

## **GREEN BELT REVIEW PHASE 1**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.0 To inform VALP Scrutiny Committee of the output from the Green Belt Review Phase 1.

### **2. Recommendation**

To consider the content of the report.

### **3. Supporting information**

- 3.1 As part of the evidence base for the emerging Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) we are undertaking an assessment of the Green Belt. This work is being done jointly with Wycombe District Council, Chiltern District Council, South Bucks District Council and Buckinghamshire County Council. It will be used to inform the emerging Local Plans in the area including the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) permits the review of Green Belt boundaries when Local Plans are prepared.
- 3.2 In March 2016 Part 1 of the Buckinghamshire Green Belt Assessment, undertaken by consultants Arups, was published. This can be viewed on our website <http://www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk/supporting-evidence> (please note this is broken down into a number of separate documents due to the file size). The Assessment has looked at how areas of land within the Green Belt, and some areas adjacent, perform against the five purposes of the Green Belt as set out in the NPPF:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
  - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
  - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
  - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns
  - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land
- 3.3 The work by Arup has identified some parcels which perform weaker against these purposes and other parcels which have areas within them which are likely to perform weaker if assessed on their own. The three areas that were identified within Aylesbury Vale and what the recommendations are attached as Appendix 1. A map showing these areas across the whole study area is attached as Appendix 2.
- 3.4 These identified areas will now be given further consideration under Part 2 of the Green Belt review to assess constraints on the site to see whether they are potentially suitable for development (similar to the way sites are assessed in the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment) and whether there are exceptional circumstances justifying the release of Green Belt land. It will also need to look at whether permanent and defensible boundaries can be identified if the Green Belt boundary is to be amended. Any sites within Aylesbury Vale which are

proposed for removal or additional to the Green Belt will be consulted on as part of the draft Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan.

- 3.5 As you will be aware the Green Belt Assessment will also be an important part of the capacity assessments of the other Buckinghamshire Councils and will be part of determining what their unmet need will be. Chiltern and South Bucks have already consulted on the suitability of sites to be removed from the Green Belt ahead of Phase 2 work. This showed more land as potentially suitable for removal than has been indicated in the Arup study and will be progressed through their local plan preparation process.

