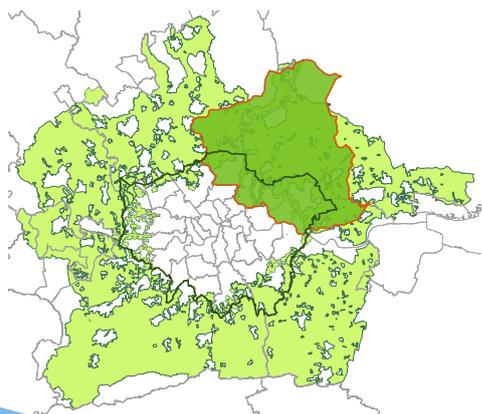


*Bringing the*

# **BIG OUTDOORS**

*closer to people*



Improving the countryside  
around London:

**The Green Arc Approach**

## **Project Report**

prepared by

**Land Use Consultants**

for the **Green Arc Steering Group**

*April 2004*





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# I. INTRODUCTION

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## PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.1. In July 2003, Land Use Consultants (LUC) was commissioned to undertake a study with three key aims:
- To provide an overview of the policies, issues and opportunities related to open space and countryside around London, focusing particularly on the role of agriculture and public accessibility issues. The Study Area embraces all of Greater London's Green Belt and extends out as far as the M25 orbital motorway (see **Figure I.1**).
  - To assess the feasibility of the 'Green Arc' - a strategic initiative aimed at significantly improving the environment and accessibility of the Green Belt open space and countryside around the north and east of London and in the southern parts of Hertfordshire and Essex.
  - To develop a 'framework model', based on the Green Arc, for improving the countryside around London.

## THE STEERING GROUP

- 1.2. A Steering Group comprising representatives of the following organisations commissioned the study:
- The Corporation of London
  - The Forestry Commission
  - The Countryside Agency
  - English Nature
  - Lee Valley Regional Park Authority
  - The Woodland Trust
  - Thames Chase Community Forest
  - Greater London Authority
- 1.3. Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils were subsequently invited to join the Steering Group, as potential partners.

## APPROACH TO THE STUDY

- 1.4. LUC undertook three stages of work. Stage 1 involved defining the aims and scope of the study in consultation with the Steering Group. Stage 2 focused on the overview of the Green Belt and a potential vision for the Green Arc.
- 1.5. The draft Stage 2 Report was underpinned by data collected from a variety of sources to facilitate the production of a series of maps and supporting text that sought to characterise the Green Belt and wider study area. A review of relevant literature and policy documents was also undertaken.
- 1.6. To help define the Vision for the Green Arc, meetings were held with individual members of the Partnership. A series of consultation interviews was also undertaken with officers of local authorities that include areas of land within the Green Belt. These authorities include:
- Essex County Council
  - London Borough of Havering
  - London Borough of Bromley
  - London Borough of Harrow
  - Epping Forest District Council
  - Croydon Borough Council
- 1.7. Stage 3 involved the refinement of the Stage 2 report, in the light of comments from the Steering Group, and additional work on potential delivery mechanisms and funding for the Green Arc. To seek the views of a wider audience, a Consultation Workshop was held in October 2003. More than 50 people attended the workshop, drawn from central and local government, and statutory and non-statutory environmental organisations. A list of attendees is included as **Appendix I**.
- 1.8. A detailed study of public access to land in the Green Belt was undertaken. The study, which involved contacting all district and county authorities, seeks to present and analyse the distribution of publicly accessible open space within the Study Area, to determine the adequacy of provision, the accessibility via public transport, opportunities for improved or increased access, and potential barriers to the use of accessible open space.

## STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

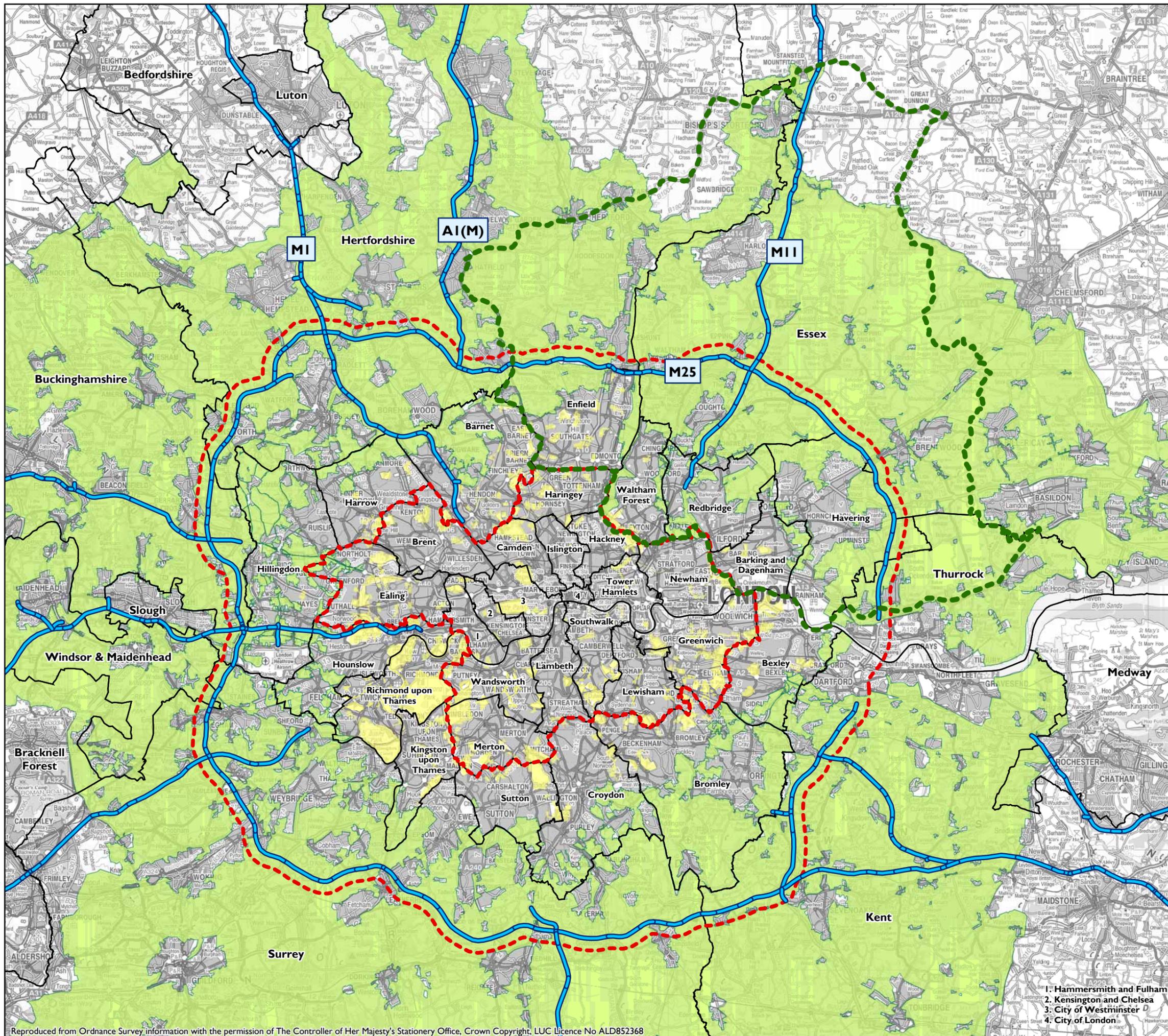
- 1.9. This Report is structured into three main parts: A B and C; reflecting the overall aims of the Study. **Part A** describes the Study Area, in terms of:
- An overview of countryside character, nature conservation interest, rivers and catchments, land use, and land in public ownership
  - Public access to land
  - Policy context
  - Objectives and aspirations

# GREEN ARC

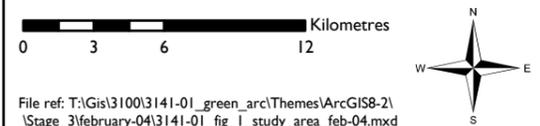
Figure I.1: Study Area

## Key

-  Study Area
-  Recommended Green Arc Boundary
-  County/Borough/Unitary Authority
-  Motorway
-  Green Belt
-  Metropolitan Open Land



Source:  
 GLA - Metropolitan Open Land and Green Belt in London  
 GOSE - Green Belt in Kent, Surrey, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire  
 Hertfordshire CC - Green Belt in Hertfordshire  
 Essex CC - Green Belt in Essex  
 Thurrock Council - Green Belt in Thurrock  
 (no Green Belt data for Bedfordshire)



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- 1: Hammersmith and Fulham
- 2: Kensington and Chelsea
- 3: City of Westminster
- 4: City of London



- Key pressures
  - Current management and enhancement initiatives
  - Need for a strategic environmental initiative.
- 1.10. To assess the feasibility of the Green Arc, **Part B** addresses three key issues:
- Green Arc background, character and boundaries
  - Vision and strategic objectives
  - Management, implementation and funding
- 1.11. The final chapter of the Report provides a summary of conclusions and recommendations.
- 1.12. **Part C** sets out the proposed Framework Model for improving the countryside around London.



# PART A

## 2. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AREA

---

### INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. London's Green Belt covers an area of about 5,000km<sup>2</sup>. About 90% of the Green Belt lies outside Greater London, extending far into the Home Counties. This study focuses on the inner Green Belt – from the outer London Boroughs to the M25 Motorway (referred to subsequently as the Study Area), which covers around 2,000 km<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.2. This section provides an overview of the Study Area, in terms of its countryside and landscape character, rivers and catchments, nature conservation interests, and transport and connections. It also covers land use in the Green Belt, although this focuses on the role of agriculture and farming – a particular requirement of the study brief.

### COUNTRYSIDE CHARACTER

- 2.3. By virtue of its setting within the Thames Basin, with its major river estuary and varied geology, the countryside of the Study Area is very rich and diverse. This diversity is revealed in the Countryside Agency's Joint Character Assessment<sup>1</sup>, which identifies seven character areas within the Study Area. These are (see **Figure 2.1**):
  - North Thames Basin, which covers an extensive area wrapping around North London - Area 111;
  - Greater Thames Estuary, following the flow of the Thames out to the east - Area 81;
  - North Kent Plain, to the southeast of Central London - Area 113;
  - Thames Basin Lowlands, to the southwest of Central London - Area 114;
  - Thames Valley, to the west - Area 115;
  - North Downs, to the south - Area 119; and
  - Thames Basin Heaths further south - Area 129.
- 2.4. A report for the London Planning Advisory Committee by Land Use Consultants, *Landscape Change in London's Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land*<sup>2</sup> also describes the landscape character of the Green Belt and how it has changed since the designation was first made.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Countryside Character Volume 7: South East and London* - Countryside Agency - 1999

<sup>2</sup> *Landscape Change in London's Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land*, by Land Use Consultants for London Planning Advisory Committee - 1993

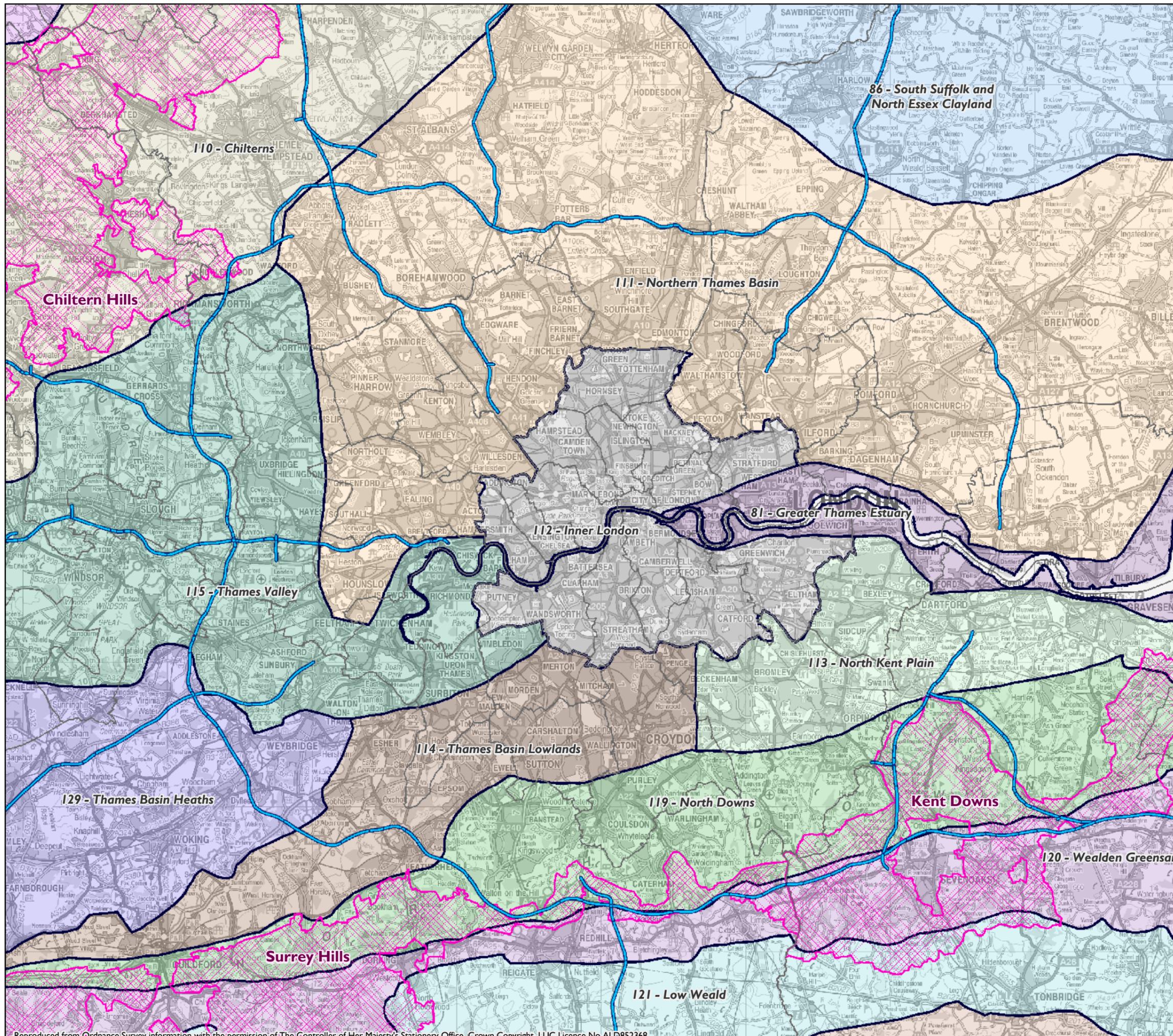
- 2.5. The **Northern Thames Basin** covers a vast area arcing around the northwest and north of Central London, extending out through southern Essex to the Suffolk boundary. The area is divided into four sub-character areas, two of which influence the London urban fringe; Hertfordshire Plateaux and River Valleys, and Ridges and London Clay Lowlands.
- 2.6. The Hertfordshire Plateaux and River Valleys is described in the *Joint Character Assessment* as a 'diverse landscape with a series of broad valleys containing major rivers' such as the Lee. The topography is undulating and varied, with a wide plateau divided by the river valleys. The higher ground of the plateau forms a distinctive backdrop to the river valleys and can give extensive views over the predominantly arable flood plains.
- 2.7. Areas of woodland and tree belts contribute to the character of the landscape. As many of the trees are on hills and hillsides, a wooded appearance is created – often far in excess of their actual extent.
- 2.8. As the traditional countryside of rural Hertfordshire merges into the north London suburbs, the landscape often becomes strongly influenced by urban activity. The M25 and M1 motorways, railway lines and prominent electricity pylons are a major influence on the character of the area. The area is not notably picturesque and can have a confused and disorderly feel.
- 2.9. The London Clay Lowlands describes an area to the north and east of central London. It is an expansive and 'predominantly open agricultural landscape' of 'traditionally unproductive farmland on heavy clay soil'. This is a historically planned landscape, which is reflected in the rectilinear field patterns and long hedgerow boundaries with remnants of elm.
- 2.10. The **Greater Thames Estuary** roughly corresponds to the Thames Gateway, a corridor of land following the River Thames, east of London. This area is dominated by the expansiveness of the river Thames. A large area of the floodplain is grazed pastureland bounded by a network of drainage ditches. The landscape is open due to the lack of hedgerows and trees that only start to become evident on higher ground.
- 2.11. The **North Kent Plain** around the southeast of London is characterised by large and exposed intensively cropped fields with an irregular pattern. Pylons disrupt the openness of the gently undulating landscape almost devoid of trees. Shrubs and trees are generally limited to shelterbelt planting around settlements and along transport corridors. The built environment heavily influences the landscape nearer London with large urban areas such as Dartford and Gillingham contrasting starkly with the open countryside. Gravel and chalk extractions have also left their mark on the landscape.
- 2.12. The **North Downs** are a dramatic landscape of chalk downland with a distinctive steep south facing scarp and broad dip slop gradually dropping to the Thames. This is a predominantly rural landscape dominated by arable fields on the gently undulating dip slop and the chalk soils of the scarp supporting high quality unimproved grassland. Parts of this landscape have been designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. However, towards London the character changes to urban, masking the

# GREEN ARC

Figure 2.1: Landscape Character - Countryside Character Areas

## Key

-  Motorway
-  County/Borough/Unitary Authority
-  Joint Character Area
-  AONB



Source: Ordnance Survey and The Countryside Agency



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- topography, with motorways and railway corridors contrasting with the otherwise peaceful, open landscape.
- 2.13. The **Thames Basin Lowlands** is a typical English farmed landscape of small and medium sized fields, set in a lowland clay vale with a gently undulating topography. Although the overall pattern of fields and woods is still evident, the traditional farming character becomes fragmented closer to London and the urban fringe is often characterised by a degraded appearance.
- 2.14. The **Thames Basin Heaths** comprise a distinct area of commonly unenclosed heathland and coniferous forestry developed on the acidic soils in the west of the Thames Basin. The Heaths extend from the Thames Basin Lowlands in the east, through to the Berkshire and Marlborough Downs. The once extensive heathland is now largely fragmented and degraded but the landscape still maintains its open and 'heathy' character. The area is heavily populated and is characterised by large towns plus numerous smaller settlements along transport corridors interspersed by open land.
- 2.15. The **Thames Valley** covers an area west of Central London. It is dominated in the south by the hydrological floodplain of the River Thames and associated flat grazed land. It is also characterised by a number of formal historic landscapes. Further west the river becomes less prominent in the wide flat landscape, with extensive areas of woodland further north. The natural character is diluted towards London by urban influences such as Heathrow Airport, transport corridors, pylons and golf courses. There is also evidence of extensive mineral extraction and numerous flooded gravel pits.

### **A landscape in gradual decline**

- 2.16. As noted above, parts of the Green Belt fall within designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (Surrey Hills and North Kent Downs). There are, in addition, many areas of attractive landscape. However, the 1993 report by LUC for the London Planning Advisory Committee drew the following key conclusions, based on a detailed analysis of landscape change in ten sample areas of the Green Belt since 1949:
- The landscape character of the Green Belt has changed significantly. Landscapes with a predominantly urban character increased by around 50 %, the average size of fields more than doubled and the length of hedgerows reduced by 30%.
  - With the exception of an increase in woodland, the changes are likely to be perceived as a deterioration in the quality of the landscape.
  - The main causes of landscape change are development and land use change that are described as acceptable or appropriate in the Green Belt, permitted development, and non-conforming development, particularly motorways.
- 2.17. The report also noted, based on the evidence, that the maintenance of landscape character and quality is more likely to be achieved where land is in public ownership.

## NATURAL AREAS

2.18. English Nature describes ecological variations on a national scale, sub-dividing England into biogeographic zones or Natural Areas<sup>3</sup> (**Figure 2.2**). Each Natural Area has a unique identity resulting from the interaction of wildlife, landform geology, land use and human impact. Four Natural Areas fall within the Study Area.

- London Basin
- North Kent Plains
- North Downs
- Greater Thames Estuary.

2.19. The **London Basin** is one of the largest natural areas covering an area of over 5,000 km<sup>2</sup> arcing around the north and west of London. The London Basin is a broad, gentle, concave fold opening out towards the east with the axis running through north London formed by earth movements some 20 to 40 million years ago. The most significant outcrop of rock is chalk deposited during the Cretaceous period. Chalk forms the bedrock of this and the adjacent Natural Areas and provides an important aquifer for London. Overlying the chalk is a series of sand and mudstone deposits from the Tertiary period. Following major marine transgression a sequence of shallow marine sediments were deposited forming London Clay. London Clay is the most widespread deposit with most of London built on it, and with extensive tunnels through it. There are also Bagshot, Barton and Breckles Beds of sand and clay overlying the London Clay. These geological influences have been partly obscured by human interference and the geography of London.

2.20. The dominance of London has also had a major influence on the ecology of the area, as road, rail and waterway networks fragment habitats, with around 50% of the natural area on the fringe of London being developed. This is principally a semi-natural habitat of pastoral agriculture alongside the suburban landscape and ecology of private gardens. Despite this there are large areas of important habitat described as key nature conservation areas including:

- Ancient parkland with veteran trees
- Woodland including ancient and semi natural ancient woods
- Lowland heath
- Reservoirs, lakes gravel pit and canals
- River valleys.

2.21. A number of sites have been protected for their ecological importance. Richmond Park is designated as a SSSI, NNR and SAC; Ruislip Park is also a SSSI and NNR; Epping Forest is a SSSI and SAC; and Staines Moore is a SSSI, NNR and SPA.

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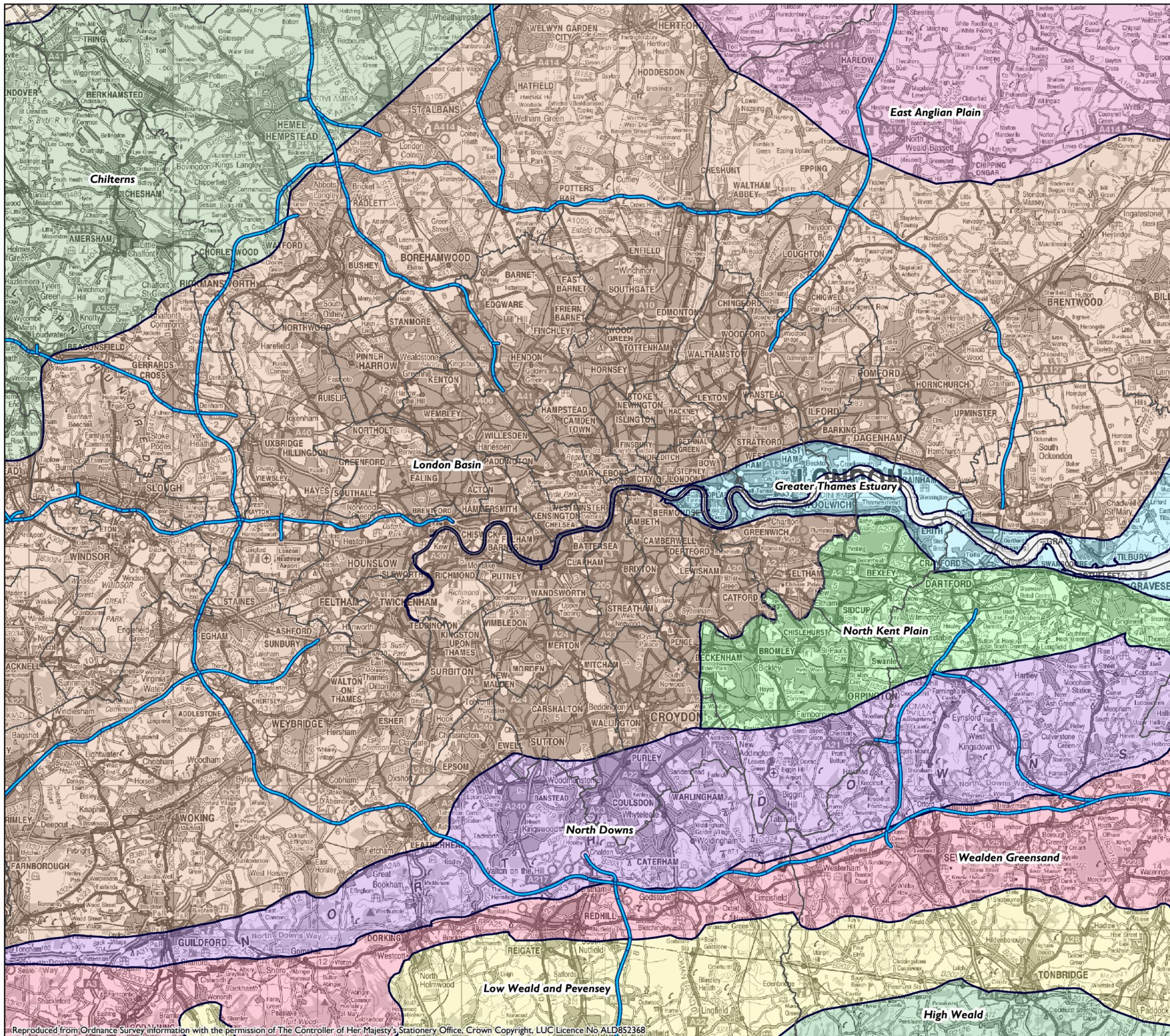
<sup>3</sup> English Nature - Natural Areas - 1998

# GREEN ARC

## Figure 2.2: Natural Areas

### Key

-  Motorway
-  County/borough boundary
-  Natural Areas (coloured, with name)



Source: English Nature

0 2.5 5 10 Kilometres

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- 2.22. The **North Kent Plains** stretches east from the outskirts of London, between Bromley and Woolwich for some 100km to the north Kent coast. The geology is characterised by the clay and sand of the Tertiary period. Through movements in the earth and changes in the sea level a number of distinct strata are prominent, principally, Thanet sand (a yellow/grey sand), Woolwich, Reading and Blackheath Beds (a series of clay deposits with some sand and pebble beds) and London Clay (a heavy and impermeable clay). Chalk underlies the whole area
- 2.23. The area is dominated by highly fertile soil that is easily worked and intensively farmed. The key areas of nature conservation have therefore been pushed out to areas where farming becomes more difficult, for example where there is poor drainage.
- 2.24. The key areas of nature conservation importance are:
- Woodland, particularly ancient woodland
  - Unimproved grassland
  - Grazing Marshland
  - Rivers and streams, reed beds and ponds, lakes and gravel pits
  - Tertiary and Pleistocene deposits.
- 2.25. Ruxley Gravel Pit, Crofton Wood, and Elmstead Pit are examples of SSSIs found in the North Kent Plain within the Study Area.
- 2.26. The **North Downs** extend for approximately 150km, from Farnham in the west, cutting the M25 south of London to the white cliffs of Dover in the east. Geologically, they are geologically dominated by Cretaceous Chalk, a very pure and globally rare limestone, which has been raised and folded by movements in the earth's crust and eroded to leave just a rim. The Downs are cut in many places by a network of dry valleys created when they carried surface streams. A heavy clay-with-flint soil covers the Downs, except on the steep slopes where the soil is freer draining.
- 2.27. Due to its rarity, the landscape of the Downs is itself considered an important natural resource to conserve. It also holds within it a number of special habitats and key nature conservation areas such as:
- Chalk grassland
  - Chalk scrub
  - Woodland
  - Cliff and chalk quarries

- 2.28. The importance of the Downs landscape as an area of nature conservation is highlighted in a large number of SSSIs including Woldingham and Oxted Downs, Chipstead Downs and Titsey wood, all within the Study Area.
- 2.29. The **Greater Thames Estuary** natural area extends from Tower Bridge downstream along the tidal Thames to Whitstable in Kent and most of the Essex coast. It is mostly comprised, geologically, of clays and sands overlain by more recent glacial and fluvial deposits. The surface deposits are largely recent estuarine sediments, ranging from fine silt in the grazing marshes to courser sand and gravel along the coast.
- 2.30. Much of the Greater Thames estuary has been subject to major industrial and associated port development, particularly within the Study Area, resulting in a loss of natural habitat. The effects of ‘coastal squeeze’, whereby the inter-tidal zone is reduced as a result of rising sea levels and the presence of coastal defences, have exacerbated this loss. The loss of natural habitat has also occurred in more remote areas where freshwater grazing marsh has been drained for arable farmland. This loss has increased pressures to retain the remaining habitat as key nature conservation areas, including:
- Inter-tidal sand and mud flats
  - Grazing marshland and associated habitats
  - Arable farmland.
- 2.31. A number of the remaining ecologically important areas have been protected as SSSIs, including Ingrebourne Marshes and Inner Thames Marshes, the latter being the largest SSSI in London.

## **BIODIVERSITY**

- 2.32. Although dominated by the urban metropolis, the Green Belt offers a range of habitats. This is illustrated by a plethora of nature conservation areas, including:
- Three National Nature Reserves (NNRs) – Ruislip Woods, Richmond Park and Ashted Common
  - Two Special Protection Areas (SPAs) – the Lee Valley and South West London Water Bodies
  - Three Special Areas for Conservation (SACs) – Epping Forest, Richmond Park and Wimbledon Common and two RAMSAR sites – South West London Water Bodies and the Lee Valley
  - Over 50 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), and numerous sites designated by London Boroughs as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).
- 2.33. There are three tiers of SINCs: Sites of Metropolitan Importance, Borough Importance and Local Importance. The former are afforded the highest priority for protection, on account of their containing the best examples of London’s habitats,

particularly rare species, rare assemblages of species or important populations, or being sites which are of particular significance within otherwise heavily built-up areas of London (see **Figure 2.3**). Non-statutory sites outside London are not shown as this information was not readily or freely available.

- 2.34. Linking many of these sites and areas to each other is a network of Green Corridors. This network allows some species with specialised habitat requirements to extend their distribution into parts of London where they would otherwise not be seen. The rivers, canals and railside land are important components of these corridors, and expansion of the waterway corridor network, as proposed in the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy<sup>4</sup>, will greatly benefit London's biodiversity. In this context, the Green Belt itself can be regarded as a Green Corridor.

## **RIVERS AND CATCHMENT AREAS**

- 2.35. The River Thames is London's largest and best-known natural feature. The principal 'river basin' catchment of the River Thames divides into around 22 sub-catchments (see **Figure 2.4**). Major river catchments within the Study Area include:
- The Lee, which flows from the north to the Thames
  - The Roding and Ingrebourne, which flow into the Thames in east London
  - The Colne, which flows from the north west
  - The Wey and Addlestone Bourne from the south west
  - The Darent and Cray from the south east
  - The Wandle from the south.
- 2.36. There is a discernable correlation between hydrology and landscape character, mainly attributable to topography – which has a strong influence on both (see **Figures 2.1** and **2.4**).
- 2.37. Like the Thames, many of London's other rivers have been hemmed in by built development on their floodplains and have had their channels deepened to accommodate flood flows. It is now widely appreciated that such developments are not sustainable, and the Environment Agency encourages the restoration of wetland habitats alongside the rivers, not only to assist with flood alleviation but also to provide valuable wildlife habitat. The Mayor has identified the 'Blue Ribbon Network' for the River Thames and London's other waterways in the London Plan. This establishes principles for the use and management of the water and land beside it.

## **Canals, lakes and ponds**

- 2.38. London's canal system adds to a wealth of wetland habitats. Unlike many of London's rivers, the canal system is almost entirely accessible via the towpaths, and thus provides valuable opportunities for informal recreation and contact with nature.

---

<sup>4</sup> *Connecting with London's nature*, The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy, Mayor of London, July 2002

- 2.39. Farm ponds were much more common before the expansion of suburban London over the last 150 years. The majority of these have been lost under built development or through neglect, threatening the local survival of species like great crested and palmate newts. The surviving ponds are concentrated in the outer boroughs, especially those across the north of London from Hillingdon to Havering. London's larger waterbodies total over 1500 hectares and many are artificial. The oldest are the lakes created during the landscaping of former country estates, once on London's margins but mostly now in public parks. Of more recent origin are flooded gravel pits and the storage reservoirs created for drinking water and canal feeders, which provide important havens for wetland birds and declining mammals such as the water vole.

## LAND USE

- 2.40. By definition, land in the Green Belt is predominantly open, comprising a mixture of farmland, woodland and areas for formal or informal recreation. Substantial pockets of urban development, including villages, farm complexes and institutional buildings also lie within the Green Belt.

