



# Elstree and Borehamwood Green Belt Society

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# Scope of this session

- Introduction to the Planning team
- A brief history of the Green Belt
- Hertsmere Local Plan
- Moving forward
- Q&A

# The Planning team...

How we're set up...

- Development Management
  - Planning Enforcement
  - Processing and Improvement Team
- Planning Strategy
  - Infrastructure and Delivery (CIL & S106)
  - Planning Policy (Local Plan etc.)
- Climate Change and Sustainability
- Economic Development

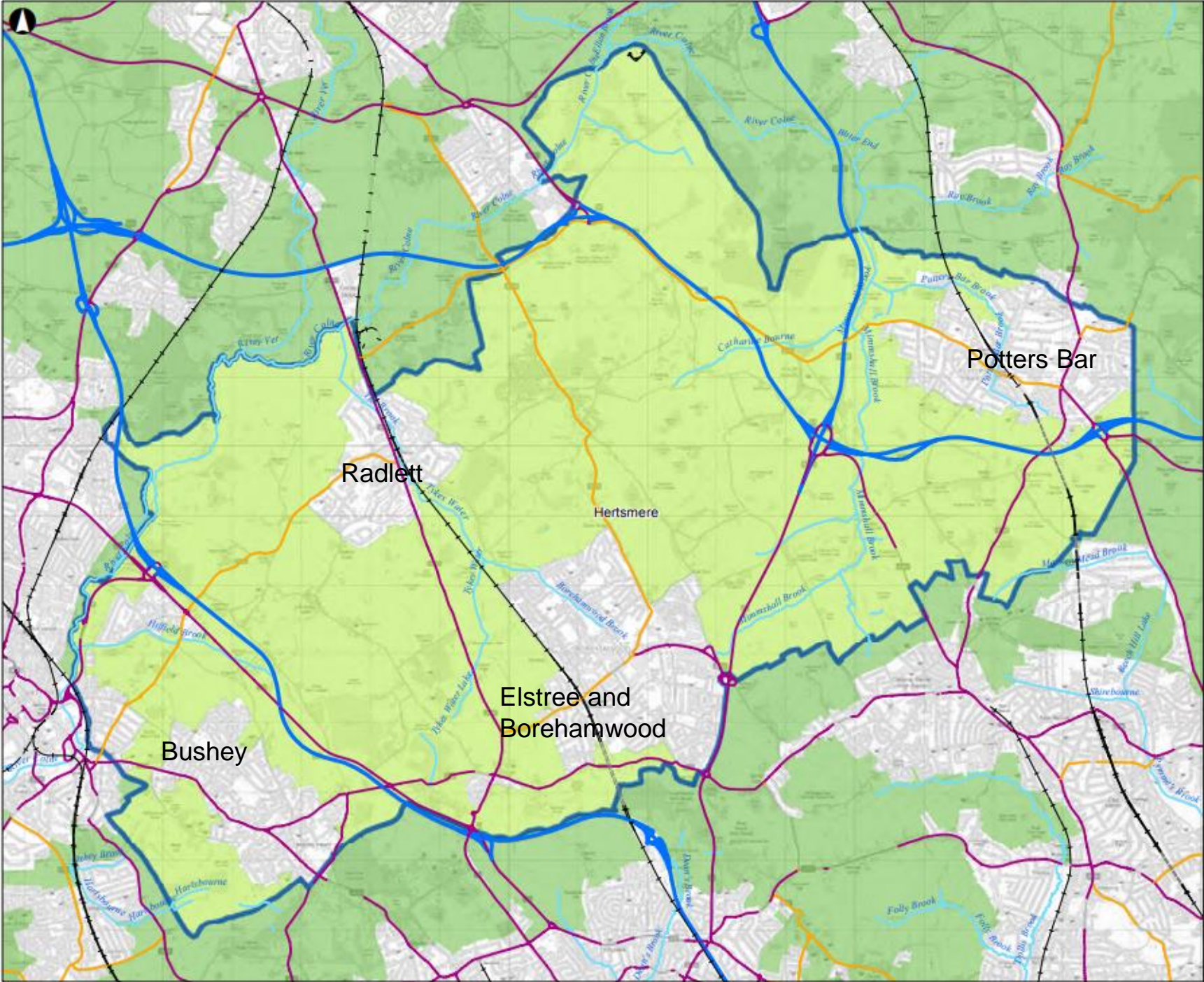
# A brief history of the Green Belt

Original designation of Green Belt established in the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947

Green Belt boundaries set by County Councils of Hertfordshire (through the County Development Plan approved in 1958)

Northern expansion of the Green Belt to cover most of Hertfordshire in 1971. Hertsmere formed in 1974

Policy and guidance up to and including NPPF - purpose and extent of the Green Belt in Hertsmere has largely remained the same - 80% of Hertsmere is designated as Green Belt



# A brief history of the Green Belt

## Five 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

# A brief history of the Green Belt

Some interesting statistics...