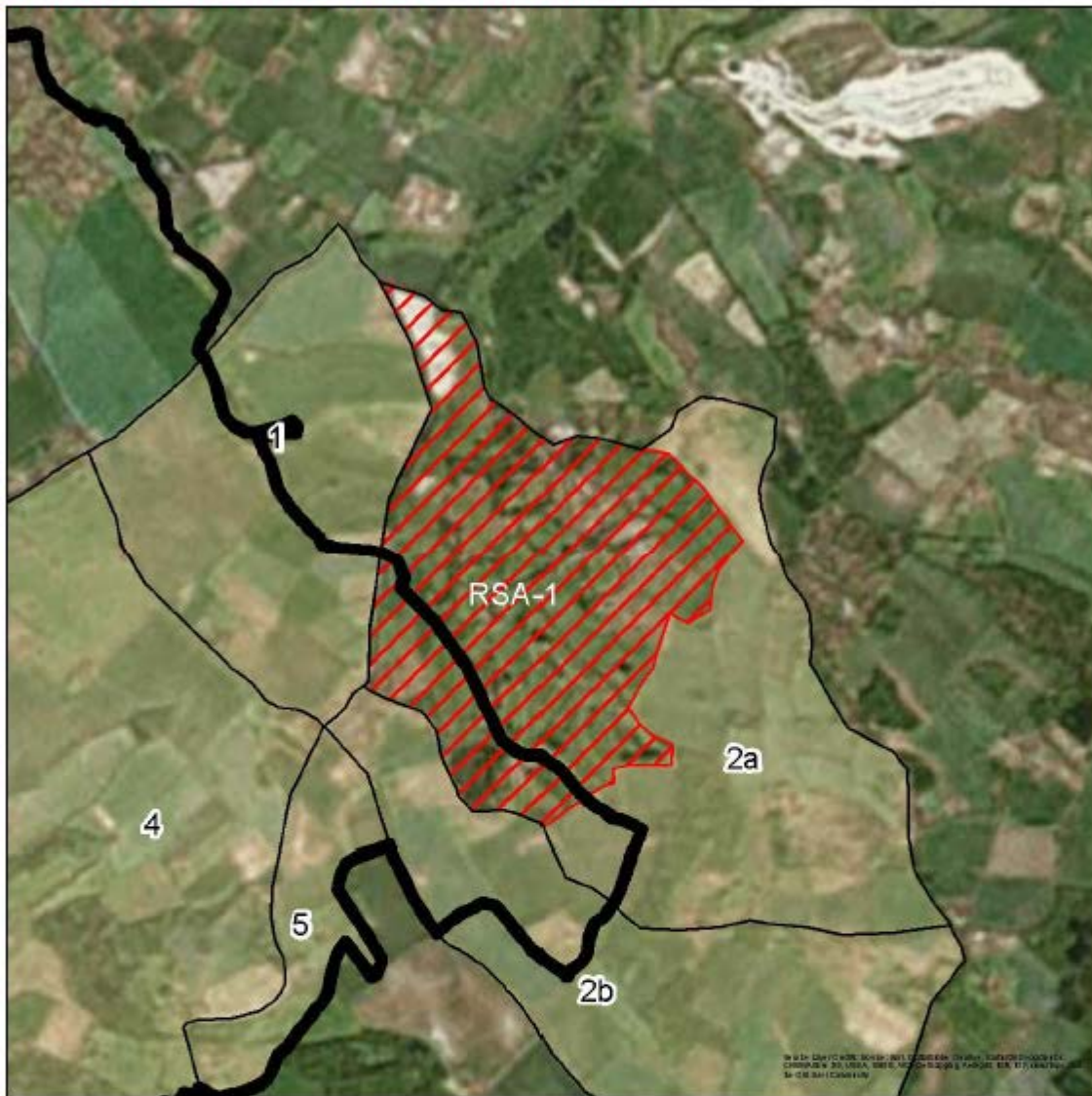
#### **4 Resource implications**

- 4.1 Funding of the Local Plan's preparation is being derived from existing budgets.

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Background Documents None

## RSA-1 (General Area 2a – Whipsnade)



- 6.4.1** As a whole, General Area 2a, located between Dunstable and Ivinghoe, attains a medium score against the NPPF Green Belt purposes. While it makes no contribution to preventing sprawl (Purpose 1), as it is not adjacent to an identified large built-up area, and makes a weak contribution to preventing coalescence between settlements (in relation to the Green Belt settlements of Dagnall, Holywell and Studham), collectively it maintains the openness and character of a largely rural area, thus preventing encroachment and fulfilling Purpose 3.
- 6.4.2** However, there is substantial contrast between the south-east and north-west of the General Area, RSA-1. The openness of RSA-1 is substantially diminished by built form around Whipsnade Zoo and Whipsnade Park Golf Course. These land uses diminish the rural feel



of the parcel and impinge upon the integrity of the wider Green Belt. As such, in isolation, this area may meet all purposes weakly.

**Recommendation:** General Area 2a meets the NPPF purposes, but there is scope for sub-division; the identified north-western area sub-area (RSA-1), which may score weakly, could be considered further.

### RSA-2 (General Area 7a – north of Wendover)





**6.4.3** As a whole, General Area 7a prevents the outward sprawl of the large built-up area of Wendover, along an edge which is weakly defined by softer natural features, thus meeting Purpose 1. It prevents the coalescence of Wendover and the Green Belt settlement of Halton (Purpose 2) and prevents encroachment into open land which is characterised by rural land uses (Purpose 3).