### Farms and Agriculture

- 2.41. Around 10% (12,000 hectares) of land in Greater London is farmed, almost all of which is within the Green Belt in outer London Boroughs. Farming features much more strongly in the wider Study Area towards the M25 (see **Figure 2.5**). Farming in the urban fringe around major centres of population presents a unique set of factors that can be both constraining and also provide positive opportunities. This overview highlights the role that farming currently plays within the Study Area, constraints that farming faces in the urban fringe generally, and significant trends. Opportunities and aspirations for farming in the Study Area are identified in section 5.
- 2.42. For centuries, farming has shaped the physical character, economy and culture of rural areas – with farmers often being described as the ‘custodians of the land’. In recent years, pressures at the urban fringe have caused farming activity to become detached physically, economically and culturally from the urban population<sup>5</sup>.
- 2.43. On the other hand, the interdependence of town and country is now more widely recognised. Many people from villages use services in towns, while town-dwellers rely on a range of raw materials produced in the countryside<sup>6</sup>. The urban fringe represents the transition between urban and rural and as such provides a location for many activities that link the two.
- 2.44. Farming also has an economic role to play, although generally the output of farms close to major conurbations is comparatively low. The economic influence of agriculture in Greater London is small, with gross output in 1997 totalling only £32 million of the national £13 billion. About two thirds of this output (£20 million) is

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<sup>5</sup> Great North Forest Land Management Initiative (Countryside Agency, 2002)

<sup>6</sup> Connecting Town and Country (Countryside Agency, Oct 2001)

# GREEN ARC

## Figure 2.3: Nature Conservation Designations

### Key

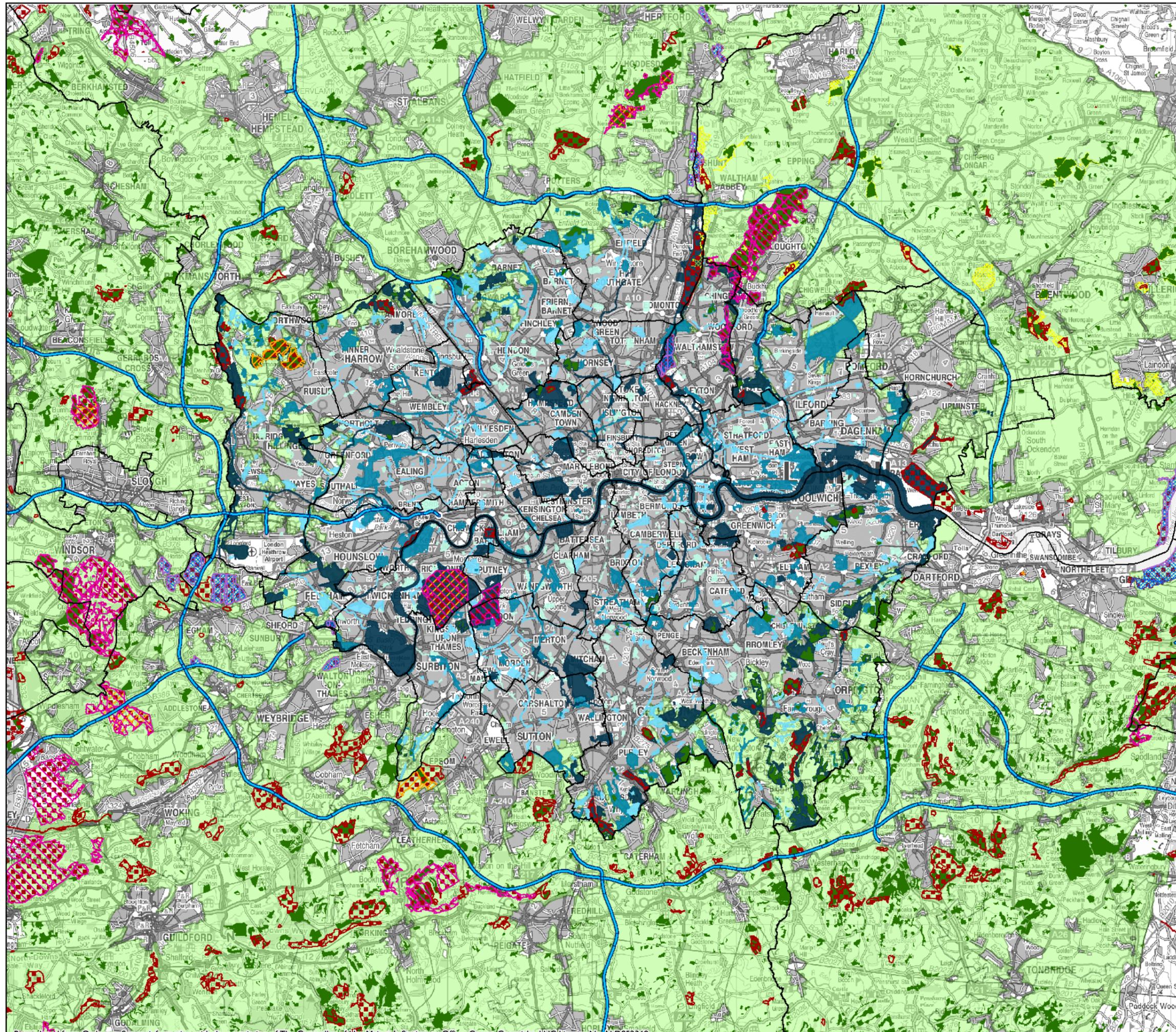
-  Motorway
  -  County/borough boundary
  -  Green Belt
  -  Ancient Woodland
- International and National Designations**
-  SAC
  -  SPA
  -  NNR
  -  RAMSAR
  -  SSSI

### Local Designations

-  Essex local designations \*
- London Biodiversity Sites (SINCs)  
Sites of:
-  Metropolitan Importance
  -  Borough Importance
  -  Borough Importance Grade 2
  -  Local Importance

\* Essex local nature conservation sites include County Wildlife Sites, LNRs, and SINCs

Not available for other Counties



Source: English Nature  
Greater London Authority  
Essex County Council - Sites within the Green Belt



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# GREEN ARC

## Figure 2.4: Rivers and Catchments

### Key

- Motorway
- Canal
- River
- Lake/Reservoir
- Catchment boundary (shaded)



Source: Ordnance Survey  
Environment Agency



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# GREEN ARC

## Figure 2.5: Agricultural Land Use

### Key

-  Motorway
-  County/borough boundary
-  Urban Area
-  Woodland
- DEFRA Dominant Farm Types \***
-  Cereals
-  General Cropping
-  Horticulture
-  Pigs & Poultry
-  Cattle & Sheep (Lowland)
-  Mixed
-  Other Types
-  No Agricultural Data

\* Dominant Farm Types taken from the 2000 Agricultural Census and based on Civil Parish Boundaries (shading indicates the dominant farm type in each parish)

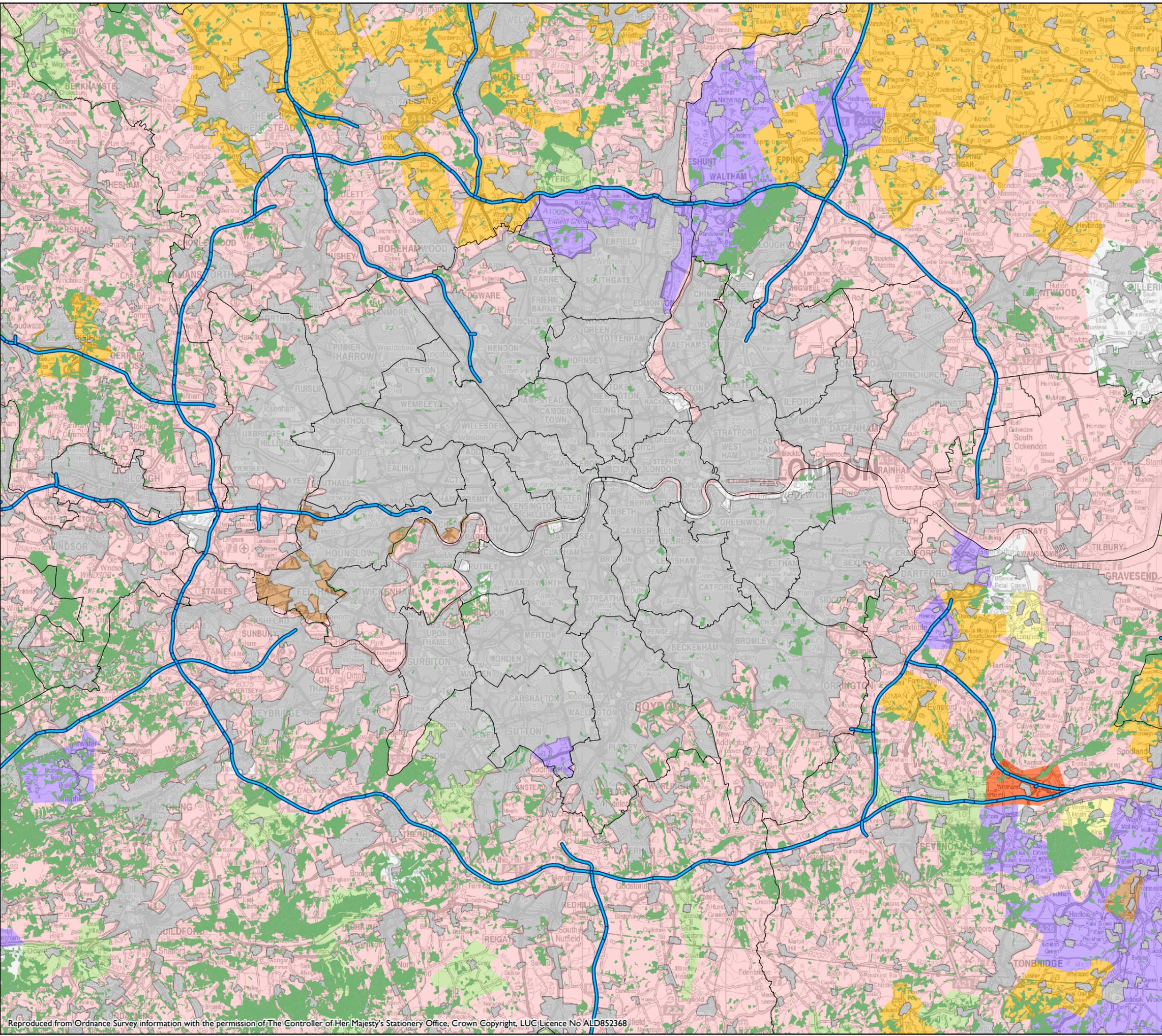
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Source: Forestry Commission  
DEFRA  
Ordnance Survey



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from horticultural practices, which is far greater than other regions of the country<sup>7</sup>. In part this is likely to be due to the proximity of market centres which would have provided a traditional outlet for local produce.

### **Farm numbers**

- 2.45. There are approximately 32,000 farms in England and Wales operating on the edge of large centres of population<sup>8</sup>. In 2002 there were 472 registered agricultural holdings in the Greater London region, representing an increase of 41 since 1995<sup>9</sup>. This indicates a fragmentation of farm ownership, the effects of which are exacerbated by an increase in part-time farming. Both these trends are likely to have implications for changes in the landscape, with land being managed less intensively or in different ways (e.g. for pony paddocks) or even neglected.

### **Farm Size**

- 2.46. The size of farms at the urban fringe is generally smaller with a wide diversity of land ownership. Around Greater London the size of the average farm is 25.6ha compared to 54.5ha nationally, and has decreased over the period 1995-2002. Only about 41% of agricultural holdings are owner-occupied, which is significantly less than the national average of about two-thirds.

### **Farm type**

- 2.47. **Table 2.1** shows the change in farm type in Greater London between 1995 and 2002.

**Table 2.1: Changes in farm types in London**

	<b>1995</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>% of Major Holdings 2002</b>
Dairy	16	7	3
Cattle and Sheep	56	53	23
Pigs and Poultry	19	19	8
General Cropping	27	17	7
Cereals	41	44	19
Horticulture	98	74	32
Mixed	24	19	8
Other, inc. minor holdings	150	239	-
<b>Total holdings</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>472</b>	-

Source: Defra June Census 1995-2002

- 2.48. Both within Greater London and the wider Study Area, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of farms classified as 'Other'. This classification includes holdings that do not fit well with mainstream agriculture, including grass or rough grazing land without livestock and specialist mushroom growing. Much of this land is

<sup>7</sup> England Rural Development Programme (MAFF, 2000)

<sup>8</sup> Farming on the Urban Fringe (NFU, 2002)

<sup>9</sup> Defra census data 1995-2002

commonly referred to as horse pasture. These may be smallholdings involved in a mix of enterprises or specialist producers.

- 2.49. Horticulture represents nearly a third of all major farm types, and mapped data of dominant farm types<sup>10</sup> (see Figure 2.5) within Greater London shows that it is particularly dominant in the north e.g. to the west of Enfield and south around Croydon. The western side of London is mixed with a wedge of cattle/sheep farming in the south of Hounslow Borough. Dairy farming in London has declined rapidly in recent years, with only a handful of dairy herds remaining. There is a small area of cereal production north of Barnet and Borehamwood.

### ***Diversification***

- 2.50. Defra in conjunction with the University of Exeter has recently undertaken a Farm Diversification Benchmark Study. Compared to a similar study in 1989/91, this showed that there has been a distinct increase in the number of farms that have diversified, with more farms than ever reliant on the income from their diversified activities both within and outside agriculture.

### ***Constraints on farms and agriculture at the urban fringe***

- 2.51. Factors affecting the decline in the agricultural industry such as poor market prices, the strength of sterling and the impact of major animal disease outbreaks have been widely reported recently. Farming in the urban fringe has been affected by these problems, but in addition has to cope with its own set of pressures.
- 2.52. Whilst the close proximity of urban populations can present opportunities for increased access, it can also make the urban fringe vulnerable and increasingly difficult to manage. A recent study carried out by the National Farmers Union<sup>11</sup> showed that the incidence of fly tipping, vandalism, joy riding, illegal encampment and poaching were disproportionately high, and becoming a key cause of concern for urban fringe farmers.
- 2.53. Competition from other land uses and fragmented ownership patterns also place added pressure at the urban fringe. Development pressure and premium land prices discourage positive farming practice, leading to an under-managed landscape, which often makes the case stronger for further urbanisation of the countryside.
- 2.54. A progressive loss of local agricultural support infrastructure, such as abattoirs, livestock markets and veterinary surgeons, has also placed pressure on agriculture in the urban fringe. This is a key issue for supporting and restoring traditional land uses, and also for encouraging any new land uses, such as short rotation coppice, which presumes that there are wood-burning power stations within economic travel distances.

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<sup>10</sup> Agricultural Census Data (Defra, 2002)

<sup>11</sup> Farming on the Urban Fringe (NFU, 2002)

## DISTRIBUTION OF LAND IN PUBLIC AND NATIONAL TRUST OWNERSHIP

- 2.55. Information on public and National Trust land ownership in the Study Area was obtained. Land ownership provides an important means of identifying opportunities for enhancing public access (see section 3)
- 2.56. Within the constraints of this study, it was not possible to obtain full data sets of land in public ownership. Data were obtained from Enfield, Sutton, Hounslow, the Corporation of London, Windsor and Maidenhead and Essex, as well as the National Trust and the Forestry Commission.
- 2.57. Mapped data are shown in **Appendix 3 Map 1**. It can be seen that of those local authorities that provided data, both Hounslow and Enfield have considerable areas in public ownership, particularly the southern part of Hounslow. Sutton has one large area in the south of the Borough. There are also notable sites within Waltham Forest (the Lee Valley, which stretches beyond the M25 into Essex) and Croydon owned by the Corporation of London. Beyond the boundaries of Greater London data were only available for sites owned by the Corporation of London (of which there are three sites in Surrey) and sites owned by Essex County Council. It can be seen that sites in Essex tend to be located on the very edge of the county boundary on the outskirts of Greater London. There are also several known sites beyond the M25 boundary in Windsor and Maidenhead.
- 2.58. National Trust land ownership is for the most part beyond the M25 outside of the wider study area, with the exception of some small sites, for example in Richmond, Hounslow, Croydon and Bromley. Outside of the M25 there are numerous sites to the south in Surrey and Kent and to the west in Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. There are far fewer sites to the north of London, with the largest sites being found near Tring in Buckinghamshire and Bishop's Stortford in Hertfordshire.
- 2.59. Most Forestry Commission owned land also lies beyond the M25 with the exception of recently acquired areas in Thames Chase.
- 2.60. Recommendations for obtaining further data on land in public ownership are set out at the end of Appendix 3.



### **3. ACCESS TO LAND IN THE GREEN BELT**

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

##### **Public open space**

- 3.1. As a world city with natural resources unparalleled in any other major conurbation (nearly 45% of the total land area of Greater London is green open space<sup>12</sup>) London is well placed to lead the way in protecting and developing networks of public open space (POS). The importance of POS is widely recognised: it plays a vital role in providing space for recreation, habitats for wildlife, connections with nature and 'green lungs' to alleviate pollution, all of which contribute to improved public health.
- 3.2. The need for POS is clearly recognised; however there are a range of issues to be addressed in terms of improving the extent and quality of POS. Many open spaces in London are in a state of decline, particularly in poorer neighbourhoods, arguably where quality POS is needed most<sup>13</sup>. Furthermore issues of social inclusion, safety and physical accessibility affect the use of POS in and around London.
- 3.3. This section considers:
  - The distribution of POS within the London Green Belt within the Study Area
  - The adequacy of provision of POS
  - Accessibility via public transport links
  - Opportunities for improved or increased access
  - Potential barriers to the use of accessible areas and potential methods for overcoming barriers.
- 3.4. 'Public open space' in this context means land to which the public can gain access without the permission of landowners or other authorities. This study addresses strategically significant areas of land within the Study Area (i.e. areas which are greater than 20ha.).

#### **METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES FOR POS**

- 3.5. There is no comprehensive data set of POS available for the study area as a whole. Therefore a range of information sources have been used, including:
  - An initial data set of POS in Greater London compiled by the GLA
  - Information held by local authorities obtained through a postal survey

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<sup>12</sup> Connecting with London's nature, the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy, 2002. (This figure excludes gardens. The figure including gardens is 60%).

<sup>13</sup> Towards London's Green Renaissance.

- National Nature Reserves (NNRs) which are all accessible (obtained from English Nature)
  - Forestry Commission freehold land which is all accessible
  - Country Parks from an OS data set
  - POS within Community Forests
  - Where other areas of POS were known to exist the relevant authorities were contacted to obtain boundaries.
- 3.6. Full details of the methodology and information sources used for determining accessible open space distribution are provided in **Appendix 3**.
- 3.7. There may be deficiencies in the data, particularly outside Greater London. Few of the County Councils keep comprehensive databases of POS and data provided by them tended to be that which overlaps with other information they hold, such as publicly owned woodland and land in local authority ownership. However, some omissions in the County Council data will evidently be picked up from the other sources listed above. A table in Appendix 3 sets out a summary of data provided for each county, including Thurrock, Slough and Windsor and Maidenhead Unitary Authorities.
- 3.8. Twelve of the 16 London boroughs responded, including the Corporation of London, with differing levels of accuracy (e.g. some described which sites were POS via telephone conversations). However, overall the data set within Greater London is thought to be reasonably comprehensive, given that the local authority survey builds on the GLA data set. Data collected for local authorities is also summarised in a Table in Appendix 3.

## **LIMITATIONS TO THE ASSESSMENT OF ACCESS TO LAND IN THE GREEN BELT**

- 3.9. There were a number of limits to the study, in addition to the issues raised regarding data availability. It was a study on accessibility of the Green Belt, rather than a study of all parks and other open spaces in London and elsewhere. Other parks and strategic spaces, such as Metropolitan Open Land, exist and contribute to the wider network of open spaces, but were not studied.
- 3.10. The study provides a broad illustration of the larger areas of POS in the Green Belt and indicates areas of deficiency; it does not consider the more local areas of POS which also have an important role to play in providing access to areas for recreation.
- 3.11. It should also be noted that the study only categorises the open space as it relates to its size and public accessibility. There is no refinement in terms of the quality of the open space or the facilities that are provided and access points, which would affect catchment sizes and areas of deficiency. The catchment areas, described below, are indicative for this reason and due to constraints of available data are not necessarily fully comprehensive.

## DISTRIBUTION & ADEQUACY OF ACCESSIBLE OPEN SPACE

- 3.12. The following paragraphs provide an overview of the provision of open space within the Green Belt in the Study Area, drawing attention to areas with good provision and areas that are deficient in accessible open space.
- 3.13. **Figures 3.1 – 3.4** show the distribution of POS in the study area, within the context of the London Green Belt. The figures use the London Plan Open Space Hierarchy<sup>14</sup> to categorise POS by size and provide indicative catchment areas based on area. The Open Space Hierarchy is as follows:

Type	Approximate Size	Indicative Catchment Area
Regional	Over 400 ha	8 km
Metropolitan	Over 60 ha	3.2 km
District	Over 20 ha	1.2 km

- 3.14. The largest sites perform a regional level function and draw people from the widest catchments. Metropolitan and district sites are also strategically important spaces, but have lesser catchment areas. The hierarchy ‘layers’ sites; in other words District sites include the larger Metropolitan and Regional sites, and similarly Metropolitan sites also include the larger Regional sites, as the larger spaces also perform a more local function. It should be noted that the Open Space Hierarchy also covers local parks (2-20 ha), small local parks (0.4 – 2 ha) and pocket parks (Less than 0.4 ha), which all have indicative catchments of 400 m. These spaces are not mapped as this study is only concerned with strategic spaces of 20 ha or greater. But it should be noted that when local authorities produce open space strategies, as required in the London Plan, these will also take into account provisions and deficiencies of these spaces, as well as the more strategic level spaces.
- 3.15. However, this approach does not take account of the fact that individual open spaces may have larger or indeed smaller catchments depending on a number of other functional criteria. The methodology recommends that local authorities undertake a more detailed assessment to identify where local circumstances such as the location of entrance gates, street patterns, the severance effects of railway lines or heavy traffic could reduce the accessibility of open spaces. Public transport accessibility will also affect the catchments of the open spaces. This study utilises the indicative catchments, and does not take into account local factors or include a detailed consideration of transport accessibility in terms of affecting catchments, although general accessibility via public transport is considered below.

<sup>14</sup> The London Plan Open Space Hierarchy provides a consistent approach to identifying broad areas of deficiency in provision.

### **POS over 400 ha**

- 3.16. There are four areas of POS within the Green Belt over 400 ha within the Study Area (**Figure 3.1**). These are located in the southern and northern parts of the study area. The central northern part of the area has the largest sites - the Lee Valley Regional Park (covering 1,600 ha) and Epping Forest (covering 2,450 ha) - which are located close together thus creating a large continuous catchment area extending through Enfield, Waltham Forest, Redbridge and into Hertfordshire and Essex. There are also two areas of POS in the south: Oaks Park in Sutton (509 ha) and Chobham Common in Surrey (516 ha). The latter site falls outside of the Study Area, beyond the M25, but its catchment extends into the southwestern part of the Study Area. The eastern and western parts of the Study Area do not have any large areas of publicly accessible land within the Green Belt. It can be seen that overall there are few large areas of POS within the Green Belt within the M25.

### **POS over 60 ha**

- 3.17. In terms of areas of POS over 60 ha within the Green Belt (**Figures 3.2**), these are fairly evenly distributed throughout the Study Area. The majority of London Boroughs which contain Green Belt land have good access to publicly accessible sites over 60 ha, as shown by the orange hatching showing indicative catchment areas. However there are some boroughs where access is not as good, for example there are no publicly accessible open spaces over 60 ha within the Green Belt in Kingston, although the southern tip of this borough benefits from a site in Surrey which abuts the southern boundary. Hillingdon contains considerable areas of Green Belt land, but only three pockets of land over 60 ha are accessible, thus leaving a deficiency in access to such sized areas in the centre of the borough. Beyond Greater London, access to sites over 60 ha within the Green Belt is more patchy. Within the Green Arc Area of Search there are only a few pockets of POS over 60 ha within Hertfordshire. In the Essex part of the Area of Search, the edge of the county abutting Greater London is better endowed with POS over 60 ha than the outer parts of the area of search.
- 3.18. Similarly the Green Belt beyond Greater London, but within the M25 in the study area is also less accessible (in terms of POS over 60 ha), particularly in Surrey around Walton on Thames and Weybridge.

### **POS over 20 ha**

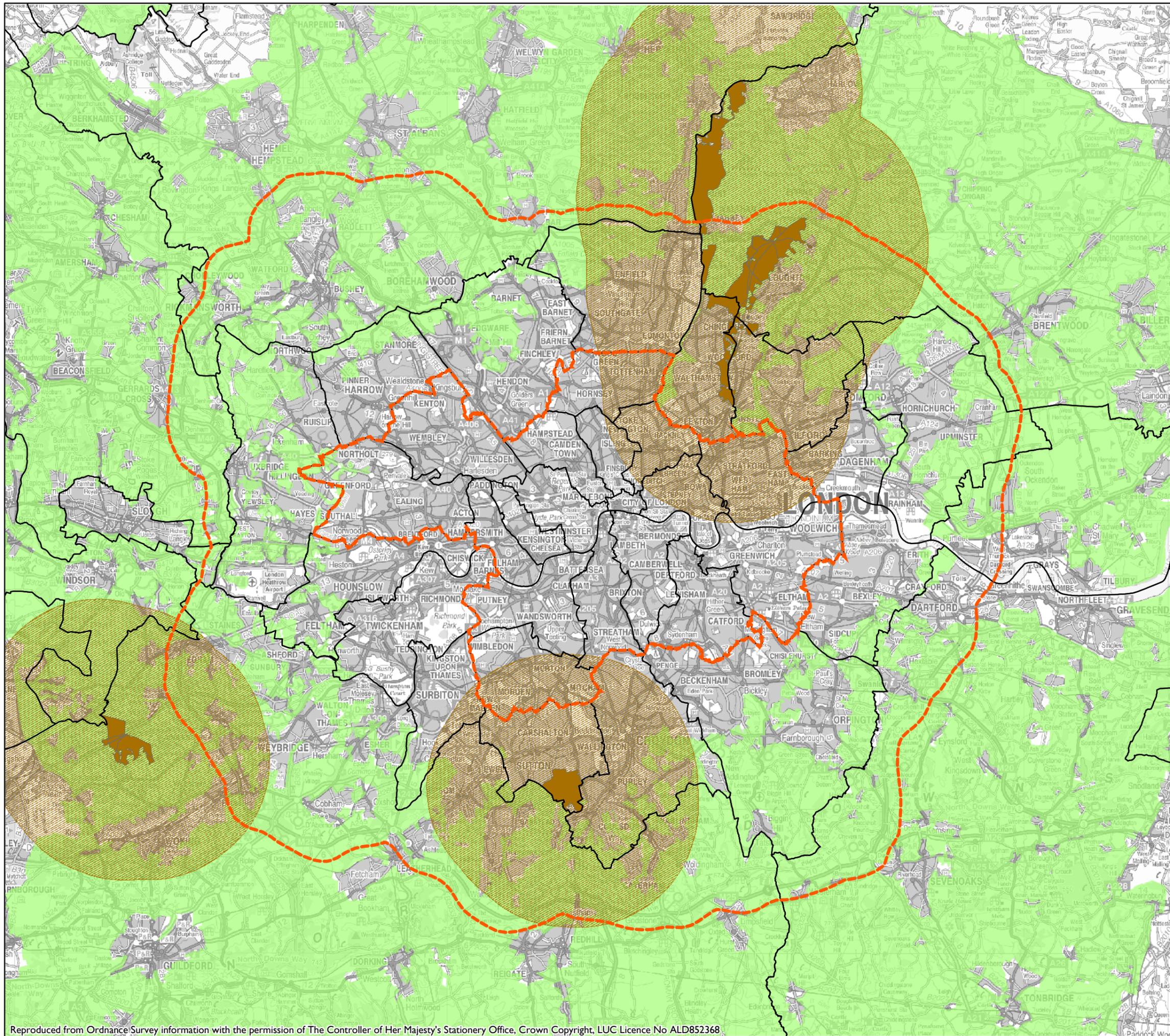
- 3.19. **Figure 3.3** shows areas of POS over 20 ha, which play a more localised function with catchments of 1.2 km, although such sites may have catchments which extend beyond borough boundaries. These sites include all the sites discussed above (i.e. over 60 and 400 ha), but smaller catchments are shown, thus indicating a more local usage. In terms of sites which play a local function, access again appears to be fairly evenly distributed, with access again being better within Greater London than beyond.
- 3.20. Some areas such as Hillingdon, which are deficient in larger sites have good access to smaller sites. Other areas which had reasonable access to sites over 60 ha have poorer access to sites over 20 ha (due to the more limited catchments used to

# GREEN ARC

Figure 3.1: Publicly Accessible Open Space over 400ha

## Key

-  Study Area
-  Counties/Boroughs
-  Green Belt
-  Accessible open space over 400ha
-  Indicative catchment area (8km)



Source: Ordnance Survey, GLA, Forestry Commission, English Nature, Buckinghamshire CC, Essex CC, Hertfordshire CC, Slough UA, Thurrock UA, Windsor & Maidenhead UA and the London Boroughs of: Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Croydon, Enfield, Harrow, Havering, Hounslow, Kingston-upon-Thames, Sutton and Waltham Forest

0 2.5 5 10 Kilometre

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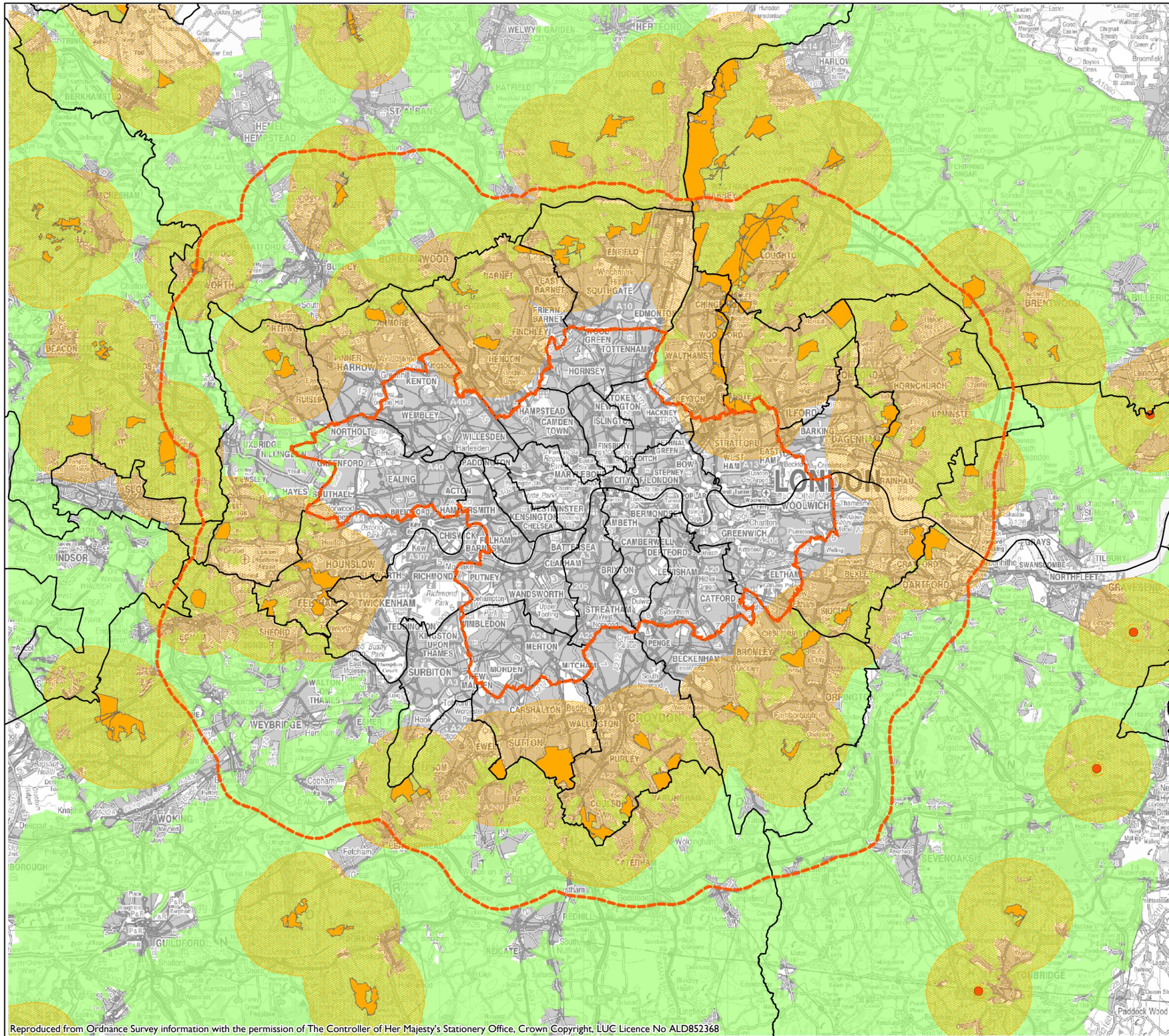


# GREEN ARC

Figure 3.2: Publicly Accessible Open Space over 60ha

## Key

-  Study Area
-  Counties/Boroughs
-  Green Belt
-  Accessible Open Space over 60ha (no Boundary info)
-  Accessible open space over 60ha
-  Indicative catchment area (3.2km)



Source: Ordnance Survey, GLA, Forestry Commission, English Nature, Buckinghamshire CC, Essex CC, Hertfordshire CC, Slough UA, Thurrock UA, Windsor & Maidenhead UA and the London Boroughs of: Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Croydon, Enfield, Harrow, Havering, Hounslow, Kingston-upon-Thames, Sutton and Waltham Forest

0 2.5 5 10 Kilometres

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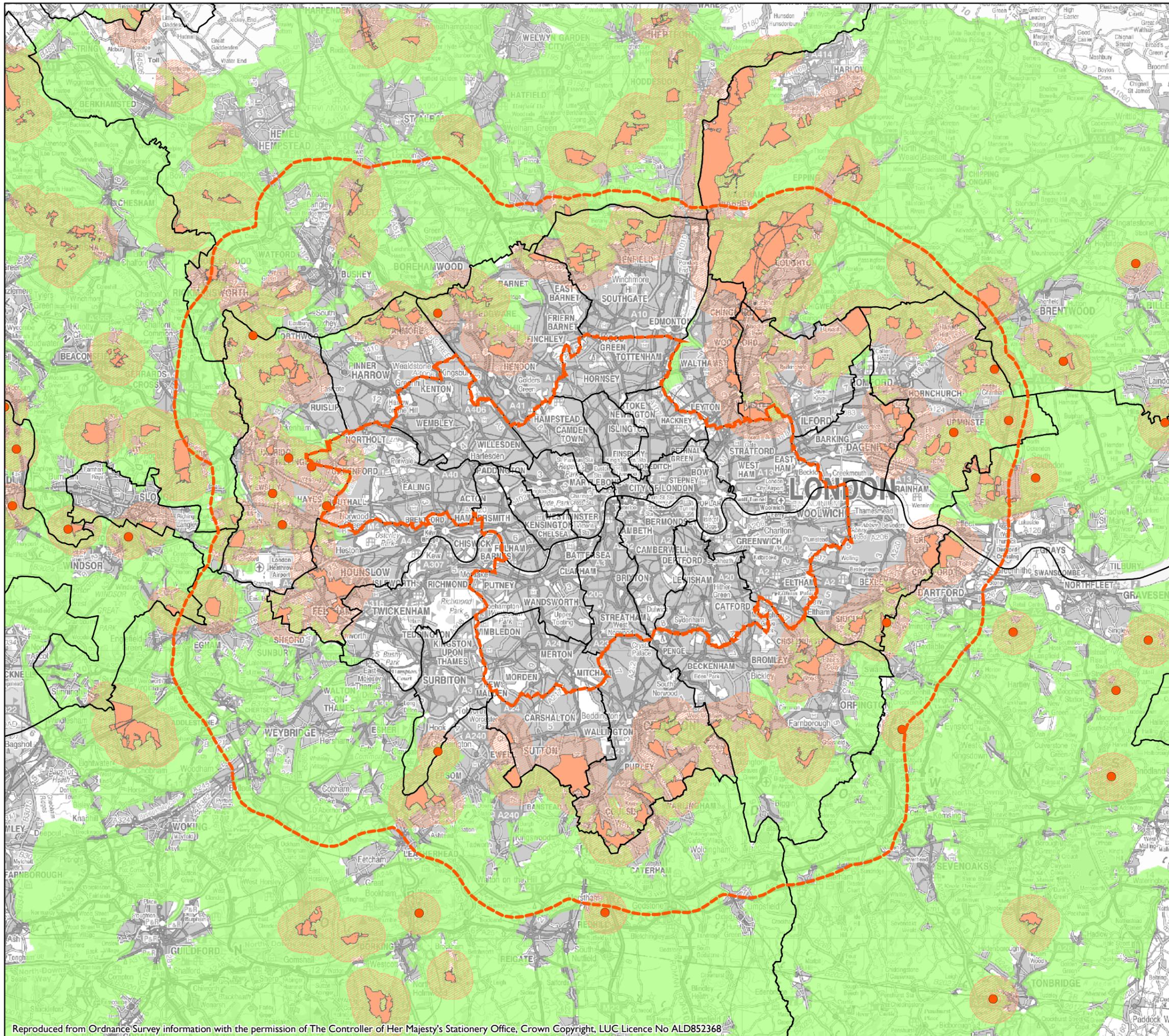


# GREEN ARC

Figure 3.3: Publicly Accessible Open Space over 20ha

## Key

-  Study Area
-  Counties/Boroughs
-  Green Belt
-  Accessible Open Space over 20ha (no Boundary info)
-  Accessible open space over 20ha
-  Indicative catchment area (1.2km)



Source: Ordnance Survey, GLA, Forestry Commission, English Nature, Buckinghamshire CC, Essex CC, Hertfordshire CC, Slough UA, Thurrock UA, Windsor & Maidenhead UA and the London Boroughs of: Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Croydon, Enfield, Harrow, Havering, Hounslow, Kingston-upon-Thames, Sutton and Waltham Forest



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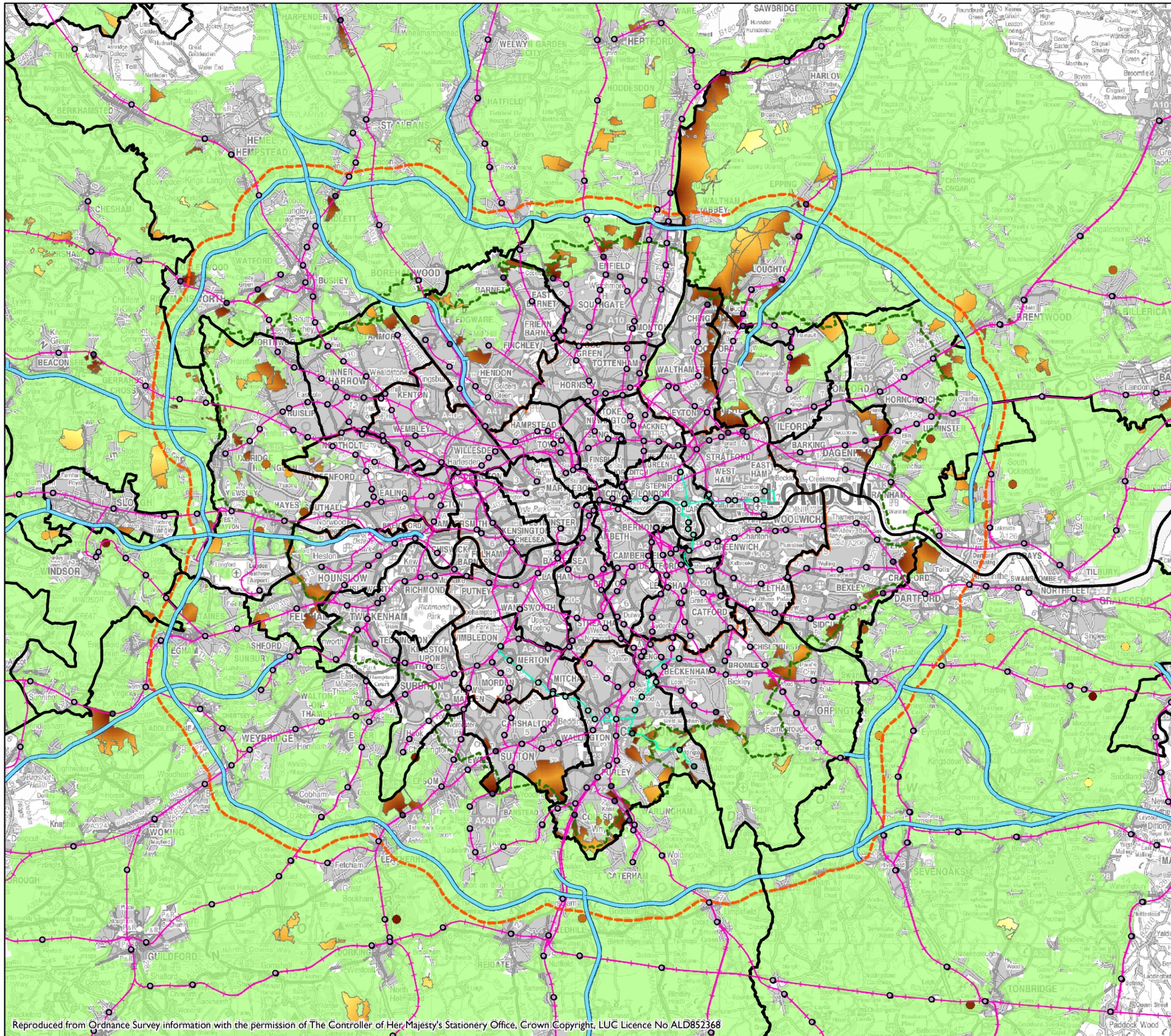
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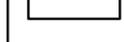
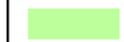


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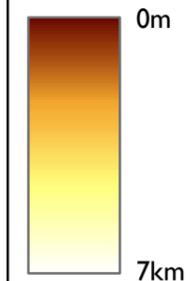
Figure 3.4: All Publicly Accessible Open Space and Transport Connections



## Key

-  Study Area
-  Motorway
-  Counties/Boroughs
-  Railway
-  Rapid transit line
-  Rail station within 400m of Accessible Open Space
-  Other rail station
-  Rapid transit station within 400m of Accessible Open Space
-  Other rapid transit station
-  London Loop walking trail
-  Green Belt

Accessible Open Space (shaded by distance to rail/rapid transit station)



 Accessible Open Space (no boundary info, shaded as above)

Rapid transit lines include the South London Tram network and the Docklands Light Railway

Source: Ordnance Survey, GLA, Forestry Commission, English Nature, Buckinghamshire CC, Essex CC, Hertfordshire CC, Slough UA, Thurrock UA, Windsor & Maidenhead UA and the London Boroughs of: Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Croydon, Enfield, Harrow, Havering, Hounslow, Kingston-upon-Thames, Sutton and Waltham Forest



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measure access to sites over 20 ha). This is the case, for example, in Bromley. Again, the Green Belt in Surrey around Walton on Thames and Weybridge is inaccessible. The Green Belt to the south of Sutton, Croydon and Bromley is also largely inaccessible. There are also only small pockets of accessible Green Belt land in Hertfordshire within the Green Arc Area of Search, and within Essex accessibility to sites over 20 ha decreases as one moves away from Greater London.

