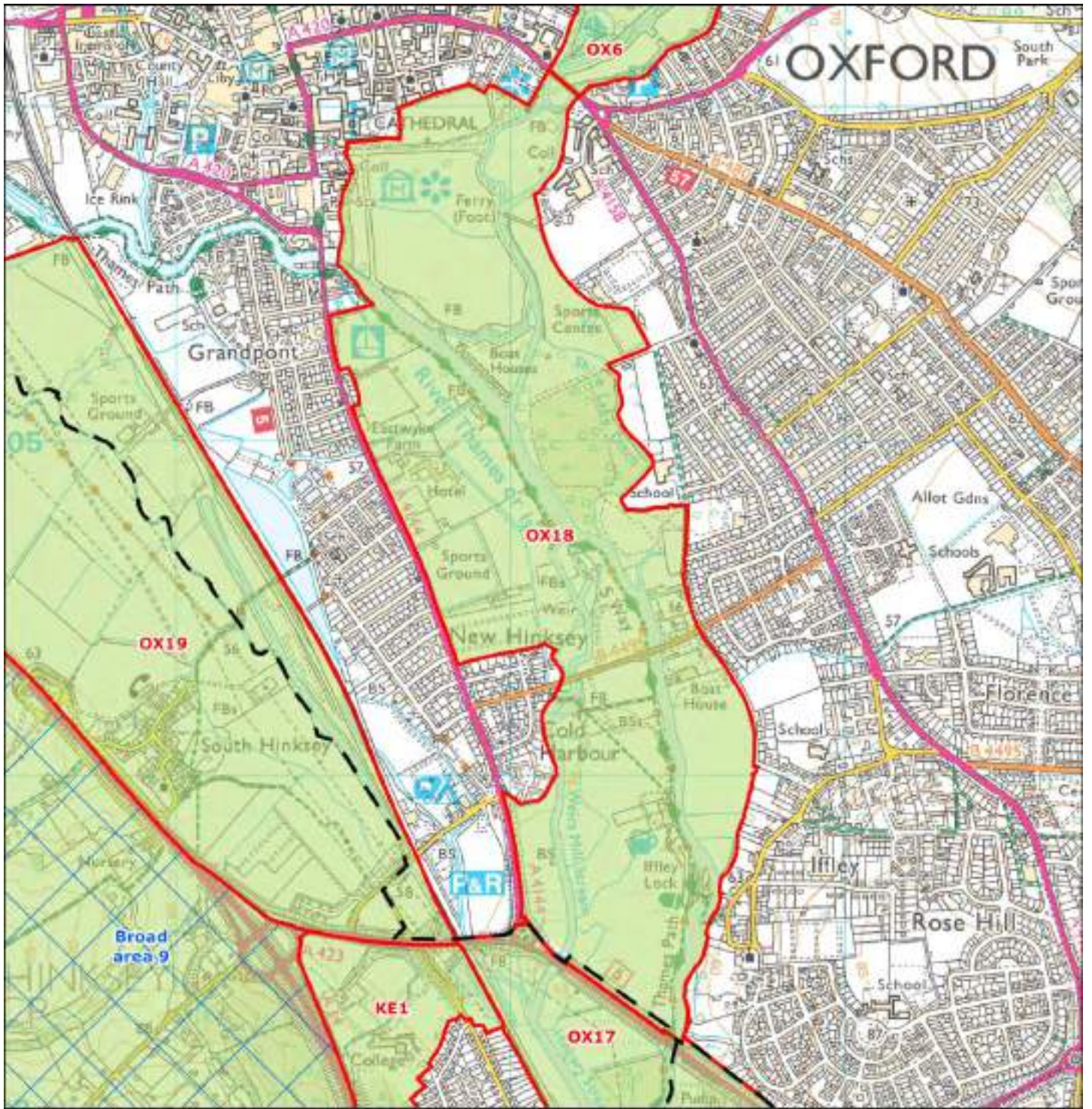
Notes:

Thames floodplain meadows. The continuity of character provided by the undeveloped river valley as it penetrates into the heart of Oxford is a key characteristic of the city's special character, experienced by those approaching the city by boat or by the Thames Path, so this parcel plays an important role in that despite a lack of visual connection with the central area. In this area the parcel separates the main body of the City from Kennington, preserving open floodplains and forming a green wedge that continue into the centre of Oxford.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



 District boundary  Green belt parcel  Broad area  Green belt 0 0.35 km 

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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: OX18

Main Authority: Oxford

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel sits within the Cherwell and Thames valleys in between the western and eastern urban areas of Oxford. The land within the northern part of the parcel is predominantly made-up of two Registered Parks and Gardens - the Grade I listed Oxford Botanic Garden and Grade I listed Christ Church Registered Park and Garden - with the remaining areas consisting of outdoor sports facilities, open pasture and the wooded banks of the river. This area contains some development which can be considered urbanising, including a large hotel, boat houses, sea cadet building and flood lit sports pitches, but the significance influence of these features is reduced by the extent of tree/woodland screening in this flat landscape. To the south of Weirs Lane the parcel is less developed, with a more natural landscape of open meadows. Buildings at Iffley Lock are rural in character. Distinction can be made between the area to the north of Weirs Lane, which scores 'medium', and the area to the south, which scores 'high'.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

There are no significant and durable boundaries to prevent development in this parcel. Release of the Green Belt on either side of the Thames or Cherwell could have a significant effect on the openness of this parcel, i.e. the development of one bank would significantly increase the importance of the Green Belt on the opposite bank in checking further sprawl of this strategic gap. The Green Belt is contributing to preventing further development adjacent to housing along Weirs Lane, which already extends to the east of the A4144 (part of the defined urban area) and Jackdaw Lane, or from the many residential estate roads which abut the boundary. The southern border of the parcel follows Southern By-pass Road which is a dual-carriageway and unlikely to facilitate ribbon development across the valley.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel occupies the whole width of the settlement gap between suburbs of Oxford, including Iffley and Donnington to the east and Grandpont and New Hinksey to the west. There is limited intervisibility between the suburbs due to intervening vegetation on the boundaries of the relatively small fields and the River Thames that occupy the gap. Due to the close proximity of the Oxford suburbs, the parcel plays an essential role in preventing the merging or erosion of the physical gap between the suburbs, as loss of any openness would substantially reduce the gap.

Land Parcel Ref: OX18

Main Authority: Oxford

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The extent to which the northern part of the parcel can be considered to have the characteristics of countryside is limited by the urbanising influences noted under Purpose 1. In functional terms the area's use largely relates to its urban edge position. However, screening by vegetation in this flat landscape does provide a degree of separation from urban influences across much of the area, and retains a sense of openness. This is more so to the south of Weirs Lane, where the open meadows have a more rural character, but the A423 by-pass to the south and Redbridge Park and Ride to the south east do affect character and the extent of perceived linkage to the wider countryside.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

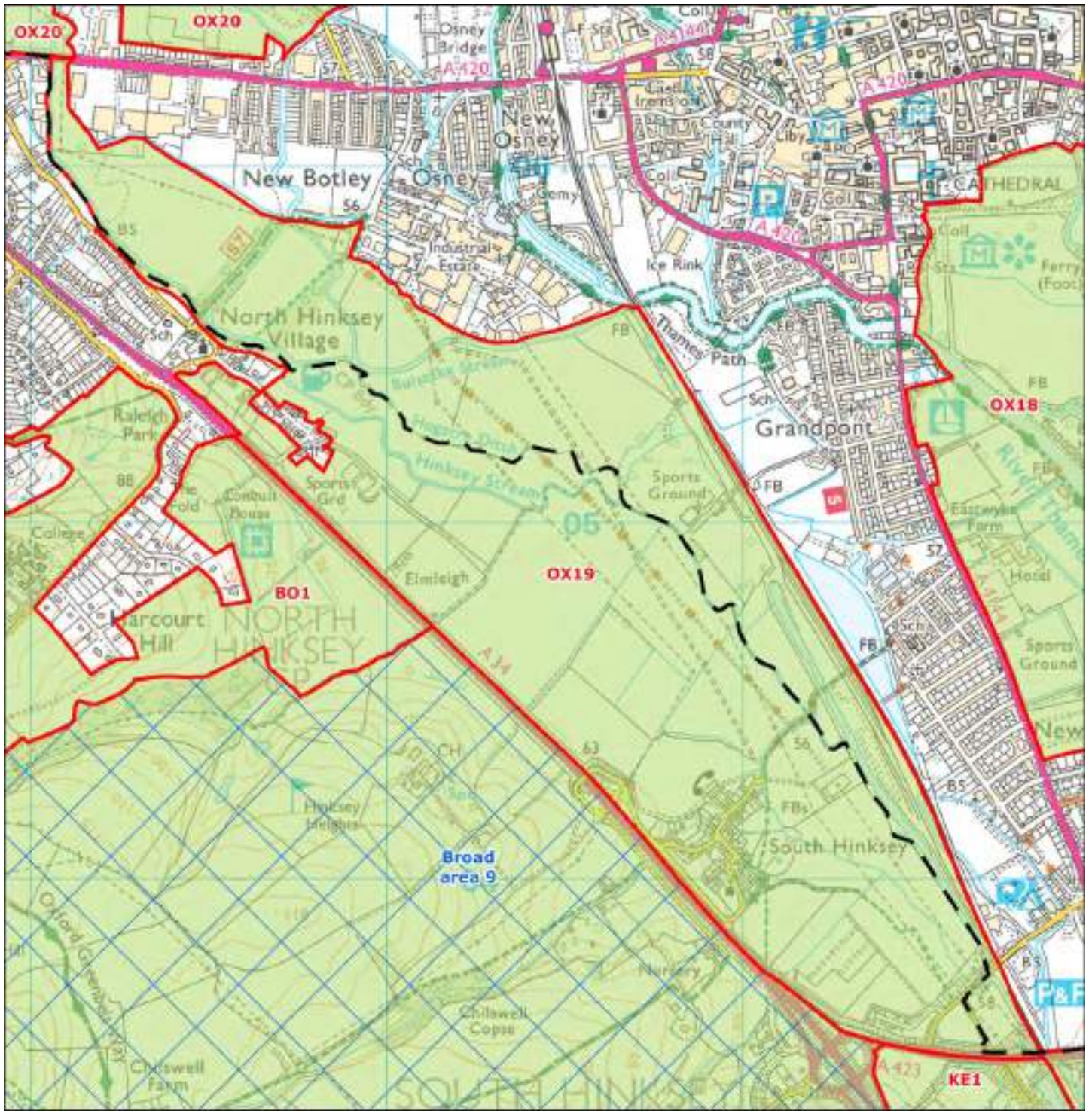
Notes:

This parcel contains Thames floodplain meadows and the confluence with the Cherwell. The continuity of character provided by the undeveloped river valley as it penetrates into the heart of Oxford is a key characteristic of the city's special character, experienced by those approaching the city by boat or by the Thames Path. The northern end of the parcel is intimately linked with the University, abutting the Botanic Gardens, Merton College and Magdalen Bridge, key historic features of the central area, and including Christchurch Meadow and various college boathouses and sports grounds. The riverside meadows provide some of the most iconic views of Oxford's spires. In the meadows to the south of Weirs Lane a greater degree of rural character persists, despite exposure in places to traffic views and noise.

Land Parcel Ref: OX19

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: Oxford

Land Parcel Ref: OX19

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel, adjacent to the large built-up area of Oxford, is predominantly made-up of flat, open and irregular shaped fields associated with the floodplain of the River Thames and its tributaries. It contains a number of urbanising influences within the parcel, namely pylons, floodlit outdoor sports pitches, the village of South Hinksey and some mobile home development on Red Bridge Hollow, but there is still a strong sense of openness.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

The railway line, and to a lesser extent the streams flowing into the River Thames are significant boundaries close to the existing urban edge of Oxford that play a strong role in inhibiting urban sprawl within the parcel of Green Belt, so to the north of the Thames there is 'low' potential for urban development to occur. To the south of the river, however, there is no significant or durable boundary to further development extending out from North Hinksey, a village which is considered to be part of the large urban area, linked to Botley. The Green Belt is also playing some role in preventing ribbon development along Abingdon Road at the southern tip of the parcel.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is in extremely close proximity to both the western limits of Oxford on the eastern boundary of the parcel, and Botley which is located to the northwest of the parcel. The southern boundary of the parcel is also in close proximity to Kennington. The parcel is situated on an area of land that is low lying, flat and open due to its association with the floodplain of the River Thames and its tributaries. The parcel is also well screened in areas by roadside vegetation, including hedgerows and trees, which create visual separation between the neighbouring settlements. The parcel therefore plays an essential role in preventing the merging or erosion of the visual and physical gap between the settlements.

Land Parcel Ref: OX19

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is predominantly made-up of flat, open and irregular shaped fields associated with the floodplain of the River Thames and its tributaries. The northern half of the parcel represents a thin strip of Green Belt land in between Oxford and Botely/North Hinksey village with pylons running through it, and the industrial estates at New Osney exert an urbanising influence. The fringes of the parcel contains outdoor sports pitches, some of which are floodlit. The southern third of the parcel contains some mobile home development on Red Bridge Hollow, but the village of South Hinksey is rural in character, despite the proximity of the A34. Whilst the northern end of the parcel would rate as 'low' in isolation, the consistent open, pastoral character of the floodplain grasslands reduces urbanising influence across the rest of the parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

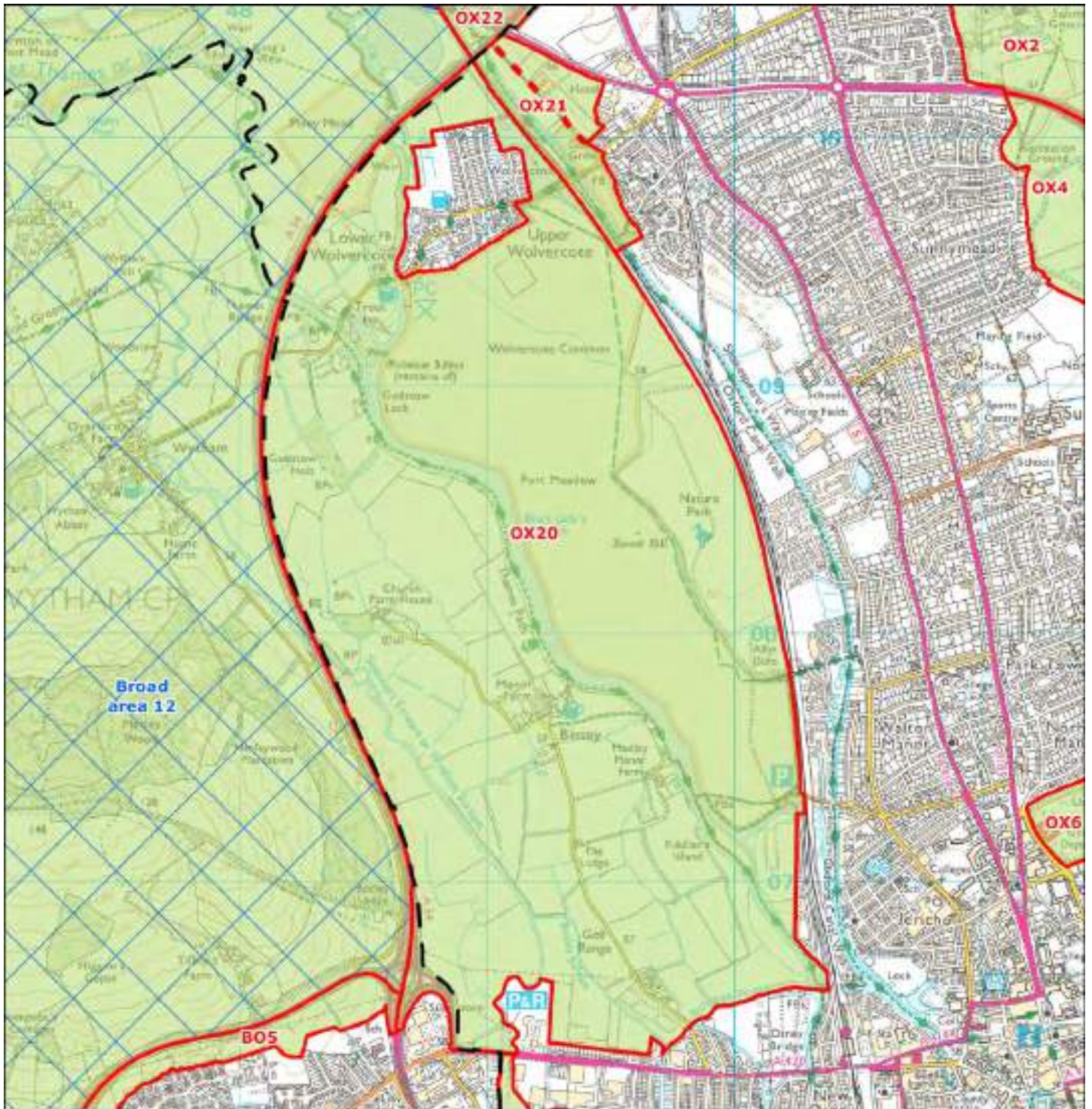
Notes:

The spires of Oxford are in clear view from parts of this open, streamside meadowland, which also forms an important foreground setting to the City in views from high ground to the west. Whilst it lacks the linear riverside access of the Thames and Cherwell, and has more of an urban-edge character associated with overhead lines, the A34 and industrial development at Osney and New Botley, this area is nonetheless important as a green lung penetrating close to the city centre. It is crossed by several important rights of way leading out towards Boars Hill and Cumnor. Historically the streams passing through this area were important boundary features, separating Berkshire and Oxfordshire and, further back in time, the Saxon kingdoms of Mercia and Wessex, so their retention in an open landscape can be considered to contribute to historic character.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: OX20

Main Authority: Oxford

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to the large built-up area of Oxford. The River Thames runs through the centre of the parcel splitting it in to two distinct parts. The eastern bank of the Thames contains the flat Port Meadow designated as a Scheduled Monument for its ring ditches, barrows and associated enclosures. This area is largely free from field boundaries. The western bank of the Thames is predominantly made-up of flat, open and irregularly shaped fields associated with the floodplain of the River Thames and its tributaries. The small settlement of Wolvercote (considered to be part of the Oxford urban area) sits within the parcel but, with the exception of a line of pylons which run through the parcel, there are no significant urbanising influences. The hamlet of Binsey to the west of the Thames has an open, rural character.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

The railway line defines the eastern edge of the parcel and represents an unbroken defensible boundary other than at the very northern end, where a bridge gives access to Wolvercote, and towards the southern end, where Walton Well Road provides access across the line to a small recreational car park. There are no significant and defensible barriers to the west of the Thames, where ribbon development has already occurred within the defined urban area along Godstow Road at the northern end of the parcel and along Botley Road at the southern edge. Binsey Lane provides access deep into the western half of the parcel. A distinction can be made between the 'high' potential for sprawl to occur in the western part of the parcel and the 'medium' potential in the eastern part.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to the western limits of Oxford (Summertown) and the railway line which runs to Oxford. It adjoins the rising, wooded slopes of Wytham Hill to the west, beyond the A34, and so plays no gap role in this respect, but the southern boundary is adjacent to Botley and the northern area of the parcel surrounds Wolvercote, occupying half of the narrow gap between the village and the suburbs of Oxford to the east. The parcel has a strong sense of openness throughout and is also well screened in areas by hedgerows and trees, which are located along surrounding roadsides and the River Thames that runs through the parcel, all of which create visual separation between the older Victorian suburbs and modern development in New Botley. Whilst the narrowness of the Wolvercote gap means that the northern end of the parcel would have a 'high' rating in its own right the majority of the parcel is considered to rate 'medium' given the connection between settlement areas in the south-eastern corner and the size of the gap at the centre of the parcel.

Land Parcel Ref: OX20

Main Authority: Oxford

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The River Thames runs through the centre of the parcel splitting it in to two very distinct parts. The eastern bank of the Thames contains the flat Port Meadow designated as a Scheduled Monument for its ring ditches, barrows and associated enclosures. This area is largely free from field boundaries and very open with views of the wider Thames valley and surrounding higher ground. The western bank of the Thames is predominantly made-up of flat, irregularly shaped fields associated with the floodplain of the River Thames and its tributaries, with good hedgerow boundaries contributing to a sense of rural separation from the City. Urbanising development has had little impact on the rural character of this parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

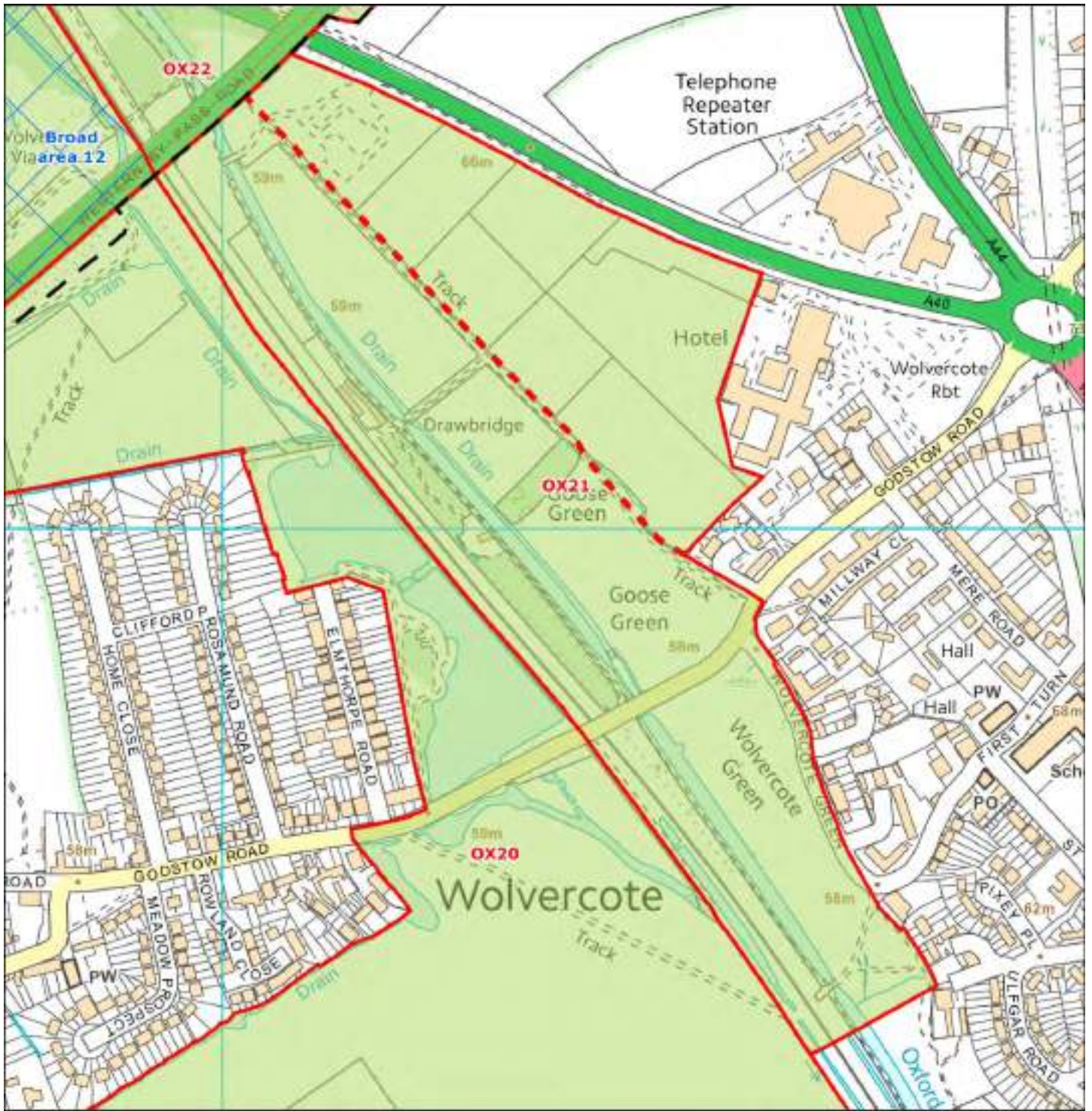
Notes:

Open, grazed floodplain commons to the east of the Thames are an important survival of a medieval landscape close to the city centre, and a key element of Oxford's historic landscape character. There are important views of Oxford's spires. The parcel also contains, amidst a network of fairly small, well-hedged fields to the west of the river, conservation areas around the village of Binsey and the Lower Wolvercote / Godstow area. These have a historic, rural character that is dependent on the survival of the surrounding landscape (although the A34 does have some impact on tranquillity within the parcel). There are two historic and well-known pubs, linked by the Thames Path, which are important to Oxford's special character: the Perch at Binsey and the Thames-side Trout at Godstow, and also the remains of Godstow Abbey.

Land Parcel Ref: OX21

Main Authority: Oxford

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: OX21

Main Authority: Oxford

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to the large built-up area of Oxford, and includes a thin strip of small fields and woodland in between a railway line at its south western edge, the Northern By-pass Road (A40) at its north eastern edge and the Western By-pass Road (A34) at its northern boundary. The Oxford canal cuts through the parcel. There is no urbanising development within the parcel.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: High

Notes:

The railway line, dual-carriageway by-passes and canal represent significant barriers on the outer edge of the parcel but do not prevent access to the parcel from the existing urban fringe on Godstow Road to the south, or from Wolvercote Green. This is considered to make the parcel very vulnerable to development. It is noted that the north eastern part of the parcel between the Oxford Hotel and the A34 (above the dashed red line on the parcel plan) is to be redesignated as non-Green Belt as part of the Northern Gateway development. Considering the remainder of the parcel in isolation there are still no significant and durable boundaries to further encroachment.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

This small, narrow parcel is situated between Wolvercote and the north-west suburbs of Oxford, occupying half of the narrow gap. The parcel is bordered by the Oxford Railway Line and the Northern By-Pass Road, and has the Oxford Canal running through it. Areas of the parcel do include open fields. Due to the close proximity of Wolvercote and the different suburbs of Oxford the parcel plays an essential role in preventing the merging or erosion of the visual and physical gap between these settlement areas.

Land Parcel Ref: OX21

Main Authority: Oxford

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

Despite the absence of urbanising influences within the parcel, noise from the adjacent transport routes and their separation of the parcel from the wider landscape affect the parcel's countryside character. This impact is greater on the higher, northern edge of the parcel, where view of the Oxford Hotel also have an impact on countryside character, but reduced in the vicinity of the Oxford Canal, where vegetation has a containing effect, reducing intrusion, and the canal itself provides a connection to the rural area to the north. Considering just the area that is not to be redesignated as part of the Northern Gateway project, the 'medium'.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

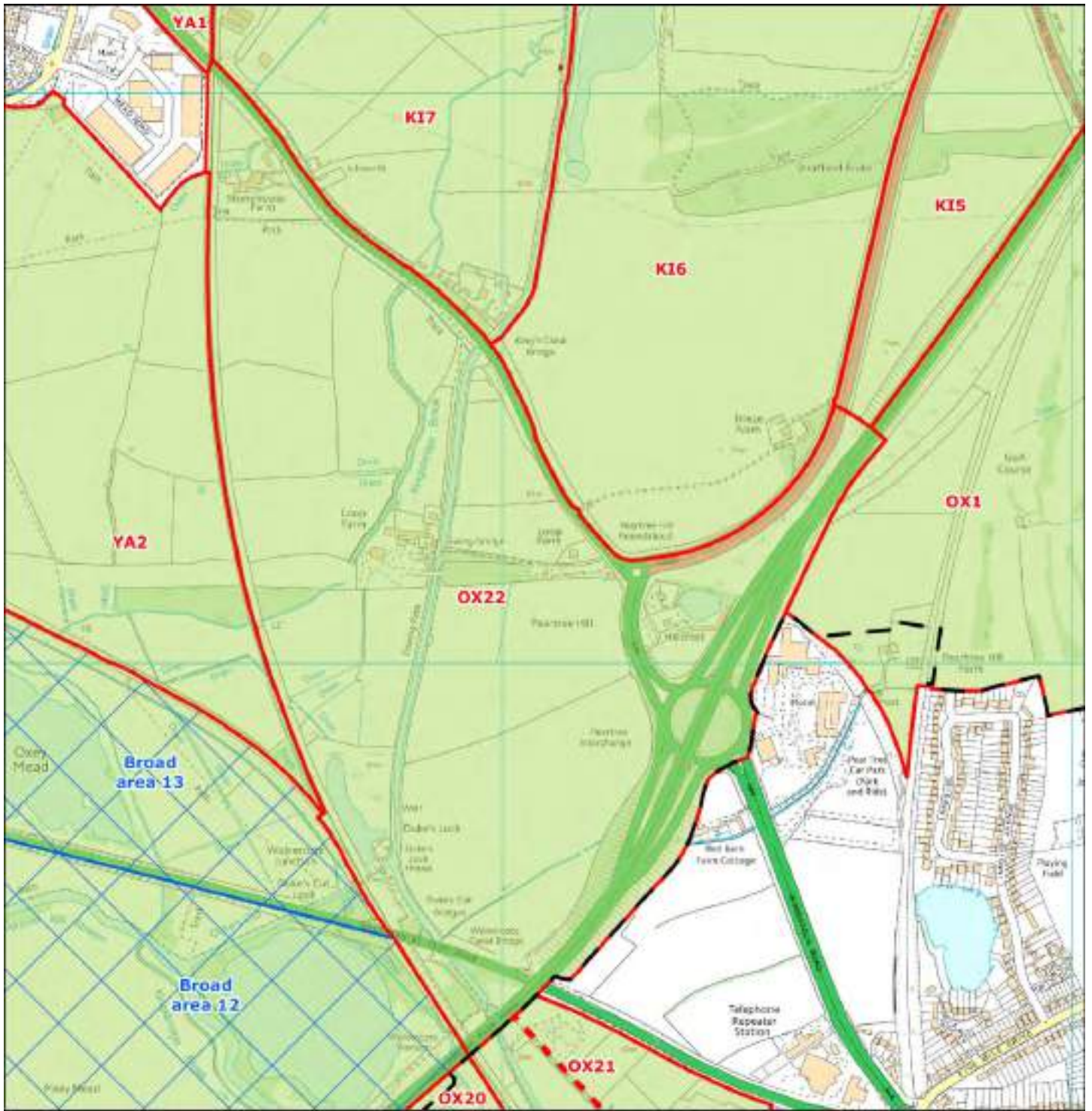
Notes:

There is no intervisibility with central Oxford, but the southern half of the parcel forms part of the Wolvercote Conservation Area, with Wolvercote Green and Goose Green providing an open setting for the settlement of Upper Wolvercote to the east (outside of the parcel). The Oxford Canal with its associated long distance paths (the Oxford Canal Walk and Shakespeare's Way) runs alongside the railway but retains a rural character due to strong tree belts and the undeveloped nature of this parcel. This is considered to be an important historic route into the City. The fields to the north of the public right of way that divides the parcel - i.e. the area to be redesignated - do not influence the character of the canal corridor and so are only of 'low' importance in terms of setting.

Land Parcel Ref: OX22

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: OX22

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to the large built-up area of Oxford. The parcel contains irregular shaped fields, two farms and isolated dwellings – there are no urbanising influences. The land is flat and very open, and the Oxford Canal and the Kingsbridge Brook flow through the middle of the parcel.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The Northern By-pass Road (A40) and the Western By-pass Road (A34) form the southern and south eastern boundary near the existing urban edge of Oxford; these dual-carriageways are considered to represent a significant and durable barrier to the spread of Oxford into the parcel. The railway line forms the western boundary of the parcel, separating the parcel from Yarnton, and the Oxford Canal also plays a role in containing potential development. If the Green Belt parcel were released these would represent a barrier to the sprawl of Oxford in this direction.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel occupies all of the area between the south of Yarnton and the northern limits of Oxford, so loss of openness would significantly affect the physical gap between the two. There is a degree of hedgerow/tree screening within the parcel, but the southern end to the east of the Canal is on ground rising up towards Peartree Hill, which increases the importance of openness in this area.