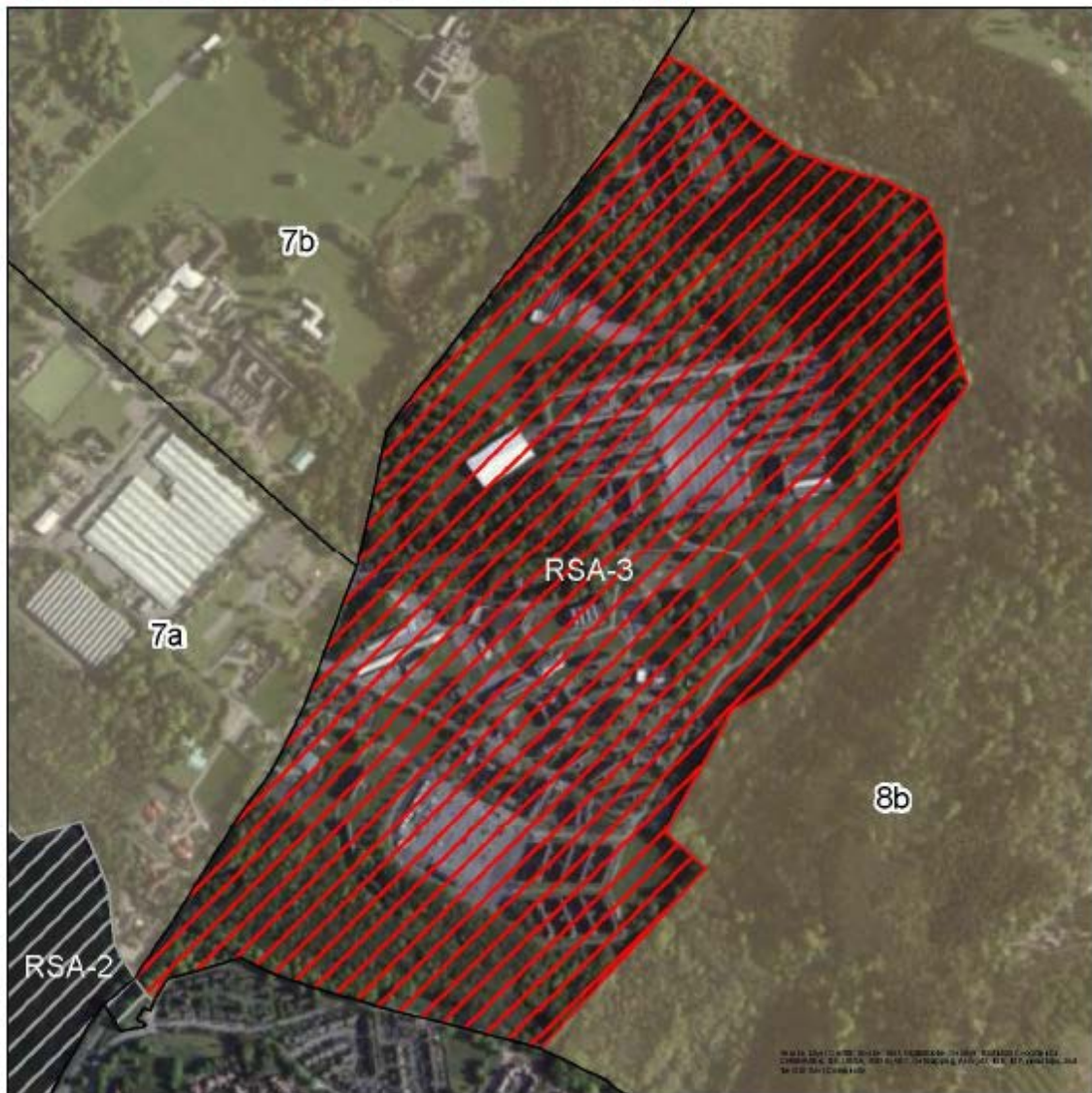
**6.4.4** However, the southern part of the parcel, RSA-2, is likely to score weakly if considered separately. This area is deemed to be less important for preventing merging between Wendover and Halton (Purpose 2), or encroachment into the countryside (Purpose 3), given it is disconnected from the countryside further north and effectively enveloped by built development to the east, south and west,

strengthening the visual and functional relationship of the area with Wendover.