- 3.21. Recommendations for obtaining further data on POS are set out at the end of Appendix 3.

## **ACCESSIBILITY BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

- 3.22. Accessibility of open space via public transport is particularly important, as public transport offers a more sustainable and socially inclusive means of accessing open space. London's rail network is primarily focussed on radial links (see **Figure 3.4**), especially as one moves out towards the M25, and transport connections are more extensive in the western half of the city (i.e. the north western and south western quartiles). The London Underground is a very important transport network in London, which in many cases extends out into the Green Belt, sometimes beyond the M25. For example, the Central Line extends to Epping in the north east, and the Metropolitan Line extends to Chesham and Amersham in the north west.
- 3.23. Radial routes are very important for accessing the Green Belt and there are a number of areas where rail links serve accessible open space well with stations near to a block of Green Belt providing a gateway to that area. **Figure 3.4** shows stations within 400 m of areas of POS i.e. approximately a five minute walk away, it also shows distance of POS from a station. This information is indicative only and only takes into account proximity rather than actual links on the ground. Therefore there may be barriers to access from stations to POS, for example, motorways, lack of information or lack of access points into the POS. As one would expect the pattern of accessibility to POS by rail is mixed. Some sites are within 400 m of a railway station, but many are not. As one would expect sites within Greater London are more likely to be accessible by rail, given the denser rail network. For example, many of the sites within the Green Belt in the south of Croydon are accessible by rail, and sites in the eastern part of Croydon are well served by a rapid transit line. However, many sites are poorly served by rail, for example many sites in Bromley and Bexley are not well served. Epping Forest and the Lea Valley, the two largest areas of POS within the study area, are both well served by several railway stations.
- 3.24. Public Transport Accessibility Levels (PTALs) which provide a detailed and accurate measure of the accessibility of a point to the public transport network, taking into account walk access time and service availability provide a means of measuring the density of the public transport network at a particular point. The GLA has produced a map to show the accessibility of a series of points throughout Greater London (**Figure 3.5**), but it should be noted that this does not cover the wider study area. Whilst the points are not specifically centred on open spaces the map provides a broad indication of accessibility. It is also important to note that the PTAL scores are based on peak times, so areas may be less accessible at other times, and the methodology also does not measure 'accessibility through the network' i.e. time to

- get from a given location to other locations. It can be seen from Figure 3.5 that the density of the public transport network decreases towards urban fringe, thus signifying decreasing accessibility, with pockets of high accessibility centred on some suburban centres, such as Croydon and Barking.
- 3.25. Walking and cycling routes also provide access to POS in the Green Belt. For example, the London Loop initiative, which is a walking route linking areas of POS (see Figure 3.4) provides access to many sites, for example, in the north of London it links sites in Enfield to parts of the Lea Valley and Epping Forest. Another example of an important walking and cycling path is the Lee Valley Pathway within the Lee Valley Regional Park, which is 30% complete. It is described as a key strategic development project providing important linkages between major sites and attractions down the eastern side of the Valley. Such is its wider strategic importance that it will form Route One of the National Cycle Network promoted by Sustrans. Such routes provide access to sites and also the paths and routes through the land 'borrow' the open space, even if it is private, adding to the enjoyment and experience.
  - 3.26. However, in many cases the links between transport nodes and accessible open space are poor. There are opportunities for public transport nodes to act as gateways into the Green Belt. The London Loop initiative is seeking to improve such links. The Colne Valley Regional Park in the Thames Valley is a good example of an area where efforts have been made to publicise walking routes linked to local railway stations, thus improving perceived accessibility of the Park.
  - 3.27. Typically roads also follow a radial route out of central London towards and through the Green Belt. The key arterial routes are the A1, A2, A3, A14, A10, A11, A12, A13 and A20, which all connect the city to the Green Belt. As one moves out towards the urban fringe there are several urban centres in their own right, such as Watford in the north west, and Croydon to the south, which are similarly the focus for radial transport links.
  - 3.28. As with the rail network, typically the network of 'A' roads in London is more extensive in the western half of the city, spanning the area from north London through west London to the south. In contrast, the road network is less well connected to the north east and, perhaps to a lesser extent, the south east of London. For example, areas around Romford in the north east and Biggin Hill in the south east, are less well connected than areas of a similar size elsewhere. Transport links from outside London are also important, as quality areas of POS e.g. Country Parks, are also visited by people from outside of London.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVED ACCESS**

- 3.29. There are considerable opportunities to increase the amount of accessible Green Belt land generally and to link fragmented areas of POS, by both public transport and walking and cycling routes. There may also be opportunities to link different forms of public transport where rail links only go so far. The East London Green Grid is a major initiative occurring in the eastern part of the study area, seeking to improve the distribution of and access to POS. Consultants are currently mapping the baseline of the area to identify constraints and opportunities for providing POS.

# GREEN ARC

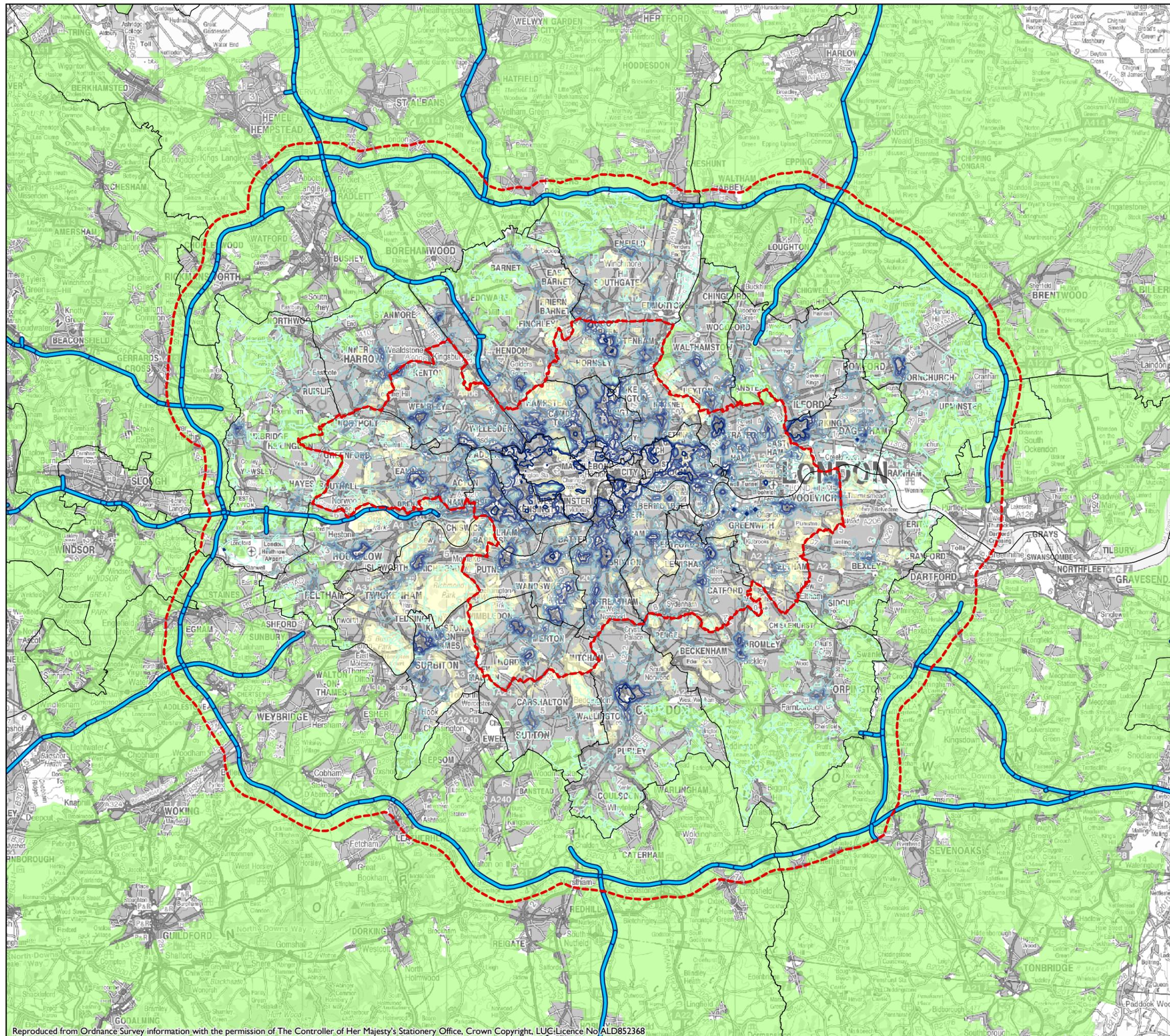
## Figure 3.5: Access to Public Transport (PTALs)

### Key

-  Study Area
-  Motorway
-  County/Borough/Unitary Authority
-  Metropolitan Open Land
-  Green Belt

### PTAL

-  1
-  2
-  3
-  4
-  5
-  6



Source:  
GLA

0 2.5 5 10 Kilometres



File ref: T:\Gis\3100\3141-01\_green\_arc\Themes\ArcGIS8-21\Stage\_3\february-04\3141-01\_fig\_9\_PTALs\_feb-04.mxd

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Fax: 020 7383 4798  
www.landuse.co.uk





- 3.30. The Colne Valley Regional Park is a good example of where networks have been created to join together fragments of open space and to create a clear public image. In many cases it is not possible to unite fragments of open space into a single open space, and instead networks, either physical including cycle tracks, or metaphysical through the creation of a single identity and strategy must be created to link up disparate sites. In the Colne Valley bridleways, cycleways and walking routes have been created, providing a network linking open spaces, and derelict land has also been restored to create a larger area of open space. The Park's name is slowly gaining recognition and it is being seen as a single area of open space. Signed and mapped routes have been defined, many linked to local railway stations, thus improving access to the Park.
- 3.31. Data on land ownership may help to further inform areas of opportunity (public sector land that is currently not accessible is likely to offer opportunities).

## **BARRIERS TO USE OF OPEN SPACE**

- 3.32. It is widely recognised that some open spaces are underused and that some social groups are less likely to partake in recreation in open spaces than others, both within urban areas and beyond. Barriers to access of open spaces include both physical and cultural barriers. These are dealt with in turn below.

### **Physical barriers to use**

- 3.33. Some spaces may be underused generally, or by some social groups in particular. Physical barriers to access may include poor accessibility by public transport, and severance by busy roads and difficult access arrangements (for example infrequent or poorly located access points), are also cited as potential barriers to access<sup>15</sup>. Another physical barrier to access may be the poor conditions of rights of way: according to the Countryside Agency on average there is an obstruction every 2 km along rights of way throughout England. This is likely to be a greater issue in rural areas where access through private land may be more important, compared to access to open spaces in more urban areas. However, the outer London Boroughs and counties are preparing Rights of Way Improvement Plans so this form of physical barrier should not be such a key issue in the Study Area.

### **Economic barriers to use**

- 3.34. There are also a number of economic barriers to use of POS. POS which has poor accessibility by public transport will evidently affect poorer social groups more, including ethnic minorities who tend to fall within the poorer end of society. This is likely to be a particularly significant issue for access to the wider countryside, rather than sites in urban areas, as public transport links to these sites are considerably poorer. Some areas of open space are not publicly accessible and require a fee to be paid for access, such as golf courses, some National Trust sites, which also imposes an economic barrier to access which will affect poorer social groups

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<sup>15</sup> Mayors Biodiversity Strategy

disproportionately. Some such sites are also likely to present barriers to use due to the 'exclusive' feel of the sites e.g. golf clubs.

### **Cultural barriers to use**

- 3.35. There is a wide body of research around social inclusion and exclusion in countryside recreation, and cultural barriers to access. Much of this research considers access to the wider countryside, and is perhaps not always applicable to access to open spaces in more urban areas. Nevertheless many similar factors can be seen to be at work in terms of access to the wider countryside and open spaces close to or within urban areas.
- 3.36. A report prepared for The Countryside Recreation Network<sup>16</sup> takes a wide-ranging look at social exclusion in countryside leisure in the United Kingdom. This study identifies four groups whose participation rates in countryside recreation are low: young people, low-income groups, ethnic minorities, and disabled people. However, it concluded that one should not assume that all members of such groups are excluded, and highlighted the differences between exclusion and non-participation. For example, affluent young people may choose not to participate in countryside recreation, and here the problem is less one of exclusion and more one of designing more attractive leisure products to better match their leisure preferences. However, when lower income groups desire access to the countryside, but are excluded by limited resources, or when ethnic minorities feel uncomfortable in a distinctly 'British Countryside', and when little is done to meet the needs of disabled users, then forces of social exclusion may be manifest. There is compelling evidence of low participation rates amongst ethnic minorities, poorer socio-economic groups and an inference that disabled and ethnic minorities may feel stigmatised in their use of the countryside.
- 3.37. Considerable research has been undertaken into lack of participation in countryside recreation amongst ethnic minorities, for example research carried out by the Countryside Agency and Black Environment Network<sup>17</sup>. It has found that ethnic minorities may not partake in countryside recreation for a number of reasons, for example due to feeling stigmatised or feeling they are not 'entitled', the cost of some activities, a lack of information, a lack of familiarity beyond urban edge, language barriers, and cultural dispositions.
- 3.38. The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy notes a number of reasons why people may not visit wildlife sites within London. These include perceived or real vulnerability to attack, exposure to anti-social behaviour or harassment once within the open space (particularly likely to be felt amongst women, elderly people and people from ethnic minorities). Parental fears over 'stranger danger' has also been found to restrict

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<sup>16</sup> Social Exclusion in Countryside Leisure in the United Kingdom: The role of the countryside in addressing social exclusion: A report for the Countryside Recreation Network (September 2001).

<sup>17</sup> The Countryside Agency and Black Environment Network (September 2003) Capturing Richness: Countryside visits by black and ethnic minority communities

- children's use of open spaces. A MORI poll for the GLA found that the majority of women would not let their children play in open spaces or parks unsupervised<sup>18</sup>.
- 3.39. Several other factors also contribute to under use, including inadequate offer and a lack of a clear sense of place. Poor information may also result in under use. These factors are likely to be particularly relevant for less well defined sites within the Green Belt as compared with more defined and recognisable sites in more urban areas. It must also be noted that in some cases under use may be due to a lack of desire.

## **OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO USE**

- 3.40. Physical barriers to access are perhaps more easily identifiable, which is one aim of the open space strategies to be prepared by local authorities as required by the London Plan, and solutions may be more readily evident, for example, increasing the number of access points or moving access points to more accessible parts of the open space boundary.
- 3.41. In many cases 'the offer' of the Green Belt may be considered to be insufficient to draw people to the Green Belt. This may be a perceived or real deficiency, for example in terms of the quality of open spaces or the facilities available, such as parking, refreshments, amenities, etc. Typically sites in the Green Belt fail to compete well with other attractions, which may be down to offer or information. For example, attractions such as Leeds Castle are widely advertised, recognised and visited. Therefore better and more comprehensive and coherent information on access to Green Belt sites is vital to improve access. The Colne Valley Regional Park is a good example of how the profile of an area can be raised and physical access and linkages improved.
- 3.42. Several studies note the importance of working with the voluntary sector and other partners to address key barriers. Work undertaken by Groundwork in urban areas has found that partnership working and community engagement can be key to creating a sense of ownership and pride in a space, contributing towards a site's long term sustainability and with wider benefits, such as reducing the fear of crime. For example provision of youth facilities in open spaces in areas lacking such facilities can help to overcome vandalism, graffiti and other anti-social behaviour. In terms of access to the wider countryside partnership working is also vital. For example, the Countryside Agency's publication 'Capturing Richness: Countryside visits by black and ethnic minority communities' outlines a range of projects which are operating with different ethnic groups to help them access the wider countryside.
- 3.43. Work by the Countryside Recreation Network looking at social exclusion in countryside leisure in the United Kingdom considered a range of diverse initiatives seeking to combine social inclusion and countryside recreation. Projects included in this study ranged from those in urban areas, for example, the PACE Project in Croydon, which sought to increase access to urban green spaces by ethnic minorities and disabled people in the borough, to schemes seeking to encourage wider

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<sup>18</sup> Women in London – Research into the attitudes of women in London to policy and service delivery, November 2003, Mayor of London

countryside recreation, for example the NT Inner City Project in Newcastle upon Tyne, which is seeking to develop awareness and interest in the environment and countryside amongst young people. Several features contributing to the success of such initiatives were identified. It was found that the most successful initiatives:

- Are community driven
- Have empowerment as an objective
- Have social cohesion as an objective
- Promote partnerships
- Have 'outreach' as opposed to just 'countryside' staff
- Use effective marketing.

3.44. The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy, in relation to access to wildlife sites within London, notes that landscape design and management can do much to promote visitors' confidence and improve safety and security and reduce the fear of crime. Clear zoning of facilities to define the most used and therefore safest areas, presence of park rangers and organisation of open days and guided walks can all improve confidence of potential users of open spaces. Better accessibility to wheelchairs and pushchairs and people with other mobility problems is also important.

## 4. POLICY CONTEXT

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### INTRODUCTION

- 4.1. This section sets out the policy context for land in the Study Area. It starts with a discussion of Green Belt policy, and goes on to look at policy for the countryside, biodiversity and nature conservation, and finally the open space policy context.

### GREEN BELTS

- 4.2. Green Belt is the most well known and widely supported planning policy in the UK. It is also recognised internationally as a successful means of containing the spread of cities and towns. Covering around 5,000 km<sup>2</sup>, London's Green Belt represents about one third of Green Belt land in England – an area equivalent to that of Hertfordshire and Essex combined, or one quarter of Wales.
- 4.3. Current policy on Green Belts is set out in PPG2 *Green Belts*, which outlines the principal purposes of Green Belts as follows:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
  - To prevent neighbouring towns from 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.
- 4.4. The Mayor's London Plan endorses these purposes for the London Green Belt.
- 4.5. However, the draft Regional Planning Guidance for the East of England indicates that the key dilemma for the strategy is the protection of Green Belt areas versus the need to allow sustainable development in key London fringe towns and to redress unsustainable commuting patterns by creating a closer relationship between homes and jobs. The strategy proposes selective Green Belt reviews around key towns, primarily those with regeneration needs and/or offering the greatest potential for sustainable development, based on public transport and management of travel demand.
- 4.6. In addition to the formal purposes of Green Belts, PPG 2 indicates that land designated as Green Belt also has a role to play in meeting a number of positive objectives, although its ability to perform them is not itself material to the inclusion of land in the Green Belt.
- 4.7. These positive objectives are:
- Providing opportunities for access to the open countryside for the urban population

- Providing opportunities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation near urban areas
- Retaining attractive landscapes, and enhancing landscapes, near to where people live
- Improving damaged and derelict land around towns
- Securing nature conservation interest
- Retaining land in agricultural, forestry and related use.

### **Origins of Green Belts**

- 4.8. The principle of maintaining a ring of open country around London can be traced back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The prevention of the spread of the plague was a key reason, and it was also valued as a source of food for the metropolis.
- 4.9. Ebenezer Howard, the pioneer of British planning envisaged a *'rural belt around a town as providing an attractive setting in which a town could develop and which would maintain, close at hand, the fresh delights of the countryside – field, hedgerow and woodland'*<sup>19</sup>.
- 4.10. The Greater London Regional Planning Committee adopted a policy to establish the London Green Belt, the first in the country, in 1935. In the absence of planning controls, it was necessary to purchase land to ensure its protection<sup>20</sup>.
- 4.11. The 1943 County of London Plan, produced by Forshaw and Abercrombie, established two main objectives for the Green Belt: restriction of urban growth; and provision of recreation as a primary use of the land. Beyond the Green Belt, they proposed an 'Outer Country Ring'. This distinction between the Green Belt and the countryside beyond implied a more managed approach to the Green Belt for the benefit of Londoners.
- 4.12. The first official guidance on the establishment of Green Belts (Circular 42/55 *Green Belts*), however, failed to recognise the amenity and public health functions of Green Belts and the opportunities they could provide for informal recreation.
- 4.13. In the London context, this was addressed in part by the 1976 Greater London Development Plan, which stated that in addition to defining the built up area, the Green Belt provides *'an area where recreational activities can take place. At the same time it plays an important role in the retention of attractive landscapes on London's fringes'*.
- 4.14. Guidance on Green Belts published by the Department of the Environment in 1988 added *'safeguarding the surrounding countryside from further encroachment to'* Green Belt purposes. This was the first reference to a rural objective for Green Belts, the previous objectives being oriented towards the urban area. Subsequently PPG 2 referred to Green Belts amongst policies with *'conservation and enhancement as their common flavour'*. As noted above, PPG 2 also emphasises the positive environmental role that Green Belts can play, as well as serving their main purposes.

<sup>19</sup> *Tomorrow: a Peaceful Path to Real Reform* Ebenezer Howard, 1898

<sup>20</sup> The London and Home Counties (Green Belt) Act, 1938, provided the legal mechanism for land purchase

## Green Belts and Sustainable Development

- 4.15. Most commentators agree that the Green Belt has been successful in achieving its main purpose: to control the spread of London and avoid coalescence with neighbouring towns. There is some concern in some quarters, however, about the principle of Green Belts in the context of sustainable development. Such concerns relate to the implications of continued restriction on development in Green Belts, in terms of amongst other things, increased land costs, diversion of development into deeper countryside, increases in travel and CO<sup>2</sup> emissions, and an inability to allow growth where needed<sup>21</sup>.
- 4.16. Although a longstanding supporter of Green Belts, the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) has highlighted three reasons to justify reviewing current Green Belt policy<sup>22</sup>:
- Green Belt Policy has failed to keep up to speed with the changing planning policy agenda in recent years;
  - The public perception of Green Belts, and their role and purpose, increasingly is removed from the realities; and
  - There are often conflicting aims in the application of green belt policy.
- 4.17. In seeking to modernise Green Belt policy the RTPI advocates the need for a universal strategic role for Green Belts, which forms an integral part of the (regional) settlement strategy with the over riding principle being an effective spatial planning tool. Emphasis should be placed on policy being stated in terms of key principles to be satisfied, moving towards a plan-led approach to development control in Green Belts.
- 4.18. The Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA), also a supporter of Green Belts, shares many of the RTPI's views with regard to the modernising of Green Belts<sup>23</sup>.
- 4.19. A recent pamphlet produced by the think-tank Politeia suggests that it would be better to build the houses that are needed in London and the South-East where people want them, rather than in growth areas up to 70 miles from London. It asks *'is it really sensible that every field close to London, even if it is bordered by Tube tracks or motorways, should be sacrosanct, when further out farmland is being covered with housing for commuters, many of whom will travel back into the city?'*
- 4.20. The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), on the other hand, argues that we need more and stronger Green Belts. It suggests that, with the twin commitments of protecting the countryside and promoting an urban renaissance now shared across the political spectrum Green Belts should be coming of age, not defending their corner<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> *The Effectiveness of Green Belts*, Department of the Environment, 1993

<sup>22</sup> *Modernising Green Belts-a discussion paper* Royal Town Planning Institute, 2002

<sup>23</sup> *Green Belts – TCPA Position Statement* Town and Country Planning Association, 2002

<sup>24</sup> *Green Belts ... still working ... still under threat*, CPRE, 2001

- 4.21. The Government has yet to respond formally to the pressures to change Green Belt policy. It is anticipated, however, that PPG 2 will be revised as a PPS as part of the overall review of PPGs.

## **COUNTRYSIDE AROUND TOWNS**

- 4.22. Planning Policy Guidance 7 *The Countryside – Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development* indicates that the urban fringe requires a 'positive approach to planning and management, aimed at securing environmental improvement and beneficial use of land, reducing conflicts between neighbouring land uses, improving public access, and catering for appropriate leisure and recreation facilities so as to reduce pressure on the wider countryside and reduce the need to travel' (para 3.24).
- 4.23. Similar guidance is provided in draft PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, which will replace PPG7. It also adds that planning authorities should support country parks and community forests and facilitate the provision of sport and recreation facilities.
- 4.24. The current draft of RPG 14 indicates that Planning authorities and other agencies in their plans, policies and programmes should seek to, amongst other things:
- Conserve and enhance the natural, historic and built environment by positive management and protect it from development likely to cause harm
  - Adopt an approach that integrates protection and enhancement of nationally and internationally designated areas while meeting the social and economic needs of local communities
  - Protect, for their own sake, all important aspects of the countryside, including individual features, special sites and the wider landscape
  - Conserve and enhance, whenever possible, regional and local distinctiveness and variety, based on a thorough assessment of local character, scrutinised in depth through the development plan system
  - Promote a sustainable approach to the use of the region's natural resources
  - Secure effective protection of the environment by considering the nature and location of proposed development as part of a broadly based concern for and awareness of biodiversity and other environmental issues, including light and noise pollution
  - Restore damaged and lost environmental features whenever possible; and adopt a common approach to environmental issues which cross local planning authority boundaries.
- 4.25. Specifically with respect to the urban fringe, draft RPG 14 indicates that local authorities, developers and other agencies should work together to secure the enhancement, effective management and appropriate use of land in the urban fringe through formulating and implementing strategies for urban fringe areas, where appropriate, at sub-regional scale.

## BIODIVERSITY

- 4.26. PPG 9 (Nature Conservation) sets out the Government’s objectives for nature conservation in relation to land use planning including the need to ‘ensure policies contribute to the conservation of the abundance and diversity of British wildlife and it’s habitats’. Paragraph 19 stipulates that nature conservation objectives should be taken into account “in urban areas where there is wildlife of local importance”. This stipulation is likely to apply especially to the urban fringe.
- 4.27. Policy ENV3 of the draft RPG indicates the region’s biodiversity, earth heritage and natural resources will be protected and enriched through conservation, restoration and reestablishment of key resources by, amongst other things:
- Promoting the restoration and re-establishment of habitats and species populations in accordance with the national and East of England Regional Biodiversity Targets
  - Identifying and safeguarding areas for habitat restoration and reestablishment, in particular for large-scale (greater than 200 ha) habitat restoration which bring associated social and economic benefits
  - Ensuring the appropriate management and further expansion of wildlife corridors that are important for the migration and dispersal of wildlife
  - Establishing networks of semi-natural green spaces in built up areas as part of the process of developing more sustainable, safer, secure and attractive urban and built forms; and
  - Ensuring that all new development minimises any damage to the biodiversity and earth heritage resource and, where possible, enhances it.
- 4.28. The London Plan emphasises the importance of conservation and the enhancement of the natural environment within the capital, particularly in relation to biodiversity and contains several policies in relation to biodiversity, habitat and species. The Plan states that Green Belt land should provide Londoners with a variety of benefits including protection and promotion of biodiversity (para 3.247). The Plan notes that ‘the Mayor expects the biodiversity and natural heritage of London to be conserved and enhanced for the benefit of this and future generations’ (para 3.258). The Plan recognises the potential for biodiversity and wildlife areas to provide access to natural green spaces, and notes that wherever appropriate new development should include new or enhanced habitats and promote biodiversity (para 3.260).
- 4.29. The Plan highlights the importance of linkages in the greenspace network in facilitating the movement of plant and animal species within the urban area. Policy 3D.7 says the Mayor will work with Boroughs and other partners to promote London’s network of open space and to protect their many benefits including those associated with biodiversity. London’s waterways also act as an important conduit for plants and animals and Policy 4C.3 stipulates the Mayor will, and borough should, protect and enhance the biodiversity of the Blue Ribbon Network in a number of ways, including resisting development that results in a net loss of biodiversity.

4.30. The Plan also cross-references to the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy, a key aspect of which is to ensure that all Londoners have ready access to wildlife and natural green spaces.

## **OPEN SPACE**

4.31. The current draft of RPG 14 indicates that Local Development Documents should:

- Provide connected and substantial networks of accessible multi-functional green space, in urban, urban fringe and adjacent countryside areas to service the new communities in the sub-region by 2021
- Have a multiple hierarchy of provision of green infrastructure, in terms of location, function, size and levels of use, at every spatial scale and all geographic areas of the region
- Provide and safeguard green infrastructure based on the analysis of existing natural, historic, cultural and landscape assets, provided by characterisation assessments, and the identification of new assets required to deliver green infrastructure
- Identify Biodiversity Conservation Areas and Biodiversity Enhancement Areas to deliver large-scale habitat enhancement for the benefit of wildlife and people.

4.32. Sustainable development is a key strand running through the London Plan. The Plan notes that open spaces should be '*protected and enhanced so that growth can benefit the city's breathing spaces*' (p. 5 para 21). The Plan sets out how the Mayor will work with boroughs and other partners to protect and promote London's network of open space. Policy 3D.10 sets out that UDP policies should identify broad areas of public open space deficiency and priorities for addressing them. The Plan also places emphasis on individual local authorities to develop open space strategies. The strategic efforts by the GLA (which this study will feed into) and efforts at local authority level will lead to a clear definition of where there is a deficit of open space across the capital, requirements for improvements and where opportunities lie to provide new sites.

4.33. The importance given to conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, particularly in relation to biodiversity, is also evident throughout the plan. The Plan contains several policies in relation to biodiversity, habitat and species. The Plan notes that 'the Mayor expects the biodiversity and natural heritage of London to be conserved and enhanced for the benefit of this and future generations'. The Plan recognises the potential for biodiversity and wildlife areas to provide access to natural green spaces, and notes that wherever appropriate new development should include new or enhanced habitats and promote biodiversity.

4.34. The London Plan cross refers to the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy, a key aspect of which is to ensure that all Londoners have ready access to wildlife and natural green spaces.

## 5. GREEN BELT OBJECTIVES AND ASPIRATIONS

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- 5.1. Whilst not questioning the principle and main purposes of Green Belts, the statutory environmental agencies and other organisations have focused attention on achieving the positive objectives for the Green Belt (referred to in section 4). In addition to these positive objectives, this study has revealed a range of 'other aspirations' for Green Belts. The Countryside Agency and Groundwork are currently consulting on a vision and strategy for the urban fringe, which indicates that the potential of the urban fringe far outweighs the challenges and costs<sup>25</sup>.
- 5.2. This section elaborates on the positive objectives for the Green Belt, in terms of the aspirations of key stakeholders. It also refers to other opportunities in the Green Belt to which the Steering Group and other stakeholders have referred.

### GREEN BELT OBJECTIVES

#### Providing access for informal recreation

- 5.3. With the increasing intensification of urban areas and the loss of open space, including playing fields, the Green Belt can play a very significant role in providing space for informal recreation activities, such as cycling, walking and picnicking. The Countryside Agency's aim is to create networks of new and improved parks, accessible woodlands and other green spaces that are joined up to form continuous green corridors between town and country. The public health benefits of such aims are widely recognised (see below).
- 5.4. Section 3 of this report considers in detail the accessibility of the Green Belt to the urban population. It outlines the spatial distribution of publicly accessible open space throughout the Study Area and the accessibility by public transport. There are extensive areas of publicly accessible open space throughout the study area, although many are not easily accessible by public transport.
- 5.5. The research highlights a number of barriers that may reduce people's use of such spaces. These range from physical barriers, such as severance by busy roads, to cultural barriers, for example ethnic minorities may not feel welcome in some areas. There are also issues surrounding the 'offer' of the Green Belt, which in some cases is perceived to be insufficient to attract people to open spaces within it. This relates to the provision and quality of facilities such as car parks and cafes.

#### Providing opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation

- 5.6. As with informal recreation, the Green Belt offers significant opportunities for formal sport and recreation. Facilities for outdoor sport and recreation are generally located towards the inner boundary of London's Green Belt, close to the urban population.