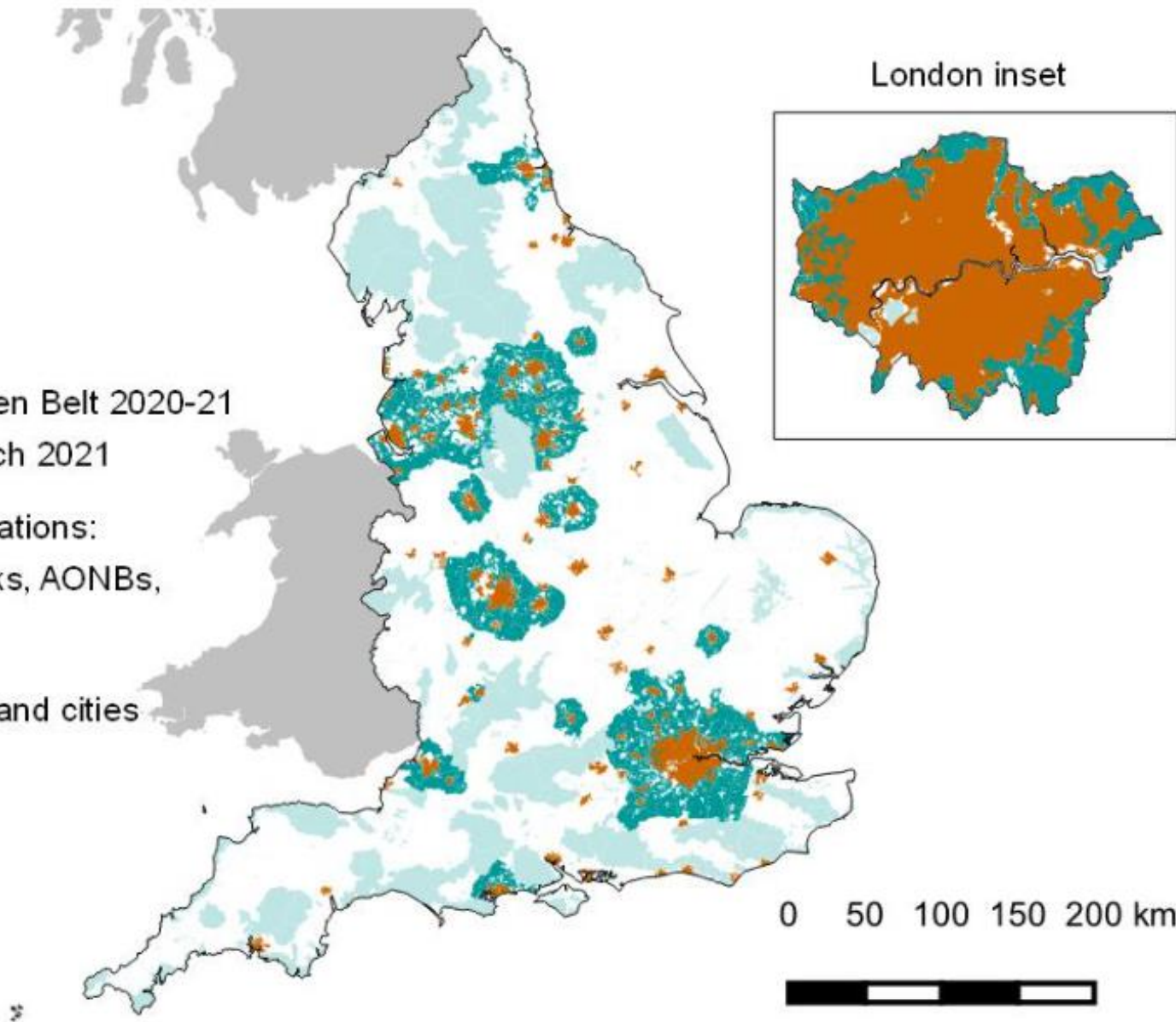
- Green Belt (England) in 1979 – 721,500 hectares (1.78m acres)
- 2011 – 1.639m hectares (4.05m acres)
- 2021 – 1.614m hectares (3.98m acres)
- Approx. 12.4% of England across 180 (57%) of all authorities

# Map 1: Extent of Green Belt as at 31 March 2021



## Legend

-  England Green Belt 2020-21 as at 31 March 2021
-  Other designations: National Parks, AONBs, and SSSIs
-  Major towns and cities



London inset

0 50 100 150 200 km



# A brief history of the Green Belt

But, it should be said...