**6.4.5** RSA-2 is effectively within the settlement footprint of Wendover, thus may be considered as 'enclosed' within the large built-up area (as opposed to preventing outward sprawl), and durable boundary features in the form of the disused Grand Union Canal to the west, a disused railway line partially to the north and a dense planting buffer at the edge of Halton Camp to the north and east would ensure a logical, strongly defined area for further consideration.

**Recommendation:** General Area 7a meets the NPPF purposes, but there is scope for sub-division; the identified southern area (RSA-2), which may score weakly, could be considered further.

### RSA-3 (General Area 8b – Halton Camp)



**6.4.6** As a whole, General Area 8b, located north-east of Wendover, attains a medium score across three of the NPPF purposes. It fulfils Purpose 1, providing a barrier to the outward sprawl of the Wendover large built-up area, particularly to the south and east, and forms part of the gap between Wendover and Tring (Purpose 2) located to the north-east. The majority of the parcel is of an open and very rural character,

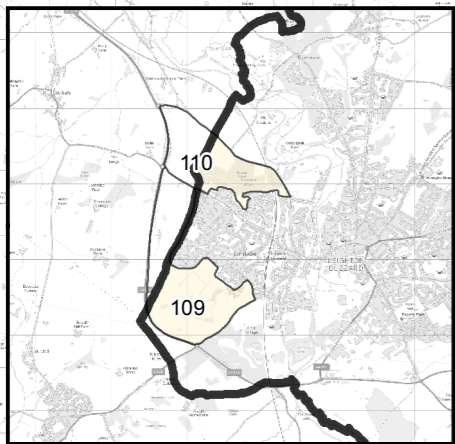
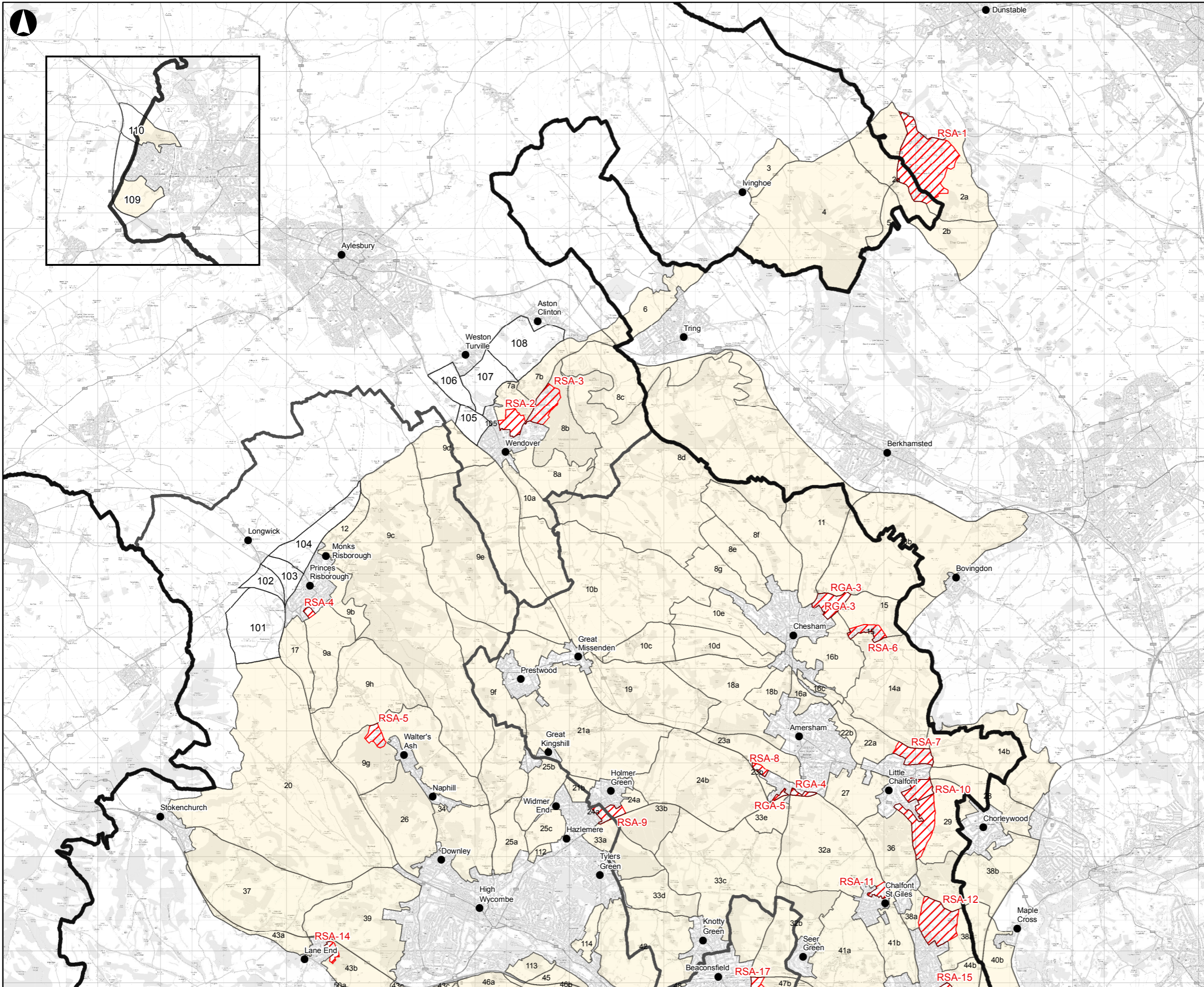
and Wendover Woods (which cover the majority of the parcel) contributes to a strong sense of remoteness. Despite the urban context, the Green Belt prevents the encroachment of urbanising influences into this area, thus meeting Purpose 3.