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<sup>25</sup> *Unlocking the potential of the rural urban fringe*, Countryside Agency/Groundwork, 2004

### **Conserving and enhancing landscapes**

- 5.7. As noted in section 2, there is evidence that, between 1949 and 1991, the landscape character of the Green Belt changed significantly and that, with the exception of an increase in woodland, the changes are likely to be perceived as a deterioration in the quality of the landscape.
- 5.8. On the other hand there are notable examples of landscape enhancement initiatives in the Green Belt, for example the Community Forest programme has been particularly successful. Section 7 and **Appendix 2** provide a summary of key strategic existing initiatives.

### **Improving damaged and derelict land**

- 5.9. The focus of many environmental initiatives has been on securing improvement to damaged and derelict land in the Green Belt. The most successful initiatives in this respect, however, have been those resulting from 'enabling development'. Typically, this involves removing a portion of land from the Green Belt in order to generate funds for restoration of a wider area. Bedfont Lakes, near Feltham in west London's Green Belt for example, is a 100 hectare site formerly used for gravel extraction and tipping. It was restored and opened for public access by means of a Section 106 Agreement related to around 20ha of mixed commercial and industrial development.
- 5.10. Several examples of successful improvements of damaged and derelict land have taken place in the Lee Valley Regional Park, using various funding sources. For example, disused filter beds in Leyton are being sensitively redeveloped, with financial assistance from London's Waterway Partnership and Groundwork Hackney, to provide the public with the opportunity to experience the wildlife and industrial archaeology of the site. Similarly a former Royal Ordnance site at Waltham Abbey, which had been derelict and closed for many years, is being redeveloped as a public open space. The site has undergone extensive remedial and soil amelioration work. In addition to providing informal outdoor recreation, it will also be of significant nature conservation value.

### **Securing nature conservation interest**

- 5.11. There is an increasing range of support mechanisms, such as agri-environment schemes (e.g. Countryside Stewardship) and forestry schemes (e.g. Farm Woodland Premium Scheme) that can be used constructively to restore damaged landscapes and habitats and to create new areas of habitats, for example expanding new wilderness areas. These schemes can also bring benefits of increased public access.
- 5.12. There are significant opportunities in the Green Belt to seek compensation for losses of biodiversity that have occurred as a result of development and land use change.

### **Retaining land in agricultural, forestry and related use**

- 5.13. Although a location on the edge of a major town or city can bring many problems, there are also a number of advantages and opportunities, particularly if

urban fringe farmers can adapt their business and diversify into other areas. Key opportunities are described below.

- 5.14. **Local and speciality markets.** The close proximity of urban fringe areas to customers can guarantee fresher produce and keep 'food miles' to a minimum. Urban areas offer a good potential market, with increased options of direct selling to shops, restaurants and the public. Farmers markets are increasing in numbers throughout London and provide benefits through face-to-face contact with producers. There is also a range of ethnic and speciality markets to provide links with ethnic origins and traditions and to engender appreciation of global biodiversity.
- 5.15. Farms in the urban fringe could capitalise on market opportunities for organic produce by 'going organic', which is supported by Defra's Organic Farming Scheme.
- 5.16. **Non-food diversification.** It has been recognised that successful diversification can only be achieved alongside a distinctive 'market led' approach to business development on the urban fringe<sup>26</sup>. Support is needed in identifying these markets and to help farmers diversify their working.
- 5.17. Non-farming activities within the rural economy have become increasingly common - 80% of people working in rural areas are employed in public services, manufacturing and business and financial services<sup>27</sup>. There are opportunities for farms close to urban centres with redundant buildings to use these spaces for non-farming activities to support farm incomes.
- 5.18. **Public access.** Public access is one area of diversification with great potential to take advantage of the high demand for rural recreation and tourism activities from city dwellers and can be marketed in terms of educational and health benefits. Incomes may be derived from a range of facilities and activities, including refreshment provision, shops, crafts, shooting, quad biking and horse riding. Through 'open farms' and 'model farms' farmers can use their land and traditional farm practices as attractions. The education opportunities associated with this can help to raise awareness of countryside management issues. Other diversification opportunities include bed and breakfast accommodation and working holidays.
- 5.19. **Local workforce.** A location near a large centre of population not only increases potential consumers, but also access to a large workforce. As family members are decreasingly likely to take over a farm and as a great deal of work is seasonal, access to a flexible workforce is important. There is also potential for 'pick your own' farms - especially relevant to the horticultural industry - which allows customers to harvest crops on behalf of the farmer as a recreational activity.
- 5.20. **Allotments and weekend gardens.** Weekend huts, gardens and allotments could compensate for the lack of space and possibilities in London. East's ideas brochure<sup>28</sup> suggests that twinning scenarios linking inner city areas directly to the Green belt, if supported by direct transport links, would benefit both areas.

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<sup>26</sup> Farm Diversification Benchmark Study, Defra/University of Exeter, 2002

<sup>27</sup> Quality of Life in Tomorrow's Countryside, Countryside Agency, 2003

<sup>28</sup> Picnics in the Green Belt, East, 2002

- 5.21. The strategic approach to forestry, as demonstrated in the Community Forests, lends itself to further application in Green Belts, and could be closely associated with enhancing the environmental quality. (RTPI)

## **OTHER OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Contributing to urban renaissance**

- 5.22. Urban renaissance is a key objective of the Mayor's London Plan. The interplay and co-dependence of urban and rural areas is widely recognised. As with planning and management of towns and cities, the surrounding countryside should not be seen as a passive, recipient place, but the subject of positive planning and management.
- 5.23. Pro-active planning and management of open space can help to shape new development, create a strong urban edge, and provide a sense of place.

### **Enhancing peoples' understanding of place**

- 5.24. Stronger 'branding' of the Green Belt would create opportunities to improve peoples understanding of place, as the Green Belt is currently not widely recognised or understood as a place with potential for outdoor recreation. A clearer image would also increase the possibility for the Green Belt in playing a positive role in terms of providing accessible open space for recreation.

### **Providing an education resource**

- 5.25. With its great diversity and proximity to such a large centre of population, the Green Belt provides an invaluable educational resource. There is potential for organised events and school visits as well as individual exploration.

### **Helping to improve public health**

- 5.26. There are tangible health benefits to be gained from exercising and relaxing in a natural open space. Some relevant research has already been undertaken showing that benefits may be particularly significant for elderly people, children and people with mental and social problems<sup>29</sup>. A number of pilot initiatives have begun to promote this aspect of open space, for example BTCV's Green Gym Project and the Walking the Way to Health initiative of the British Heart Foundation and Countryside Agency.

### **Responding to climate change**

- 5.27. Like the rest of the UK, the Study Area will experience the effects of climate change over the coming decades. In November 2002 the London Climate Change Partnership published 'London's warming: the impacts of climate change on London'. Hotter drier summers and milder wetter winters, more frequent extreme high temperatures and more frequent extreme winter precipitation are predicted. The London Green Belt offers the potential to contribute to limiting the effects of climate change, for example through vegetated areas acting as carbon sinks and through

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<sup>29</sup> Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy

- opportunities for accommodating renewable energy resources such as biomass energy crops.
- 5.28. The Green Belt also offers many opportunities for responding and adapting to climate change. For example, climate change is likely to exacerbate problems of water supply in London with lower summer flows in rivers and increased domestic water demand, and the Green Belt could provide space for water storage to adapt to drier summers. Flooding is already a significant issue in many parts of London. London is at risk from the inundation of floodplains by river water, local flooding when the drainage network is overwhelmed by intense rainfall, and by tidal surges in the Thames. The Green Belt has a potential role to play in retaining floodwaters through floodwater storage, and other flood limitation measures, such as use of contour ploughing on agricultural land, which will help to minimise floods caused by inundation of drainage systems in particular.
- 5.29. Other environmental impacts identified in London's warming include changes in the distribution of species and the places they inhabit, and a reduction in air quality. Again, the Green Belt could help to address the former by creating the space required to allow migration of habitats and species. In terms of air quality, as noted above, trees can help to act as carbon sinks.
- 5.30. In terms of social and economic impacts, there are potential benefits in terms of increased demand for leisure and tourism as a result of warmer temperatures. The Green Belt could play a key role in providing a recreational resource on the urban fringe for outdoor activities. However, the Green Belt will also be subject to some negative impacts from climate change, for example, increased pressures on green spaces as a result of water shortages and increased visitor pressure.

### **A venue for holidays and tourism**

- 5.31. Open spaces around London are potentially attractive to tourists and visitors. Notable examples within or close to the Green Belt include Epping Forest, the Wildfowl and Wetland Centre, the Lee Valley Regional Park, and the major new nature reserve currently being developed at Rainham Marshes.
- 5.32. There is also considerable opportunity to revive the longstanding British tradition of holiday chalets, which were particularly popular during the interwar period. There are many remaining examples along the upper reaches of the River Thames, but also deep in the countryside in Essex and Hertfordshire. This idea has many attractions, not least in reducing regular travel to far-flung holiday destinations, which contributes significantly to national emissions of CO<sup>2</sup>. It is recognised, however, that new holiday chalets may not be regarded as acceptable development in Green Belt, in terms of Green Belt policy.

### **Opportunities for renewable energy development**

- 5.33. Energy crops for biomass energy production provide a form of agricultural diversification, which Defra is supporting through the Energy Crop Scheme. Grants can be obtained to help establish short rotation coppice of willow and poplar or miscanthus grass and establish producer groups. Biomass production could also

make use of existing woodlands in the Green Belt, through appropriate management. BioRegional supply wood fuel from Croydon's woodlands for the BedZed development in Beddington<sup>30</sup>. To be cost effective and efficient from an environmental viewpoint, the electricity generating plant needs to be close to the source of biomass. This may have implications for Green Belt policy.

- 5.34. There may also be opportunities in the Green Belt for wind power development, although this clearly poses potential planning issues as wind turbines may not be regarded as acceptable forms of development in the Green Belt. Hydropower is likely to be less controversial, although the opportunities are likely to be more limited. The Mayor of London has produced an Energy Strategy to help lead London towards a future where the way energy is sourced and used is better for health and the environment. The strategy sets out a need to reduce the amount of energy used in London and to move away from power supplied by fossil fuels, towards a greater use of renewable energy, such as solar energy, wind power and power from organic materials, like wood.

### **Providing burial space**

- 5.35. London is running short of burial space. In response to this, the London Plan seeks to ensure that boroughs provide for London's burial needs, including the special needs of certain religious or cultural groups for whom burial is the only option. The Green Belt offers considerable potential for burial space. There is current demand for 'green' or 'woodland' burials, which could provide an attractive place for mourners and others to visit.

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<sup>30</sup> Further details of this are given in the Mayor's Municipal Waste Management Strategy

## 6. KEY PRESSURES IN THE GREEN BELT

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- 6.1. This section describes the key pressures affecting the environmental quality of London's Green Belt.

### MAJOR DEVELOPMENT

#### Sustainable communities

- 6.2. The requirement for a significant amount of new housing in London and the South East is placing considerable pressure on the Green Belt. The Deputy Prime Minister launched the Communities Plan (*Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future*) in February 2003. This sets out a long-term programme of action for delivering sustainable communities in both urban and rural areas. It aims to tackle housing supply issues in London and the South East, low demand in other parts of the country, and the quality of our public spaces.
- 6.3. Overall, an additional 345,000 new homes are required. The London Growth Areas will accommodate 200,000 homes above the levels currently planned in regional planning guidance, of which 80,000 will be in the Thames Gateway.
- 6.4. A significant amount of new housing is also planned for the London–Stansted–Cambridge– Peterborough sub-region, which extends broadly along the M11 corridor (see **Figure 6.1**). The East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) has submitted a 'qualified draft' of Regional Planning Guidance (later to become the Regional Spatial Strategy) to Government. Following discussions with Government, EERA has agreed to investigate the potential for additional growth in the London-Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough corridor to increase its contribution to the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan and deliver a further increase of up to 900 dwellings per annum in regional housing provision within that corridor.
- 6.5. The Harlow Options Study<sup>31</sup> identified a housing growth requirement between the range of 19,000 and 28,000 dwellings over the period 2003-2021.
- 6.6. While the search for new housing land may result in a loss of Green Belt, there is potential for improvement of remaining open space. The Green Grid initiative is seeking to secure these opportunities.

#### Transport

- 6.7. The original development of the M25 consumed and severed agricultural land, causing the removal of hedgerows and trees, and changes in the landform. Other major roads have similarly affected the Green Belt, for example the A3 to the southwest of London and the A2 to the east. In addition to the physical impacts of major roads, the secondary effects, such as visual intrusion (particularly gantries and lighting columns) have led to a noticeable deterioration in the quality of the surrounding landscape.

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<sup>31</sup> Harlow Options Study Draft Final Report (Atkins, June 2003)

- 6.8. The Highways Agency is proposing to widen certain key stretches of the M25, London's orbital motorway. The widening is likely to take place within the existing curtilage of the motorway, through the removal of the landscaped strips of land alongside the motorway. This could have the effect of reducing existing mitigation of noise and visual impacts, but also give rise to opportunities to secure increased off-site mitigation such as tree planting. There is potential for off-site planting, for example the Highways Agency is funding planting within the visual envelope in the Thames Chase.
- 6.9. The expansion of the London Airports including the Government recommendation for a second runway at Stansted, all of which lie in close proximity to Green Belt land, will also place pressure on the Green Belt. Similarly potential expansion of rail corridors, especially with the growth of Stansted Airport has the potential to put pressure on the Green Belt, and again there is potential for off-site planting.

## **DECLINE OF AGRICULTURE**

- 6.10. As noted in section 2, farmers have traditionally been the custodians of the land in rural and urban fringe areas. It is therefore not surprising that, when agriculture is in decline, the management of land will become increasingly neglected.

### **Non-farming use of smallholdings and 'hope value'**

- 6.11. In parts of the Green Belt there is incipient pressure from non-farming use of small-sized holdings, notably for horse keeping and land held for 'hope value'. Although it should be noted that horse grazing is not always inappropriate provided stocking rates are not artificially high. Poorly kept land used for horse keeping and held for 'hope value' is particularly evident in west and southwest of London, for example around Heathrow. Poor quality neglected land held for 'hope value' is also a pressure to the north of London in Hertfordshire. The Countryside Agency description relating to the Thames Basin Lowlands character area, which lies to the southwest of London, notes that 'the interface between countryside and urban edge is typically characterised by an often unkempt appearance associated with horse keeping. Irregular fences and gappy hedges, run-down sheds and fields full of docks, nettles and ragwort give these landscapes a neglected feel'.

## **MINERAL EXTRACTION**

- 6.12. Large-scale mineral extraction to the north, east and west of London is a key pressure in the Green Belt, which in some areas has been followed by waste disposal in the form of landfill or landraising. To the west and north of London, gravel pits are a common feature of the landscape. To the east of London there are particular pressures from waste disposal sites and also spoil heaps and dredging. Restoration of mineral workings has often been relatively poor. However, it is notable that flooded gravel pits can also provide important wildlife habitats.

## **RECREATION**

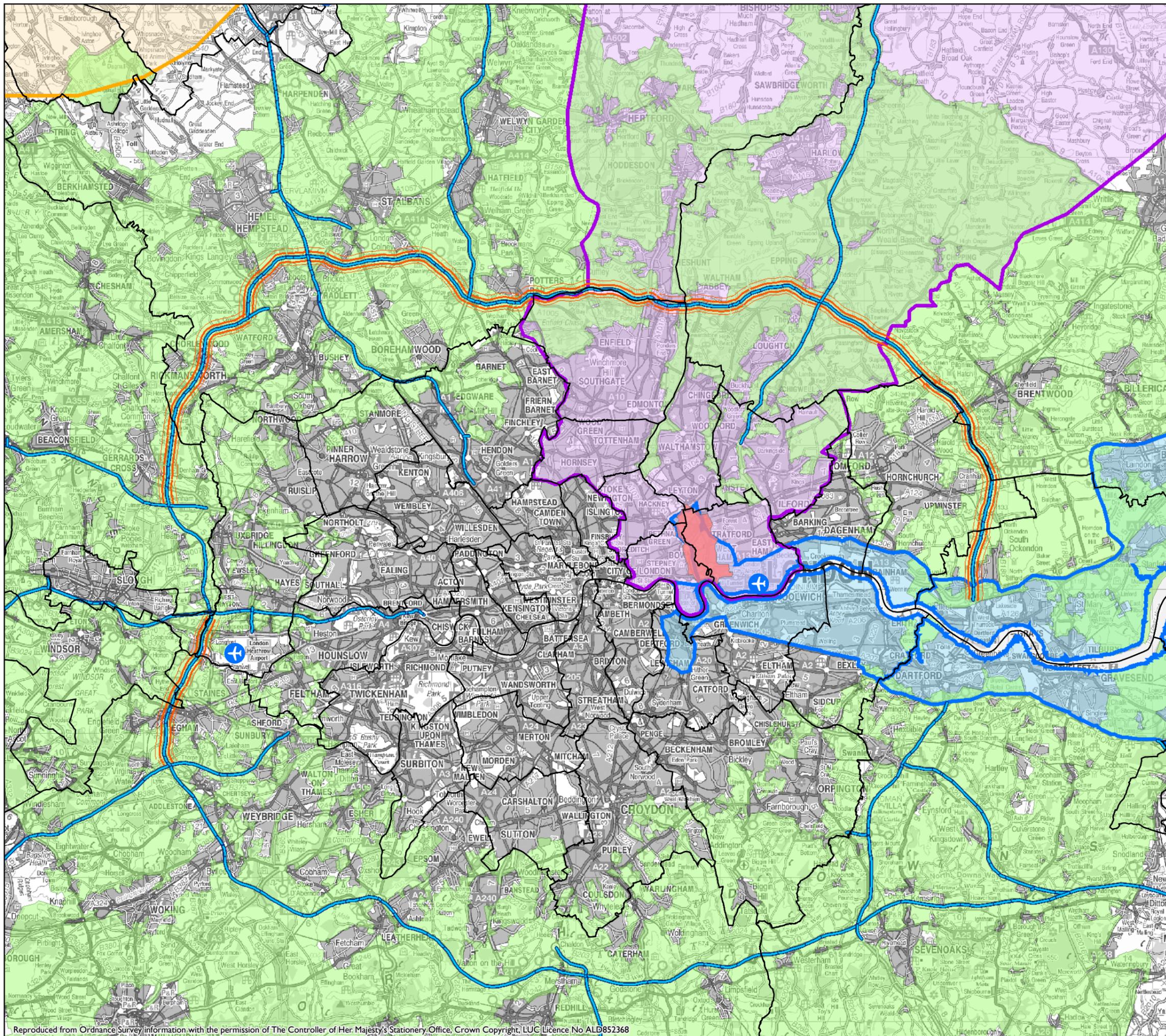
- 6.13. The development of sports pitches and golf courses, and other formal recreational facilities, has led to a gradual erosion of landscape character in the Green Belt.

# GREEN ARC

Figure 6.1:  
Major Development Pressures

Key

-  Motorway
-  Green Belt
-  County/borough boundary
-  Airport
-  London Olympic Bid (main area)
-  M25 Expansion
- Growth Areas**
-  Milton Keynes
-  M11 Corridor
-  Thames Gateway



Source: Highways Agency  
Ordnance Survey  
ODPM

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Recreational use and associated facilities can place pressure on the quality of the Green Belt, however, less intensive recreational uses need not put pressure on quality.

## **OTHER FACTORS**

- 6.14. In addition to the specific pressures outlined above, which typically relate to different development pressures of one sort or another, there are also a number of more general factors which affect the environmental quality of the Green Belt. These are detailed below.

### **Land ownership**

- 6.15. The LPAC study of landscape change found that land ownership strongly influences the extent and type of change in the Green Belt. More significant landscape change was found to have occurred on privately owned land, particularly through degradation caused by mineral extraction and waste disposal. The highest quality and most accessible landscapes in the Green Belt are publicly owned.

### **Incremental development and land use change**

- 6.16. Incremental development and land use change, mainly resulting from 'appropriate/acceptable' uses and permitted development, as well as non-conforming uses, is a key force for change in the Green Belt. This tends to be concentrated in, but not confined to, areas close to the urban fringe and adjacent to roads. Areas of high landscape quality in the Green Belt, such as the North Downs landscapes in Croydon and Bromley, succumb less easily to the urban fringe pressures that adversely affect other, less distinctive areas.

### **Land management**

- 6.17. Differences in land management initiatives also have a bearing on the environmental quality of the Green Belt. Consultees made the following general points:
- Management of public open space has become less intensive. In some areas, this is due to a greater awareness of the ecological benefits of less intrusive management, or a downturn in participatory field sports. In general though, a lack of sufficient funding for countryside management is a key factor.
  - Countryside management initiatives have been more successful in dealing with smaller scale environmental improvement projects than larger scale problems over a wider area requiring major capital expenditure and long-term action.
  - There are large areas of privately owned land in the Green Belt which appear to be unmanaged e.g. former landfill sites, recreation grounds which are no longer used, and in some cases unused farmland. The poor management of such land is due to a lack of incentives to undertake management, the high cost of restoration, and, as noted above, 'hope value' in an attempt to gain permission for future development. However, such sites can be of high value as wildlife habitats due to the lack of management.



## 7. EXISTING MANAGEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT INITIATIVES

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### INTRODUCTION

- 7.1. Better land management and environmental enhancement cannot be delivered by the planning system alone. It is unrealistic to expect acceptable forms of development in the Green Belt to raise sufficient development value. This section provides an outline of the main countryside management and enhancement initiatives within London's Green Belt. Pro-formas summarising details of the specific initiatives are included in **Appendix 2. Figure 7.1** shows the geographic extent of the existing countryside management and environmental initiatives.

### EPPING FOREST

- 7.2. Epping Forest is an early and unique example of a strategic initiative designed to protect an area of strategic open space. It covers an area of 2450 ha. In the 1870s, the Corporation of London had been concerned that free access to open countryside was being threatened by landowners wanting to enclose common land and by building development. It therefore embarked on an ambitious project to protect what it could of London's countryside. As a result two Acts of Parliament were passed in 1878: the Epping Forest Act, which made the Corporation of London the Conservators of the Forest, and the Open Spaces Act, which enabled the Corporation to acquire and safeguard land within 25 miles of the City for the 'recreation and enjoyment' of the public.
- 7.3. Under the Corporation, the responsibility for the Forest is vested in the Epping Forest and Open Spaces Committee comprising twelve members of the Corporation and four Verderers. The Forest's Commoners elect the Verderers, who provide essential links between the Committee, the public and the Forest's officers, every seven years. The Corporation's Epping Forest Department carries out the policies and directives of the Committee. The entire net cost of the Forest's management is borne by the Corporation from its private investments with no contribution from the public purse. The Corporation has added to its ownership an additional 750 ha of Green Belt 'buffer land' around the Forest.

### AONB MANAGEMENT

- 7.4. Two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are found at the southern edges of the study area: The North Kent Downs and Surrey Hills. AONBs have clear management arrangements, typically via a management unit made up of a range of partners, including local authorities. Staff teams are funded mainly by the local authorities and the Countryside Agency and are located locally to co-ordinate and deliver action on the ground. The CROW Act required that all AONBs should have management plans in place by 2004, and most are now some way to introducing these. For example, the North Kent Downs is preparing a Management Plan for 2004 – 2009. To support AONB staff the Countryside Agency has produced 'The

Handbook for AONB Management' to provide technical advice on a number of key areas.

## **COUNTRY PARKS**

- 7.5. The 1968 Countryside Act introduced the concept of Country Parks, by empowering local authorities (and private land owners) to purchase land and manage it, with Countryside Commission grant aid, for the purposes of recreation. Country Parks were to be created in locations where they would take pressure off sensitive countryside areas such as the farmed countryside, the National Parks and other popular beauty spots by providing people with an alternative, easily accessible recreation resource. Country Parks were initially designed to meet a perceived need for family-based, car-orientated leisure facilities in the countryside. However, by the late 1970s priorities shifted to creating Country Parks closer to urban populations which were accessible by public transport. Over the following 20 years, more than 200 Country Parks were created throughout England. In recent years Country Parks have become a less popular mechanism for establishing recreational areas of open space. However, the Countryside Agency has recently launched a new initiative to revitalise Country Parks and make them relevant to today's needs.

## **REGIONAL PARKS**

- 7.6. The Lee Valley Regional Park Authority established the Lee Valley Regional Park in 1967. The Park covers 4,047 ha of the Lee Valley stretching from East India Dock Basin to Ware in Hertfordshire. The Authority's remit, described in the 1966 Act which established the Park, embraces just about every conceivable aspect of leisure, sport and recreation, including nature conservation and the protection and enhancement of the natural environment. The Park's website notes that it provides a mosaic of countryside areas, urban green spaces, heritage sites, country parks, nature reserves and lake and riverside trails. It also houses a range of overnight accommodation, including caravan parks, campsites and riverside chalets. The Park has been very successful and has acquired ownership of 4000 acres, and is continuing to acquire and restore areas of derelict and damaged land.
- 7.7. The Colne Valley Regional Park, on the western edge of London, was established in 1967. It covers an area of 11,000 ha. A voluntary association of local authorities known as the Colne Valley Park Standing Conference Partnership, which provides planning and financial support, manages it. The project work involves a wider partnership including Groundwork, government agencies, private companies and local groups. The aims of the Park include maintaining and enhancing the landscape, resisting urbanisation, conserving resources and providing accessible facilities and opportunities for countryside recreation.

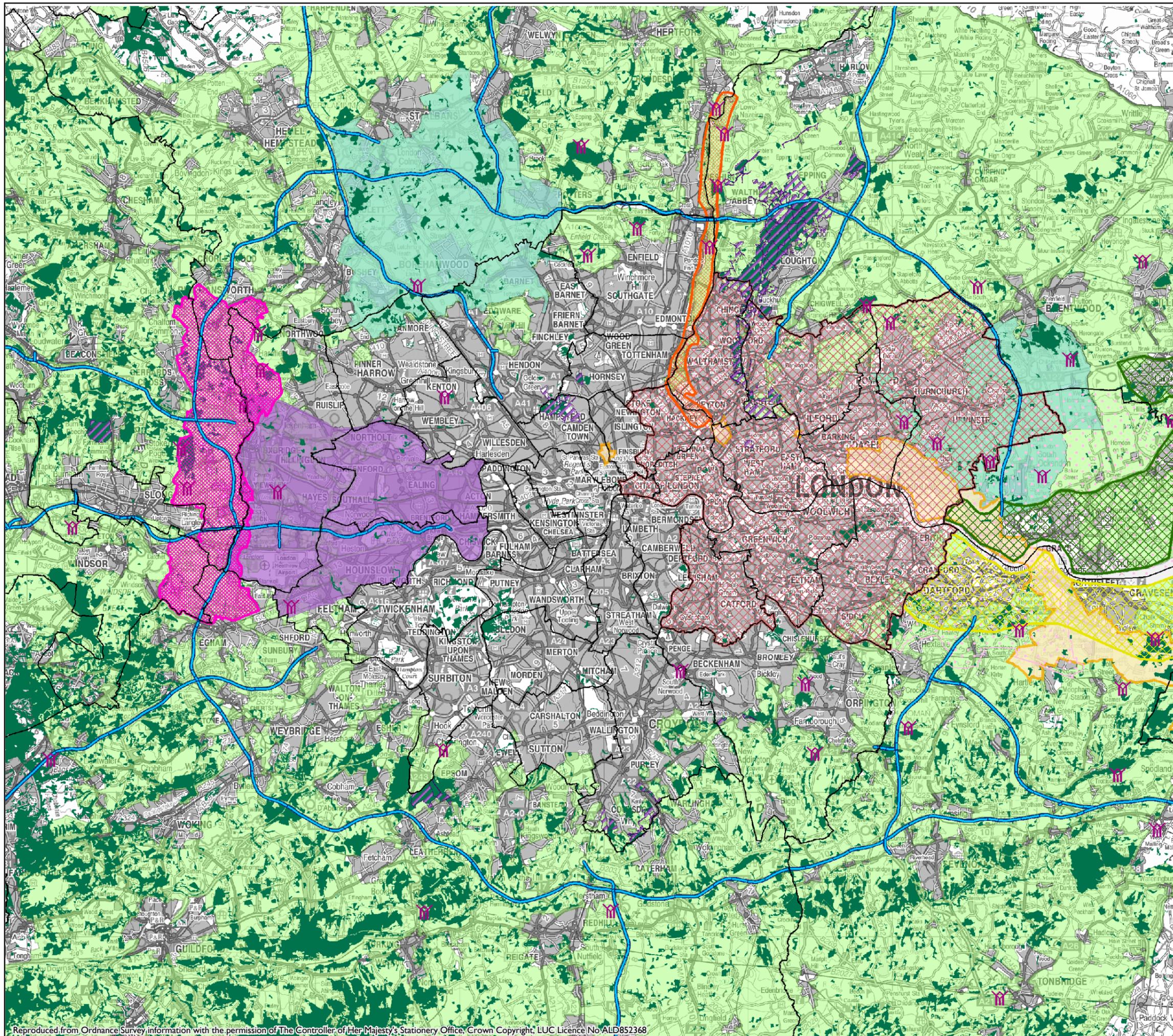
## **GREEN CORRIDOR**

- 7.8. The Green Corridor initiative (as distinct from Green Corridors in the London Plan which are a biodiversity designation) is another form of strategic environmental initiative. The Green Corridor is located in west London, and extends from Paddington to Heathrow and outward across the Thames Valley, which includes an extension into Hammersmith and Fulham and Kensington and Chelsea as part of the

# GREEN ARC

## Figure 7.1: Major Green Belt Enhancement Initiatives

- Key
-  Green Belt
  -  Country Park
  -  Motorway
  -  County/borough boundary
  -  Corporation of London Owned Land
  -  Countryside Rail Link Initiative
  -  Lea Valley Regional Park
  -  Colne Valley
  -  Community Forest
  -  East London Green Grid Boroughs
  -  Green Gateway
  -  South Essex Green Grid
  -  Kent Thameside Green Grid
  -  West London Green Corridor
  -  Woodland



Source: Forestry Commission  
Ordnance Survey  
Buckingham CC  
Rail Link Countryside Initiative



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Mayor's 100 Public Spaces Project. It was established in 1997 as a Single Regeneration Bid Pilot Project. The Green Corridor is now a registered charity and is the 'successor body' of a five-year government funded regeneration partnership. Sources of funding include Countryside Agency Grants, Section 106 Agreements and contributions from the private sector.

- 7.9. This initiative came about from a report published in 1993 by the Countryside Commission (Countryside Agency's predecessor), entitled 'Action for London's Trees', which proposed planting trees along London's transport routes to create 'green corridors'. A further report of the Government Office for London and the Countryside Commission in 1995 explored these ideas further and the A4/M4 was recommended as a pilot.
- 7.10. The initiative is made up of a wide range of partners, including the three London Borough's, the Highways Agency, the countryside Agency, as well as BAA Heathrow and British Airways. The latter are two major employers, who also have significant impacts on the quality of the local environment. The initiative is aiming to address the poor environmental quality of the M4/A4 corridor through the implementation of an 'Integrated Management Strategy', improving the perception of the corridor as a welcoming entrance to the capital, contributing to the economic and tourism potential of West London and providing environmental benefits for those communities affected by their location within the UK's busiest transport corridor.

## **COMMUNITY FORESTS**

- 7.11. Community forestry is an environmental regeneration idea which was started around 15 years ago by the Countryside Commission, which is being implemented throughout England. England's 12 Community Forests are the product of a partnership between the Countryside Agency, the Forestry Commission, and local authorities, and a host of other local and national organisations. The Community Forests are aiming to improve landscapes and modern-day town and city life, screening urbanisation in a veil of trees and greenery, softening the hard edges of contemporary development and regenerating neglected land.
- 7.12. Within the wider Green Belt study area there are two Community Forests: Thames Chase established in 1990; and Watling Chase, established in 1991. As with Community Forests nationally both are made up of a range of partners who work together to achieve environmental benefits. Thames Chase covers 40 square miles of green belt land in east London and south-west Essex, around the towns of Romford, Dagenham, Brentwood, Upminster and Grays. Watling Chase Community Forest is an area of 72 square miles in south Hertfordshire and north London. As with all Community Forests, the two Forests are supported by local partnerships. Thames Chase Community Forest is led by a specifically formed Thames Chase organisation and is supported by Essex County Council, the London Borough of Havering, the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Thurrock Council, Brentwood Borough Council, the Countryside Agency, the Forestry Commission and the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers. Watling Chase is supported by a local partnership including Hertfordshire County Council, Welwyn Hatfield Council, Hertsmere Borough Council and St Albans City and District Council. The Countryside Agency

and the Forestry Commission in turn support this partnership. Delivery on the ground is through the Countryside Management Service and Groundwork Hertfordshire.

- 7.13. The two Community Forests have made great progress on the ground, for example Thames Chase has achieved 452 ha of tree planting, brought into management 418ha of existing woodland created 76 km of new and upgraded access routes, opened up 312ha of non-woodland areas for public access and created or restored 455ha of non-woodland habitat. Watling Chase has achieved 30 ha of habitat restoration with access improvements, has undertaken greenways and open space improvement projects including a new bike park and has achieved significant tree planting, for example, Saffron Green project.
- 7.14. The Community Forest Partnerships work together to deliver a comprehensive package of urban, economic and social regeneration. This shared vision is creating high-quality environments by diversifying land-use, revitalising derelict land, revitalising derelict landscapes, enhancing biodiversity and providing new opportunities for leisure, recreation, cultural activity, education, healthy living and social and economic development.
- 7.15. The Community Forests are run by a dedicated team or organisation working with a variety of partnerships and delivery agencies to focus resources and harness skills and experience to achieve a wider strategic vision.

## **GREEN GATEWAY**

- 7.16. The Green Gateway Partnership, established in 2000, is the shared environmental vision for the Thames Gateway London. It seeks to enhance the urban environment using trees and woodland for the benefit of people, wildlife and the local economy. It covers the same area as the East London Green Grid but extends into Thurrock and Dartford. The lead partners are Groundwork East London, the GLA and Thames Chase Community Forest
- 7.17. The Partnership offers grants for tree planting and woodland management to help create a strategic green infrastructure to attract new investment and improve the health of workers and residents in the Gateway.
- 7.18. Key aims and objectives include identifying opportunities for improving the quality of and increasing the coverage of trees and woodland; working within local and regional planning frameworks to protect existing trees and add to the forest through the development process; raising awareness of the benefits that trees can bring and maximizing resources in support of the urban forestry strategy, particularly by capitalising on the combined strength of multi-sectoral partnerships
- 7.19. The partnership offers grants for tree planting and woodland management under a range of headings including social and community projects, biodiversity enhancement, recreation and health, and so on. It also offers grants for strategies which link with Green Grids, Thames Chase and regeneration zones. So far the Partnership has involved local people in tree planting initiatives, and is going some way towards

greening some of the deprived parts of the Gateway. For example, in 2003 it achieved 30,000 trees planted in Thamesmead.