Land Parcel Ref: OX22

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel contains three clusters of farm buildings and their associated farm houses, and a kennel facility. None of these developments are considered to be urbanising influences on the countryside within the parcel, which is largely made up of large irregular shaped fields with open views of the wider countryside to the north, west and south west, but the major roads which abut the parcel, and their associated lighting, have an adverse impact on countryside character.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

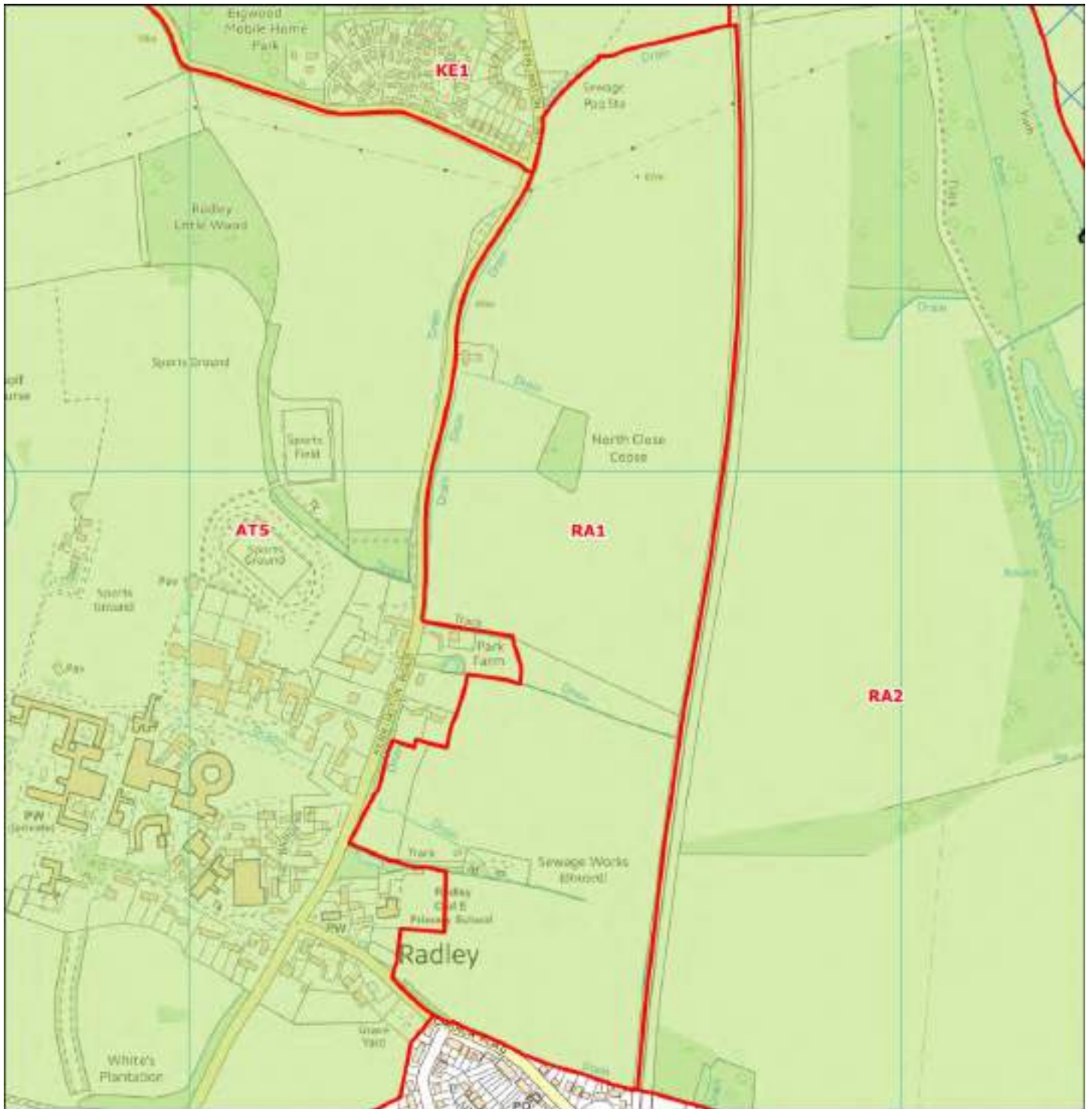
Notes:

There is no visual relationship between this mostly low-lying area and the historic core of Oxford or other Oxford conservation areas, but in views from hills to the north-west (to the west of Yarnton, over which Shakespeare's Way approaches the city) the visual role of this area as a gap between Yarnton and Oxford is evident. With regard to Oxford's special character the approach from Yarnton/Kidlington is less significant than the approach along the Thames and Cherwell Valleys, but the presence of the Oxford Canal and associated long distance path, which run through the centre of the parcel, does add to significance. The canal is a conservation area, and its rural setting is one of its valued characteristics; the higher ground at the southern end of the parcel in particular is important in preserving this sense of rurality on approach to an area characterised by numerous transport routes. The majority of the parcel makes a 'medium' contribution but the higher ground at the southern end is considered to make a 'high' contribution.

Land Parcel Ref: RA1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: RA1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Radley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Radley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The northern and southern boundaries of the parcel are positioned between Radley to the south and Kennington to the north, with the eastern boundary adjacent to the railway line that runs between Radley and Oxford, and the western boundary adjacent to Kennington Road. The settlements are separated from each other by several large, arable fields. Major development in the parcel would potentially result in a significant reduction in the gap, but it is noted that hedgerows with trees prevent any direct intervisibility, and there is some distance between the settlements, so there is scope for some loss of openness without a resultant substantial reduction in the gap.

Land Parcel Ref: RA1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel contains one very large, open, arable field, with a copse in the centre and a single residential building on the western edge (Kennington Road). This is an open, rural landscape with open views to the east in particular.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

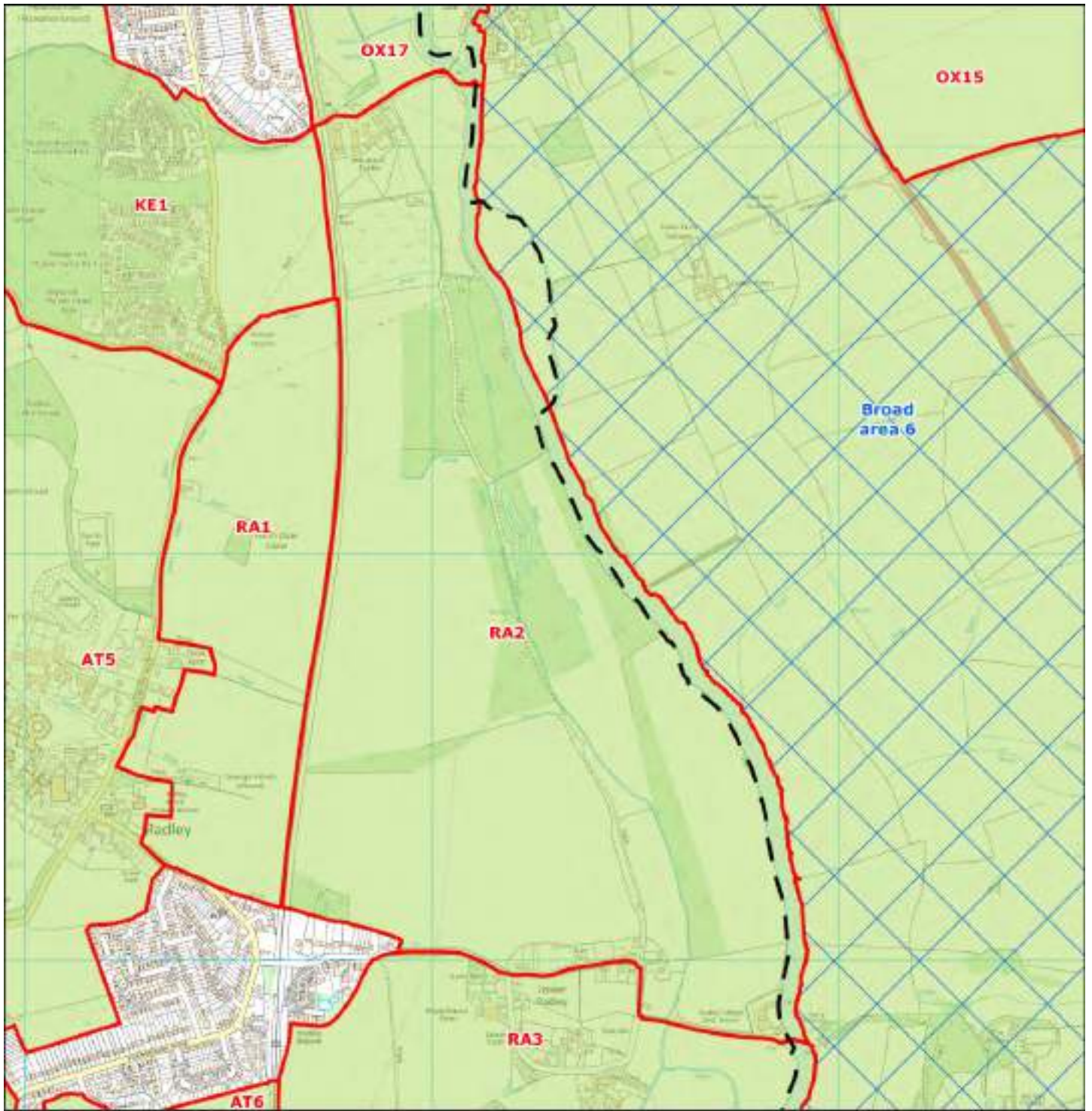
Notes:

This arable farmland on lower slopes above the Thames river terrace marks a distinct change in terrain from the wooded landscape at southern end of Kennington. There is no visibility from City centre towers, and limited views from the Thames Valley, but the open, arable slopes are exposed to view from higher ground to east. Whilst less visible than the higher, wooded ground to the north and south-east, this parcel forms a rural link that joins these areas, thus forming part of the ring of countryside that surrounds Oxford.

Land Parcel Ref: RA2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



--- District boundary Green belt parcel Broad area Green belt 0 km 0.3 

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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: South Oxfordshire

Land Parcel Ref: RA2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Radley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Radley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The southwest corner of the parcel is adjacent to Radley with the northern area of the parcel adjacent to Kennington and in close proximity to the southern limits of Oxford. Relatively flat and open topography occupies the space between the settlements, and major development in the parcel would potentially result in a significant reduction in the gap. It is noted, however, that vegetation restricts direct intervisibility and the distance between the two settlements means that a degree of loss of openness could occur without resulting in a substantial reduction in the settlement gap.

Land Parcel Ref: RA2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel sits between a railway line which runs along the western edge of the parcel and the River Thames which flows along the eastern edge of the parcel. Much of the parcel falls within the River's floodplain and is therefore relatively flat. Roughly half of the parcel is wooded; the other half contains large irregular-shaped agricultural fields with good views of countryside immediately to the east. The southern edge of the parcel contains some detached dwellings within the small hamlet of Lower Radley. These dwellings are rural in character and are not considered to be urbanising influences on the countryside. Pylons run through the parcel. Sandford Lane Industrial Estate is located at its northern tip of the parcel. In combination with the pylons, the estate's large buildings and areas of hardstanding have an urbanising influence on the countryside within the northernmost part of the Green Belt parcel, but the majority of the parcel can be considered to have an open, rural character, with very little urbanising development.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: High

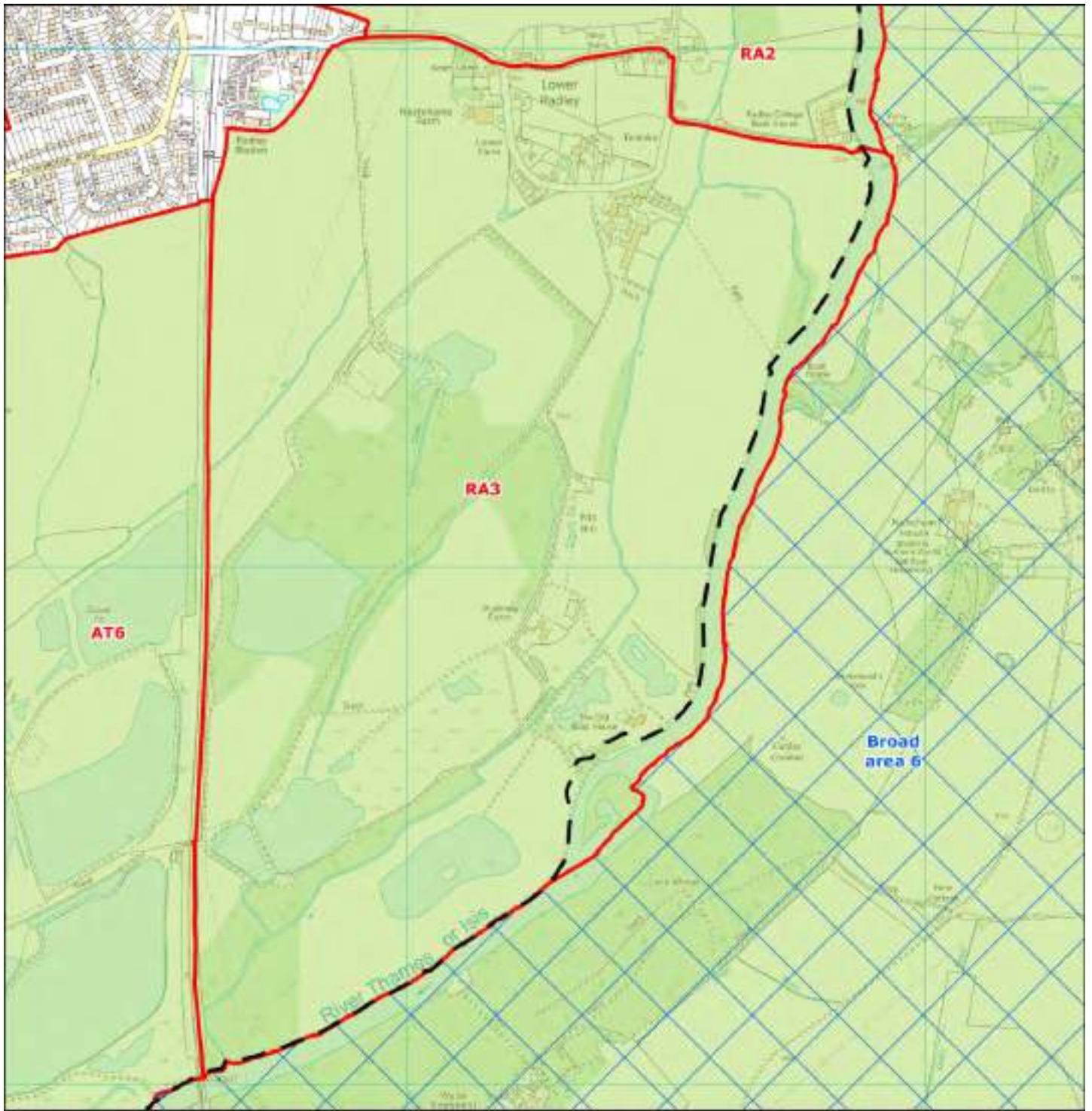
Notes:

River terrace farmlands dropping down to the Thames. This forms an important corridor of open valley which continues north into the heart of Oxford, one of the 'green lungs' which form an essential element of the city's special character. There are long views along this river corridor from the Nuneham Park area. The parcel is split east-west by tree lines and woodland blocks, with the lower, western half contributing more in terms of its proximity to the river and visibility from the Thames Path than the eastern half (which makes a 'medium' contribution).