**6.4.7** The identified sub-area in the west, RSA-3, has a contrasting character. It contains substantial built-form which diminishes the openness of the countryside, and is characterised by urban land uses, including various structures associated with the Halton Camp RAF Base such as barracks, offices and other ancillary structures. It is effectively urbanised and strongly linked with the urban form of Wendover to the south, thus making little contribution to Purpose 3 (as encroachment has already occurred).

**6.4.8** While the role of RSA-3 in preventing the further perceptual coalescence of Wendover and Tring from ribbon development along the B4009 (Upper Icknield Way) is recognised, it is felt that a consolidation of the Green Belt in this location would better maintain the integrity of the wider Green Belt designation around Wendover and more appropriately reflect the status of this distinct land parcel.

**Recommendation:** General Area 8b meets the NPPF purposes, but there is scope for sub-division; the identified area in the west (RSA-3), encompassing Halton Camp, may score weakly and could be considered further.

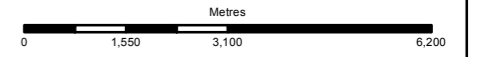




- Legend**
- Non-Greenbelt settlement
  - Buckinghamshire County
  - District Boundary
  - General Areas
  - ▨ Green Belt Areas for Consideration in Stage 2
  - Areas Not for Consideration in Stage 2
  - Areas Not for Consideration in Stage 2

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**The Buckinghamshire Authorities**