## **GREEN GRID**

- 7.20. The Green Grid concept is embedded in the Thames Gateway Guidelines RPG 9a, and is now being actively pursued in the three sub-regions of Thames Gateway, in Thames Gateway South Essex, Kent Thameside and East London. The driving force behind such initiatives is to develop green space networks that can make significant contributions to environmental, social and economic policy aims and thereby contribute to the regeneration and development of sustainable communities to provide a high quality of life for existing and future residents.
- 7.21. Kent Thameside Green Grid, which is located in Dartford and Gravesham was established in 1995, by the Countryside Agency, which still supports the initiative. The Kent Thameside Association, a public-private partnership, manages it. The partnership is wide ranging, including local authorities, Land Securities - a principal land owner of key development sites in the area, Innogy a utility provider, Bluewater and the University of Greenwich, amongst others. This Green Grid partnership is well established, and has considerable success, for example in leveraging funding from other sources such as European Union programmes, lottery funding and Section 106 contributions.
- 7.22. The Thames Gateway South Essex Green Grid is managed by the Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership Limited, which is a limited company, and a range of other partners, including the Forestry Commission, Thames Chase and the local authorities in the Green Grid area. The Forestry Commission, Forest Enterprise, the Countryside Agency and Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership fund the project officer.
- 7.23. The East London Green Grid is a very recent initiative that is seeking to develop a framework for creating a network of interlinked open spaces in East London as an integrated part of achieving social and economic regeneration. The framework will establish policies that will feed into the Thames Gateway Development and Delivery Strategy, the East London Sub-Regional Development Framework, borough Open Space Strategies and other planning documents and strategies. Consultants are currently undertaking 'Phase I' to map the baseline of the area to identify constraints and opportunities for action within the area.
- 7.24. Both the Green Arc and East London Green Grid projects are concerned with improving and protecting the open space network in and around London. The overlap between the Green Grid and Green Arc projects occurs in the North and East of London where the Green Belt and the urban open space network meets. It is intended for the Green Grid study to cover the linkages between the urban network and access to the Green Belt for Londoners and for the Green Arc project to establish the gateways into the Green Belt and look at the accessibility through and between accessible sites and the quality of the open land beyond North and East London.

## **RAIL LINK COUNTRYSIDE INITIATIVE**

- 7.25. Similar to the Green Corridor, is the Rail Link Countryside Initiative which follows the M2 corridor and incorporates all areas affected by the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. The organisation, established in 1995, is a registered charity which comprises of a wide range of partners. These include Union Railways, the Government's Statutory Agencies, relevant local authorities, the Kent Wildlife Trust, London Wildlife Trust and the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group.
- 7.26. The aim of the partnership is to promote the conservation and preservation of the natural environment and landscape of the area affected by the development or operation of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link for the benefit of the public. Projects fall into a number of categories: wildlife, landscape, access and interpretation. One example of a project designed to improve access to the countryside is a project in the Kent Downs AONB, where work has been undertaken to provide greater public access to heritage assets and features.
- 7.27. The initiative was established after discussions between railway promoters, environmental bodies and statutory authorities during the parliamentary hearings into the CTRL Act in 1995. A countryside project was seen as a mechanism for compensating for residual and diffuse environmental issues that could not be fully addressed through the mitigation process.
- 7.28. The initiative is funded by a £2 million endowment from Union Railways, and to date it has undertaken 67 projects.

## **8. NEED FOR A STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT INITIATIVE**

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- 8.1. As outlined in section 7, there are a number of local initiatives that seek to address environmental issues within the Green Belt – particularly within the Study Area. Although often very effective, the initiatives are disjointed and do not form part of a cohesive whole. There is a tendency for local authorities to focus on their own ‘patch’ of Green Belt, rather than see it as a contiguous landscape, habitat or recreation area. This fragmented approach at the local level is exacerbated regionally by the fact that the Study Area falls within three planning regions: London; the South East; and the East of England. Paris, in contrast, falls within a single region and has developed a strategic approach to the planning and management of the city’s hinterland (Plan Vert Regional D’ile-de-France).

### **ADVANTAGES OF A STRATEGIC APPROACH**

- 8.2. A strategic approach could bring a number of important benefits. These include:
- Environmental enhancement of the Green Belt could be achieved across administrative boundaries
  - Consolidation and integration of existing initiatives into a more cohesive framework
  - Development pressures of a strategic nature, such as the Growth Areas defined in the Sustainable Communities Plan, require a strategic response
  - The opportunities and aspirations for the Green Belt, as set out in section 5, would be realised more effectively in the context of a strategic initiative.
- 8.3. Ideally, a single strategic initiative should cover the entire Green Belt and urban fringe, as with the Paris model. However, a sub-regional, cross-boundary approach is a positive step, particularly if links are made between initiatives. For example, it may be appropriate to develop initiatives in quadrants around London in the northeast (Green Arc area), northwest, southeast and southwest. In the southeast a partnership led by Kent County Council is at the early stages of developing a ‘regional park’ initiative, which extends from the edge of London along the Thames Gateway to the sea, which could represent an example of such a cross-boundary sub-regional initiative.
- 8.4. Part B of this report develops the concept further for the Green Arc area around the northeast of London, and the final section of the report presents a framework model that could be used for extending the concept around London.

### **REGIONAL POLICY SUPPORT**

- 8.5. Current draft RPG14 (East of England) emphasises that there are significant advantages to be gained through a strategic vision for urban fringe management of an extended area, such as the Green Grid in Thames Gateway South Essex and the

- Green Arc around north-east London. It states that the potential for co-ordinated management of the countryside throughout the Green Belts in the Region should be investigated and consideration given to preparing joint strategies that cross administrative boundaries (Para 4.41)
- 8.6. RPG 9a for the Thames Gateway sets out policies for environmental improvement in the Thames Gateway area. It highlights that the vision for the Gateway is concerned with enhancing the environment, which can mean making better use of assets or creating new features of benefit. The range of existing initiatives, including the Thames Chase Community Forest in East London, are discussed, and the scope for further flagship projects noted.
  - 8.7. The London Plan includes as a key objective (Objective 6): To make London a more attractive, well-designed and green city. A key policy direction for achieving this objective is to provide the spatial framework to achieve better use of resources and improvements to the environment in support of the Mayor's environmental strategies.
  - 8.8. The Plan also indicates that the Mayor will work with partners to improve access to the countryside and the quality of the landscape in the urban fringe. It also notes that the Mayor and boroughs will support sub-regional and cross-borough boundary urban fringe management and in particular will explore the potential for taking forward the concept of Community Forests within London (Policy 3D.13 Rural London).
  - 8.9. Specifically with regard to the Green Belt, the Plan states that *where Green Belt is of poor quality, steps should be taken to improve it. This may include undertaking a review of a wider area and identifying actions to promote improvements* (Paragraph 3D.46)

## 9. CONCLUSIONS: PART A OVERVIEW OF THE GREEN BELT

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- 9.1. By virtue of its setting within the Thames Basin, with its major river estuary and varied geology, the landscape of the Study Area is very rich and diverse. It also provides an important resource for biodiversity and for recreation close to the urban population.
- 9.2. Land use within the Green Belt is dominated by farming, although other non-farming uses are becoming more prevalent. There have, and continue to be, significant threats to the Green Belt landscape from major development areas, the development of roads and other infrastructure. These pressures, together with the sub-division of landownership to create 'hope value', are contributing to a decline in the environment of the Green Belt.
- 9.3. Current policy focuses the main purposes of Green Belts but also emphasises the need to enhance the environment of the countryside around London and achieve its potential as resource for the benefit of people and wildlife.
- 9.4. The national and local policy objectives for the use of land in the Green Belt include:
  - Providing access for informal recreation
  - Providing opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation
  - Conserving and enhancing landscapes
  - Improving damaged and derelict land
  - Securing nature conservation interest
  - Retaining land in agricultural, forestry and related use close to the urban population
- 9.5. Environmental bodies have more ambitious aspirations for the countryside around towns, including:
  - Contributing to urban renaissance
  - Enhancing peoples' understanding of place
  - Providing an education resource
  - Helping to improve public health
  - Responding to climate change
  - A venue for holidays and tourism
  - Opportunities for renewable energy development

- Providing burial space
- 9.6. There are considerable opportunities to increase the amount of publicly accessible in the countryside around London and generally and to link fragmented areas of public open space, by both public transport and walking and cycling routes. There may also be opportunities to link different forms of public transport where rail links only go so far.
- 9.7. There are a number of local initiatives that seek to address environmental issues within the Green Belt and at the urban fringe. The Community Forests, for example, have realised many opportunities, such as the restoration of derelict farmland and former areas of mineral extraction.
- 9.8. Although often very effective, the existing initiatives do not form part of a cohesive whole. This fragmented approach at the local level is exacerbated regionally by the fact that the Study Area falls within three planning regions: London; the South East; and the East of England.
- 9.9. The benefits of a strategic approach to environmental enhancement of the Green Belt include:
- Environmental enhancement of the Green Belt could be achieved across administrative boundaries
  - Consolidation and integration of existing initiatives into a more cohesive framework
  - Development pressures of a strategic nature, such as the Growth Areas defined in the Sustainable Communities Plan, require a strategic response
  - The positive objectives and aspirations for the Green Belt would be realised more effectively.
- 9.10. Part B of this report looks specifically at the feasibility of the Green Arc concept, focussing in the Green Belt to the northeast of London. Part C presents a framework model that could be used for extending the concept around London.

## PART B

### 10. THE GREEN ARC

---

#### INTRODUCTION

- 10.1. The 'Green Arc' is a strategic initiative aimed at significantly improving the environment and accessibility of the Green Belt open space and countryside around the north and east of London and in the southern parts of Hertfordshire and Essex (see **Figure I.1**). The aim is to build on the success of the existing initiatives already operating in the area, such as Epping Forest, Hainault Forest, Thames Chase and the Lee Valley Regional Park and bring significant improvements to the area and to guide and shape new development. Such an approach is consistent with the view that a 'world class City should have a world-class environment'.
- 10.2. Inspired by the experience in the Netherlands of bold environmental initiatives in the countryside around towns, the concept was originally conceived in 2002 by officers of the Corporation of London, the Forestry Commission, the Woodland Trust, Thames Chase Community Forest and the Countryside Agency, all of whom have been involved in delivering projects on the ground and who are keen to promote a bold idea which they are confident can be delivered in practice.
- 10.3. The concept of the Green Arc developed significantly during the course of this study. This was a response to the views of consultees and a reflection of the rapidly developing planning context in London, the South East and the East of England. The Steering Group were in agreement that the Green Arc should not be seen as a 'foil' to the Sustainable Communities Plan. It has a longer-term bolder vision and it's own *raison d'être*, which is seeking to set a new agenda and challenge preconceptions. The Green Arc will also contribute to the objectives of many other strategies such as regional woodland strategies and biodiversity targets.
- 10.4. The remainder of this section outlines the process by which the Green Arc boundary was defined and characterises the Green Arc area.

#### THE GREEN ARC AREA OF SEARCH

- 10.5. The Green Arc area of search (AOS) was defined by LUC, in consultation with Steering Group members, at an early stage in the Study. It was agreed that the AOS should extend from the outer edge of London's built up area to about 15km beyond the M25. On the east side, the AOS should extend from the River Thames, to embrace Thames Chase Community Forest. On the west side, it was concluded that Watling Chase Community Forest should also be included. This broad area was defined to reflect the wide-ranging interests of the Steering Group members, throughout this geographical area. Subsequently the boundary was refined in consultation with stakeholders and the project Steering Group and the recommended Green Arc area is significantly smaller than the initial AOS.

- 10.6. The AOS boundary shown on **Figure 10.1** follows these broad parameters. For convenience, the boundaries follow administrative boundaries for the most part. The AOS covers seven outer London Boroughs and 12 districts (four in Essex and eight in Hertfordshire). About 80% of the AOS lies within the East of England; the remaining 20% being in Greater London.

## **GREEN ARC BOUNDARY**

- 10.7. The question of the scale of the Green Arc and its boundaries was a matter of some concern and importance. There was general agreement at the Consultation Workshop that there is a need to refine the AOS in order to focus the initiative, but little consensus about where the Green Arc boundaries should lie.

### **Key principles**

- 10.8. To find a rationale for the boundaries of the Green Arc, the findings of the consultation were used to define a set of principles. These suggest that the Green Arc area should:
- Provide scope/opportunities to achieve the Vision, including a large area of predominately open land
  - Focus on a manageable and clearly defined area
  - Include the main existing environmental initiatives and enable links to be made between them
  - Focus on that part of the AOS where the Green Belt is most in need of improvement
  - Cover areas where future development pressures are likely to be greatest, with requisite funding opportunities for environmental initiatives.
- 10.9. Boundary options that were considered range from using the full AOS boundary with minor adjustments, to concentrating on the eastern sector (roughly an arc between the Lee Valley and River Thames), which is the broad extent of the Green Arc, as envisaged by those who conceived the idea. The idea of extending the boundary to the north to embrace the Growth Area around Stansted Airport and Hatfield Forest, possibly using the outer boundary of the Green Belt as the Green Arc boundary was also considered. The pros and cons of these approaches are discussed below.
- 10.10. The whole AOS does not accord closely with any of the key principles referred to above. The western part of the AOS, predominantly within Hertfordshire, is markedly different to the eastern part, which covers east London and inner Essex. Settlements in Hertfordshire are much larger and more numerous, each with a strong identity. The countryside is generally in much better condition than on the east side, with large areas of productive agricultural land and more extensive areas managed for public access and recreation. Apart from Watling Chase Community Forest, there are few existing environmental initiatives on the west side. Although development pressures in south Hertfordshire are, and will continue to be great, the Sustainable Communities Plan Growth Areas are focused on the east side





- 10.11. Covering a smaller area to the east of the AOS accords much better with the key principles. It is generally less developed with smaller settlements. It includes extensive open countryside, with numerous green links right into the urban area (mainly river corridors). It has significant established initiatives (or building blocks), such as Epping Forest, Hainault Forest, the Lee Valley Regional Park, Thames Chase Community Forest, and Rainham Marshes.
- 10.12. Extending the boundary to the north would take in the environs of Stansted Airport, which are likely to be the focus of significant development, and Hatfield Forest, which is an important recreational resource and habitat owned by the National Trust. The Trust could potentially be a valuable member of the Green Arc Partnership.

### **Agreed boundary**

- 10.13. The agreed boundary, see **Figure 10.1**, focuses on the eastern half of the AOS. The Steering Group agreed that the western boundary should abut the eastern edge of Watling Chase Community Forest, but not include it. This boundary follows the A1000 Potters Bar Road. Setting the western boundary here ensures that important areas such as the Lee Valley and the Hertfordshire woodlands to the west, which could be linked through the Green Arc initiative, are included. It was decided to omit Watling Chase in order to achieve a manageable area. The southern boundary follows the boundaries of the outer London Boroughs, as in the AOS. The eastern boundary has been drawn in from the original AOS boundary, and omits the South Essex Green Grid. The Steering Group felt that this was appropriate in order to maintain the clarity of both initiatives, but that links would be made between the two. Finally, it was decided to extend the boundary in the north to take in the environs of Stansted Airport for the reasons outlined above.
- 10.14. The agreed boundary represents a focussed and workable area. Whilst some important areas are excluded, it is anticipated that these could form part of complimentary initiatives. For example, Watling Chase could provide an important focus for a similar Green Arc type initiative, possibly spanning the north-western part of London.

## **CHARACTERISATION OF THE GREEN ARC AREA**

- 10.15. The open countryside to the north and east of London (the Green Arc) serves a variety of important functions. It separates Greater London from towns in Essex and Hertfordshire and it offers an important environmental resource for London and the southern parts of Essex and Hertfordshire. Its varied landscape, mainly designated as Green Belt, provides opportunities for recreation and spiritual nourishment. It also includes a wide range of ecologically important sites. The area's agricultural land and mineral workings play a big part in shaping the landscape, and provide an economic resource for the area.
- 10.16. However, the area is facing considerable development pressure. Other pressures described in Part A in relation to the wider Green Belt are equally applicable, including mineral extraction, the changing face of agriculture and road development.

The M25 expansion areas are concentrated in the northern part of the motorway within the Green Arc area.

### **Countryside Character**

- 10.17. Two main countryside character areas cover the Green Arc area: the Northern Thames Basin in the south and the South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland in the north (**Figure 10.2**). Both Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils have also carried out more detailed county level Landscape Character Assessments.
- 10.18. The **Northern Thames Basin** covers the southern and central bands of the Green Arc area. Two sub-character areas influence the London urban fringe within the Green Arc: Hertfordshire Plateaux and River Valleys (covering the western part of the Green Arc to the Lee Valley), and Essex Wooded Hills and Ridges (stretching from the Lee Valley to the eastern edge of the Green Arc).
- 10.19. The Hertfordshire Plateaux and River Valleys is a diverse landscape with a series of broad valleys containing major rivers, such as the Lee. The topography is undulating and varied, with a wide plateau divided by the river valleys. The higher ground of the plateau forms a distinctive backdrop to the river valleys and can give extensive views over the predominantly arable flood plains. Areas of woodland and tree belts contribute to the character of the landscape. As many of the trees are on hills and hillsides, a wooded appearance is created – often far in excess of their actual extent.
- 10.20. River valleys are important features within the area, and are the location of key settlements reflecting the historical use of the valleys of a means of access into the heart of the area allowing for the clearance of the ancient ‘wildwood’. Many have been extensively modified by reservoirs, current and reclaimed gravel pits, landfill sites, artificial wetlands, river realignments and canals. Smaller intimate tree-lined valleys supporting red brick villages provide a contrast to the more heavily developed major river valley floodplains.
- 10.21. The Hertfordshire LCA notes that before 1900 the major impact on the landscape other than agriculture was parkland development and country house building, many of which remain in the county in some form or another. Since the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there has been a major change in the landscape of the county. Until then it had no natural resources on which to base an industrial revolution. However in 1900 the development of modern cement created a market for gravel quarrying. Railways were built and provided a focus for new settlements around stations, thus Hertfordshire became a commuter belt. Development patterns provide the most obvious pattern in the landscape of the county, with the south being far more urbanised while the northeast remains sparsely populated and rural.
- 10.22. The area is now a zone of commuter homes, new towns and the Garden Cities of Ebenezer Howard, distorted by the trunk roads and M1 running from London northwards. London’s expansion has led to a new landscape superimposed on the earlier human landscape, but which still has a predominantly rural feel in many places.
- 10.23. The largest settlements include Hatfield, Welwyn Garden City and Hertford all of which lie on or just outside the western fringe of the Green Arc. As the traditional

- countryside of rural Hertfordshire merges into the north London suburbs, such as Enfield and Barnet, the landscape often becomes strongly influenced by urban activity. The Lee Valley contains a mix of gravel pits and heavy industrial development but it is also as important as a recreational and wildlife resource. The M25 and M11 motorways, railway lines and prominent electricity pylons are a major influence on the character of the area. The area is not notably picturesque and can have a confused and disorderly feel.
- 10.24. The Essex Wooded Hills and Ridges, the second area within the Northern Thames Basin, is characterised by well wooded and prominent hills and ridges often referred to as the 'Bagshot Hills' stretching through Essex from Epping Forest to Tiptree (beyond the Green Arc area).
- 10.25. This area includes the most wooded parts of Essex, many of which are quite ancient. The areas of Epping Forest and Hainault Forest have been largely unaffected by modern-day developments. The purchase of Epping Forest by the Corporation of London in 1878 is a significant cultural influence on this landscape feature.
- 10.26. The historical scattered and relatively sparse settlement pattern has largely been obliterated by modern developments including extensive residential developments and large towns. The present-day pattern of settlement follows the 19<sup>th</sup> century pattern of dispersion around an area where population was concentrated in numerous nucleated settlements which have since developed into substantial urban areas, such as Loughton, Chingford and Brentwood.
- 10.27. The northern half of the Green Arc falls within the **South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland**, which extends through Essex and Hertfordshire into Suffolk. The South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland is a broadly flat, chalky, boulder clay plateau dissected by undulating river valley topography, particularly marked in upper valley reaches, which are much smaller in scale. The area is predominantly arable with a wooded appearance. Agriculture continues to play an important role in the area. Unlike other parts of the Green Arc, particularly to the west, this area was not one of great landowners and magnificent houses, and as such there are few substantial estates. The area is typically characterised by small settlements and scattered farmsteads, although in the southern part of the area there are large urban areas such as Harlow. Besides Harlow, this part of the Green Arc has a more rural feel.
- 10.28. A small part of the Green Arc along the southern boundary in the east of the area falls within the **Greater Thames Estuary** character area. A large area of the floodplain is grazed pastureland bounded by a network of drainage ditches. The landscape is open due to the lack of hedgerows and trees that only start to become evident on higher ground. Significant pressures on the landscape have resulted from new roads and the development of industrial complexes and their ancillary structures. The Thames Gateway and associated developments including transport are likely to further increase these pressures in the future. Increasing demand since 1945 for waste disposal sites and spoil heaps has further changed the character of the landscape.
- 10.29. There is evidence from place names that Green Arc area has a long history of woodland management. Hamlets and villages named *-ley* and *-hurst* (for instance,

Shenley) mean an inhabited clearing surrounded by woodland. Names ending in – *field*, such as Enfield, mean an open space in sight of woodland with which to contrast it. The woodland associations of other place names within the Green Arc speak for themselves: Brentwood; Woodford; Oaklands; Ashridge; Theydon Bois.

- 10.30. The Green Arc has some remaining areas of wood pasture. Epping Forest has remained remarkably intact – in terms of area and character – over at least 800 years. The Thames Chase Community Forest initiative has created some small areas of woodland and wood-pasture. The role of human management in creating the variety of open spaces and woodland in the Green Arc, such as the Chases, is significant.

### **Natural areas**

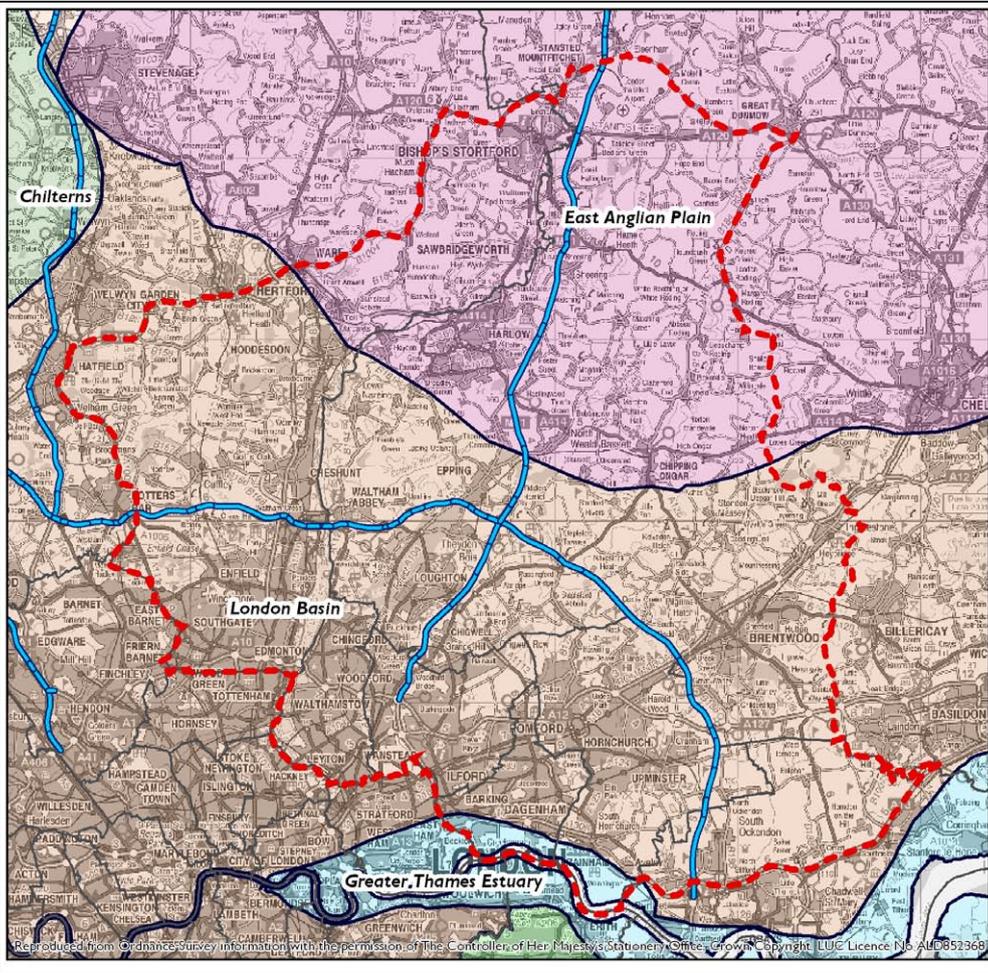
- 10.31. In terms of Natural Areas (**Figure 10.3**), the Green Arc is dominated by the **London Basin**, which as described in Part A. This area, particularly on the fringes of London, is home to fragmented habitats. However, there are still large areas of important habitat, such as ancient parkland with veteran trees, woodland, lowland heath, reservoirs, lakes, gravel pits and canals and river valleys. The **Greater Thames Estuary**, along the southern boundary of the Green Arc, has been significantly affected by major industrial and port development. There is pressure to retain the remaining habitats including inter-tidal sand and mud flats, grazing marshland and arable farmland.
- 10.32. In the north the Green Arc falls within the **East Anglian Plain**. Fragments of chalk in the clay in this area give a more or less calcicolous feel to the vegetation. Arable farming is the overwhelmingly dominant land use. Hedges, isolated trees and woods give the southern part (which falls within the Green Arc) a wooded feel. The agricultural landscape supports a low density and diversity of wildlife, and special habitats and features occupy a small proportion, but are highly valued for nature conservation, including ancient woods, meadows, fens, bat caves and parkland.

### **Biodiversity**

- 10.33. The Green Arc Area is rich in areas of nature conservation interest (see **Figure 10.4**), for example, Epping Forest and Hoddesdon Woods are both designated as SACs. Parts of the Thames Estuary and the Lee Valley are designated as SPA on account of their rich bird life. There are also two NNRs, Broxbourne Woods and Hatfield Forest, and numerous SSSIs as well as fragments of ancient woodland.

### **Rivers and catchment areas**

- 10.34. In terms of rivers and catchment areas (**Figure 10.5**), the Green Arc area divides into two clear sections: to the west and east of the River Lee. On the east side most sub-catchments relate to the River Lee, or include rivers that flow directly into the River Thames. However, the Brentwood Hills form a watershed between the Rivers Thames and Chelmer; the River Wid for example flows into the Chelmer. To the west of the River Lee and its catchment lies the catchment of the River Colne.



### GREEN ARC

Figure 10.3: Natural Areas

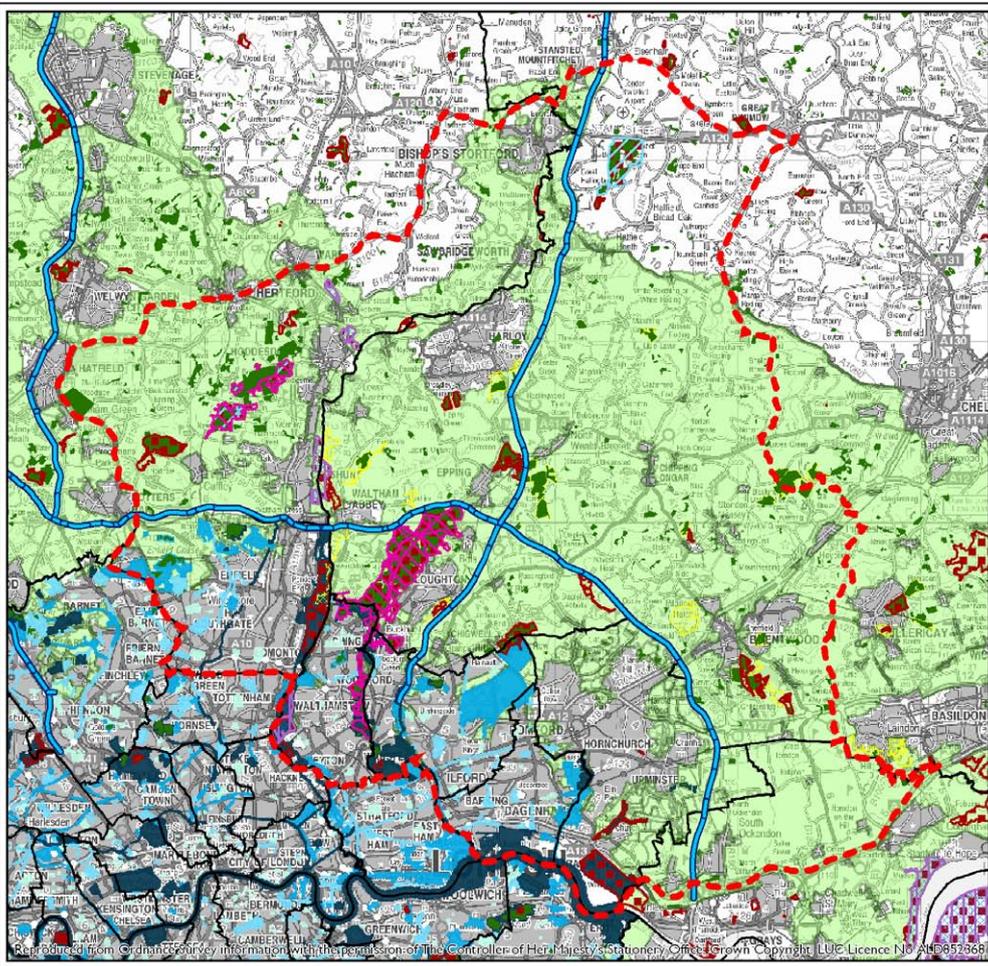
- Key**
- Green Arc
  - Motorway
  - County/borough boundary
  - Natural Areas

Source: English Nature

0 1.5 3 6 Kilometres

File ref: T:\GIS\31003141-01\_green\_arc\Themes\ArcGIS8-2\Stage\_3\february-04\B-3141-01\_fig\_2\_natural\_areas\_feb-04.mxd

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### GREEN ARC

Figure 10.4: Nature Conservation Designations

- Key**
- Green Arc
  - Motorway
  - County/borough boundary
  - Green Belt
  - Ancient Woodland
- International and National Designations**
- SAC
  - SPA
  - NNR
  - RAMSAR
  - SSSI

- Local Designations**
- Essex local designations \*
- London Biodiversity Sites (SINCs)**
- Sites of:
- Metropolitan Importance
  - Borough Importance
  - Borough Importance Grade 2
  - Local Importance

\* Essex local nature conservation sites include County Wildlife Sites, LNRs, and SINCs

Not available for other Counties

Source: English Nature  
Greater London Authority  
Essex County Council - Sites within the Green Belt

0 2.5 5 10 Kilometres

File ref: T:\GIS\31003141-01\_green\_arc\Themes\ArcGIS8-2\Stage\_3\february-04\B-3141-01\_fig\_3\_nat\_cons\_des\_feb-04.mxd

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### GREEN ARC

Figure 10.5: Rivers and Catchments

- Key**
- Green Arc
  - Motorway
  - Canal
  - River
  - Lake/Reservoir
  - Catchment boundary (shaded)

Source: Ordnance Survey  
Environment Agency

Kilometres

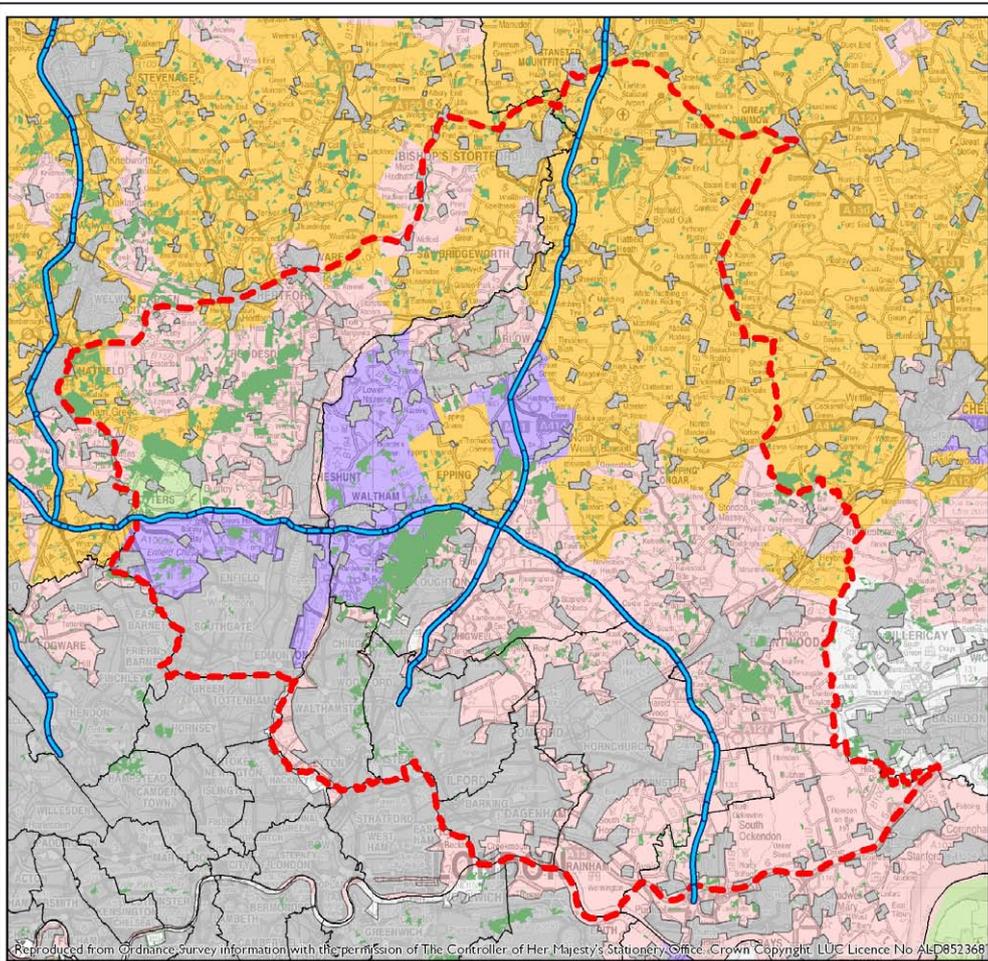


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### GREEN ARC

Figure 10.6: Agricultural Land Use

- Key**
- Green Arc
  - Motorway
  - County/borough boundary
  - Urban Area
  - Woodland
  - DEFRA Dominant Farm Types \***
  - Cereals
  - Horticulture
  - Cattle & Sheep (Lowland)
  - Other Types
  - No Agricultural Data

\* Dominant Farm Types taken from the 2000 Agricultural Census and based on Civil Parish Boundaries (shading indicates the dominant farm type in each parish)

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Source: Forestry Commission  
DEFRA  
Ordnance Survey

Kilometres



File ref: T:\Gis\3100\3141-01\_green\_arc\Themes\ArcGIS8-2\Stage3\February-04\B5-3141-01\_fig5\_landuse\_feb-04.mxd

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## **Land use**

- 10.35. As with the Green Belt generally, the Green Arc area is predominantly open, comprising a mixture of farmland, woodland, and areas for formal or informal recreation (**Figure 10.6**). The main land use in the southern part of the Green Arc is urban, and there are ribbons and pockets of urban development found throughout the area. Cereals farming is predominant, with a significant element of horticulture to the north east of Epping Forest. Many of the trends and pressures in the wider study area as discussed in Part A are equally applicable to the Green Arc area; for example, fragmentation of farm ownership and an increase in part-time farming, as well as changes in farming types with an increasing number being classified as outside of mainstream agriculture, including horse pasture.

## **Access**

- 10.36. The main areas of POS in the Green Arc centre around the Lee Valley and Epping Forest, both of which are important strategic sites over 400 ha in area (**Figure 10.7**). As such the catchments of these areas extend over a large central portion of the Green Arc. Accessibility to sites over 20 ha and over 60 ha is relatively evenly spread throughout the London Boroughs within the Green Arc and the inner fringes of Essex and Hertfordshire. However, as one moves to the outer edges of the Green Arc there is less POS (see **Figures 10.8** and **10.9**).
- 10.37. From the data available much of the land in the Green Belt would appear to be inaccessible, and therefore large areas of the Green Arc in Hertfordshire and Essex are potentially lacking in POS, which is likely to reflect the fact that large areas of land are in agricultural production, and whilst likely to include criss-crossing footpaths is unlikely to be widely accessible.