Land Parcel Ref: RA3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: South Oxfordshire

Land Parcel Ref: RA3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel abuts Radley which is not considered to be a large built up area, i.e. Oxford. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel abuts Radley which is not considered to be a large built up area, i.e. Oxford. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The north-western boundary of the parcel is adjacent to Radley, with the western boundary adjacent to the railway line that runs to Radley and the south-eastern boundary adjacent to the River Thames. The parcel has a strong sense of openness and is a flat area of land. The parcel is some distance from any other settlement considered against this purpose and so plays no role in preventing the merging or erosion of the physical gap between the settlements.

Land Parcel Ref: RA3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel sits between a railway line which runs along the western edge of the parcel and the River Thames which flows along the eastern and southern edges of the parcel. Much of the parcel falls within the **River's floodplain and is therefore relatively flat with some large areas of standing water associated with** historic gravel extraction within the parcel. Most of the parcel is made-up of large irregular-shaped agricultural fields and scrubland lined by trees. Through the gaps in the tree cover it is possible to see views of the surrounding countryside along the River Thames. Pylons run through the north western corner of the parcel. At the northern end of the parcel, the parcel contains the majority of the small hamlet of Lower Radley. This small hamlet is very rural in character, containing Lower Farm and several large detached dwellings. The small hamlet is not considered to be an urbanising influence on the countryside within the Green Belt parcel. In addition, there is a small area of previously developed land in the centre of the parcel and some large isolated dwellings in the south of the parcel close to the River Thames; however, these features are not considered to have an urbanising influence.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

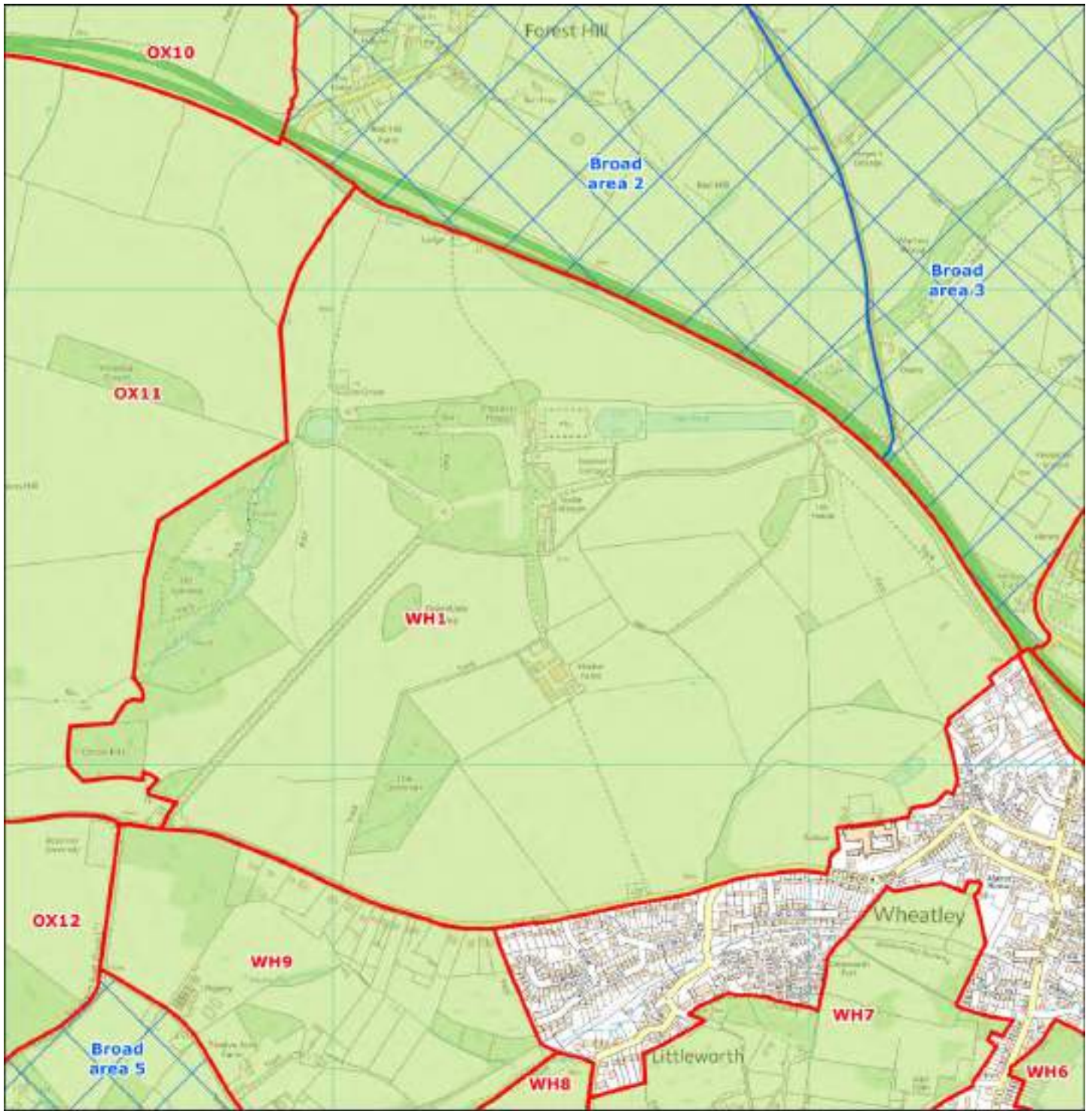
Notes:

Mixture of arable and scrub/secondary woodland and lakes associated with former gravel workings, on riverside lowlands. Formal linear tree planting (poplars) around large arable field on eastern side of parcel draw the eye in views. There is no intervisibility with central Oxford, but undeveloped river corridors which extend into the heart of the city are a key element in Oxford's special character. Land further west, closer to Radley and Lower Radley, contributes less in this respect.

Land Parcel Ref: WH1

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



--- District boundary Green belt parcel Broad area Green belt 0 0.25 km 

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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: WH1

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The northern boundary of the parcel is adjacent to the A40 while the eastern boundary is adjacent to Wheatley. The parcel has a strong sense of openness and flat topography to the northern area of the parcel with the parcel rising in elevation towards the southwest. Sandhills, a suburb of Oxford, is in relatively close proximity to the western boundary of the parcel, however due to the intervening vegetation and woodlands in the open areas and topography, views between the Oxford suburb and Wheatley are limited. Due to the close proximity between the settlements and the A40 connection between the two the parcel plays some role in preventing the merging of the two settlements, as any encroachment by either settlement would result in loss of openness and reduction of the settlement gap.

Land Parcel Ref: WH1

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The north western half of the parcel is made-up of the Grade I listed Shotover Registered Park and Garden containing large areas of woodland and landscaped parkland. The majority of the south eastern half of the parcel is made up of large irregular-shaped agricultural fields. The land within the parcel slopes up to its highest point in the south western corner of the parcel. Therefore, there are open views of the surrounding countryside, particularly to the east and north east. A park sits in the southern half of the parcel and the historic buildings of the Registered Park and Garden sit in the northern half of the parcel. Neither development is considered to be urbanising influences on the countryside characteristics of the land within the parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is largely occupied by the Grade I listed parkland and gardens of Shotover House, together with arable farmland to the south, set on the eastern slopes of Shotover Hill. Shotover Hill forms a distinctive and historically important rural setting to Oxford, and WH1, whilst lacking intervisibility with the City, contributes to this setting as it is perceived from settlements to the east (Wheatley, Holton, Littleworth). The tree-enclosed fields in the lower, south-eastern corner of the parcel, adjacent to Wheatley C of E Primary School and Littleworth, are less important in this respect.

Land Parcel Ref: WH2

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: WH2

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

This small parcel is located between Wheatley and the A40 and is surrounded by other parcels. The parcel is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose. Therefore, the parcel makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements.

Land Parcel Ref: WH2

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel represents a very thin strip of woodland and scrubland in between the urban edge of Wheatley and the A40 dual-carriageway (A40). While the thin strip of land does not contain any development it is somewhat disconnected from the wider countryside by the A40, and influenced by the busy road to the north and urbanising development to the south. The land does slope upwards to the west opening-up views of the wider countryside to the east.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: N/C

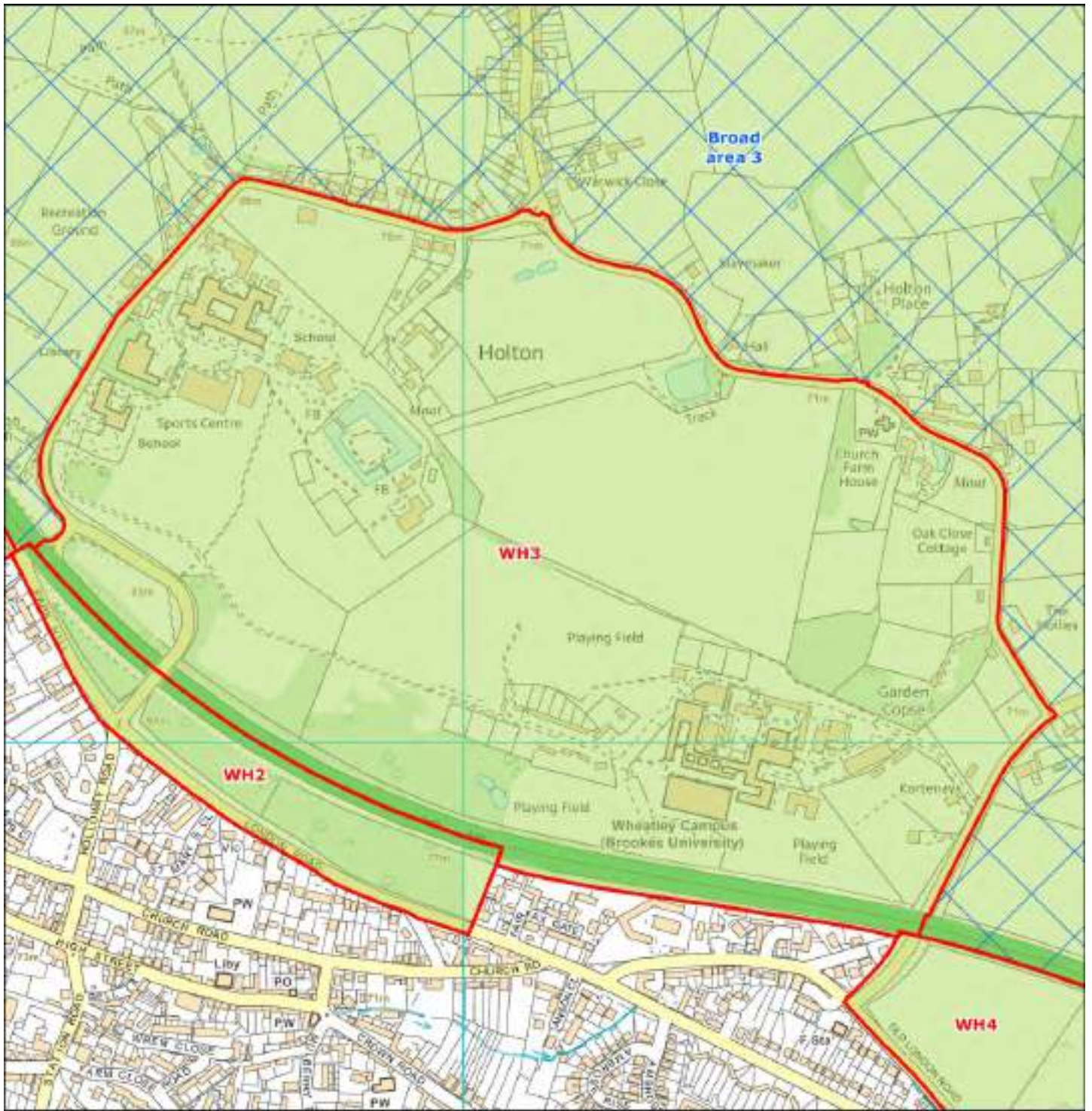
Notes:

A narrow strip of largely wooded ground along the southern edge of the A40 (presumably planted, and perhaps reshaped, as part of the road's construction). The northern edge of Wheatley already lies adjacent to the A40 to the east of this parcel, but is well screened by roadside trees, so the parcel, whilst forming a buffer between parts of Wheatley and the main road, doesn't contribute to the rural character of Oxford's wider setting.

Land Parcel Ref: WH3

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: WH3

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel is located to the north of Wheatley and the A40 and includes parts of Holton, and Oxford Brookes University and Wheatley Park School. The parcel is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose. Therefore, the parcel makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements. The land parcel acts to prevent Wheatley and Holton merging, but Holton is not considered under Purpose 2 for this study

Land Parcel Ref: WH3

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel contains some significant developments which have compromised the openness of the countryside that remains within the parcel and represent significant urbanising influences: the Wheatley Campus of Oxford Brookes University is located in the south eastern corner of the parcel and in the north western corner of the parcel are Wheatley Park School and Sports Centre. There are some floodlit sports pitches. However, a clear distinction can be made between this and the rural character of Holton village, to the north of the parcel. A large, open area at the centre of the parcel is the moated Holton House site (a scheduled ancient monument). In between the built areas are some small pockets of woodland and large open fields. The land slopes upwards to the west opening-up views of the wider countryside to the east. The southern and western parts of the parcel, constituting the majority of the area, make a 'low' contribution to openness but the village area is considered to have the characteristics of countryside and therefore to score 'high'.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating:

Notes:

Sloping downhill eastwards away from Oxford, there is limited visibility of the parcel in the wider landscape, with large woodland blocks to the north and the low-lying landscape of the River Thames and its tributaries to the east. From higher ground to the west, the area is seen as already developed to a degree, and in close proximity to Wheatley and Holton.

Land Parcel Ref: WH4

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: WH4

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is located to the east of Wheatley and the south of the A40. The parcel is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose. Therefore, the parcel makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements.

Land Parcel Ref: WH4

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel sits on relatively flat open land adjacent to the River Thame which flows along the eastern edge of the parcel. Power lines run overhead through the centre of the parcel. There is an area of hardstanding along London Road in the centre of the parcel. The buildings on the hardstanding house the Wheatley Farm Shop. Whilst the buildings are not considered to have a significant urbanising influence in their own right, considered in conjunction with intrusion from the A40; and the influence of adjacent development (the Oxford Aquatics building and the large area of developed uses across the road) there is considered to be some sense of encroachment on the countryside.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: N/C

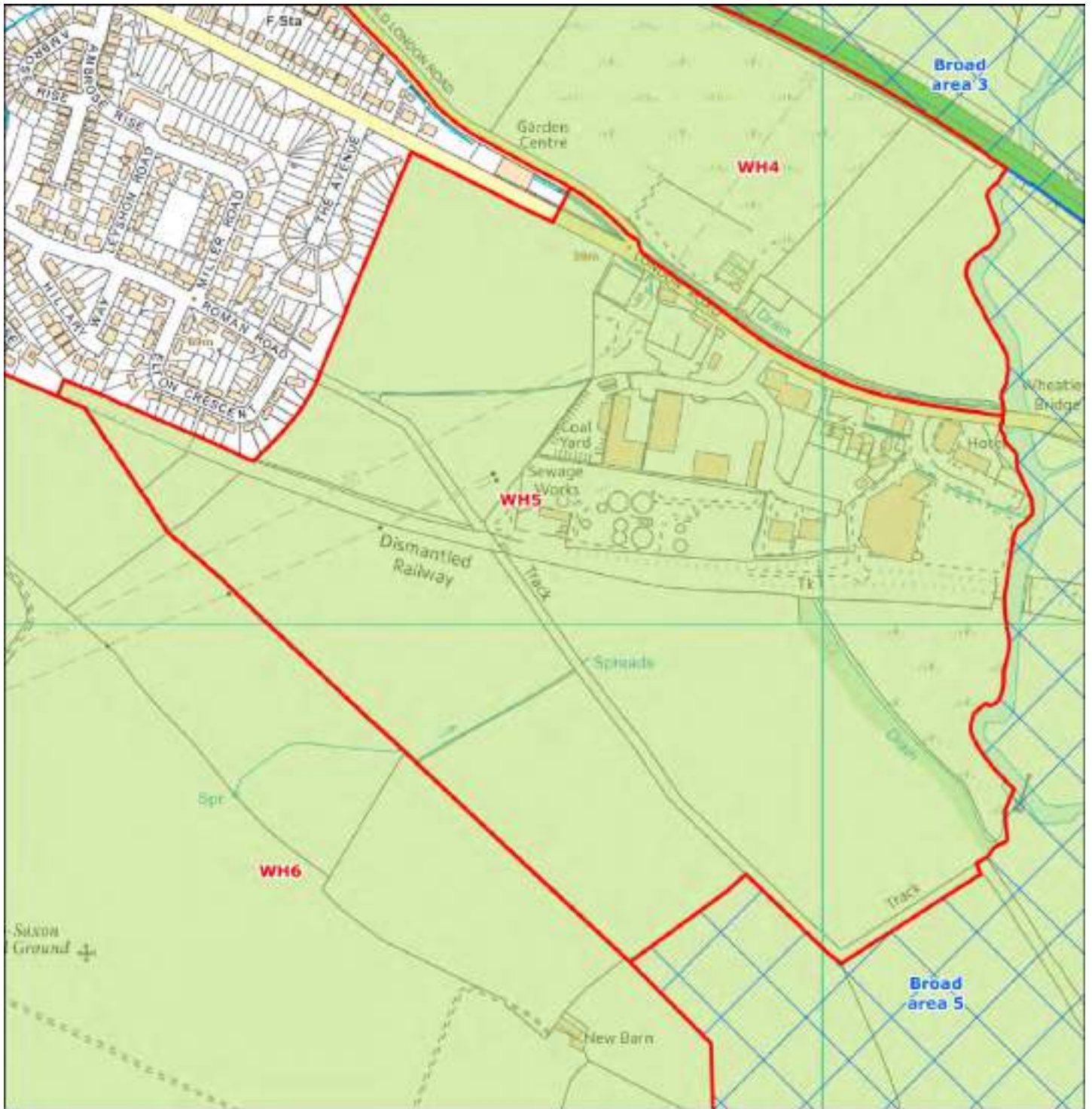
Notes:

There is no intervisibility with Oxford and no sense of this area to the east of Wheatley forming part of Oxford's setting. There is a sharp change from rural to urban fringe on crossing the River Thame, with a Travelodge, Harvester, petrol garage and superstore to the south of the road, opposite the parcel, all detracting from historic character.