- Does not relate to ecological, historical or cultural or recreational value
- Many parts of it are not and does not have to be 'Green' or 'attractive'
- Not all of it is undeveloped – e.g. washed-over settlements
- It is largely inaccessible for recreation (other than rights of way/permissive paths)
- Its designation does not stop 'all' development

# Green Belt and Local Plans

- Boundaries only altered where '*exceptional circumstances*' are fully evidenced and justified.
- Para. 81 states that 'local planning authorities are required to plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt' once Green Belt boundaries have been defined including looking for opportunities to:
  - Provide access;
  - Provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation;
  - Retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or
  - Improve damaged and derelict land

# Green Belt and decisions

- Planning decisions are to be made in accordance with Section 38(6) of the PCPA 2004, unless material considerations indicate otherwise
- Green Belt policy approach set out in NPPF – development in the Green Belt doesn't change its designation
- Para. 147 - *“Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.”*
- Paragraph 148 states that those must be such as would clearly outweigh the potential harm to the Green Belt and any other harm.

# Green Belt and decisions

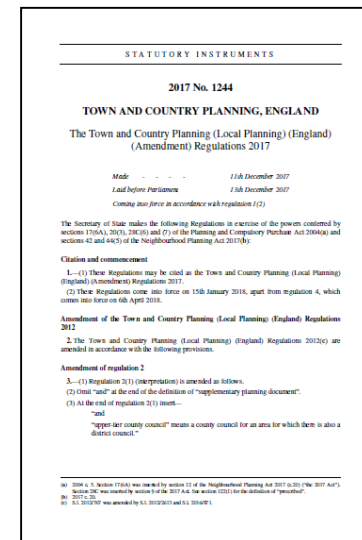
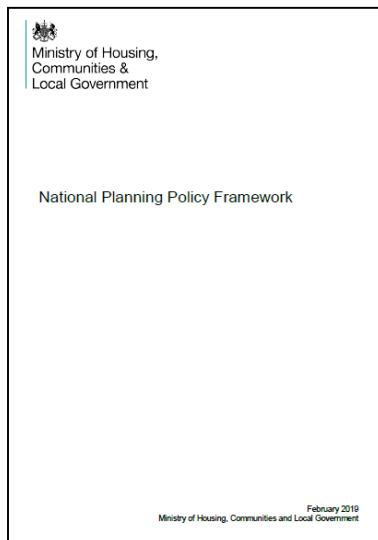
Para. 149 – exceptions:

- a) agriculture and forestry buildings
- b) appropriate facilities supporting sport, recreation, cemeteries and allotments – preserving openness
- c) extensions/alterations to existing buildings
- d) replacement buildings
- e) limited village infill
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs
- g) limited infilling/redevelopment – no greater impact on openness or cause substantial harm where PDL and affordable housing

# What is a Local Plan?

A Local Plan is a **statutory document that sets out the council's vision and strategy for future development.**