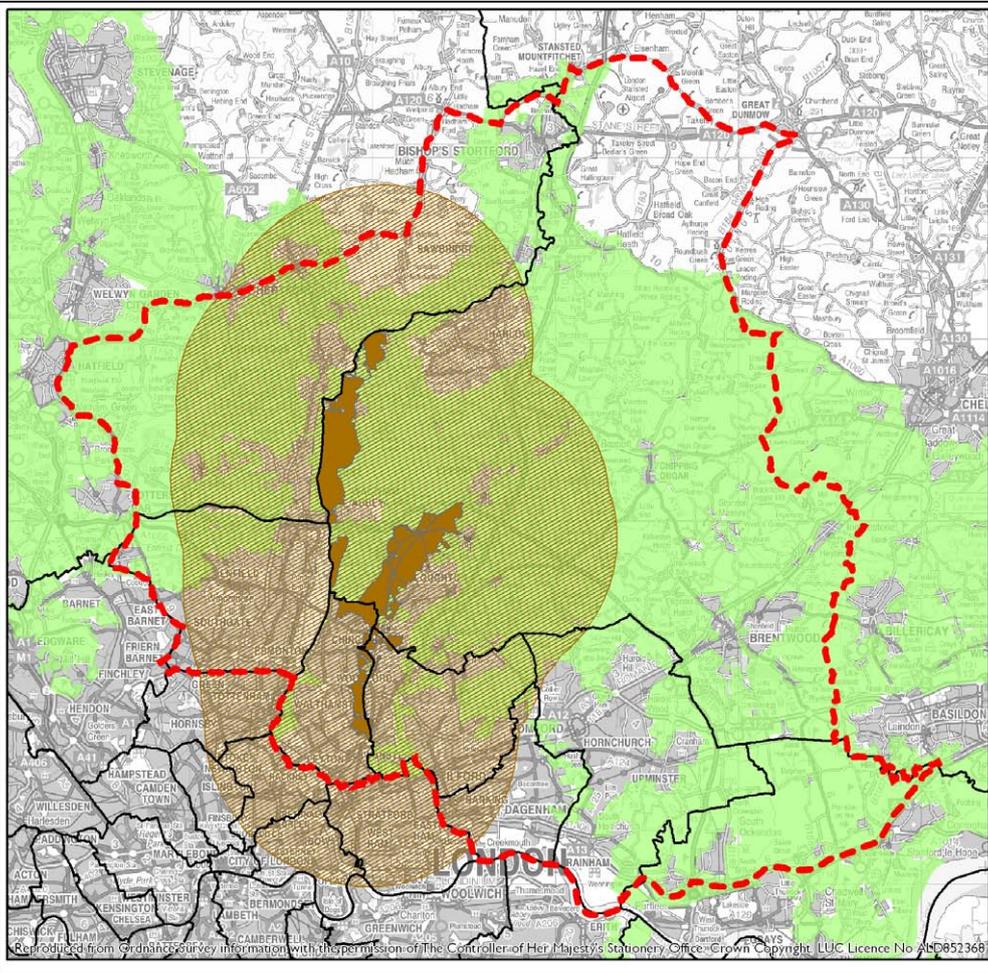
## **Accessibility by public transport**

- 10.38. In terms of accessibility by public transport to POS within the Green Arc it can be seen that many areas of POS are accessible by rail (**Figure 10.10**). Epping Forest and the Lee Valley both have several railway stations within 400m, as do many sites of POS within the London Boroughs in the Green Arc, for example sites in the south and centre of Redbridge, on the northern fringe of Enfield, and the eastern fringes of Barking and Dagenham. Other sites further into the Green Belt, for example around Hoddesdon and Brentwood, are less accessible by rail.

## **Barriers to access**

- 10.39. Amongst its many aims, the Green Arc concept is seeking to improve open space provision and accessibility both on the outskirts of London and beyond. Such open space will provide recreation opportunities for residents of Greater London, which will be very important particularly given the high-density development proposed for many areas. Factors affecting access to open spaces in urban areas, such as parks, and access to more 'natural' spaces in the wider countryside beyond Greater London are therefore very important.

10.40. The discussion on barriers to access in Part A is particularly applicable to the Green Arc area, with many of the same physical, economic and cultural barriers operating. Some factors are particularly influential, such as poor accessibility by public transport, which will impact especially heavily on poorer social groups. It is very important that development of the Green Arc concept considers this issue in order to create socially inclusive spaces. The inadequacy of the 'offer' of the countryside and lack of clear sense of place are also significant in the Green Arc area. Part A of this report outlines a number of opportunities for overcoming such barriers, including better and more comprehensive and coherent information on access to Green Belt sites, and working with the voluntary sector and other groups to identify cultural barriers and ways to meet different groups' needs.

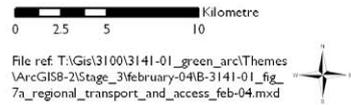


**GREEN ARC**

Figure 10.7: Publicly Accessible Open Space over 400ha

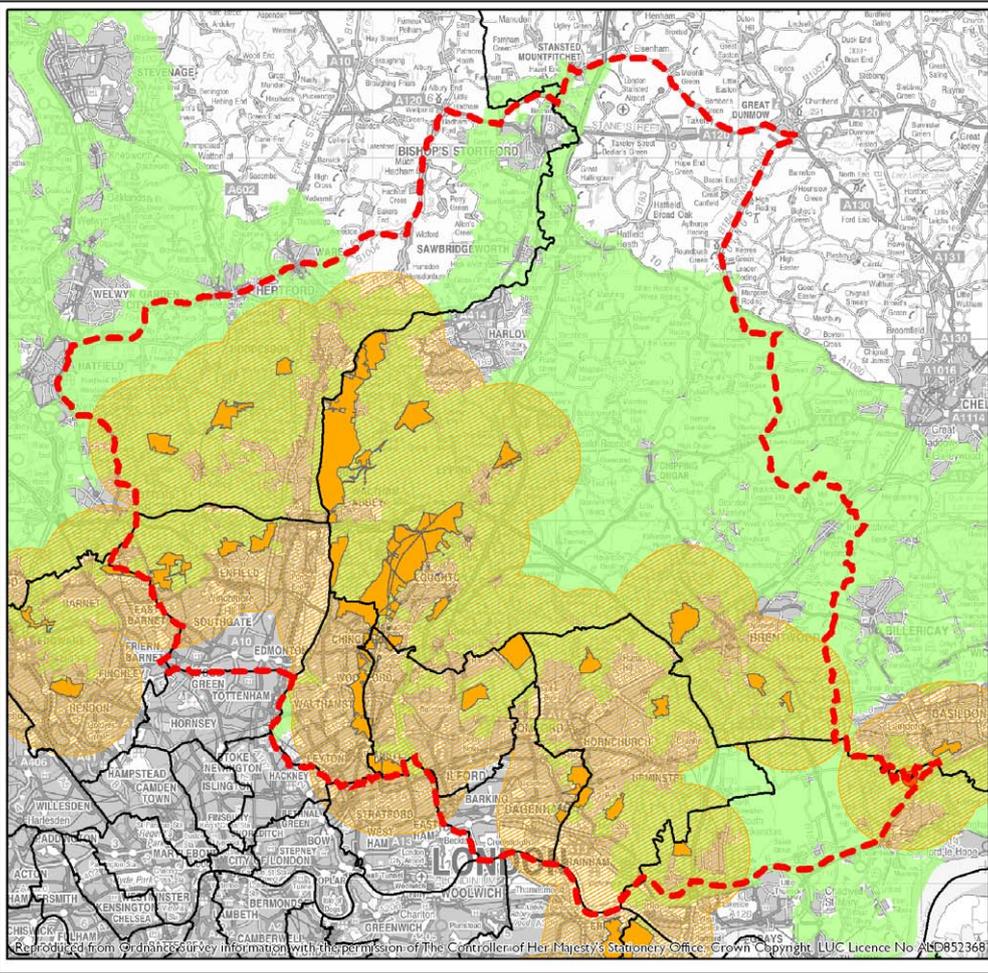
- Key
- Green Arc
  - Counties/Boroughs
  - Green Belt
  - Accessible open space over 400ha
  - Indicative catchment area (8km)

Source: Ordnance Survey, GLA, Forestry Commission, English Nature, Buckinghamshire CC, Essex CC, Hertfordshire CC, Slough UA, Thurrock UA, Windsor & Maidenhead UA and the London Boroughs of Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Croydon, Enfield, Harrow, Havering, Hounslow, Kingston-upon-Thames, Sutton and Waltham Forest



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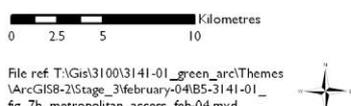


**GREEN ARC**

Figure 10.8: Publicly Accessible Open Space over 60ha

- Key
- Green Arc
  - Counties/Boroughs
  - Green Belt
  - Accessible Open Space over 60ha (no Boundary info)
  - Accessible open space over 60ha
  - Indicative catchment area (3.2km)

Source: Ordnance Survey, GLA, Forestry Commission, English Nature, Buckinghamshire CC, Essex CC, Hertfordshire CC, Slough UA, Thurrock UA, Windsor & Maidenhead UA and the London Boroughs of Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Croydon, Enfield, Harrow, Havering, Hounslow, Kingston-upon-Thames, Sutton and Waltham Forest

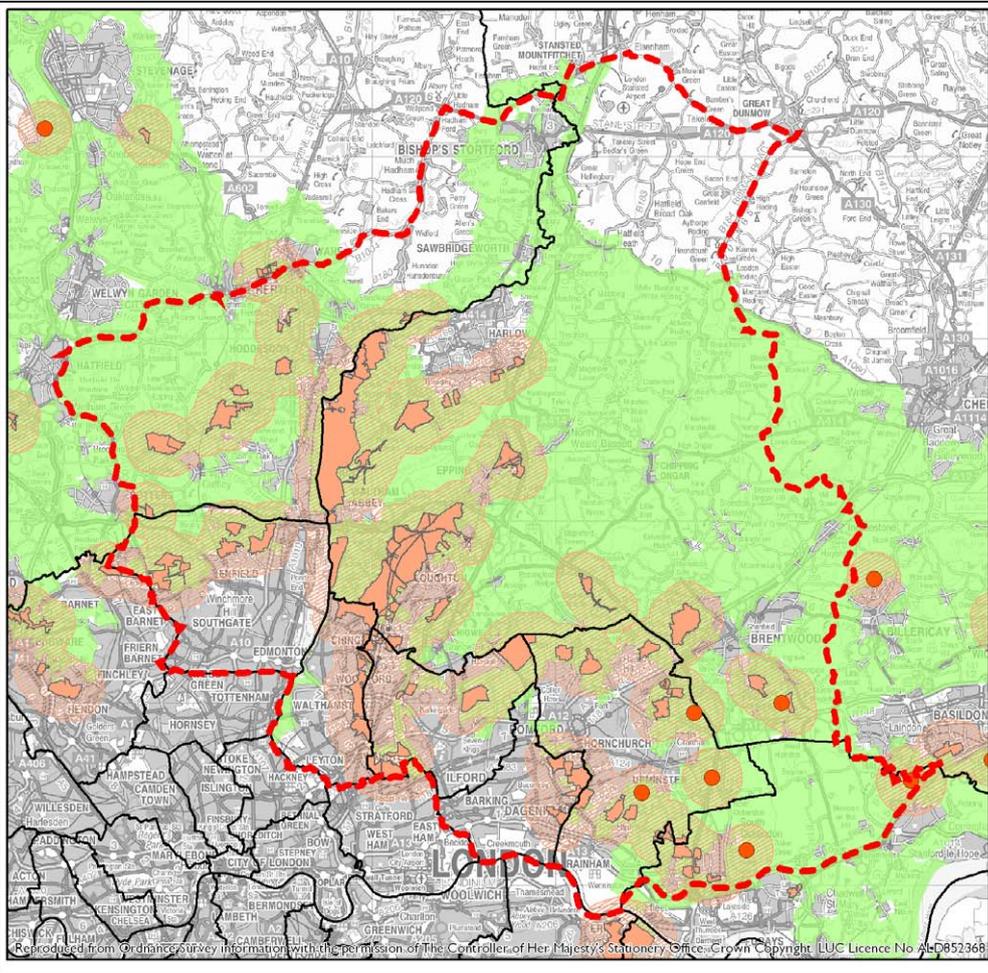


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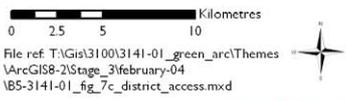


### GREEN ARC

Figure 10.9: Publicly Accessible Open Space over 20ha

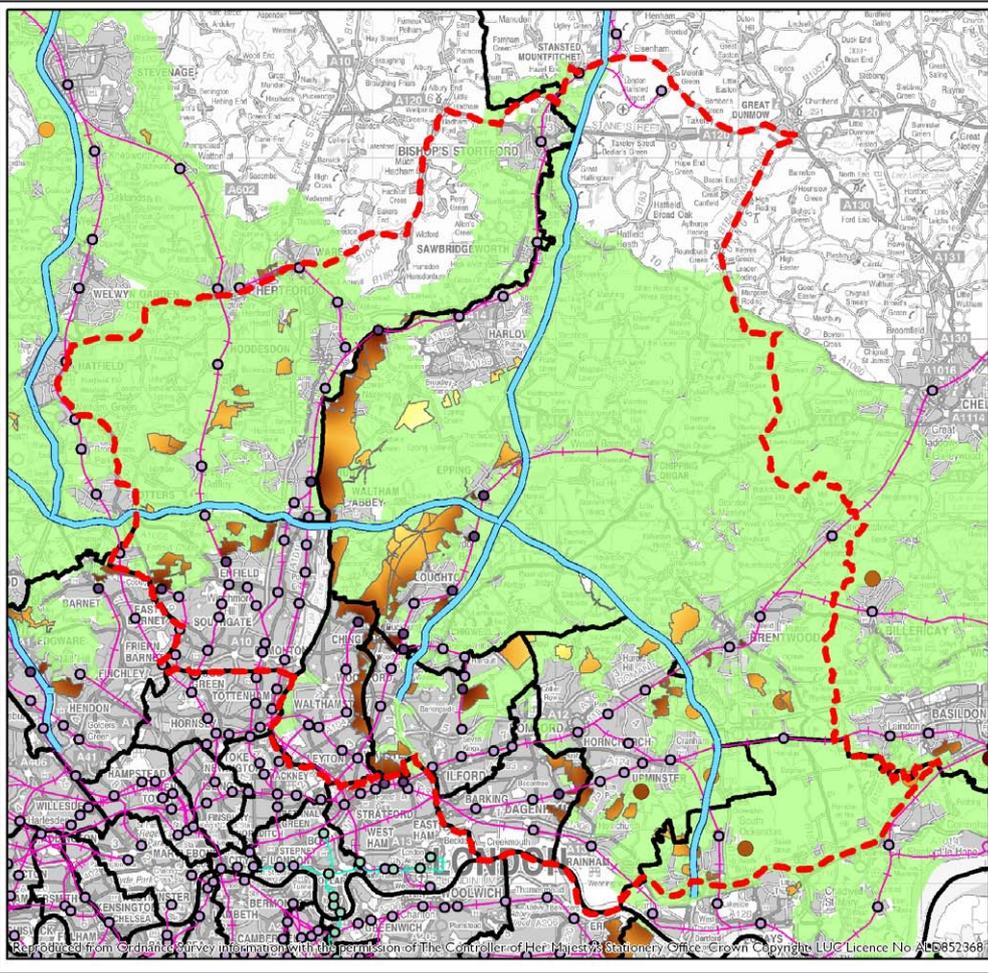
- Key**
- Study Area
  - Counties/Boroughs
  - Green Belt
  - Accessible Open Space over 20ha (no Boundary info)
  - Accessible open space over 20ha
  - Indicative catchment area (1.2km)

Source: Ordnance Survey, GLA, Forestry Commission, English Nature, Buckinghamshire CC, Essex CC, Hertfordshire CC, Slough UA, Thurrock UA, Windsor & Maidenhead UA and the London Boroughs of Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Croydon, Enfield, Harrow, Havering, Hounslow, Kingston-upon-Thames, Sutton and Waltham Forest



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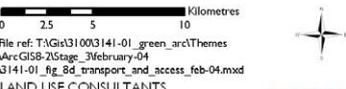


### GREEN ARC

Figure 10.10: All Publicly Accessible Open Space and Transport Connections

- Key**
- Study Area
  - Motorway
  - Counties/Boroughs
  - Railway
  - Rapid transit line
  - Rail station within 400m of Accessible Open Space
  - Other rail station
  - Rapid transit station within 400m of Accessible Open Space
  - Other rapid transit station
  - London Loop walking trail
  - Green Belt
  - Accessible Open Space (shaded by distance to rail/rapid transit station)
  - Accessible Open Space (no boundary info, shaded as above)

Rapid transit lines include the South London Tram network and the Docklands Light Railway  
 Source: Ordnance Survey, GLA, Forestry Commission, English Nature, Buckinghamshire CC, Essex CC, Hertfordshire CC, Slough UA, Thurrock UA, Windsor & Maidenhead UA and the London Boroughs of Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Croydon, Enfield, Harrow, Havering, Hounslow, Kingston-upon-Thames, Sutton and Waltham Forest



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# 11. GREEN ARC VISION AND OBJECTIVES

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## BACKGROUND

- 11.1. The Steering Group drafted a vision for the Green Arc when the concept was at an embryonic stage. The draft vision was distilled into three key elements:
- To create an extensive and attractive recreational landscape for North and East London, Essex and Hertfordshire, characterised by a rich mix of woodlands, grassland and scrub, woodland pasture, riverine wetlands, and parkland, in which animals can graze freely and extensively.
  - To encourage the development of large and well-connected areas of open space and attractions that provide areas of tranquillity with a freedom for people to roam and explore and which meet the needs of local residents whilst drawing people from Greater London and surrounding towns.
  - To improve perception of the Green Belt as a pro-active place, in which positive planning and management of the land and environment is pursued in order to realise the Vision.

## REFINING THE VISION

- 11.2. During the course of this Study, the Green Arc Vision evolved in response to Steering Group members' comments and the views of consultees. Most people agreed that, as initially defined, the Vision addressed the main issues of concern and, as such, would attract support in policy terms. In particular, there is support for woodland creation in appropriate locations, which is consistent with national and regional forestry and woodland strategies<sup>32</sup> and from a public health point of view.
- 11.3. Some concern was expressed about the emphasis on grazing animals which, although a metaphor for large, well-connected areas of open space and a management tool for self-sustaining landscapes, might be misinterpreted.
- 11.4. There was also a strong view that the Vision should give expression to the positive role of the Green Arc in responding to development pressures, particularly those associated with the Sustainable Communities Plan. This would help to ensure that the Green Arc is related closely to the East of England, where a considerable amount of growth is set to occur, as well as London.
- 11.5. To ensure wide support for the Green Arc, it was also considered important to demonstrate the benefits that it will bring to people of all ethnic groups – particularly because of the ethnic diversity of north and east London. This underlines the importance of further consultation, to ensure that the needs and aspirations of different ethnic groups are recognised.

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<sup>32</sup> Woodland for Life: The Regional Woodland Strategy for the East of England, November 2003 (EERA and Forestry Commission)

- 11.6. Above all, it was also agreed that the vision should be big, bold and encapsulate the essence of the Steering Group’s ambitions in simple terms.

## **AGREED VISION FOR THE GREEN ARC**

- 11.7. The agreed vision for the Green Arc is:

***Bringing the BIG OUTDOORS closer to people – through the creation and protection of an extensive, attractive and valued recreational landscape of well-connected and accessible countryside around London, for people and wildlife.***

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

- 11.8. It was agreed that the Vision should be supplemented by strategic objectives that address the full range of opportunities and aspirations for the Green Belt. The following range of strategic objectives were considered appropriate:
- To promote positive uses for the Green Belt that realise the potential to improve the quality and accessibility of the land while meeting its statutory purposes
  - To improve the contribution of the urban fringe countryside to the quality of life of Londoners, local residents, visitors and people beyond the outer boundary
  - To conserve and enhance the biodiversity value
  - To improve the linkages between existing and potential accessible open land for people and wildlife
  - To create attractive destinations for daytrips and holidays, for visitors, tourists and the local population
  - To support initiatives that contribute to sustainable development, including renewable energy, floodwater retention and water gathering areas
  - To provide burial space ‘green’ or ‘woodland’ burials in natural environments

## 12. IMPLEMENTATION, MANAGEMENT AND FUNDING

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### INTRODUCTION

- 12.1. This section sets out proposed mechanisms for implementing the Green Arc, recommends a management structure, and outlines the capital and revenue costs of the Green Arc. It also sets out an indicative programme and identifies potential sources of funding.

### IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

- 12.2. The following implementation mechanisms should be employed to deliver the Green Arc Vision and objectives:

#### **Land acquisitions and land management**

- 12.3. The Green Arc will have two principal mechanisms for creating the new, more accessible landscape described in the vision. These are:

- Land acquisition by public and voluntary sector agencies
- Land management agreements with private landowners.

#### ***Land acquisitions***

- 12.4. As noted in section 2 of this report, publicly owned Green Belt land is often maintained to higher standards and experiences fewer of the problems normally associated with the Green Belt such as fragmentation and degradation of landscape. It is recommended that a strategic approach is adopted to purchasing land within the Green Arc area to provide a greater degree of influence over its management. This would include targeted purchasing of land in close proximity to and between existing initiatives. Land purchase is a feature of Thames Chase Community Forest, where the Forestry Commission acquired 360 hectares of land and has undertaken improvements such as planting, access paths, car parks, signage and seating. Similarly the Corporation of London have a proven track record of land purchase, for example adding an additional 750 ha of Green Belt 'buffer land' around the Forest.
- 12.5. Several partners within the Green Arc are currently considering land acquisitions in four important areas:
- the Green Belt between Theydon Bois and Debden
  - Park Farm: a 53 ha site effectively forming an eastern extension to Hainault Forest. This site is owned by Essex County Council and is being considered by the Woodland Trust.

- Areas of countryside close to Epping Forest to both the south and south-west of Harlow using funding from the ODPM Greenspaces Fund and others forming potential links with both Harlow and the Lee Valley'
- 12.6. A number of these sites are important strategic sites, which perform key roles in Priority Opportunity Areas (see Geographical Structure for the Project Plan below).

### **Prescriptions for land management**

- 12.7. It has been assumed that to ensure the long-term future of the Green Arc that land acquisitions will be key. However, it may be necessary to acquire land with tenancies, in which case it would be possible to negotiate environmental agreements with tenants. Broadly speaking two types of land management regimes are envisaged:
- **Traditional farmed landscapes.** These would be important hedged and wooded landscapes where the Green Arc would seek to retain the landscape character. There would be a move away from intensive arable farming towards extensive permanent pasture. This landscape could also accommodate low-input organic farming initiatives. Access, whilst planned and encouraged, would need to take account of the farming practices. New woods and hedges could be planted.
  - **Extensive naturalistic landscapes.** These would, by their nature, be large areas of relatively unmanaged areas where natural processes of colonization and low intensity grazing would be encouraged. These broadly unenclosed areas would have a low input regime. These areas could accommodate open access. However in reality access could be managed and restricted to key strategic paths. Naturally regenerating woodlands would be encouraged.

### **Private sector funding**

- 12.8. There is potential to attract private sector investment within the Green Arc. This might include the establishment of an endowment scheme by local businesses or attracting inward investment in the area. Such private sector funding would be used to secure the protection and management of Green Belt land. Experience could be taken from existing examples e.g. the endowment schemes to protect open space established by London First and in Milton Keynes.

### **Creative use of the planning system**

- 12.9. Although improved land management and environmental enhancement cannot be achieved through the planning system alone, it provides an important mechanism to influence the location and form of future development. This is especially true given the planning reforms due to come into force in 2004 are intended to achieve a more streamlined system resulting in better quality development.

- 12.10. Probably the most widely known planning tool to influence the scale and form of development is the Section 106 agreement. Planning authorities can enter into such agreements with developers to achieve local benefits in return for the granting of planning permission. There is potential for Local Authorities to use these powers more widely to work towards the Green Arc Vision.
- 12.11. Other, more creative tools exist such as Concept Statements, developed recently by the Countryside Agency. Their purpose is to provide an expression of the kind of place a new development should provide, based on views of the local community, and published at an early stage in the planning process i.e. with the publication of the Local Development Document. This results in a greater degree of influence in the type and form of site-based development. A number of examples of varying scale exist, such as South Hams District Council.

### **Use of other statutory duties and responsibilities**

- 12.12. The Green Arc initiative represents a coming together of a number of Government Agencies, each with specific responsibilities, statutory or otherwise. For example, there is potential for a more proactive use of these responsibilities for the benefit of the Green Arc. For example, English Nature's duties in relation to SSSIs and NNRs, Forestry Commission approval of woodland planting schemes.

### **Influencing regional and local policy**

- 12.13. Regional and local policy has a fundamental bearing on physical change in the Green Arc. It will therefore be important to establish the Green Arc vision and objectives within strategies and statements, the most influential of which will be the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England (to replace current Regional Planning Guidance). This sets the planning context at regional level and the policy framework for Local Development Documents to follow.
- 12.14. The East of England Regional Assembly has submitted a 'qualified submission' or 'banked' version of RPG14 to Government. There will be an opportunity to promote the Green Arc vision and objectives through the Government Consultation to take place from early October 2004 and the Public Examination is due to be held in Mid 2005. The published version (expected early in 2006) will take the form of the new Regional Spatial Strategy.

## **MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

### **Green Arc Partnership**

- 12.15. A Green Arc Partnership should be established, as an informal partnership of the principal organisations, including those already on the Steering Group:
- Lee Valley Regional Park
  - Corporation of London

- Thames Chase
- Woodland Trust
- Countryside Agency
- Forestry Commission
- Greater London Authority
- English Nature
- Essex County Council
- Hertfordshire County Council.

12.16. Additional partners might include the following:

- London Development Agency
- East of England Development Agency
- National Trust
- British Airports Authority

***Role of Partnership members***

12.17. Members of the Partnership will have a number of tasks and responsibilities, including:

- Putting in place a Steering Group to guide the project.
- Reviewing the composition of the Partnership and the wider network of organisations, agencies and associations that may be involved in implementation.
- Ensuring that the role and objectives of the Partnership are understood and publicised within organisations represented on the Partnership.
- Overseeing the development of the Project Plan (see below) to agree flagship projects and the priority of other projects.
- Reviewing the Project Plan.
- Defining sub-groups for each topic area to guide the formulation and implementation of detailed projects.
- Monitoring progress at regular intervals and the strategy as a whole on a five yearly basis.
- Managing the Project Director (see below).

### **Identification of a wider network of key stakeholders**

12.18. The establishment of effective networks to work with the Green Arc Partnership will be a key component of success. Constant and effective links to central, regional and local government as well as implementation bodies, will increase the sphere of influence of the Green Arc and help to bring about change. Organisations could include:

- Local authorities in the Green Arc area
- Royal Parks Agency
- Groundwork
- Principal land owners.

### **Identifying a Champion Organisation**

12.19. A Champion Organisation should be identified with the remit of 'selling' the vision and objectives of the initiative. This would help to improve upstream (e.g. political) and downstream (e.g. implementation bodies) networks and thereby enhance the Green Arc's sphere of influence and funding potential. It is recommended that the Countryside Agency should take on this role, given the organisation's wide and inclusive remit.

### **Appointing a Project Director**

- 12.20. The success of the Partnership will depend to a large extent on the appointment and retention of a suitably qualified and experienced Project Director. Ideally this person would be employed via one of the Partnership organisations.
- 12.21. The Project Director will be responsible for developing the Project Plan (see below), and overseeing project implementation in consultation with the Partnership and wider network. A further priority action in the first three years will be to integrate the Green Arc Vision into the Regional Spatial Strategy and other relevant regional policy documents. The Project Director would also be involved in the coordination of funding bids.
- 12.22. The Project Director will require skills in negotiation, liaison, coordination, facilitation and community outreach. S/he will need to be able to provide on-the-ground support for projects and schemes with practical advice about funding and implementation. Given the geographic extent of the Green Arc, it is vital that the Project Director is able to maintain a strategic perspective and role, and avoid being drawn into the detail of individual local projects.

### **Appointing Project Officers**

12.23. In the longer term (in the next 3 years), it is envisaged that the Project Director could appoint a limited number of project officers to work in particular sub-areas of the Green Arc or as specialists on particular projects.

## **PROJECT PLAN**

- 12.24. A Project Plan should be produced as a first priority. This would provide the overall working strategy for Partnership, showing what is already happening in the Green Arc area, where the gaps are and setting targets for activity. It would also provide a point of source for identifying and appraising projects. The project plan would cover a suitable time period (e.g. three years) and be reviewed on an annual basis. The Plan would be developed by the Project Director with a clear steer from the Partnership.
- 12.25. Development of the Project plan should commence with a consultation workshop with the Partnership and wider network to identify possible projects, to develop criteria against which projects should be appraised and to start to prioritise projects.
- 12.26. The Project Plan could include the following:
- Themes for action reflecting Strategic Objectives e.g. access, recreation and tourism, landscape, nature conservation, heritage and culture, etc.
  - Flagship projects, which will be essential for raising the profile of the Green Arc.
  - 'Easy-win' projects, which will ensure the Green Arc has a positive and visible impact in the short term.
  - A long list of potential projects, which could be structured geographically by 'Management Block' or by 'Priority Opportunity Areas' (see below).

## **GEOGRAPHICAL STRUCTURE FOR THE PROJECT PLAN**

- 12.27. The Steering Group have worked up two possible frameworks for geographically structuring the management of the Green Arc. The GLA has developed a series of emerging 'Management Blocks' and a sub-group of the steering group has identified a range of potential 'Priority Opportunity Areas'. Both are outlined below.

### **Emerging management blocks**

- 12.28. In order to consider how the Green Arc area would operate in terms of management 'areas' or 'units', the GLA has gone some way to defining a series of management blocks within the Green Arc, which break the area down into a series of 'chases'. The aim is for these sub areas to provide an organisational device for further work, funding bids and general communication and marketing.

### **Priority Opportunity Areas**

- 12.29. The Green Arc Steering Group has also gone some way to considering potential areas of opportunity within the Green Arc area. A range of Priority Opportunity Areas have been identified with the aim of creating connectivity between existing initiatives, including the Lee Valley Regional Park, Epping

Forest, Hainault Forest and Thames Chase, and connecting these to the west, to the Broxbourne Woods. It is also the aim of the Green Arc to increase the connection to Harlow, and to the North of Harlow. Criteria for considering Priority Opportunity Areas have been identified as follows:

- Areas which provide or enhance ecological and habitat links between existing areas of importance
- Areas which prevent the coalescence of urban areas
- Areas which enlarge existing areas and create large scale areas
- Areas which can provide physical links through which people can travel
- Areas that are close to centres of population
- Areas that are provided for with public access links
- Areas of important landscape character, which can be conserved or enhanced
- Key linkage areas that are threatened by a third party, thus losing a potential opportunity.

12.30. Six Priority Opportunity Areas have been identified, discussed below, including specific project ideas.

#### ***Stansted, Harlow and the M11 Corridor***

12.31. This area represents part of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Sustainable Communities Plan Growth Area, the M11 Corridor. A significant amount of funding is being made available for the creation of greenspace alongside the new housing developments. These new greenspace sites will require clear definition and vision in order to benefit from their financial investment. The Green Arc Vision and Strategic Objectives are a method to achieve this focused approach ensuring that the new spaces are linked with the Green Arc partner sites and policies. This area is likely to be developed in the near future and therefore Green Arc partners see this Northern section as a Priority Opportunity Area.

#### ***Broxbourne Woods to Lee Valley Regional Park***

12.32. It would be extremely difficult to connect Broxbourne Woods and surroundings with the Lee Valley Regional Park due to the almost solid block of urban development dividing the two areas, which includes Brimsdown, Cheshunt, Broxbourne and Hoddesdon. However, two key opportunity areas have been identified and key landowners and the relevant water company will need to be contacted:

- The New River Link at Broxbourne
- Land north of Hoddesdon at St Margaret's.

- 12.33. There are also opportunities to improve linkages between the woods themselves at Broxbourne.

#### ***Lee Valley Regional Park to Epping Forest***

- 12.34. Two key areas have been identified here, which would allow physical and environmental linkages to be made between the Lee Valley Regional Park and Epping Forest and to the major population centres including Harlow:
- ***North of Waltham Abbey.*** There is a large swathe of countryside, which includes potential land acquisitions in the Galley Hill Wood area and to the south of Harlow. Nearby is a large area of the Lee Valley farm estate. It would be possible to make some linkages quickly in this part of Green Arc. It would further require linkages or acquisitions around Warlies Park to link up with Copped Hall, which is a 700-acre Corporation of London estate. Copped Hall has links to Epping Forest, including the Bell Green Tunnel. The area to the south of Harlow is likely to be under increasing pressure from possible Harlow expansion. The ODPM Greenspaces Funding Bid identifies land acquisition in this area to develop physical links both within the Green Arc and to connect with the people of Harlow.
  - ***South of Waltham Abbey.*** At this point Epping Forest overlooks the Lea Valley, and sites south of Waltham Abbey could provide a link between the two. The re-development of an ordnance site in Enfield could provide access infrastructure. Potentially a small number of land acquisitions could link the two initiatives.

#### ***Epping Forest north through Roydon***

- 12.35. The area from Epping Forest north to Roydon is likely to be under increasing pressure from possible westward Harlow expansion. It will be important to retain ecological and physical links north to the Stort Valley. The ODPM Green spaces Fund has awarded £1 million to fund a range of greenspace projects in and around Harlow, including land acquisition (e.g. land at Galley Hill wood and near Parndon wood, as described above), upgrading of rights of way through this area and funding of consultancy work to prepare a green infrastructure for the rural-urban fringe of Harlow.

#### ***Epping Forest to Hainault Forest***

- 12.36. The key barrier for linkages between Epping Forest and Hainault Forest is the M11. The Corporation of London owns a site north of Theydon Bois and they have identified Green Belt land to the south between Theydon and Debden as an important Green Arc corridor. The latter land acquisition, if successful, would take Corporation ownership south west of the M11 to the River Roding. It is recommended that improved access to the River Roding should be investigated as a potential element of the Green Arc. The Environment Agency should be approached as they have land acquisition powers in river corridors to create flood storage areas. This is a consideration in the Cobbins Brook, further north and immediate involvement of the Agency would be beneficial.

12.37. A key link from the Roding Valley to Hainault Forest could be created through the Lambourne Estate. Essex County Council owns a number of the woods here and footpaths and bridleways have maintained access between them.

#### ***Hainault Forest to Thames Chase***

12.38. There are two potential linkages between Hainault Forest and Thames Chase.

- ***The Dagenham Corridor.*** This is the most westerly point of Thames Chase and is a thin strip of land separating Romford from Dagenham. The London Boroughs of Havering and Barking and Dagenham own about 80 – 90% of the Corridor. New acquisition or access agreements would be needed on the agricultural land around Whalebone Lane North. Acquisition of Park Farm is a critical part of making this connection. A current gravel extraction at Warren Farm may also offer opportunities. The southern end of the corridor could link to the River Thames via the redevelopment of Fords at Dagenham. This area is part of Thames Gateway “London Riverside area”.
- ***The Havering Ridge.*** This wooded ridge geologically and ecologically links Epping Forest to the Thorndon Woods at Brentwood. The wooded ridge dominates the high land north of Romford. The area contains four substantial Country Parks. Three are owned by the London Borough of Havering (Havering Country Park (approx 68 ha), Bedford park (approx 87 ha) and Dagenham Park (47 ha)). The fourth Country Park is Weald Country Park, which is over 200 hectares and owned by Essex County Council. The local authorities have already made substantial links between these sites. There are further opportunities to make linkages south to Thames Chase partners, including Essex County Council and Brentwood Borough Council in the Thorndon area and the Forestry Commission south of Harold Wood.