Land Parcel Ref: WH5

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: WH5

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating:

Notes:

The parcel is located to the south east of Wheatley. The parcel is not in close proximity to any other settlements considered against this purpose. Therefore, the parcel makes no contribution to preventing the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between settlements.

Land Parcel Ref: WH5

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel sits on relatively flat open land adjacent to the River Thames which flows along the eastern edge of the parcel. The land slopes up to the south western side of the parcel. Power lines run overhead through the parcel. The north eastern third of the parcel has been wholly developed. This area of the parcel contains the London Road Industrial Estate, including a supermarket, open-air depot, large warehouse and a sewage treatment works. These developments represent a significant urbanising influence on the countryside within the Green Belt parcel. From the open fields within make up the rest of the parcel it is possible to see out to the wider countryside surrounding the parcel, with long ranging views to east. A distinction can be made between the area to the south of the dismantled railway line, which retains a reasonably strong sense of openness and scores 'medium', and the largely developed area to the north, which scores 'low' in this respect.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: N/C

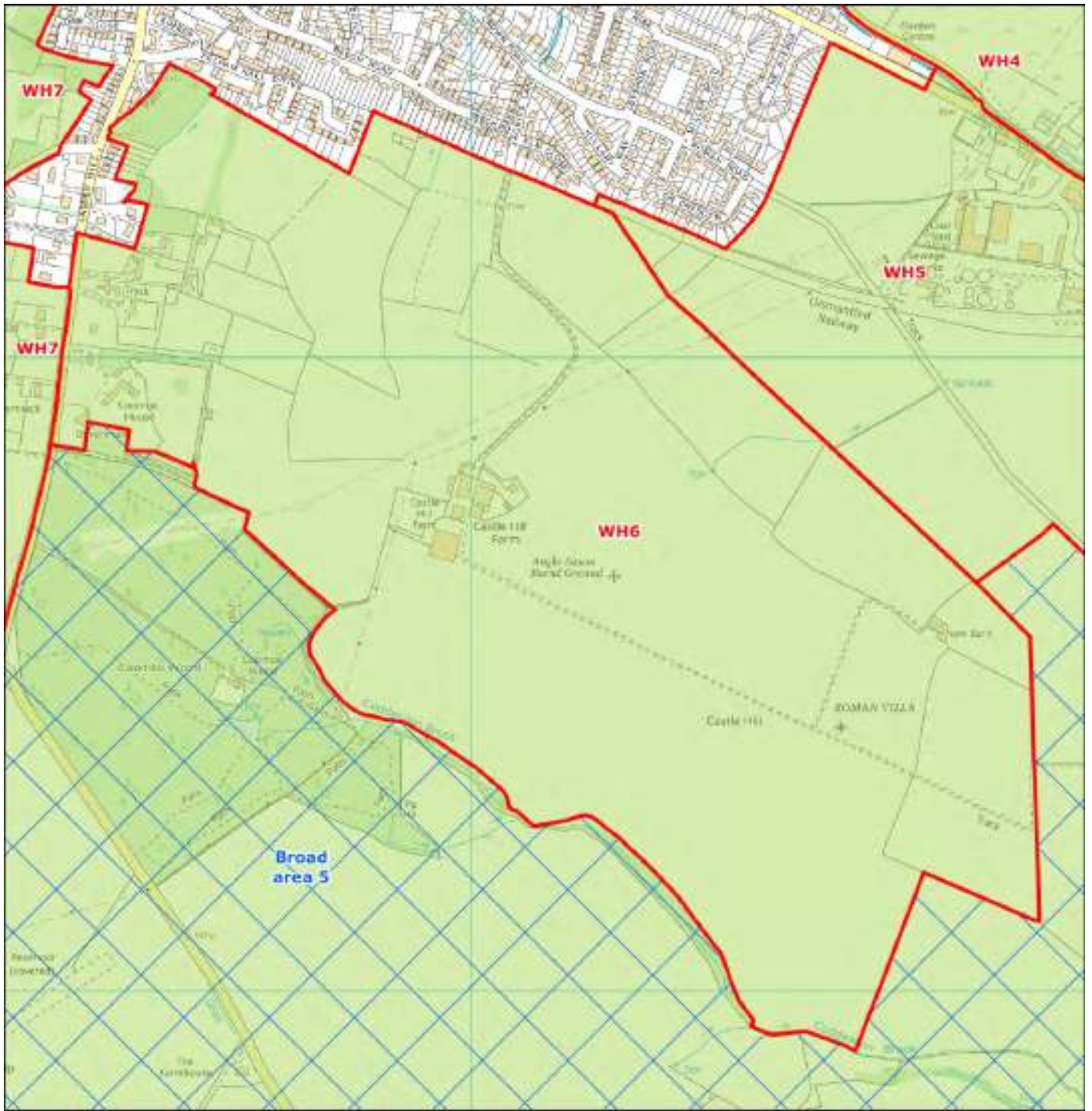
Notes:

Neither the developed area nor the small fields that separate it from the residential area of Wheatley play any role in Oxford's historic setting. Arable farmland to the south of the former railway line is more distinctly separate from Wheatley and rural in character, but is too isolated from Oxford, and principal routes to it, to be considered to make any contribution to its setting.

Land Parcel Ref: WH6

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: WH6

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The northern boundary of the parcel borders the southern boundary of Wheatley and the parcel has a strong sense of openness. While the eastern limits of the parcel are not in close proximity of any other settlements considered under this purpose, the western area of the parcel is adjacent to parcel WH7 which plays some role in preventing the merging of settlements due to its proximity to the suburbs of Oxford.

Land Parcel Ref: WH6

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel contains the summit of Castle Hill, as well as portions of its steep northern, eastern and southern slopes. Therefore, the parcel has excellent views of the surrounding countryside. Pylons run through the centre of the parcel. The majority of the parcel is made up of large open irregular-shaped agricultural fields. The only significant concentration of buildings within the parcel is located along the eastern edge along Ladder Hill Road. The majority of the buildings are large detached dwellings set back from the road, such as the historic Coombe House, and are not considered to be urbanising influences. Amongst the dwellings are some moderate urbanising influences such as a small office block administering courier services and some larger modern maisonette dwellings in the north western corner of the parcel. Most of the development along this western edge of the parcel is screened by mature trees and has relatively little influence over the vast majority of the countryside within the Green Belt parcel. Therefore, the integrity and openness of the countryside within the parcel is considered to be uncompromised.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

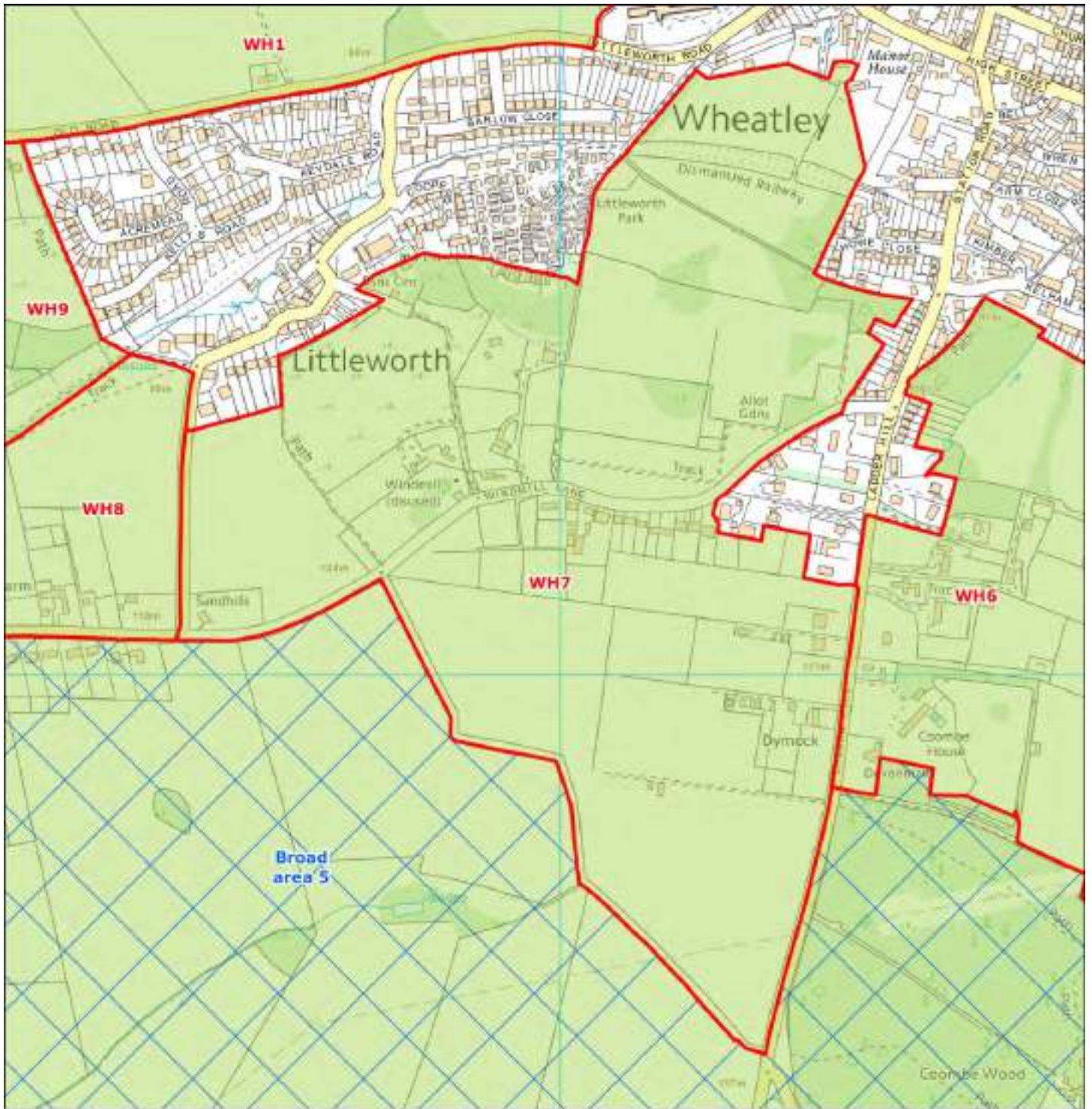
Notes:

Rising up westwards to a wooded hill top, this open, arable land is more exposed to view than the lower ground closer to the River Thames. The upper slopes, backed by Coombe Wood, are prominent on the horizon in views westwards towards Oxford (although there is no visibility of the city), so a contribution is made to the wider rural character of the city's setting.

Land Parcel Ref: WH7

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: WH7

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The northern boundary of the parcel borders the southern boundary of Wheatley. The parcel is relatively open and increases in elevation towards Littleworth. There is relatively close proximity with only small gaps between Cowley and Horspath and between Horspath and Littleworth. While visibility between the non-Green Belt area of Littleworth and Oxford is screened by high ground between Littleworth and Horspath, the Oxford suburbs are intervisible with the southern part of the parcel, and the relationship between these settlements is evident in views from higher ground to the south towards Garsington. Any perceived spilling out of Wheatley/Littleworth towards Oxford would be a significant change so the openness of the southern end of the parcel makes a 'high' contribution to preventing this, but the remainder of the parcel, accounting for the majority of the area makes a 'medium' contribution.

Land Parcel Ref: WH7

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel contains the summit of Castle Hill, as well as portions of its steep northern, western and southern slopes. Therefore, the parcel has excellent views of the surrounding countryside. Pylons run through the southern tip of the parcel. The southern half of the parcel is largely free from woodland, containing open regular-shaped agricultural fields, whereas the northern half contains significantly more woodland as the land slopes down towards Wheatley. One of the larger pockets of woodland at the northern border of the parcel is designated as the Littleworth Brick Pit SSSI. There are some large developments within the parcel along the western side of Ladder Hill Road, for example the Mill View Plant Centre, at the parcel's eastern edge and through the centre of the parcel along Windmill Lane. The relatively small detached dwellings along Windmill Lane overlook an allotment and have excellent views of the wider countryside beyond. All the developments are rural in character and are considered to have a limited urbanising influence on the countryside within the parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