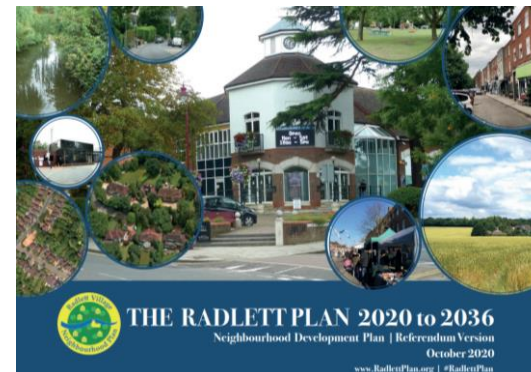
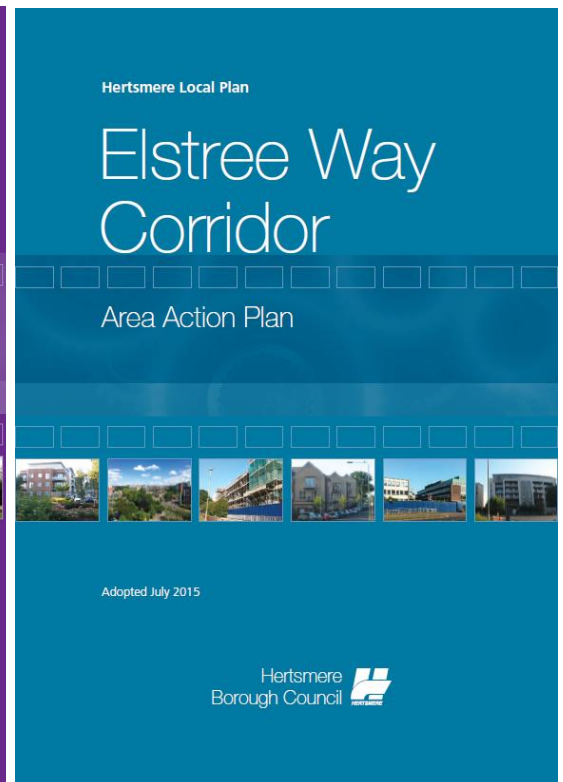
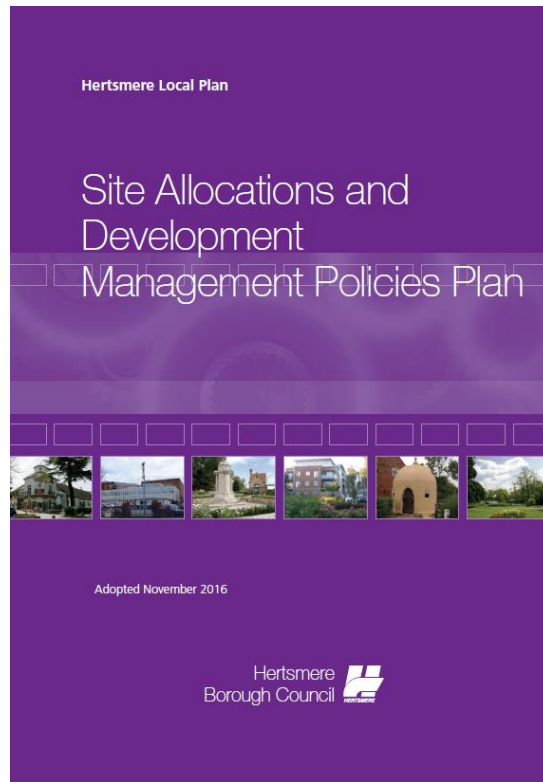
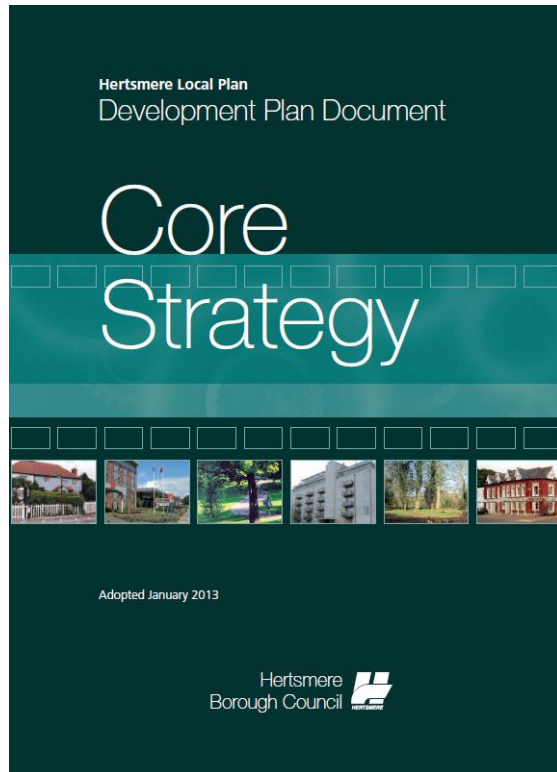
Local Plans are used in the **determination of planning applications** and in other planning related decisions. Also the basis for **securing planning obligations.**



*Has to be prepared in accordance with relevant Acts, regulations, national policy and guidance issued by central Government.*

*Image courtesy of the Independent*

# Current Local Plan



# Importance of preparing a Local Plan

## **NATIONAL:**

- A legal duty to have an up to date Local Plan in place.
- Clear Government (and main opposition parties') commitment to deliver more homes
- The Government can only change national policy through its National Planning Policy Framework

## **LOCAL:**

- Sets clear local parameters for the future of the area
- Provides an up to date framework for determining planning applications.
- Allows the Council to plan for positive change for the area.
- Supports delivery of wider Council commitments (and visioning work) on:
  - (a) climate change and sustainability
  - (b) economic development
  - (c) affordable housing
  - (d) infrastructure
  - (e) health and wellbeing
  - (e) plus any other priority areas (such as creative industries)



# HERTSMERE'S NEW LOCAL PLAN



Our journey so far and the next steps.



# Moving forward

- Decision by Council on 27 April
- Evidence base work still to be completed
- New/updated evidence base work
- Understanding of Levelling Up Bill and implications on Local Plan
- Dealing with applications during this period

# Thank you

## Q&A