12.39. A substantial number of sites have already been created in Thames Chase and it is intended that Thames Chase will be further linked to the south to Rainham, Aveley and Wennington Marshes and to the east to the Green Grid projects in Thames Gateway South Essex.

## **PROGRAMME**

12.40. The figure below presents the elements of the management structure that need to be put in place over time to make the initiative as effective as possible.

	SHORT TERM 1-3 years	MEDIUM TERM 4-8 years	LONG TERM 9-40 years +
<b>Time period</b>			
<b>Milestone</b>			
<b>Key Features</b>			
<b>Vision/Identity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear identity with improved recognition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong identity well recognised</li> <li>• Review of vision and strategic direction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision being actively delivered and realised</li> <li>• Review of vision and strategic direction</li> </ul>
<b>Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start-up funding obtained</li> <li>• Successful bids on project basis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium term funding secured for administration</li> <li>• More established funding mechanisms for achieving physical change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-sustaining funding streams through revenue generation and member/outside contributions</li> <li>• In-house and outside expertise in obtaining competitive funds</li> <li>• Green Arc objectives built into competitive fund targeting mechanisms</li> </ul>
<b>Management Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Champion' organisation</li> <li>• Partnership with established responsibilities</li> <li>• Project Director employed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Champion' organisation</li> <li>• Partnership with established responsibilities</li> <li>• Project Director with established responsibilities</li> <li>• Four Project Officers employed</li> <li>• Action still driven primarily from 'ground level'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Champion' organisation</li> <li>• Partnership with established responsibilities</li> <li>• Project Director and Officers with established responsibilities</li> <li>• Action still driven primarily from 'ground level'</li> </ul>
<b>Networks/Influence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wider network established</li> <li>• Well-networked upstream and downstream</li> <li>• Well-linked to Communities Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established associated network of organisations</li> <li>• Political backing</li> <li>• Increased ownership of initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established associated network of organisations</li> <li>• Integral part of Communities Plan</li> <li>• Working closely with ODFM and other Government Dept/agencies</li> </ul>
<b>Project Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare Project Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Project Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to regularly review Project Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Action</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiating and overseeing projects</li> <li>• Greater co-ordination of existing initiatives</li> <li>• Concept established in Regional Spatial Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of established initiatives with visible signs of success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits being realised through physical change e.g. improved access.</li> </ul>

## INDICATIVE COSTS

- 12.41. The Green Arc steering group, drawing on partner's experience in terms of funding environmental initiatives, have generated some estimates of capital and revenue costs of establishing the Green Arc.

### Capital Costs

- 12.42. Forestry Commission acquisition costs in Thames Chase provide a relatively accurate guide for the Green Arc. The costs also include considerable infrastructure including paths, car parks, seating, sculptures, tree planting (60%), new meadows (40%), new ponds and new signage systems. In addition there has been a substantial outlay for marketing new sites in Thames Chase. The average cost of the green space creation has been approximately £12,000 per hectare. However the lower intensity regimes recommended for large areas of the Green Arc suggest a lower figure of around £10,000 per hectare.
- 12.43. The current area of the Green Arc is 135,600 hectares. If 10% of the area was required, 13,600 ha would therefore be required at a cost of £136 million. This of course would be spread over a long timescale. The Thames Chase Plan is programmed over **40 years**. If this timescale were adopted it would equate to **£3.4 million per annum**.
- 12.44. Acquisitions could be spread amongst existing partners; however most are limited to their forest, regional park or borough boundaries. The Forestry Commission and Woodland Trust, as national partners, could therefore have an important role in acquiring land that is geographically difficult for other partners.

### Revenue costs of estate management

- 12.45. The land management regimes advocated for the Green Arc are fundamentally low input. Extensive land management regimes, such as those practiced by Forestry Commission and Epping Forest attract costs of approximately £1,000 per hectare, which include ranger services, community workers and moderate landscape management. The low-key landscape management of the Woodland Trust costs approximately £500 to £900 per hectare. The Woodland Trust figures offer a better model for the Green Arc management regimes. At **£500 per hectare** the cost of running the new estate is £6.8 million per annum, when all land over 40 year programming period has been purchased (i.e. costs of management will increase year on year as area under management increases). If this were spread across the existing 10 to 15 partners this would equate to £453,000 to £680,000.

### Revenue costs of management structure

- 12.46. Based on the management structure outlined above, the revenue costs of the management structure would be as follows:
- Project Director's salary of £40 k per annum, commencing in year one.
  - Project Officers' salaries of £25 k per annum for four Officers, commencing in year three.

## Total costs

12.47. **Table 12.1** provides indicative capital and revenue costs for the Green Arc over a 40-year programme period. Costs are broken down into three timescales (short, medium and long term) and indicate costs for that period (rather than cumulative costs across the programme period). Total capital costs over the 40-year period are **£136 million**. Total revenue costs of salaries and land management are **£145.8 million** over the 40-year period. Total costs over the time period are therefore **£281.8 million**.

**Table 12.1: Green Arc costs**

Time period	Short term (years 1-3)	Medium term (years 4-8)	Long term (years 9-40)	Over 40 year programme
Capital cost per year (£million) for land acquisition	3,400,000	3,400,000	3,400,000	3,400,000
<b>Capital cost (£million) in each time period for land acquisition</b>	<b>10,200,000</b>	<b>17,000,000</b>	<b>108,800,000</b>	<b>136,000,000</b>
Cumulative area of estate at end of time period (ha)	1,020	2,720	13,600	13,600
Estate management cost (£500/ha) in each time period	1,020,000	5,100,000	133,280,000	139,400,000
Project director costs in time period (£40k pa + 20% overhead costs)	144,000	240,000	1,536,000	1,920,000
Project officers in time period (x4 at £25k pa + 20% overhead costs)	-	600,000	3,840,000	4,440,000
<b>Total revenue costs in time period</b>	<b>1,164,000</b>	<b>5,940,000</b>	<b>138,656,000</b>	<b>145,760,000</b>
Average revenue cost in time period	388,000	1,188,000	4,333,000	3,644,000
<b>TOTAL IN TIME PERIOD</b>	<b>11,364,000</b>	<b>22,940,000</b>	<b>247,456,000</b>	<b>281,760,000</b>

## FUNDING

12.48. The Government's Sustainable Communities Plan (February 2003) presented several areas for major housing development, including the London-Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough Growth Area and Thames Gateway Growth Area. The former falls partially within the Green Arc area, whilst the latter abuts the southern edge of the Green Arc. The Government has provided a commitment for new development to improve quality of life in all locations, which includes objectives for enhancing the environment and creating opportunities for public enjoyment of open space. There is a major opportunity within the Communities Plan for the Green Arc to attract sustained funding for environmentally based initiatives.

- 12.49. Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future sets out how the Government will invest £22 billion over 2002/03 to 2005/6 to improve housing and communities. The Sustainable Communities funding allocates specific funds to each of the growth areas (£446 million to the Thames Gateway and £164 million to all other areas over the period 2003/4 to 2005/6). The Thames Gateway has already allocated £15 million to environmental projects, although there is likely to be some potential for further projects; overall approximately 75% of the £446 million has been allocated to projects<sup>33</sup>. It is also important that projects fall within the Thames Gateway area – which due to the boundary of the Green Arc may possibly preclude this source of funding. In the London-Stansted-Cambridge growth area all funds have now been allocated<sup>34</sup>, but this does not preclude further funding being made available in future spending reviews.
- 12.50. The Sustainable Communities Plan also allocated £201 million to improve parks and public spaces over three years. This includes £40m to assist in the environmental charity Groundwork's work with local authorities and communities to deliver environmental regeneration. Funds are paid directly to Groundwork, and Groundwork delivers initiatives through working with a range of partners. Other funding sources from the £201 million are already allocated and are more appropriate for smaller scale local neighbourhood initiatives, such as the Liveability Fund.
- 12.51. As noted above the ODPM Green spaces Fund has awarded £1 million to fund a range of greenspace projects in and around Harlow, including land acquisition.
- 12.52. In addition to funding through the Sustainable Communities Plan, a wide range of funding sources exists with the potential to support project-based activity in the Green Arc. **Appendix 4** provides a list of the most relevant funds and the type of projects that can be supported

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<sup>33</sup> Pers comm. Susan Koconowski ODPM (Thames Gateway)

<sup>34</sup> Pers comm. Sally Randall ODPM (All other growth areas)



## 13. PART B: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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13.1. Section 10 sets out the recommended Green Arc boundary, which focuses on the eastern half of the original area of search (see Figure 11.1).

13.2. Section 11 outlines the recommended Vision for the Green Arc:

***Bringing the BIG OUTDOORS closer to people – through the creation and protection of an extensive, attractive and valued recreational landscape of well-connected and accessible countryside around London, for people and wildlife.***

13.3. The following range of strategic objectives are also recommended to give expression to the Vision:

- Promote positive uses for the Green Belt that realise the potential to improve the quality and accessibility of the land while maintaining its strategic objectives
- To improve the contribution of the countryside around London to the quality of life of Londoners, local residents, visitors and people beyond the outer boundary
- To conserve and enhance the biodiversity value
- To improve the linkages between existing and potential accessible open land for people and wildlife
- To create attractive destinations for daytrips and holidays, for visitors, tourists and the local population
- To support initiatives that contribute to sustainable development, including renewable energy, floodwater retention and water gathering areas
- To provide burial space 'green' or 'woodland' burials in natural environments

13.4. Section 12 recommends that the following implementation mechanisms be employed to deliver the Green Arc Vision and objectives:

- Land acquisitions and prescriptions for land management
- Private sector funding
- Creative use of the planning system
- Use of other statutory duties and responsibilities
- Influencing regional and local policy

- 13.5. It recommends that a Green Arc Partnership is established comprising those organisations already on the Steering Group:
- Lee Valley Regional Park
  - Corporation of London
  - Thames Chase
  - Woodland Trust
  - Countryside Agency
  - Forestry Commission
  - Greater London Authority
  - English Nature
  - Essex County Council
  - Hertfordshire County Council.
- 13.6. Members of the Partnership should have a number of tasks and responsibilities, including:
- Reviewing the composition of the Partnership and the wider network of organisations, agencies and associations that may be involved in implementation.
  - Ensuring that the role and objectives of the Partnership are understood and publicised within organisations represented on the Partnership.
  - Overseeing the development of the Project Plan (see below) to agree flagship projects and the priority of other projects.
  - Reviewing the Project Plan.
  - Defining sub-groups for each topic area to guide the formulation and implementation of detailed projects.
  - Monitoring progress at regular intervals and the strategy as a whole on a five yearly basis.
  - Managing the Project Director (see below).
- 13.7. Constant and effective links should be made with central, regional and local government as well as implementation bodies to help the sphere of influence of the Green Arc and help to bring about change. This wider network should include:
- Groundwork
  - Principal land owners.

- 13.8. A Champion Organisation should be identified with the remit of 'selling' the vision and objectives of the initiative. It is recommended that the Countryside Agency should take on this role, given the organisation's wide and inclusive remit.
- 13.9.** A suitably qualified and experienced Project Director should be appointed; ideally this person would be seconded from one of the Partnership organisations. The Project Director should be responsible for developing the Project Plan (see below), and overseeing project implementation in consultation with the Partnership and wider network. A further priority action in the first three years should be to integrate the Green Arc Vision into the Regional Spatial Strategy and other relevant regional policy documents. The Project Director should also be involved in the coordination of funding bids.
- 13.10.** In the longer term (in the next 3 years), it is recommended that that the Project Director should appoint a limited number of project officers to work in particular sub-areas of the Green Arc or as specialists on particular projects.
- 13.11. A Project Plan should be produced as a first priority, to provide the overall working strategy for the Partnership. The project plan would cover a suitable time period (e.g. three years) and be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 13.12. Development of the Project plan should commence with a consultation workshop with the Partnership and wider network to identify possible projects, to develop criteria against which projects should be appraised and to start to prioritise projects.
- 13.13. The Project Plan should include the following:
- Themes for action reflecting Strategic Objectives e.g. access, recreation and tourism, landscape, nature conservation, heritage and culture, etc.
  - Flagship projects, which will be essential for raising the profile of the Green Arc.
  - 'Easy-win' projects, which will ensure the Green Arc has a positive and visible impact in the short term.
  - A long list of potential projects, which could be structured geographically by 'Management Block' or by 'Priority Opportunity Areas' (see below).
- 13.14. The Project Plan could usefully be structured geographically, for example identifying projects within Priority Opportunity Areas to build up links between key areas within the Green Arc. The Steering Group has identified five Priority Opportunity Areas:
- Stansted, Harlow and the M11 Corridor
  - Broxbourne Woods to Lee Valley Regional Park
  - Lee Valley Regional Park to Epping Forest
  - Epping Forest north through Roydon
  - Epping Forest to Hainault Forest

- Hainault Forest to Thames Chase.
- 13.15. Over a 40-year programme period, total capital costs of land acquisition are estimated to be around **£136 million**. Total running cost of the estate including staff, maintenance, management and public consultation are likely to be in the order of **£145.8million** over the 40-year period. Total costs over the time period are therefore estimated to be around **£281.8 million**.
- 13.16. The Government has made a commitment through the Sustainable Communities Plan that new development should improve quality of life in all locations, which includes objectives for enhancing the environment and creating opportunities for public enjoyment of open space. There is a major opportunity within the Communities Plan for the Green Arc to attract sustained funding for environmentally-based initiatives. A range of other funding sources has also been identified.

# PART C

## 14. FRAMEWORK MODEL

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### EXTENDING THE GREEN ARC IDEA

14.1. Part A of this report concluded that a strategic approach to the management of the wider countryside around London could bring a number of important benefits. These include:

- Environmental enhancement across administrative boundaries
- Consolidation and integration of existing initiatives into a more cohesive framework
- Development pressures of a strategic nature require a strategic response
- The opportunities and aspirations for the Green Belt would be realised more effectively in the context of a strategic initiative.

### THE FRAMEWORK MODEL

14.2. Through the evolution of the Green Arc initiative a number of lessons have been learned. These have been developed into '**Guiding Principles**', which could be applied to strategic initiatives elsewhere in the countryside around London or other cities.

14.3. A framework model has been developed, based on these Guiding Principles. The purpose of the model is to provide a framework to achieve improved access to the countryside and improved quality of landscape in the urban fringe. The model identifies a series of **Actions** which should guide activity, and a series of more detailed **Guiding Principles**.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Guiding principles</b>
<b>Stage 1: Inception</b>	
Identify a broad area which might benefit from a Strategic Environmental Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can you identify an area with a distinct set of issues/pressures?</li><li>• Are there existing initiatives/organisations which work well separately but which would benefit from a more coherent framework?</li><li>• Are there successful initiatives operating in the area which could create a focus and momentum for the</li></ul>

	idea?
Identify the issues to be addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is environmental or landscape quality in decline?</li> <li>• Is the area facing development pressures?</li> <li>• Is the area facing pressures from changes in agriculture?</li> <li>• Does the area lack accessible areas for formal and informal recreation?</li> <li>• Are there untapped areas of potential e.g. for improving public accessibility?</li> </ul>
Identify the key stakeholders related to these issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which organisations operating in the area have a remit or interest in addressing the issues identified above?</li> <li>• Who are the key partners involved in existing initiatives?</li> </ul>
Identify core stakeholders to steer the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which stakeholders are already involved in successful initiatives on the ground and could provide guidance and add impetus?</li> <li>• Which stakeholders have access to funding streams?</li> <li>• Which stakeholders have the resources available (including staff time) to actively develop the idea?</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 2: Defining a boundary and vision</b>	
Define a logical boundary (management unit)	<p>The area covered by the Strategic Environmental Initiative should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide scope/opportunities to achieve the Vision (see below), including a large area of predominately open land</li> <li>• Focus on a manageable and clearly defined area</li> <li>• Include key existing environmental initiatives and enable links to be made between them</li> <li>• Focus on countryside that is most in</li> </ul>

	<p>need of improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cover areas where future development pressures are likely to be greatest</li> <li>• Consider the likely availability of funding.</li> </ul>
Define a vision and set of objectives	<p>The vision should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bold and arresting</li> <li>• Clear and concise</li> <li>• Highlight the positive role the initiative will play</li> </ul> <p>The objectives should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add depth to the vision</li> <li>• Outline the full range of opportunities and aspirations</li> <li>• Set out how the needs and aspirations of all groups are addressed.</li> </ul>
Decide on a strategy for communicating and consulting with wider stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the key points for consultation and communication (for example, during the early stages of development of the idea, and then again when the form of the Initiative has been developed further)</li> <li>• Ensure a wide and inclusive group of stakeholders are consulted to ensure the needs and aspirations of all groups are taken into account.</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 3: Management, implementation and funding</b>	
Define a management structure	<p>The management structure should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain clarity of purpose based on a clear vision and objectives</li> <li>• Have a sufficiently high profile to attract positive publicity and funding</li> <li>• Have an independent identity</li> <li>• Be inclusive with involvement of voluntary and minority sectors</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add value and not duplicate existing initiatives</li> <li>• Have clear lines of accountability</li> <li>• Be well networked with strong links to implementation organisations</li> <li>• Include a Champion Figure to 'sell' the initiative.</li> </ul>
Identify implementation mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify initiatives to work with</li> <li>• Consider the role of land acquisition versus management agreements</li> <li>• Identify funding sources</li> <li>• Consider the role the planning system could play in delivery</li> <li>• Consider how the Initiative could be embedded in regional and local policy.</li> </ul>
Market the Strategic Environmental Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop promotional material</li> <li>• Raise the profile through promotion documents and events</li> </ul>
Develop a project plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify opportunities on the ground</li> <li>• Define prescriptions for management</li> <li>• Identify project priorities</li> </ul>
Initiate projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Test project proposals against Project Plan.</li> </ul>

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**APPENDIX I**  
**Workshop Attendees**



**Green Arc Workshop**  
**Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2003**

**ATTENDEES**

Steve Prewer, Manager of Countryside Services, Basildon District Council

Ron Melville, Forestry Commission

Marina Pacheco, Outer London Area Manager, BTCV

Jeremy Wisenfeld, Corporation of London

Jeremy Dagley, Conservation Officer, Corp. of London

Sally Hayns, Public Affairs Manager, Corp of London

Catherine Cairns, Countryside Agency

Jane Houghton, Countryside Agency

Terry Robinson, Director London region, Countryside Agency

Valerie Woodifield, Countryside Agency

Alan Wheeler, Consultant Regional Planner, EERA

Gordon Wyatt, Conservation Officer, English Nature

Ian White, Senior Planning Officer, Epping Forest District Council

Martin Wakelin, Landscape & Ecology Manager, Essex County Council

Jim Lyon, Forest District Manager, Forest Enterprise

Jonathan Spencer, Senior Ecologist, Forestry Commission

Alex Brearley, Team Leader in Thames Chase, Forest Enterprise

Steve Scott, Conservator, Forestry Commission

Harry Bitten, Friends of Epping Forest

Dearbhla Lawson, Regional Planning & Growth Areas, Go East Cambridge

Nick Burton, Director London Parks & Green Spaces Forum

Dr Dave Dawson, Biodiversity Strategy Manager, Greater London Authority

John O'Neil, Senior Planner, Policy Partnerships, Greater London Authority

Steve Rose, Executive Director, Groundwork Hertfordshire

Rob Rees, CMS Director, Hertfordshire County Council

Philip Smith, Land Use Consultants

Charlotte Goodwin, Land Use Consultants

Michael Henderson, Land Use Consultants

Emily Reynolds, Nature Conservation Team Leader, Ldn Bor of Redbridge, Hainault Country Park

Bill Munro, Forward Planning Manager, Ldn Bor of Harrow

Claire Martin, Policy Officer, Lee Valley Regional Park

Dave Perkins, Lee Valley Regional Park

Mike Levett, Senior Parks Development Officer, Ldn. Bor of Barking & Dagenham

Judith Hargreaves, London Green Belt Council

Annie Chipchase, Regional Conservation Officer, London Wildlife Trust

Paul Hammett, Environment & Land Use Adviser, East Anglia Region, National Farmers Union

Michael Cullen, Ramblers Association

Dave Symonds, Landscape Officer, Surrey County Council

Karen Hearnshaw, Senior Planning Officer, Surrey County Council

Sarah Parry-Jones, Manager, London Sustrans

John Meehan, Director Thames Chase

Simon Aguss, Thames Chase

Simon Aguss, Project Co-ordinator, Thames Chase

Catherine Bailey, Green Spaces Officer, Thames Chase

Alex Nickson, Environmental Co-ordinator, Thames Gateway London

Tony Chadwick, Regional Policy Officer, The Woodland Trust

Nick Morgan, Regional Development Manager, The Woodland Trust

Isabel Baxter, Strategic Environmental Planning Manager, Thurrock Council

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Summary of existing environmental initiatives**



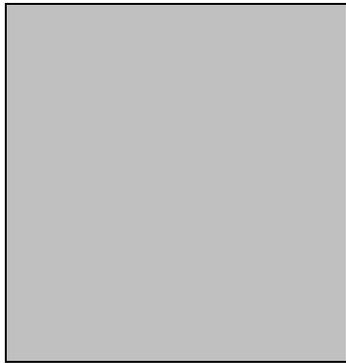
## EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

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<b>Name of initiative</b>	The Green Corridor
<b>Geographical coverage (districts covered)</b>	A 15km long and 3km wide strip along the A4/M4 in the London Boroughs of Ealing, Hillingdon and Hounslow. Since 2002 this has been extended up to and including the A40/ M40 to the north and the A316/ M3 to the south.
<b>Date established</b>	1997 as a Single Regeneration Bid Pilot Project
<b>Lead organisation</b>	The Green Corridor, which is a registered charity and is the “successor body” of the five year government funded regeneration partnership
<b>Type of organisation</b>	A registered charity
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• London Borough of Ealing</li> <li>• London Borough of Hillingdon</li> <li>• London Borough of Hounslow</li> <li>• BAA Heathrow</li> <li>• The Highways Agency</li> <li>• Transport for London (from July 2000)</li> <li>• The Countryside Agency</li> <li>• Chamber of Commerce - West London Business</li> <li>• British Airways</li> <li>• Groundwork London</li> <li>• Groundwork Thames Valley</li> </ul>
<b>Key plans/strategies/ documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape Enhancement Strategy (LES) (1998)</li> <li>• Review of the Green Corridors Partnership LES (2002)</li> <li>• The lessons learned: A report back on the National SRB Pilot Study (2002)</li> <li>• Supplementary Planning Guidance has been drafted, but not yet adopted by the Boroughs.</li> </ul>
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	<p>Four strategic objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Addressing the poor environmental quality of the M4/A4 transport corridor through the implementation of an Integrated Management Strategy.</li> <li>2. Improving the perception of the M4/A4 as a welcoming entrance to the Capital.</li> <li>3. Contributing to the economic and tourism potential of West London.</li> <li>4. Providing environmental benefits for those communities affected by their location within the UK's busiest transport corridor.</li> </ol> <p>Also prepared a Landscape Enhancement Strategy with</p>

	<p>the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To assess the current landscape quality</li> <li>• To provide a strategic landscape framework which complemented other initiatives and strategies in the GCP target area</li> <li>• To provide guidance on the type of landscape elements that should be used within each part of the framework</li> <li>• To confirm which key locations would bring the greatest benefits to the GCP target area.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mechanisms – how established</b></p>	<p>As a Single Regeneration Bid Pilot Project. Now a registered charity.</p>
<p><b>Funding sources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SRB funding</li> <li>• Countryside Agency Grant</li> <li>• BAA</li> <li>• London Boroughs of Ealing, Hillingdon and Hounslow</li> <li>• S 106 Agreements</li> <li>• Contributions from private sector</li> </ul>
<p><b>Achievements to date</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planted over 30,000 trees</li> <li>• Created more than 70,000 m2 of new woodland</li> <li>• Planted 6km of hedgerow</li> <li>• Improved more than 25km of road corridor</li> <li>• Supported over 120 voluntary and community groups</li> <li>• Involved over 3,600 young people and more than 45 schools</li> <li>• Worked with over 40 businesses</li> </ul>

<b>Name of initiative</b>	The Green Gateway
<b>Geographical coverage (districts covered)</b>	40 square miles in one Thames Gateway area of London
<b>Date established</b>	2000
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Groundwork East London, GLA and Thames Chase
<b>Type of organisation</b>	Charity (environmental, regeneration and community)
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 Boroughs</li> <li>• Bioregional Development Group</li> <li>• BTCV</li> <li>• English Nature</li> <li>• Forestry Commission</li> <li>• Ground Work Thames Gateway London South</li> <li>• LDA</li> <li>• London Tree Officer Association</li> <li>• London Wildlife Trust</li> <li>• NUFU</li> <li>• Trees for London</li> <li>• Thames Estuary Partnership</li> <li>• Thames Gateway London Partnership</li> </ul>
<b>Key plans/strategies/documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Gateway Strategy Document, 2002</li> <li>• Urban Forestry Strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	<p>The Green Gateway Partnership is the shared environmental vision for the Thames Gateway London. It seeks to enhance the urban environment using trees and woodlands for the benefit of people, wildlife and the local economy. It can offer grants for tree planting and woodland management to help create a strategic green infrastructure.</p> <p>Key objectives agreed by the partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the location and extent of existing trees and woodland in streets, parks, gardens and informal open space, and assess available land where more trees and woodland can be introduced through planting or natural colonisation.</li> <li>• Increase tree cover and improve existing woodlands, whilst taking account of other habitats and competing land uses.</li> <li>• Work within local and regional planning frameworks to protect existing trees and add to the forest through the development process.</li> <li>• Raise awareness of the benefits that trees can bring to</li> </ul>



- the people of Thames Gateway London.
- Promote best practice and encourage exchange of experience and resources.
  - Work in collaboration with public, private and voluntary organisations and with individuals to add to the urban forest by planting appropriate trees and to deliver broader aspects of the strategy through a collaborative partnership approach.
  - Maximise resources in support of the urban forest strategy, particularly by capitalising on the combined strength of multi-sectoral partnerships.

**Mechanisms – how established**

Steering Group with quarterly meetings, no constitution or budget, but agreed strategy.  
Groundwork handles funds on Green Gateway’s behalf

**Funding sources**

Government sponsored

**Achievements to date**

- 30,000 trees planted in Thamesmead in 2003
- Involving local people in tree planting initiatives
- Greening some of the deprived parts of the gateway

<b>Name of initiative</b>	Watling Chase Community Forest
<b>Geographical coverage (districts covered)</b>	72 miles <sup>2</sup> /188km <sup>2</sup> in south Hertfordshire and North London (Potters Bar, St Albans, Bushey, Borehamwood and Barnet).
<b>Date established</b>	1991
<b>Lead organisation</b>	National Community Forests Partnership
<b>Type of organisation</b>	Local Authority Based
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Countryside Agency</li> <li>• Hertsmere Borough Council</li> <li>• The Forestry Commission</li> <li>• City and District of St Albans</li> <li>• Hertfordshire County Council</li> <li>• Welwyn Hatfield Council</li> </ul>
<b>Key plans/strategies/documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forest Plan 1995</li> <li>• Forest Plan Review 2001</li> <li>• Landscape Supplement 2001</li> <li>• Annual Review 2002 &amp; 2003</li> </ul>
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	The Vision for Watling Chase, described in the Forest Plan, is to see much of the areas under positive and appropriate management by 2025.
<b>Mechanisms – how established</b>	It is one of 12 Community Forests in established England.
<b>Funding sources</b>	See sponsoring partners listed above.
<b>Achievements to date</b>	<p><b>Achievements since 1991</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 283 hectares of new planting</li> <li>• 1187 hectares of existing woodland brought into management</li> <li>• 849 hectares of existing woodland opened for recreation and access</li> <li>• 121 kilometres of footpaths, bridleways and cycleways opened up or improved</li> <li>• 435 hectares of non-woodland habitat created or brought into management</li> <li>• 28.5 kilometres of hedgerow created or brought into management.</li> </ul> <p><b>Achievements this year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 22.15 hectares of new woodland planted</li> <li>• 2 hectares of woodland under new management</li> </ul>



- 5.63 kilometres of new hedgerow
- 1.7 kilometers of paths restored/created
- 118.7 hectares of non-woodland habitat created or restored
- 5.4 hectares of new access to woodland
- 0.4 hectares of new access to non-woodland
- 15 school events held
- 52 non-school events held.

<b>Name of initiative</b>	Thames Chase Community Forest
<b>Geographical coverage (districts covered)</b>	40 sq. miles (104sq. km) in East London and South West Essex
<b>Date established</b>	1990
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Thames Chase (part of the National Community Forest Partnership)
<b>Type of organisation</b>	Local Authority based
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essex County Council</li> <li>• London Borough of Havering</li> <li>• London Borough of Barking and Dagenham</li> <li>• Thurrock Council</li> <li>• Brentwood Borough Council</li> <li>• Countryside Agency</li> <li>• Forestry Commission</li> <li>• British Trust for Conservation Volunteers.</li> </ul>
<b>Key plans/strategies/documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thames Chase Plan (first published in 1992 and fully re-written in 2000).</li> <li>• Annual Thames Chase Business Action Plan</li> <li>• “Out and About in Thames Chase” - a guide to all publicly accessible sites in Thames Chase.</li> </ul>
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	<p>Mission:  “To renew and regenerate the landscape at the edge of East London and South Essex by creating Thames Chase, the Community Forest: a varied wooded landscape for local people to influence, create, use, enjoy and cherish.”</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Creating new woodland</li> <li>2. Managing existing woodland</li> <li>3. Creating and improving access to the countryside</li> <li>4. Involving local people</li> <li>5. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment</li> <li>6. Assembling resources and partnerships</li> </ol>
<b>Mechanisms – how established</b>	Established as one of three national trial Community Forests in 1990, through the initiative of the then Countryside Commission.
<b>Funding sources</b>	<p>Core funding from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Countryside Agency</li> <li>• Essex County Council</li> <li>• London Borough of Havering</li> </ul>



- London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
  - Thurrock Council
  - Brentwood Borough Council.
- Project funding derived from a range of public, private and charitable sector sources for specific project delivery.

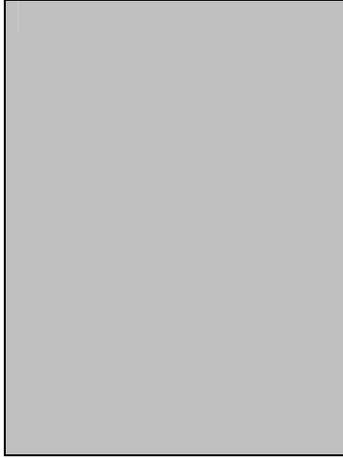


- 452ha of tree planting achieved (over 1.2 million trees)
- 418ha of existing woodland brought into management
- 76km of new and upgraded access routes created
- 312ha of non-woodland areas opened for public access
- 34km of hedgerows created or restored
- 455ha of non-woodland habitat created or restored.

<b>Name of initiative</b>	East London Green Grid
<b>Geographical coverage (districts covered)</b>	London Boroughs of Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Redbridge, Newham, Lewisham, Greenwich, Bexley, Barking and Dagenham, Havering
<b>Date established</b>	Not formally established; the Green Grid initiative was identified in RPG 9a as a potential mechanism for improving the environmental quality of the area. In 2003 funding was obtained to start working up detailed proposals for the East London Green Grid.
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Thames Gateway London Partnership (TGLP) in conjunction with an informal Steering Group consisting of the LDA, GLA and English Nature.
<b>Type of organisation</b>	Informal Steering Group.
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TGLP</li> <li>• LDA</li> <li>• GLA</li> <li>• EN</li> </ul>
<b>Key plans/strategies/documents</b>	Action plans and policies for boroughs to use in their local open spaces strategies will be launched in April/May 2004. These will be linked to the Thames Gateway Development and Investment Framework.
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	Aiming to develop a framework for creating a network of interlinked open spaces in East London as an integrated part of achieving social and economic regeneration.
<b>Mechanisms – how established</b>	“Greening the Gateway” outlines the government vision for ensuring that publicly accessible green spaces are integrated into regeneration plans for the Thames Gateway.
<b>Funding sources</b>	The feasibility study has been funded by the LDA.
<b>Achievements to date</b>	‘Phase 1’ - mapping the baseline of the area to identify constraints and opportunities for action within the area has been completed. ‘Phase 2’ is now developing Framework Plans for river corridors and the Thames Gateway bridge, in order to ensure that environmental considerations are factored into development proposals. The work is also considering options for management and maintenance.

<b>Name of initiative</b>	Thames Gateway South Essex Green Grid
<b>Geographical coverage (districts covered)</b>	Thames Gateway (470 sq km)
<b>Date established</b>	Green Grid group set up in 2001
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership Limited
<b>Type of organisation</b>	Limited Company
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ODPM</li> <li>• East of England Development Agency</li> <li>• Forestry Commission</li> <li>• Countryside Agency</li> <li>• Thames Chase</li> <li>• Castle Point District Council</li> <li>• Basildon District Council</li> <li>• Rochford District Council</li> <li>• Southend Unitary Authority</li> <li>• Thurrock Unitary Authority</li> <li>• Essex Country Council</li> </ul>
<b>Key plans/strategies/documents</b>	Vision for the Future – 2001 Delivering the Future - 2003
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	To enhance the environment, access and the area's perceived image amongst people who live, work and visit South Essex.
<b>Mechanisms – how established</b>	“Greening the gateway,” outlines the government vision for ensuring that publicly accessible green spaces are integrated into regeneration plans for the Thames Gateway.
<b>Funding sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EEDA</li> <li>• Countryside Agency</li> <li>• Forestry Commission</li> <li>• Forest Enterprise</li> </ul>
<b>Achievements to date</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community parks in Basildon, Rochford and Castle Point</li> <li>• Undertaken a number of studies to pave way for environmental information and education centres.</li> </ul>

<b>Name of initiative</b>	Kent Thameside Green Grid
<b>Geographical coverage (districts covered)</b>	Dartford and Gravesham
<b>Date established</b>	1995 (Proposed in RPG9a)
<b>Lead organisation</b>	The Kent Thameside Association
<b>Type of organisation</b>	Public/Private Partnership
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dartford Borough Council</li> <li>• Dartford Borough Council</li> <li>• Kent Country Council</li> <li>• Land Securities (the principal land owner of key development sites in the area)</li> <li>• Lafarge Cement</li> <li>• The University of Greenwich</li> <li>• London &amp; Continental Railways (responsible for the Channel Tunnel Rail Link)</li> <li>• Countryside Properties</li> <li>• Bluewater</li> <li>• Innogy (utility provider and owners of Littlebrook Power Station)</li> </ul>
<b>Key plans/strategies/documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Grid Landscape Character Plan</li> <li>• Strategic Urban Framework Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating an extensive framework of attractive open spaces linked by green corridors, footpaths and parkland;</li> <li>• Ensuring the area's heritage, established countryside and green urban areas are conserved, enhanced and, where possible, extended;</li> <li>• Sensitively integrating existing communities with new regeneration projects;</li> <li>• Connecting the Thames waterfront to the Kent Countryside and North Downs;</li> <li>• Providing a new landscape and visual quality with ready access for recreation, walking, cycling and ecological and wildlife value.</li> </ul>
<b>Mechanisms – how established</b>	The green grid concept was introduced in government guidance for Thames Gateway (RPG9a) and this has been developed within Kent Thames-side since 1995.
<b>Funding sources</b>	Government investment
<b>Achievements to date</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An accurate baseline assessment, mapping out green</li> </ul>



space and landscape character areas that will form the core of the Green Grid;

- The successful integration of Green Grid into the development control process and good awareness of its objectives among key stakeholders;
- An effective start on project delivery with some 36 Green Grid projects of varying scope and ambition active on the ground or in planning;
- Considerable success in leveraging funding from other sources such as European Union programmes, Lottery, S.106 contributions etc;
- The development of structured community involvement in pilot areas.