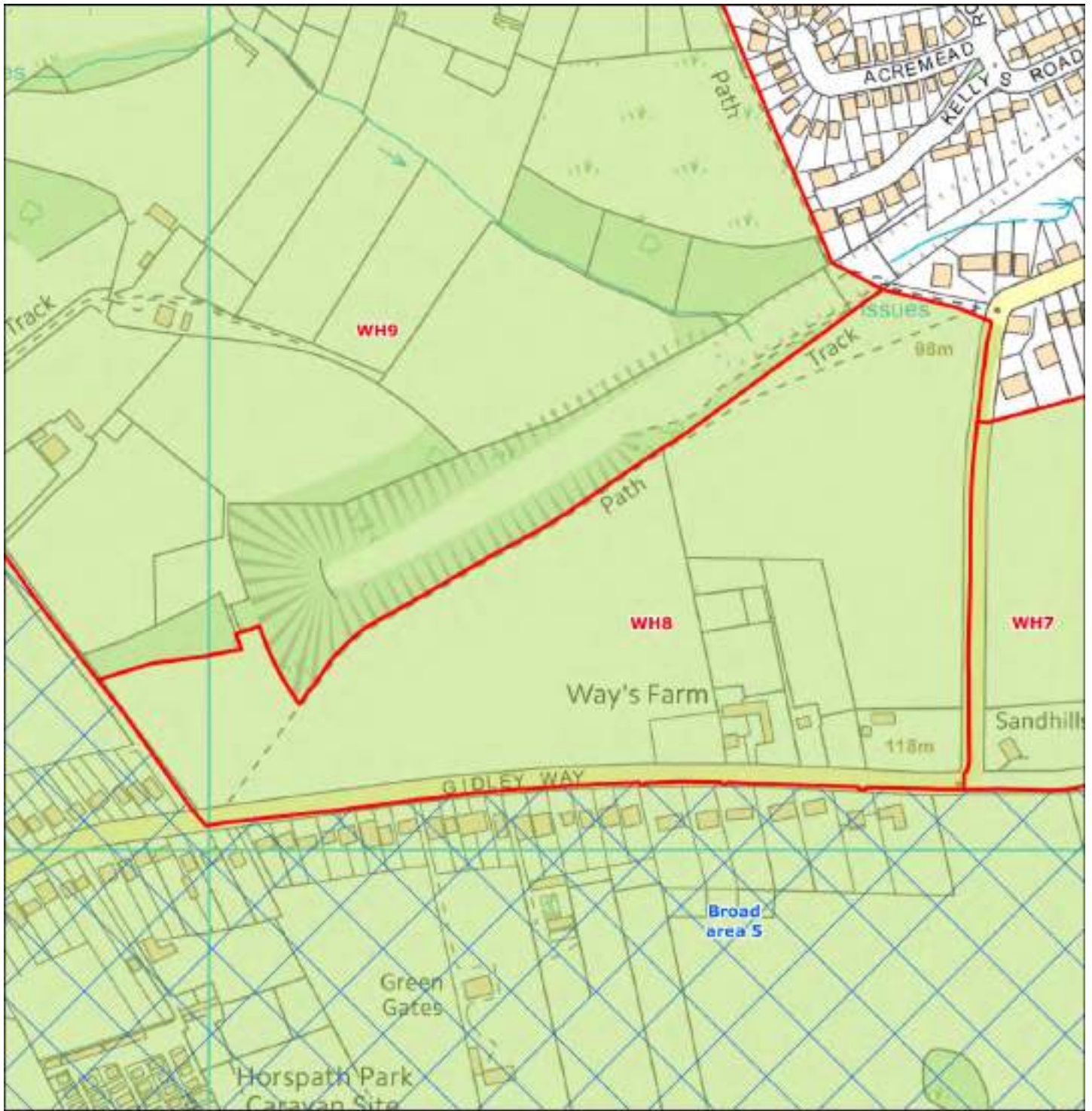
Notes:

The parcel, which is well treed but also has a ribbon of housing along Windmill Lane, occupies a prominent hilltop to the south of Wheatley and Littleworth, providing long vistas. Whilst there is no intervisibility with central Oxford there are views to and from the eastern edge of the city, in the vicinity of Blackbird Leys. The parcel contributes to the rural character of the enclosing high ground, an important aspect of Oxford's setting, although the fact that houses are visible in the vicinity in views out from the urban edge reduces its importance a little. The north-facing slope of the parcel is less significant in terms of Oxford's setting.

Land Parcel Ref: WH8

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: WH8

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The northern boundary of the parcel borders the southwest boundary of Wheatley, while the southern boundary of the parcel borders Gidley Way. The parcel is relatively small but open, with intervisibility from one end to the other due to its sloping terrain, and is in relatively close proximity to the eastern limits of the suburbs of Oxford. The parcel plays an important role in preventing the merger Littleworth and Horspath, and whilst the latter isn't considered as a settlement under Purpose 2 its joining to Littleworth would have a significant knock-on effect on the perceived separation between Oxford and Wheatley. It would not, however, affect the visual gap from Oxford.

Land Parcel Ref: WH8

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The narrow, triangular parcel containing two open, irregularly-shaped fields sits on the northern slope of the ridge which separates Horspath to the south from Littleworth to the north. The open fields have views of the wider countryside to the north of the parcel. Way's Farm sits at the southern edge of the parcel and represents the only built development within it. The farm is not considered to be an urbanising influence on the countryside within the Green Belt.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

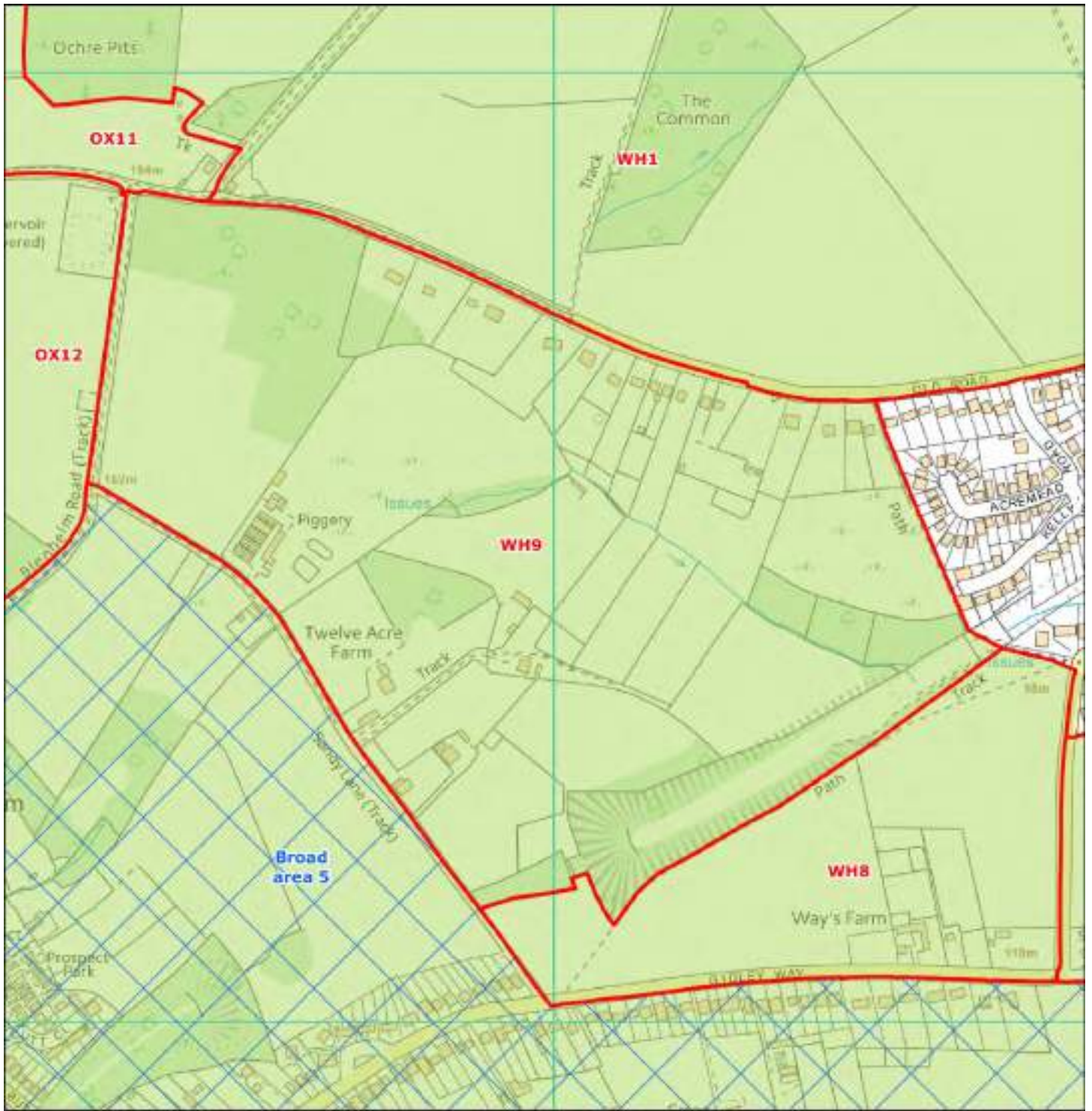
Notes:

A small parcel of farmland on high sloping ground oriented away from Oxford but with very long vistas north-east towards hills in the vicinity of Brill from its southern edge on Gidley Way. It could therefore be considered to make a minor contribution to the perception of Oxford being in a very rural setting, although visibility of Wheatley and Littleworth in views from the east might diminish this.

Land Parcel Ref: WH9

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: WH9

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wheatley which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel has a sense of openness with the eastern boundary of the parcel bordering Wheatley. The topography rises towards the southwest of the parcel, partially screening views to the west towards the suburbs of Oxford such as Slade Park, Wood Farm and Lye Valley. The western boundary of the parcel is in relatively close proximity to these suburbs of Oxford, and as high ground which rises above Horspath it is visible from Oxford. Loss of openness between Horspath and Littleworth would therefore have a significant impact on perceived openness between Oxford and Wheatley, even though Horspath is not considered under Purpose 2 for this study. Due to the elevation of this parcel, it is considered to make a 'high' contribution in respect of this Green Belt purpose.

Land Parcel Ref: WH9

Main Authority: South Oxfordshire

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel straddles a small valley formed by a small stream that runs in to Littleworth to the east. The land rises steeply on both sides of the valley, flattening out on the western side of the parcel where there are excellent views of the wider countryside to the north and east. The north western corner and the lower slopes of the small valley are wooded; the rest of the parcel contains small irregular-shaped fields, the majority of which are lined by trees. There are several agricultural buildings along the track that forms the southern boundary of the parcel, including a stables and piggery. Along the southern side of Old Road which forms the northern edge of the parcel, the parcel contains a number of detached residential dwellings which, although set in well treed surrounds, constitute ribbon development from the village of Littleworth to the east and therefore have some urbanising influence.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

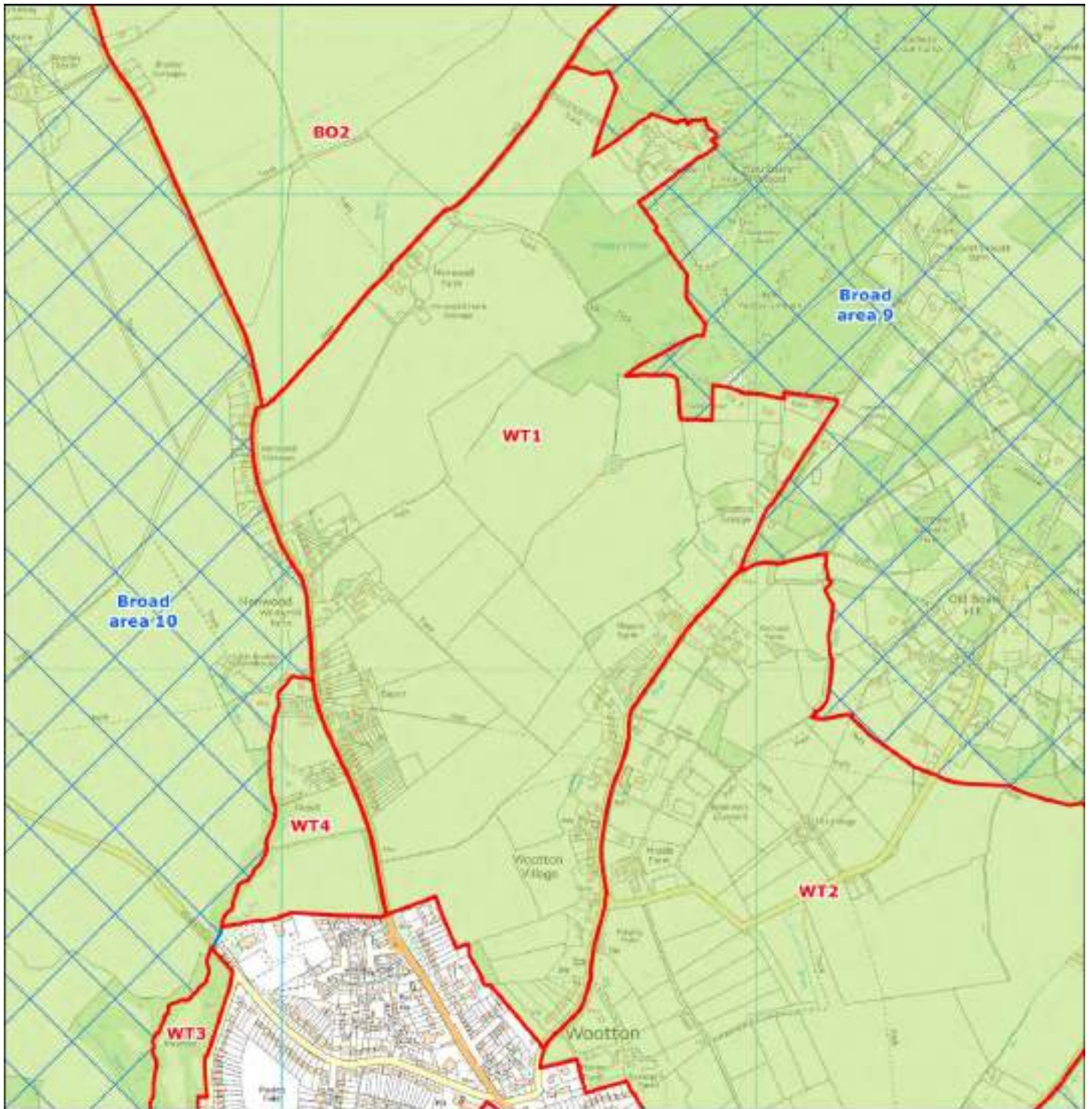
Notes:

Steep ground on the upper, eastern slope of Shotover Hill. Well treed, with some agricultural use and large houses along the northern edge of the parcel. The undeveloped slopes of Shotover Hill are visually prominent in the context of Oxford's rural setting, so although there is no intervisibility with Oxford there is a contribution to the rural character of the hills that bound much of the city.

Land Parcel Ref: WT1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: WT1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel abuts Wootton which is not considered to be a large built up area, i.e. Oxford. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel abuts Wootton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The southern boundary of the parcel borders Wootton, the western boundary borders the B4017, and the eastern boundary borders Sandy Lane. The parcel is an area of open undulating land. The northern boundary of the parcel is located in close proximity to Botley, however the elevated topography to the north screens views between Botley and Wootton. Due to the close proximity between the settlements, the parcel plays some role in preventing the merging of the settlements, as any encroachment by either settlement would result in reducing the gap. The linear development along the B4017 at Henwood could easily be consumed by an enlarged Wootton.