Job Title  
**Buckinghamshire Green Belt Assessment**

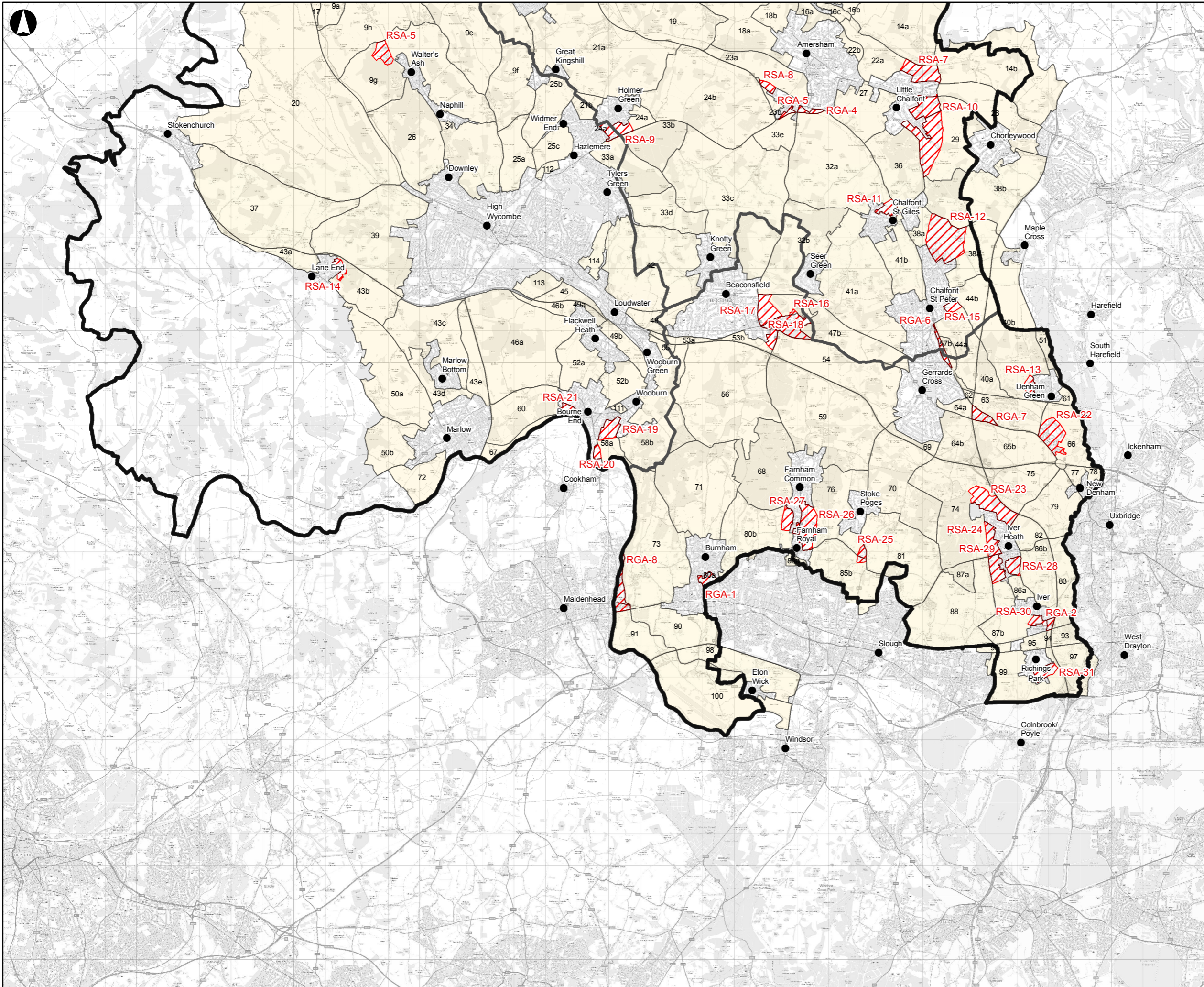
**Map 6.1a Areas for Further Consideration at Stage 2, North**

Scale at A3  
**1:115,000**

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Drawing No <b>6.1a</b>	Issue <b>P1</b>
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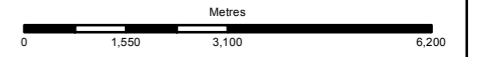


**Legend**

- Non-Greenbelt settlement
- Buckinghamshire County
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- ▨ Green Belt Areas for Consideration in Stage 2
- Areas Not for Consideration in Stage 2

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**Buckinghamshire Green Belt Assessment**

**Map 6.1b Areas for Further Consideration at Stage 2, South**

Scale at A3  
**1:115,000**

Job No <b>242368-00</b>	Drawing Status <b>Issue</b>
Drawing No <b>6.1b</b>	Issue <b>P1</b>