<b>Name of initiative</b>	Lee Valley Regional Park
<b>Geographical coverage (districts covered)</b>	10,000 acres of the Lee Valley, stretching 25 miles from East India Dock Basin to Ware in Hertfordshire.
<b>Date established</b>	1967 (establishment of the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority)
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Lee Valley Regional Park Authority
<b>Type of organisation</b>	Independent Statutory Authority
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East Harts District Council</li> <li>• Epping District Council</li> <li>• Broxbourne Borough Council</li> <li>• London Boroughs of Enfield, Waltham Forest, Haringey, Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Newham</li> <li>• Hertfordshire Country Council</li> <li>• Essex County Council</li> <li>• Association of London Government</li> </ul>
<b>Key plans/strategies/documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Park Plan – 2000</li> <li>• A Fresh Direction (Strategic Business Plan)</li> <li>• Land Management Strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	The Authority's remit, described in the 1966 Act, and embraces just about every conceivable aspect of leisure, sport and recreation, including nature conservation and the protection and enhancement of the natural environment.
<b>Mechanisms – how established</b>	Established by an Act of Parliament
<b>Funding sources</b>	From the council tax base of Hertfordshire, Essex and Greater London through an annual levy.
<b>Achievements to date</b>	Ownership of approx 4000 acres

<b>Name of initiative</b>	The Colne Valley Regional Park.
<b>Geographical coverage (districts covered)</b>	The Colne Valley Regional Park, covering 27 500 acres, is situated on London's western edge. The Local Authority boundaries have been reviewed several times during the Park's existence and the Park now covers parts of the following: <b>Counties of:</b> Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Surrey <b>the Unitary Authorities of:</b> Slough and Windsor & Maidenhead the London Borough of Hillingdon <b>and the Districts of:</b> Chiltern, South Bucks, Spelthorne and Three Rivers
<b>Date established</b>	1967
<b>Lead organisation</b>	A voluntary association of local authorities known as the Colne Valley Park Standing Conference Partnership continues to foster the Park and provide planning and financial support. This partnership plays a key role in the development of projects and the technical and political contributions enable the Park to function.
<b>Type of organisation</b>	A voluntary association
<b>Partners</b>	In addition to the Standing Conference Partnership, the project work involves a much wider partnership group. This includes Groundwork, government agencies, private companies and local groups.
<b>Key plans/strategies/ documents</b>	Forward planning (such as production of the 2003-2006 Action Plan) Monitoring Groundwork's progress against annual plan and approving any variations Leading on Planning Matters (in particular formulating a 'Colne Valley View' on major development issues as required)
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To maintain and enhance the landscape (including settlements) and waterscape of the Park in terms of their scenic and conservation value and their overall amenity</li> <li>2) To resist urbanisation of the Colne Valley Park and to safeguard existing areas of countryside from inappropriate development</li> <li>3) To conserve the nature conservation resources of the Park through the protection and management of its diverse plant and animal species, habitats and geological features</li> <li>4) To provide accessible facilities and opportunities for</li> </ol>

	<p>countryside recreation which do not compromise the above.</p>
<p><b>Mechanisms – how established</b></p>	<p>The Greater London Council convened a conference of local authorities in 1965, to commission a detailed survey of the area. This aimed to establish whether the area was suitable for recreation and leisure purposes and define the boundaries. The report concluded that there were wide opportunities for the whole area from Rickmansworth to Staines and the Colne Valley Park was duly established in 1967.</p>
<p><b>Funding sources</b></p>	<p>Local authority funding  Developer contributions  Grants, Lottery and Environmental taxes (i.e. Landfill Tax)</p>
<p><b>Achievements to date</b></p>	<p>The existence of a Regional Park helps halt the fragmentation of the Greenbelt in this area and aids the reversal of this process by a programme of positive measures. The Park significantly aids co-ordination between neighbouring authorities and different tiers of authorities. Co-operation extends to mineral sites, recreation provision, nature conservation and landscaping. The Park also acts as a focal point for local groups and in particular the wildlife and natural history groups who recognise the Valley as an ecological unit and have formed the Colne Valley Wildlife Action Group.</p> <p>The Park provides a wide range of volunteering opportunities and has encouraged support for environmental protection and improvement in the area amongst local people.</p> <p>The Colne Valley Park also serves an important recreational need, concentrating effort on the creation of facilities and the positive after use of mineral sites. These facilities are mainly used by residents of the constituent authorities, but also serve west London Boroughs such as Ealing, Hounslow and Harrow.</p>

<b>Name of initiative</b>	Epping Forest
<b>Geographical coverage (districts covered)</b>	2,450 hectares in Essex and London, plus 750 hectares of 'buffer land'.
<b>Date established</b>	1878
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Corporation of London – Epping Forest Department
<b>Type of organisation</b>	Local Authority based
<b>Partners</b>	12 Members of Corporation and 4 Verderers elected every 7 years by the Forest's Commoners
<b>Key plans/strategies/documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Epping Forest Management Plan</li> <li>• What matters and why in Epping Forest (March 2003)</li> </ul>
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To preserve and protect the physical and biological integrity of the Forest as a unique public open space;</li> <li>• To ensure the sustainable use of the Forest for the recreation and enjoyment of the public;</li> <li>• To Protect and to prolong the life of all the veteran trees and pollards of the Forest and to ensure new generations of trees are promoted to provide successors of equivalent wildlife value;</li> <li>• To maintain the ancient, semi-natural woodland in a favourable condition;</li> <li>• To restore and thereafter maintain the forest Plains, meadows, other grasslands and heaths in a favourable condition;</li> <li>• To enhance and thereafter maintain the network of Forest ponds, bogs, streams, ditches and their banks in a favourable condition;</li> <li>• To protect and maintain the condition of sites of historic and landscape importance, in particular Wanstead Park, Ambresbury Banks, Loughton Camp and the Purlieu Bank.</li> <li>• To enhance the wildlife value, increase the structural diversity and thereafter maintain in favourable condition the Forest's secondary woodland and scrub, scrub-grass, mosaics, glades, slades, rides, Green Lanes and road verges.</li> <li>• To encourage the educational use of the Forest by the widest possible range of people.</li> <li>• To promote scientific monitoring and research within the aim of establishing the Forest as a nationally-recognised centre of ecological/nature conservation research.</li> </ul>
<b>Mechanisms – how</b>	By 1878 Epping Forest Act

**established**

**Funding sources**

The entire net cost of the Forest's Management is borne by the Corporation from its private investments with no contribution from the public purse.

**Achievements to date**

Works include:

- Tree planting and pollarding
- Boundary tree safety
- Scrub management – increase bird numbers
- Repair work to forest paths and rides
- Management of forest ponds and wildlife

<b>Name of initiative</b>	Rail Link Countryside Initiative (M2 corridor)
<b>Geographical coverage (districts covered)</b>	Any area physically affected by the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL)
<b>Date established</b>	1995
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Rail Link Countryside Initiative
<b>Type of organisation</b>	Registered Charity
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Union Railways</li> <li>• The Environment Agency</li> <li>• English Nature</li> <li>• English Heritage</li> <li>• The Countryside Agency</li> <li>• Thurrock Council</li> <li>• Kent County Council</li> <li>• Kent Wildlife Trust</li> <li>• London Wildlife Trust</li> <li>• Greater London Authority</li> <li>• The Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group</li> </ul>
<b>Key plans/strategies/documents</b>	A full Environmental Statement accompanied the CTRL Bill, which preceded the CTRL Act.
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	Promote the conservation, preservation and beautification of the natural environment and landscape of the area affected by the development or operation of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, for the public benefit
<b>Mechanisms – how established</b>	The proposal for a countryside project to promote positive environmental works in the CTRL corridor arose in discussions between the railway promoters, environmental bodies and statutory authorities during the parliamentary hearings into the CTRL Act in 1995. A countryside project was seen as a mechanism for compensating for residual and diffuse environmental issues that could not be fully addressed through the mitigation process.
<b>Funding sources</b>	£2 Million endowment from Union Railways
<b>Achievements to date</b>	67 projects to date.

<b>Name of initiative</b>	North Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
<b>Geographical coverage (districts covered)</b>	878 sq km in area. The eastern end of a great arc of nationally important landscapes stretching from East Hampshire and Surrey Hills AONBs. The Kent AONB continues from the Surrey Border in a wide ribbon to meet the sea at Dover.
<b>Date established</b>	Designated an AONB in 1968
<b>Lead organisation</b>	The Kent Downs AONB Partnership
<b>Type of organisation</b>	Joint Advisory Committee (established 1997)
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 Local Authorities</li> <li>• Countryside Agency</li> <li>• Environment Agency</li> <li>• English Nature</li> <li>• DEFRA</li> <li>• Country Land and Business Association</li> <li>• National Farmers Union</li> <li>• Kent Association of Parish Council</li> <li>• Kent Rural Community Council</li> </ul>
<b>Key plans/strategies/documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management Strategy (1999)</li> <li>• Landscape Design Guide</li> <li>• Annual Reviews</li> <li>• Consultation Draft Management Plan for 2004-2009 (April 2003)</li> <li>• Draft Action Plan (2003)</li> </ul>
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	<p>Objectives and Targets are set out in the Action Plan.</p> <p><u>The Vision</u></p> <p>The Kent Downs AONB is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognised, understood and conserved for its biodiversity, historic and cultural significance, that form this beautiful and rich landscape. These key features are valued in their own right and for their contribution to people's social and economic quality of life;</li> <li>• A 'gateway' landscape that thrives from the benefit of the many passing visitors yet provides a rural and tranquil retreat for those who seek it;</li> <li>• A place where the use of the land provides continuous and positive landscape renewal and gain, where eroded and lost landscape features are replaced and restored as an integral part of all land use activities;</li> <li>• A working, changing landscape that is shaped and stewarded by sustainable economic and social activity,</li> </ul>



- that provide rewarding employment for local people;
- A place of living, dynamic communities, where people enjoy a high quality of life, equality of opportunity, and a safe, clean and quiet environment;
  - A landscape where there is opportunity and access for all, for a quiet recreation, for relaxation, enjoyment and understanding;
  - A place where the relationship between Downs and towns is strong, positive and mutually beneficial;
  - A landscape recognised, valued, celebrated and enjoyed by those who do not live there but may visit; those who may have been excluded from the inspiration landscape can bring; or those who can simply delight in the fact that it is there.

**Mechanisms – how established**

The Government designated 38 AONBs under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

**Funding sources**

- Partnership funding

**Achievements to date**

- Landscape Enhancement Grants
- More than 2,300 metres of hedge have been planted, gapped up or laid in the AONB.
- A new wild flower meadow was sown in the Stour Valley.
- New areas of chalk downland were brought into management in the Mid Kent Downs area.

<b>Name of initiative</b>	Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
<b>Geographical coverage (districts covered)</b>	The Surrey Hills AONB stretches across a quarter of the County of Surrey and includes the chalk slopes of the North Downs from Farnham in the west to Oxted in the east and extends south to the deeply wooded Greensand Hills, which rise in Haslemere.
<b>Date established</b>	The site was designated an AONB in 1958.
<b>Lead organisation</b>	The Surrey Hills Partnership
<b>Type of organisation</b>	Managed by a Joint Advisory Committee
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Countryside Agency</li> <li>• National Trust</li> <li>• Surrey County Council</li> <li>• Local Authorities</li> <li>• County Landowners and Business Assoc</li> <li>• Forestry Commission</li> <li>• National Farmers Union</li> <li>• Surrey Archaeological Society</li> <li>• Surrey County Association of Parish and Town Councils</li> <li>• Surrey Wildlife Trust</li> <li>• Council for the Protection of Rural England</li> <li>• English Nature</li> </ul>
<b>Key plans/strategies/documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation document a Management Plan for the Surrey Hills – prepared by the Surrey Hills Partnership (May 2003)</li> </ul>
<b>Aims and objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote policies and action too conserve and enhance the Surrey Hills AONB.</li> </ul>
<b>Mechanisms – how established</b>	The Government designated 38 AONBs under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.
<b>Funding sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Countryside Agency</li> <li>• National Trust</li> <li>• Surrey County Council</li> <li>• Other Local Authorities</li> </ul>
<b>Achievements to date</b>	



## **APPENDIX 3**

### **Access study and land in public ownership: Methodology and information sources**



# **METHODOLOGY AND INFORMATION SOURCES FOR DETERMINING DISTRIBUTION OF ACCESSIBLE OPEN SPACE AND LAND IN PUBLIC OWNERSHIP**

## **PUBLIC OPEN SPACE**

1. To determine the current distribution and provision of POS, reliable and comprehensive data sources are required showing the physical extent of areas known to be publicly accessible. To date no such comprehensive data set has been compiled for the Study Area as a whole.
2. The GLA has started to compile such a data set for Greater London (discussed further below), however, it is accepted that this data set is not fully comprehensive. Outside of Greater London there is no comprehensive data set. Therefore it was necessary to contact a range of organisations to obtain additional data. Data has been obtained from the following sources:
3. National Nature Reserves from English Nature. These are all accessible to the public.
4. Forestry Commission freehold land which is all accessible.
5. Information held by local authorities (including the Corporation of London) has been obtained as far as possible. The methodology, data obtained and the limitations of the data are discussed further below.
6. POS within Community Forests.
7. Country Parks from OS data set.
8. Various other sites known to be accessible were identified by the project Steering Group and boundaries obtained from the relevant authorities e.g. Colne Valley Regional Park.
9. In addition Defra was approached regarding Countryside Stewardship Access Agreements. Maps showing where Countryside Stewardship Agreements are in place is available from Defra, however these do not show access specifically). The Countryside Agency was also approached regarding maps being prepared under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act. It is expected that by 2005 conclusive maps showing access rights will be published, and access rights brought into force. Currently the Agency is preparing draft maps. Some but not all of the land identified will become 'access land' under the Crow Act, but these maps will go through several stages of consultation before final decisions are made. Further background information on the access maps is provided in the box below. County Wildlife Trusts/County Records Centres were also contacted to see if they have any information on accessibility, however they didn't. Local Authority web sites were also checked to see if they included data on POS; only Kent's website had data on Country Parks.

**CROW Act Access maps** Part I of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 grants a general right of access to the public to 'access land' for the purposes of

open-air recreation. 'Access land' under the Act includes land mapped in conclusive form as open country (mountain, moor, heath or down), land mapped in conclusive form as registered common land (land registered and maintained under the 1965 commons Registration Act), or land voluntarily dedicated by landowners for permanent access. Land that has existing rights of access under different legislation (Section 15 land) will not be included (which will be the case with some registered common land and open country), and existing rights will remain in place. There are several other exceptions, such as land which is used as a park or garden, golf course, or racecourse, etc.

In response to this legislation, the Countryside Agency is preparing maps of all open country and registered common land in England. These will be produced in three stages: draft maps, provisional maps and conclusive maps. The draft mapping will be subject to a formal period of public consultation, in which the public can comment on the accuracy of the maps. Those with a legal interest in the land then have the right to appeal against the provisional map. Once a conclusive map is issued, the Secretary of State will issue a commencement order to bring access rights into force. This is unlikely to occur before 2005.

The Countryside Agency is currently at the stage of preparing draft maps. As explained above, some but not all the land identified will become 'access land' under the Crow Act.

Together, the S15 land boundaries (land with existing rights – which will be mapped this winter), open country and registered common land boundaries might be useful in indicating where access rights may be in force or may be due to come into force (under the CROW Act). However, until the Agency has conclusive boundary data, they are reluctant to release the data for publication.

Nevertheless, the Agency has provided data in its current state, which requires careful interpretation.

### **GLA POS data set**

10. The GLA provided two data sets to help inform the access study:
11. A GIS polygon file of Green Belt land within Greater London.
12. An excel spreadsheet listing POS over 20ha in Greater London. The POS list is a compilation of information from the boroughs and contained some gaps (for example there were initially no sites listed in Bromley).
13. As some of the POS sites listed within the excel spreadsheet fall within Green Belt which the GLA provided as a GIS polygon file, it was possible to identify the boundaries of these sites from the GIS data. Unfortunately the GIS file did not include names of areas, so sites had to be identified based on local knowledge, base maps and an AtoZ map. However, the boundaries of polygons in the GLA GIS data did not always correspond with the base maps and it was not necessarily possible to extract the relevant area. In these cases a point was added to show the location of the POS.
14. The GLA subsequently provided an updated list of POS. This was compared to the compiled POS data and sites were added as necessary.

### **Local authority survey of accessible open space**

15. In order to obtain data on accessible open space, a postal survey of local authorities was undertaken. This involved sending out a covering letter and map to each of the 16 London Boroughs, and the five counties (Kent, Surrey, Hertfordshire, Essex and Buckinghamshire) and Thurrock, Slough and Windsor and Maidenhead Unitary Authorities.
16. The letter explained the purpose of the survey and the data requirements, namely GIS polygon data (where possible, or otherwise GIS point data or hard copies of maps) for areas of accessible open space over 20ha. The map sent to London Boroughs showed the existing data available on accessible open space (from the GLA), which local authorities were asked to correct/add to/delete from. For the authorities outside Greater London there was very little existing data on accessible open space, so this map just showed Country Parks (from OS Strategic Data) and National Nature Reserves (from English Nature). Again, local authorities were asked to correct/add to/delete from this map.
17. The response rate was 81% for the London Boroughs (all responded, although with differing levels of detail and accuracy, except Redbridge, Richmond and Hillingdon), and almost 86% for the authorities contacted outside Greater London (i.e. all responded, again with differing levels of detail and accuracy, except Kent County council). Some authorities were contacted on several occasions in order to ensure a high response rate was achieved.

### ***Notes on coverage and accuracy of data obtained for areas outside Greater London***

18. The information received through the postal survey was varied:
19. Surrey did not have data available on POS, but suggested contact was made with Surrey Wildlife Trust who manage the Surrey County Council estate (land within Surrey County Council ownership). Surrey Wildlife Trust provided a map of the publicly accessible sites in their management in Surrey over 20ha within the M25. Sites of POS owned by other bodies are therefore not included in this data set.
20. Buckinghamshire provided a GIS file of common land and Country Parks which were added to the map of POS in the study area. They also provided information on designated areas, including AONBs, Historic Parks and Gardens, SSSIs and SINCs, none of which are necessarily POS by definition, so these sites were not included.
21. Hertfordshire was only able to provide common land and publicly owned woodland in GIS format. While these areas are all accessible, there are likely to be other areas of POS that do not fall into either category. Hertfordshire apparently holds no information on these areas.
22. Essex provided us with Country Parks and 'open areas' both of which are POS and also provided a list of potentially accessible sites, which were areas designated for their nature conservation/landscape value, which are not necessarily accessible (these latter sites have not been mapped).

23. Thurrock provided existing POS and proposed POS (from 1998). The contact at Thurrock supposed that some of the proposed POS had now been designated, but no additional information was available. Only the existing POS has been mapped.
24. Slough and Windsor and Maidenhead provided comprehensive data sets.
25. Kent did not respond.
26. The data that we have collected as a result of this exercise contains several inconsistencies:
27. The data held on POS vary from county to county. Few of the counties keep comprehensive databases on accessible land; most only hold information on POS where it overlaps with other information (e.g. nature conservation designations, publicly owned woodland, land in local authority ownership).
28. It is not known how the different data sets compare in terms of scale, date of production and accuracy. The scale and accuracy at which sites are drawn/digitised can have an impact on area and even location, leading to discrepancies between counties. Date of production is obviously an important factor. The Thurrock data, for example, is five years old and we have no way of knowing what changes have occurred in this time. It is assumed that the most up-to-date information available has been provided, but there is no information on when the majority of the data was compiled.
29. Information on POS is stored in a variety of formats. Some counties were able to provide definitive boundaries in GIS format, while others could only provide hardcopy maps or lists of names of sites. The latter could only be mapped as point data.

***Notes on coverage and accuracy of data obtained for London Boroughs***

30. Several boroughs indicated that our data (mapped using the GLA data set) appeared to be correct, while others sent through maps of their POS in either hardcopy or GIS format.
31. There are again inconsistencies in the London POS data since boroughs sent a variety of data. For example Kingston provided a UDP proposals map which did not clearly identify POS. POS was identified by talking through the sites with a planner at the council using local knowledge. The response from Bromley indicated there is no POS over 20ha, however additional data received from the GLA has shown this response to be incorrect. Some boroughs (Hillingdon, Redbridge and Richmond) did not respond.
32. The Corporation of London owns large amounts of land beyond the City, some of which is publicly accessible. They provided us with GIS boundaries of sites in Croydon and Surrey: West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons (Croydon) and Ashstead Common (Surrey), Burnham Beeches (Bucks) and Epping Forest (Borough of Epping Forest).

### Compiling the data

33. All data sources have been mapped. Where GIS data was provided, sites were added as polygons. If paper copies of maps were provided then the data was added as points. The GLA data set for Greater London was taken as a starting point and additional data was added if it was not already shown. This included additional information provided by local authorities in Greater London, data from local authorities outside Greater London, NNRs, Forestry Commission Freehold land, Country Parks and any other sites which were known off but not picked up through the preceding sources. Finally boundaries of 'access land' on a draft CROW Act access map obtained from the Countryside Agency were compared with the compiled data to see if any boundaries appeared to correspond to point data of known areas of POS. If so these could then be used to augment the data set. However, no such corresponding sites were identified. **Tables 1 and 2** below summarise the access data in the study area outside Greater London and within Greater London.
34. A full database of data has been provided to the GLA, providing information on each piece of data (name of site, area, type of data, source of data, etc.) with each site numbered and correspondingly marked on a GIS figure.

**Table 1: Access data in study area outside Greater London**

County	Data set of POS from local authority	POS in local authority estate	Country Parks (from OS strategic data)	NNR's (from English Nature)	Forestry Commission freehold land	Common land	Publicly owned woodland	Corporation of London sites
Surrey	Full data set not available (Advised contacting Surrey Wildlife Trust, which provided POS in LA estate)	✓ (within M25)	✓	✓	✓			✓
Buckinghamshire	Full data set not available (Provided common land, country parks and NNR's)		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Hertfordshire	Full data set not available. (Provided		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

County	Data set of POS from local authority	POS in local authority estate	Country Parks (from OS strategic data)	NNR's (from English Nature)	Forestry Commission freehold land	Common land	Publicly owned woodland	Corporation of London sites
	common land and publicly owned woodland)							
Essex	✓ <sup>1</sup>		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Kent	No response		✓	✓	✓			
Thurrock	✓ <sup>2</sup>		✓	✓	*			
Slough	✓		✓	*	*			
Windsor and Maidenhead	✓		✓	*	*			

<sup>1</sup> Boundaries of 'open spaces' received from Essex County Council

<sup>2</sup> Existing and proposed POS (dated 1998) received from Thurrock UA. Some of the proposed POS may now have been designated, but no additional information was available. Therefore only existing POS has been mapped.

\* n.b. full data sets of NNR's and Forestry Commission Freehold land were obtained but there were no such sites within these council areas.

**Table 2: Access data in the study area within Greater London**

Local Authority	GLA POS data	Additional POS data from local authority	Country Parks (from OS strategic data)	Corporation of London sites
Barking and Dagenham	✓	✓		
Barnet	✓	*		
Bexley	✓	✓		
Bromley	✓	*		
Croyden	✓	✓		✓
Enfield	✓	✓		
Harrow	✓	✓		
Havering	✓	✓		

Local Authority	GLA POS data	Additional POS data from local authority	Country Parks (from OS strategic data)	Corporation of London sites
Hillingdon	✓	No response	✓	
Hounslow	✓	✓		
Kingston	✓	✓	✓	
Redbridge	✓	No response		✓
Richmond	✓	No response		
Sutton	✓	✓		
Waltham Forest	✓	*		✓
Corporation of London	✓	✓ (provided sites owned outside City)		

\* Responded to confirm that GLA data was correct.

## LAND IN PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

35. In order to identify land in public ownership a similar approach has been taken i.e. contacting a range of organisations including local authorities, as again no comprehensive data set for the study area is available. Data has been obtained from the following:

- Local authorities (including the Corporation of London) through a survey of land in their ownership.
- The National Trust.
- The Forestry Commission.

### Notes on data coverage

36. Full data sets of land owned by the National Trust and Forestry Commission (freehold and leasehold) have been obtained in GIS format. The response by local authorities, however, has been quite poor. Only Enfield, Sutton, Hounslow and the Corporation of London have provided data in digital format. Windsor and Maidenhead and Essex have provided paper maps. Hertfordshire is unable to provide data; whilst they do hold data on ownership, the maps are very large and copies cannot be made. The remaining 17 local authorities either did not respond despite follow up emails or in several cases promised but did not deliver data.

## **FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OBTAINING DATA ON POS AND LAND OWNERSHIP**

37. As noted there are limitations to the data available to assess distribution of POS and land in public ownership.
38. A key source of data on POS which should be utilised when it is available is 'access land' identified under the CROW Act. It is expected that by 2005 conclusive maps showing access rights will be published, and access rights brought into force. Currently the Countryside Agency is preparing draft maps. Some but not all of the land identified will become 'access land' under the Crow Act, but these maps will go through several stages of consultation before final decisions are made.
39. Additionally the Woodland Trust is in the final stages of a joint project with the Forestry Commission to identify publicly accessible woodland across the UK. The results of this could provide additional information on POS.
40. As noted above there are possible inconsistencies in data and lack of comprehensive data sets. It is essential that local authorities put in place systems for monitoring and mapping POS not least in order to prepare their own open space strategies.
41. In terms of land in public ownership further attempts could be made to obtain data from local authorities, and the Steering Group will be adding to this data land which they know to be in public ownership.

**APPENDIX 4**  
**Potential funding sources**



## Potential Funding Opportunities for the Green Arc Area (GAA)

Name of fund	Funding body	Description of fund	Type of projects the fund may cover	Does fund apply to a specific area?
<b>ODPM Funding</b>				
Communities Plan Growth Areas	ODPM	£330m available to support projects that will help to achieve sustainable communities in the Thames Gateway (£5 million has already been agreed for projects in Thames Gateway South Essex Green Grid), and a further £136m for local projects across the other three growth areas (Milton Keynes and south Midlands, London-Stansted-Cambridge, Ashford) (£1 million has been allocated to projects in and around Harlow in the London-Stansted-Cambridge corridor). A proportion of this can go towards enhancement schemes such as 'Green Grid' projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental enhancement</li> <li>• landscape</li> <li>• open space</li> </ul>	<p>Growth areas of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thames Gateway</li> <li>• London-Stansted-Cambridge.</li> </ul>
<b>England Rural Development Programme (ERDP) - Land Based Schemes</b>				
Countryside Stewardship	DEFRA	Available to farmers and non-farming land owners and managers (including voluntary bodies, local authorities and community groups) who enter 10 year agreements, under which they manage land in an environmentally beneficial way in return for annual payments. Not applicable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape</li> <li>• Nature conservation</li> <li>• Access</li> <li>• Heritage</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA
Environmentally Sensitive Areas	DEFRA	Not applicable	Not applicable	There are no ESAs in GAA
Entry-level Agri-Environment Scheme	DEFRA	Likely to be available from 2005. Basic tier of agri-environment measures available to farmers, aimed at encouraging environmentally- sensitive farming practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA
Organic Farming Scheme	DEFRA	Encourages the expansion of organic production. Under the scheme, farmers moving from conventional to organic farming methods receive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA

Name of fund	Funding body	Description of fund	Type of projects the fund may cover	Does fund apply to a specific area?
		financial help during the conversion process.		
Woodland Grant Scheme	Forestry Commission	Grants to help with the creation of new woodlands and to encourage the good management of existing woodlands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landscape and woodlands</li> <li>Nature conservation</li> <li>Access</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA area. Existing woodlands generally have to be at least ¼ ha or 15 metres wide.
Farm Woodland Premium Scheme	DEFRA	Encourages farmers to plant and maintain farm woodlands, to improve landscape, provide new habitats and increase biodiversity. Provides annual payments to help offset the annual income lost by farmers by converting their land. Farmers are also encouraged to realise the productive potential of woodlands as a sustainable income source.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landscape and woodlands</li> <li>Nature conservation</li> <li>Agriculture</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA
Extensification payments	DEFRA	Payment open to farmers who currently receive Beef Special Premium or Sheep Annual Premium and meet specific low density stocking rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agriculture</li> </ul>	Applies to areas within GAA currently farmed by farmers registered under the IACs system.
<b>ERDP Project Grants</b>				
Rural Enterprise Scheme (RES)	DEFRA	Provides targeted assistance to support the development of more sustainable, diversified and enterprising rural economies and communities to assist their regeneration and adjustment to the declining importance of agriculture and to the demands of the rural economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agriculture (diversification)</li> <li>Rural services and economy</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA
Vocational training scheme for people in farming and forestry	DEFRA	Provides funding for training that contributes to an improvement in the occupational skill and competence of farmers and other involved in farming and forestry activities and their diversification.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agriculture</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA
Processing and Marketing Grant (PMG)	DEFRA	Aimed at developing processing facilities for primary agricultural products, for the benefit of processors and the producers of the raw	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agriculture</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA

Name of fund	Funding body	Description of fund	Type of projects the fund may cover	Does fund apply to a specific area?
Energy Crops Scheme (ECS)	DEFRA	<p>material.</p> <p>Energy crops contribute to sustainable development by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and by renewable energy generation, create jobs in rural areas and are a new commercial opportunity for farmers. ECS provides establishment grants for two energy crops, short-rotation coppice and miscanthus (elephant grass), and aid for the establishment of producer groups for SRC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewable Energy</li> <li>• Agriculture</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA
<b>English Nature</b>				
Biodiversity Grant Scheme	EN	Grant for maintaining and enhancing biodiversity. Currently suspended and EN are looking at options to continue its operation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA.
Reserves Enhancement Scheme	EN	Aimed at Voluntary Conservation Organisations who manage Sites of Special Scientific Interest as nature reserves. Five-year grants contributing to the day to day management of such sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation</li> </ul>	SSSIs within the GAA.
Section 35 National Nature Reserve Capital Grants Scheme	EN	Grants available to Approved Bodies under Section 35(1)(c) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, where these Approved Bodies are not eligible for the Reserves Enhancement Scheme. These grants contribute to capital projects for the improvement of reserve management, access and interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature conservation management</li> <li>• Access</li> <li>• Interpretation</li> </ul>	NNRs within the GAA.
Local grants including local biodiversity grants	EN	Available from English Nature area teams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA.

Name of fund	Funding body	Description of fund	Type of projects the fund may cover	Does fund apply to a specific area?
<b>EU Structural Funds</b>				
Objective 2	Government Office for London	Fund aims to tackle barriers to economic opportunity in key areas suffering industrial decline, urban deprivation, low economic activity and social exclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Economic Development</li> <li>• Business Development and Competitiveness</li> <li>• Infrastructure, Premises and Environment</li> <li>• Technical Assistance</li> </ul>	Funds are available in parts of London including areas of East London, Outer Thames Gateway and the Lee Valley.
Interreg III	Government Office for the East of England	Community Initiative promotes transnational co-operation and integrated regional development between European regions. Aims in particular to develop economic, cultural, social and environmental exchanges in order to create employment, enhance cultural knowledge and protect the environment. Must be linked to cross-boarder co-operation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental</li> <li>• Social</li> <li>• Economic</li> </ul>	Applies to whole of GAA.
<b>Tax Credits</b>				
Landfill Tax Credits Scheme	Landfill operators	This source of funding is a voluntary contribution from the landfill operator. Site operators are able to claim back 20% of tax liability if they make payments to a registered Environmental Body for approved purposes. Funding can only be given to a Registered Environmental Body (i.e. registered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape and woodlands</li> <li>• Nature conservation</li> <li>• Heritage and culture</li> </ul>	There are geographic restrictions on the use of the money i.e. must be in the vicinity of a landfill site – but vicinity can be broadly interpreted.

Name of fund	Funding body	Description of fund	Type of projects the fund may cover	Does fund apply to a specific area?
Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund	DEFRA through EN, CA and EH	with Entrust to receive credits) and organisations must be non-profit distributing. Applies to sand, gravel and crushed rock, and address, by taxation, the environmental costs associated with quarrying operations. Objectives are to encourage recycling of aggregates and address environmental impacts. The Sustainability Fund has been set up with some of the revenue raised from the levy and will be used to deliver local environmental benefits to areas affected by quarrying.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic landscape</li> <li>• Nature conservation</li> <li>• Local community projects</li> <li>• Recreation</li> <li>• Ecology/biodiversity</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA
<b>Lottery Funding</b>				
Transforming Your Space England	NOF	Aims to fund local environment projects which improve quality of life in deprived areas that struggle to access lottery money.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental enhancement</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA
Green Spaces and Sustainable Communities	NOF	This programme supports projects designed to help urban and rural communities throughout the UK understand, improve or care for their natural environment, focusing on disadvantage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental enhancement</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA
Transforming Waste	NOF	The programme supports community recycling, reuse and composting projects to increase the amount of waste collected in deprived communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste management</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA
Five-a-day local communities initiative	NOF	Community food projects to promote the consumption of fruit and vegetables.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA
The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)	National Lottery fund	The aim of HLF is to safeguard and enhance the heritage of the UK. Funding is directed through	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture and heritage</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA

Name of fund	Funding body	Description of fund	Type of projects the fund may cover	Does fund apply to a specific area?
Arts Lottery	The Arts Council of England	There are various Arts Council Lottery Schemes eg Arts Capital Programme which includes the commissioning of public art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nature conservation</li> <li>Landscape (urban parks and designed landscapes)</li> <li>Culture and heritage</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA
<b>Sport England</b>				
Awards for All	SE	Lottery grants scheme aimed at local communities. Projects enabling people to take part in art, sport, heritage and community activities, as well as projects that promote education, the environment and health in the local community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sport and recreation</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA
Playing Fields and Community Green Spaces Programme	SE and New Opportunities Fund	To help communities gain access to playing fields, green spaces, school playgrounds and community play areas. Programme can provide, protect and improve playing fields and green spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sport and recreation</li> </ul>	Spread across England, but will focus 50% of the funding on areas of deprivation.
<b>Renewable Energy Initiatives</b>				
Bio-energy Infrastructure Scheme	Defra	To help develop the supply chains required to harvest, store, process and supply energy crops and forestry woodfuel to energy end-users. Can be used for the purchasing of specialist capital equipment or setting up producer groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renewable energy</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA

Name of fund	Funding body	Description of fund	Type of projects the fund may cover	Does fund apply to a specific area?
Bio-energy Capital Grant Scheme	DTI	Available from the end of 2003. For project developers and organisations investing in heat and/or electricity generating projects fuelled by energy crops and other biomass feedstocks. Currently closed to new applications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renewable energy</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA
Environmental Action Fund	Defra	Helps voluntary organisations to advance the Government's environmental policies through their work in England.  Only formally constituted voluntary organisations (including registered charities) can apply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Biodiversity</li> <li>Understanding and awareness</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAA
<b>Land Use Planning: Developer Contributions</b>				
Developer contributions	Developers	Opportunity for developer contributions to environmental enhancement through s106 agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental enhancement</li> </ul>	Throughout GAA but growth areas in particular.
M25 widening scheme	Highways Agency	Funding for mitigation and compensation measures to maintain and enhance environment, as a result of M25 widening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental enhancement</li> </ul>	Around existing curtilage of M25, particularly junctions 12 (M3) and 13 (M4).
<b>Transport</b>				
The Rural Bus Challenge	Countryside Agency	Opportunity for local authorities to bid for money for imaginative schemes, which demonstrate innovation in improving public transport in rural areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transport</li> </ul>	Applies to whole GAP area