Land Parcel Ref: WT1

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel sits between two roads emanating from the centre of the village of Wootton to the south – Cumnor Road which forms the western edge of the parcel and Sandy Lane the eastern edge. These roads have been subjected to a significant amount of ribbon development a large proportion of which falls within the eastern and western (Henwood village) edges of the parcel. The centre of the parcel is free from development and is made up of large open agricultural fields with good views of the countryside within the parcel and to the south west. Youlbury Wood forms the north eastern edge of the parcel. Henwood Farm and the large isolated dwelling of Whitebarn represent the only development in the north of the parcel, but neither is considered to have an urbanising influences. Much of the ribbon development along the eastern and western edges of the parcel is rural in character, including farms and large detached dwellings; however its scale and density in the southern half of the parcel does have an urbanising influence on the countryside within the Green Belt parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

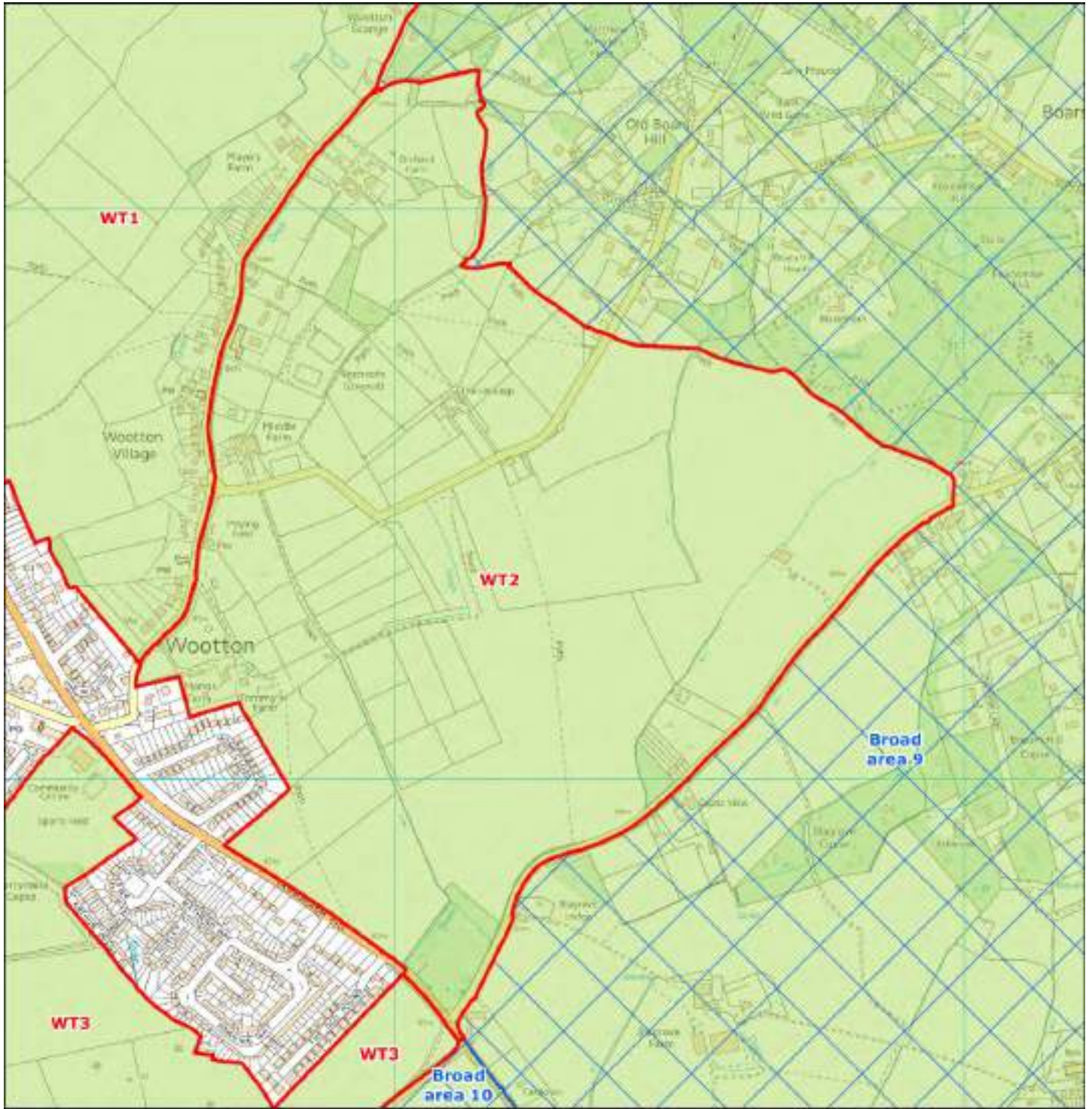
Notes:

Separated from Oxford by the wooded Youlbury/Boars Hill ridge, the elevated, gently sloping arable farmland in this parcel nonetheless performs a role in defining the rural character of Oxford's broader setting by providing a setting to the wooded ridge, in particular from the B4017 and the settlements along it (Cumnor, Henwood and Wootton), which are connected to the city by a number of rights of way that cross the parcel. Gaps in the roadside housing allow views up to the wooded ridge.

Land Parcel Ref: WT2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: WT2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wootton which is not considered to be a large built up area, i.e. Oxford. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wootton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel lies to the east of Wootton, with the southern boundary of the parcel adjacent to Fox Lane. The parcel has a sense of openness throughout. The parcel is relatively distant from Abingdon to the southeast and therefore plays a very limited role in preventing the merging or erosion of the visual and physical gap between Wootton and Abingdon.

Land Parcel Ref: WT2

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel sits on the south facing slope of Boars Hill which is located to the north of the parcel. From the open agricultural fields which cover the majority of the parcel there are excellent views of the countryside to the south and south west of the parcel. There are a number of farms and two underground reservoirs within the parcel. A large isolated dwelling sits on the edge of Wootton in the south of the parcel. Sandy Lane which forms the western edge of the parcel has been subjected to a significant amount of ribbon development some of which falls within the western edge of the parcel. All the ribbon development along the western edge of the parcel is rural in character, including a farm, village school and detached dwellings; these developments are not considered to have an urbanising influence on the countryside within the Green Belt parcel. The ribbon development along the southern side of Lamborough Hill, with associated street lighting and pavement, does have an urbanising influence on the southern part of the parcel, which would score 'medium' if considered in isolation.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

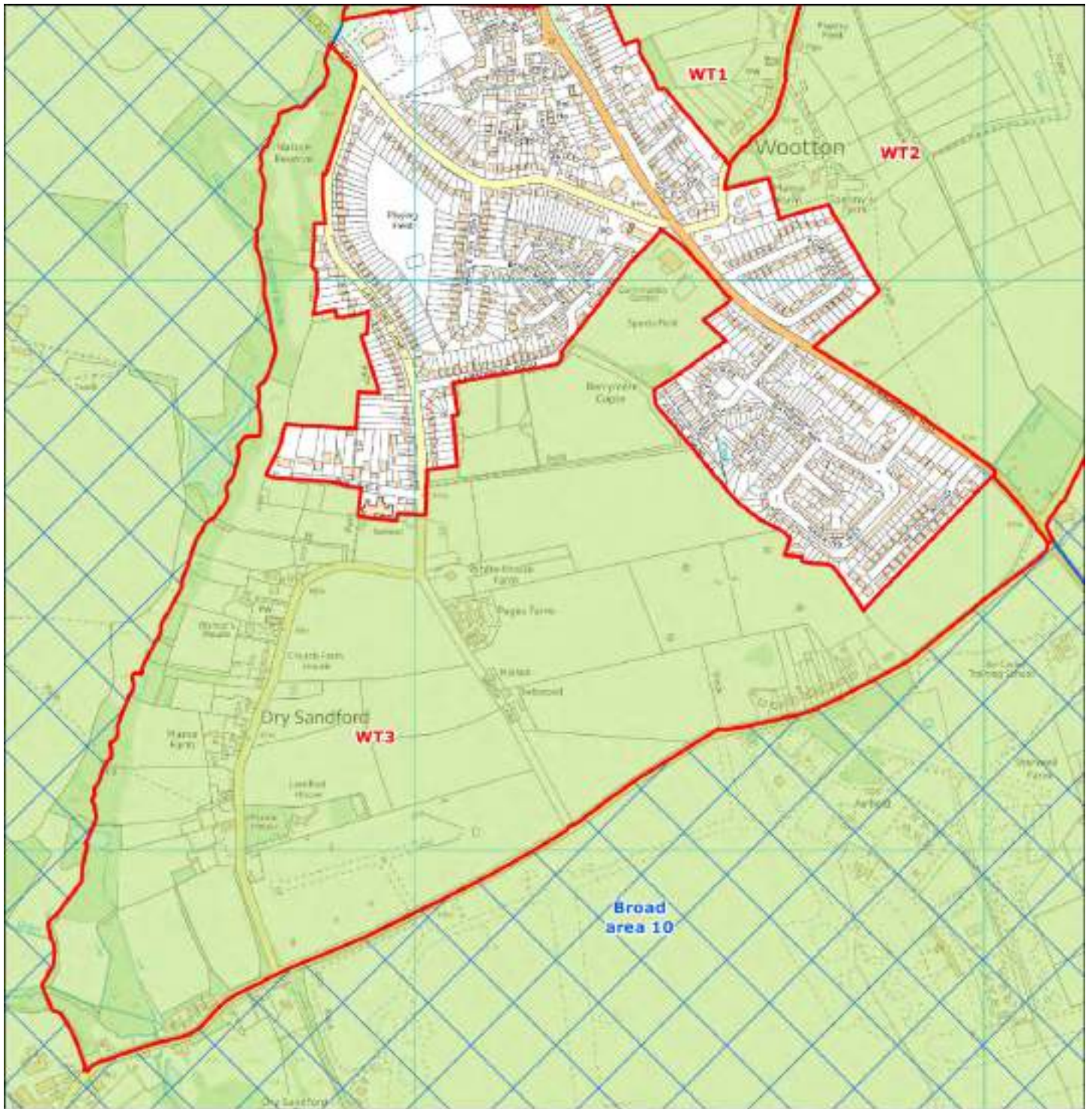
Notes:

Separated from Oxford by the wooded Boars Hill ridge, the elevated, gently sloping arable farmland in this parcel nonetheless performs a role in defining the rural character of Oxford's broader setting by providing an open foreground to views of the wooded ridge, in particular from the B4017 and the village of Wootton, which is connected to the city by a number of rights of way that cross the parcel. Gaps in the roadside housing allow views up to the wooded ridge. The parcel is visible in views from many locations in the low-lying Vale to the south, and as far as the hills south of Didcot.

Land Parcel Ref: WT3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: WT3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wootton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wootton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel is located to the south and west of Wootton. The western boundary of the parcel is adjacent to Sandford Brook and the southern boundary is adjacent to Honeybottom Lane. The parcel has a strong sense of openness and is relatively flat. The western boundary is in relatively close proximity to Appleton, however due to the topography and vegetation between the settlements, views are screened. The southern boundary of the parcel is not much closer to Abingdon than the current settlement edge, and development along the B4017 is more likely to be perceived as narrowing the gap, but the presence of Abingdon Airfield and Shippon to the south does limit rural character in this direction so the parcel makes some contribution. The parcel plays a key role in preventing the merging of Wootton and Dry Sandford but Dry Sandford is not considered as a settlement under Purpose 2 for this study.

Land Parcel Ref: WT3

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is predominantly made-up of linear agricultural fields lined by trees. In between the gaps in the woodland there are views of the countryside to the south and east of the parcel. There is a greater concentration of woodland along the western edge of the parcel which follows Sanford Brook. The wooded floodplain of this watercourse is also designated as the Cothill Fen SSSI. Wooton Hall and associated outdoor sports pitches (some of which are flood lit) are located in the northern tip of the parcel, where adjacent bungalows on Landsdowne Road and Lashford Lane also affect rural character. A farm sits in the centre of the parcel. The small hamlet of Dry Sandford lies in the western half of the parcel along Church Lane. The village is very rural in character containing a church (St Helens Church) and a number of large detached dwellings. Similarly, along Honeybottom Lane in the eastern corner of the parcel is a line of dwellings. The northern part of the parcel would rate 'medium' in isolation, but the majority of the parcel rates as 'high'.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: N/C

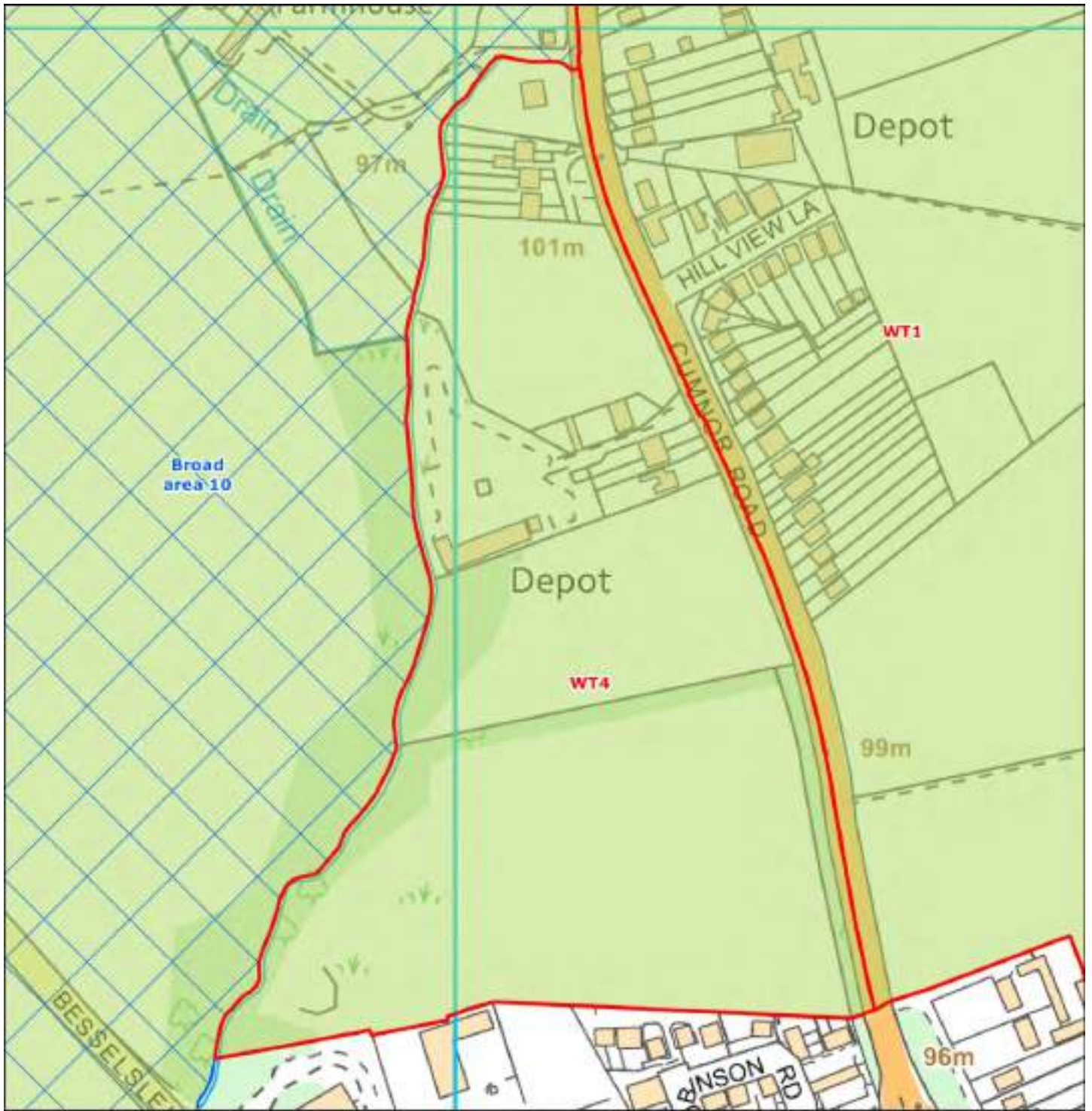
Notes:

Very gently sloping farmland, with treed field boundaries. Its location relative to Wootton, Abingdon Airfield and Dry Sandford means that it is somewhat detached from the landscape that forms Oxford's more immediate setting.

Land Parcel Ref: WT4

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Other Authorities: N/A

Land Parcel Ref: WT4

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wootton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Wootton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The small parcel is located to the north of Wootton and is adjacent to the B4017. The parcel is an area of open land and is well screened on its boundaries by roadside vegetation and extensive field boundaries. The parcel is relatively distant from all settlements included under this purpose but it makes some contribution to the gap between Wootton and Cumnor by contributing to the gap between Wootton and Henwood (which in itself is not considered as a settlement under Purpose 2 for this study).

Land Parcel Ref: WT4

Main Authority: Vale of White Horse

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel represents a triangular strip of land in between Cumnor Road on the eastern edge of the parcel and Sandford Brook on the western edge. Woodland follows the brook on the western side of the parcel. The majority of the parcel is made up of three small fields. There are limited views out to the wider countryside from the fields. There are two developments within the parcel which have an urbanising influence on this area of countryside: an area of hard standing containing large vehicle shed sits in the centre of the parcel, and a small residential cul-de-sac is located at the northern tip of the parcel. The extent to which these features represent an urbanising influence is limited by strong hedgerows within the parcel, and they have little impact on the majority of the parcel to the south.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

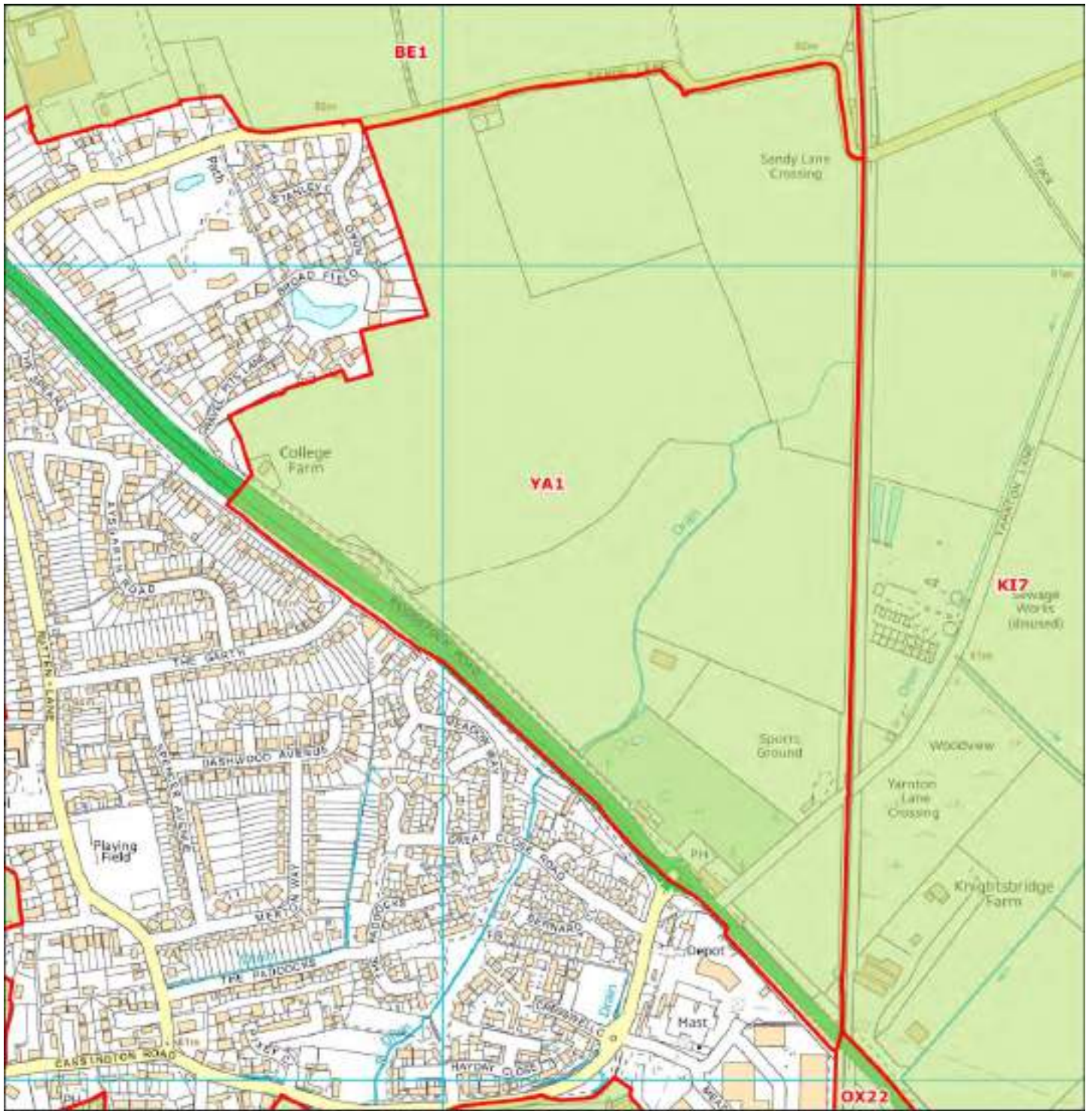
Notes:

Several small fields, dwellings and a storage area in an enclosed setting between Sandford Brook and the B4017. This small parcel is not very prominent in wider views - a strong roadside treeline screens views from higher ground to the east - but presents an undeveloped front that can be considered to make a minor contribution to Oxford's rural setting by providing undeveloped space between Henwood and Wootton.

Land Parcel Ref: YA1

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



Legend: District boundary Green belt parcel Broad area Green belt

Scale: 0 to 0.15 km

North Arrow:

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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: YA1

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Yarnton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Yarnton which is not considered to be a large built up area, i.e. . Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel has a strong sense of openness and is adjacent to the eastern side of Yarnton and in close proximity to Kidlington to the east. Only a small portion of parcel K17 separates the parcel from Kidlington. Due to the close proximity of the two settlements, the parcel plays an essential role in preventing the merging and erosion of the physical gap between the two settlements, as any loss of openness would substantially reduce the gap.

Land Parcel Ref: YA1

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is largely free from development, being made up of large open agricultural fields with views of countryside within the parcel and immediately to the east and south up to the edges of Kidlington and Oxford. Two developments along Woodstock Road are considered to represent urbanising influences on the Green Belt within their immediate vicinity – a petrol station and a large pub with associated car park. However, both have relatively limited influence on the wider countryside within the parcel.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

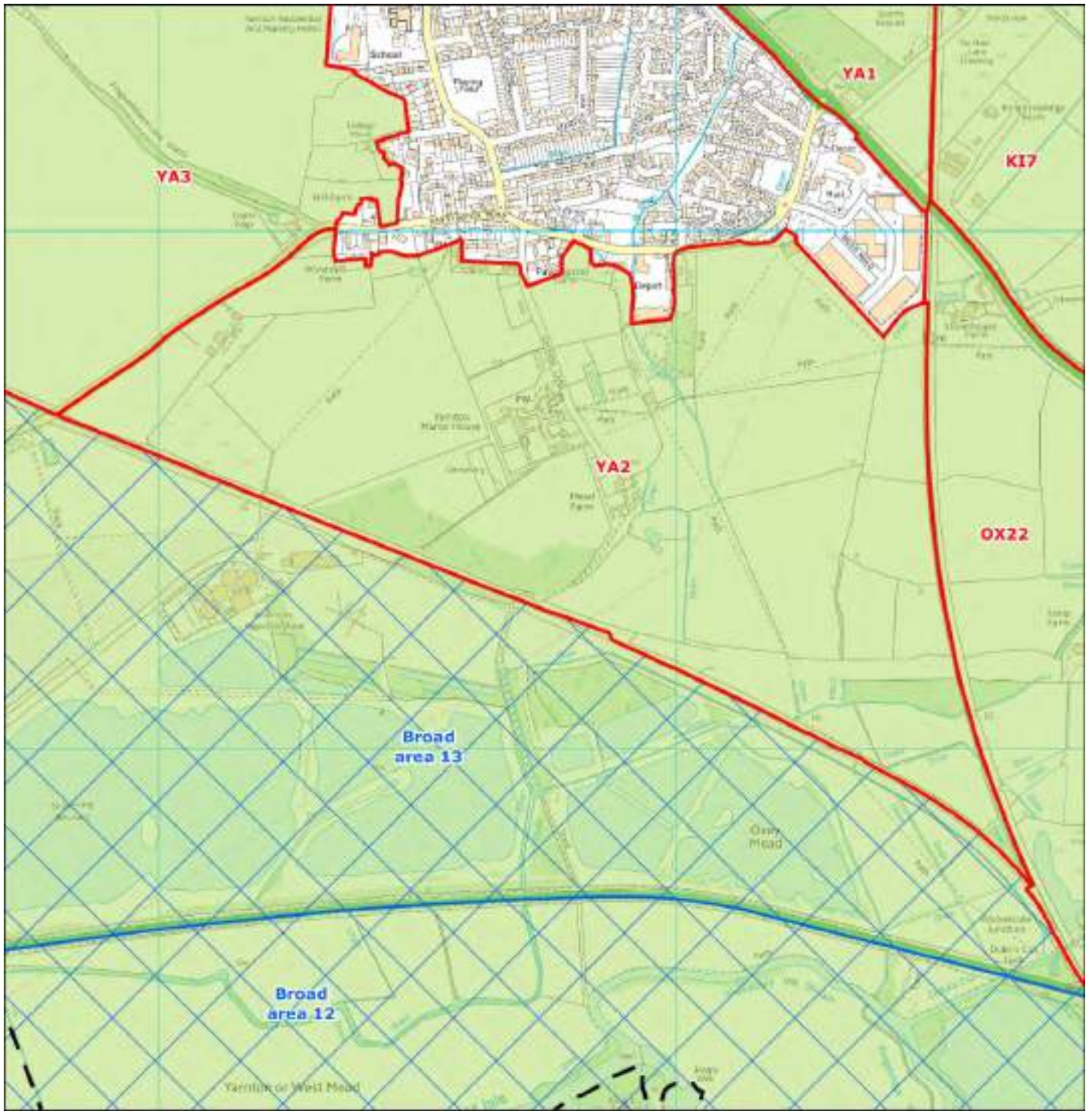
Notes:

There is no intervisibility with the historic core of Oxford. The parcel is orientated between Yarnton and Kidlington, rather than towards Oxford, but loss of openness would contribute to some impact on rural character of wider setting.

Land Parcel Ref:

Main Authority:

Parcel Type:



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: YA2

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Yarnton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Yarnton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel is located to the south of Yarnton, with the southern boundary of the parcel adjacent to the railway line which runs to Oxford. The parcel occupies part of the gap between the south of Yarnton and north of Oxford, and has a strong sense of openness. Any loss of openness would physically reduce the gap, but level terrain and strong tree cover prevent visual links.

The parcel does play a key role in preventing the merging of Worton and Yarnton, but Worton is not considered as a settlement under Purpose 2 for this study.

Land Parcel Ref: YA2

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel contains a large manor house and associated outbuildings, a church and a small number of dwellings. None of these developments are considered to have an urbanising influence on the countryside within the parcel. The manor house is surrounded by agricultural fields which are relatively open with immediate views of the wider countryside to the south east and north west and long range views to the north and south. Further south the well bounded fields have a strong rural character and sense of separation from urban influence.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Low

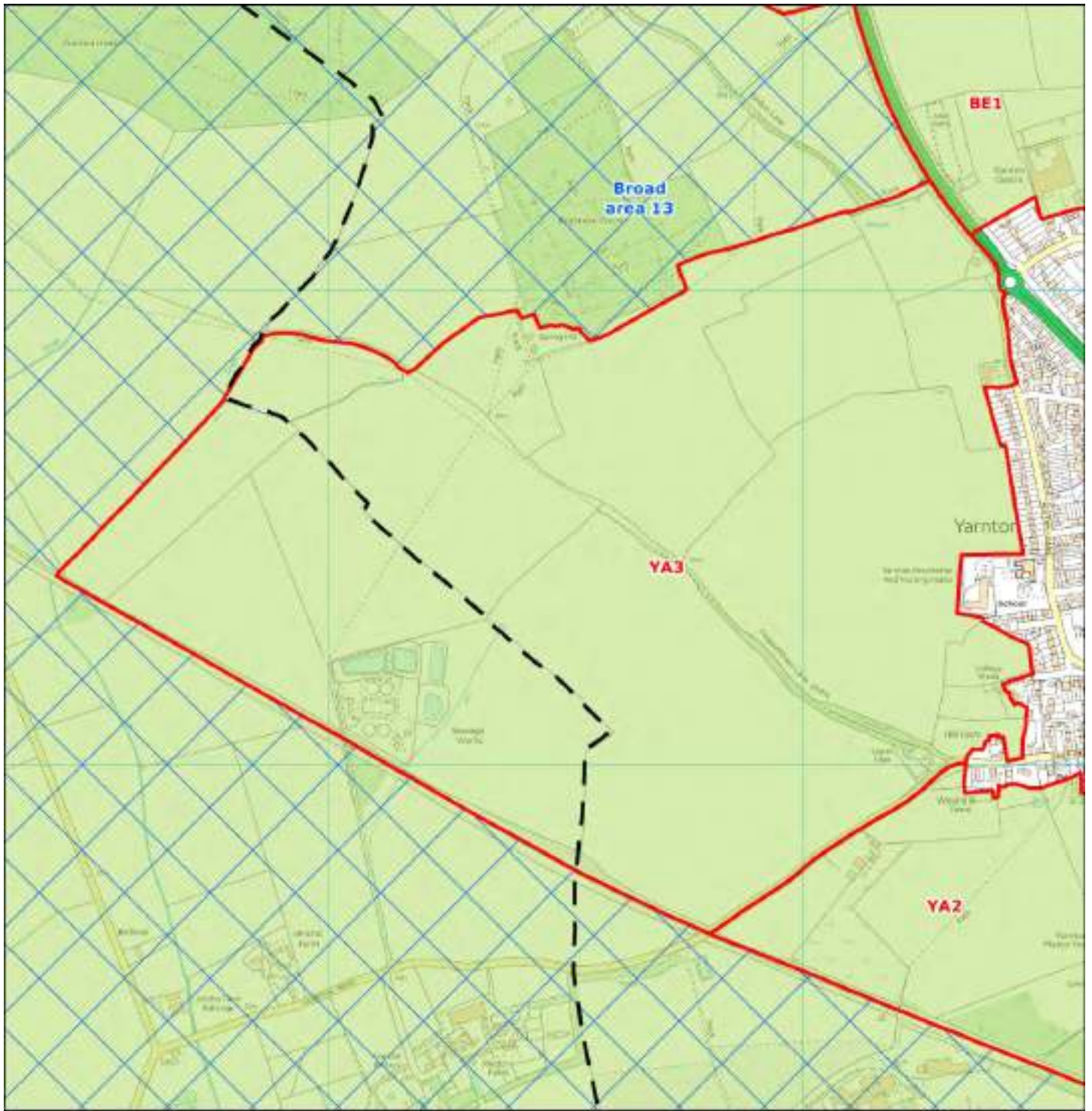
Notes:

This farmland lies within the ring of hills that frame much of Oxford and so plays a role in defining Oxford's rural setting, but it is low-lying and largely contained by tree cover, and there is no intervisibility with Oxford.

Land Parcel Ref: YA3

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel



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Main Authority:

Other Authorities:

Land Parcel Ref: YA3

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 1 - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Issue 1a - Protection of open land from urban sprawl

Does the parcel exhibit evidence of urban sprawl and consequent loss of openness?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Yarnton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Issue 1b - Ability of boundaries / features to contain development and prevent urban sprawl

Does the parcel protect open land from the potential for urban sprawl to occur?

Rating: N/C

Notes:

The parcel is adjacent to Yarnton which is not considered to be a large built up area. Therefore, the parcel is not considered to contribute to checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

Purpose 2 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

Issue 2a - Reduction in visual or physical gaps between settlements

Does the parcel prevent the merging or erosion of the visual or physical gap between neighbouring settlements?

Rating: Low

Notes:

The parcel borders the western boundary of Yarnton, while the railway line which runs to Oxford borders the southern boundary. The parcel has a strong sense of openness and elevated topography as you move west through the parcel. The parcel is more distant from nearby settlements such as Begbroke and Oxford than neighbouring parcels (e.g. YA2), and therefore the parcel plays a limited role in preventing the merging or erosion of the visual and physical gap between the settlements. The loss of the openness of the parcel would not be perceived as reducing the gap between the settlements.

The land parcels forms the part of the gap between Yarnton and the hamlet of Worton and Cassington beyond but these settlements are not considered under Purpose 2 in this study.

Land Parcel Ref: YA3

Main Authority: Cherwell

Parcel Type: Green belt parcel

Purpose 3 - To assist in the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment

Issue 3a - Significance of existing urbanising influences and sense of openness

Does the parcel have the characteristics of countryside and/or connect to land with the characteristics of countryside?

Has the parcel already been affected by encroachment of urbanised built development?

Rating: High

Notes:

The parcel is largely free from development containing large irregular shaped agricultural fields with extensive views of the countryside to the west and south west. Two developments within the parcel are **considered to have an urbanising influence on the countryside within the parcel – a sewage treatment works** adjacent to the railway line which forms the southern edge of the parcel and a GP surgery on Rutten Lane. While these developments do constitute urbanising influences, their locations reduce their urbanising influence on the surrounding countryside. The sewage treatment works is surrounded by open agricultural fields and is therefore considered to have a rural setting; the GP surgery represents a relatively minor extension to Yarnton and therefore a minor encroachment on the countryside.

Purpose 4 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

Issue 4a - Significance of historical and/or visual setting to the historic town

Does the parcel contribute to the setting and 'special character' of Oxford?

Rating: Medium

Notes:

The parcel includes arable farmland on high ground, which contributes to ring of hills around Oxford that form a key aspect of its distinctive setting. There is no intervisibility with spires of central Oxford, but the hill forms part of the backdrop to north side of Thames Valley on approach from west and Shakespeare's Way long distance path approaches the city through this parcel.