

Appendix 4 –  
Green Belt Boundary Review Parcels – Absolute  
Constraints Assessment

## Green Belt Parcel Ref: 45

### Key Information

Parcel area: 20.5 ha within Elmbridge Borough



Figure 1: Location map (aerial)

### Summary of Green Belt Boundary Review Information

#### Strategic Area Assessment: A/B

The small section (approx.5%) to the south of the parcel is located within an area of convergence between Strategic Area A and B. The northern section of the parcel is located within Strategic Area A (See Figure 2).

**Strategic Area A** - is part of a narrow but essential arc of Green Belt and plays an important role in meeting the fundamental aim of preventing the sprawl of Greater London built-up area and its coalescence with towns in Surrey, as well as acting to maintain separation between the Surrey towns themselves.

Assessment of the Strategic Area against the relevant NPPF purposes is as follows:

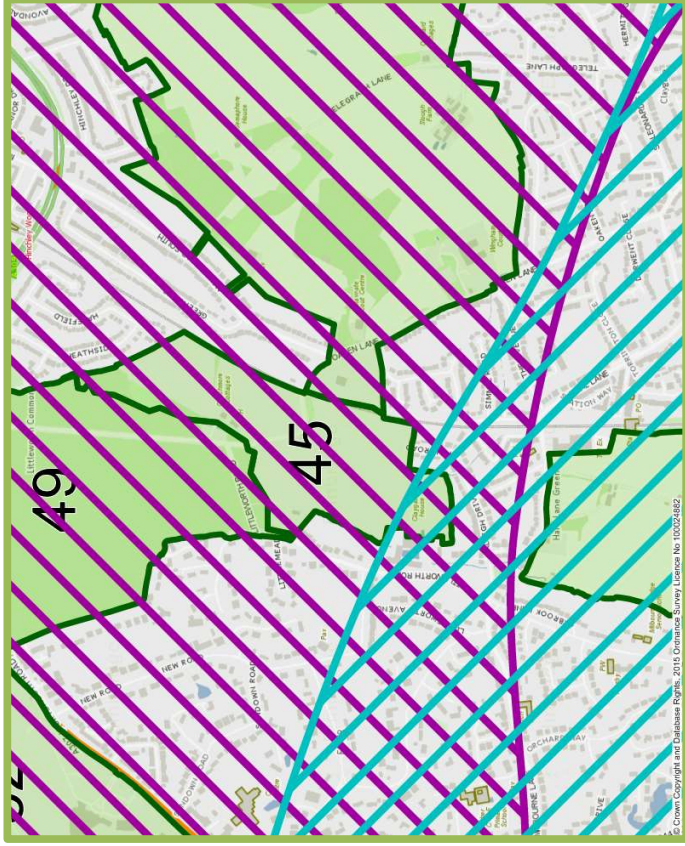
- **Purpose 1** – meets the purpose **very strongly** by acting as an important barrier to potential sprawl from Greater London built-up area (including Molesey / Thames Ditton / Long Ditton) and a number of large built-up areas within Surrey (for example Walton-on-Thames / Weybridge / Hersham, and Sunbury-on-Thames).
- **Purpose 2** – meets the purpose **very strongly** by establishing important gaps between a number of Surrey towns from merging into one another and the Greater London built-up area.
- **Purpose 3** - meets the purpose **weakly** due to the fragmented nature of the Green Belt and the prevalence of man-made / industrial uses, in particular the western section of the Strategic Area.

*Sensitivity to Change* – the importance of the Strategic Area as part of the a wider Green Belt network must be acknowledged, yet there is a sense that, in some of the more fragmented and/or degraded parts of the Green Belt, change could be accommodated without causing any further harm to its integrity.

Staines-up-Thames; Egham / Englefield Green, Addlestone; Chertsey; and Woking / Byfleet / Woodham.

- *Purpose 2* – meets the purpose **strongly** by establishing important gaps between a number of Surrey towns from merging into one another.
- *Purpose 3* – meets the purpose **moderately** (there is some variation across the Strategic Area) by preventing encroachment into some relatively unspoilt areas of the countryside.

*Sensitivity to Change* – given the Strategic Area protects a series of particularly narrow gaps between settlements; the character of the area could be altered significantly by alterations to Green Belt boundaries. Consideration should also be given to the area's particular sense of rurality. Some areas of Green Belt which already contain development, such as St. George's Hill, may be less sensitive to change.



**Figure 2: Strategic Areas Map (aerial)**

**Strategic Area B** – maintains a series of narrow gaps between Elmbridge's towns, as well as settlements in adjacent boroughs and, on this axis, consists of the first sizeable swathe of countryside outside Greater London. The Strategic Area plays an important role in meeting the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy to prevent urban sprawl, in this case the sprawl of settlements in Surrey, by keeping land permanently open.

Assessment of the Strategic Area against the relevant NPPF purposes is as follows:

- *Purpose 1* – meets the purpose **strongly** by acting as an important barrier to potential sprawl from large built-up areas such as Walton-on-Thames / Weybridge / Hersham;

### Local Area Assessment:

Assessment of the Local Area against the relevant NPPF purposes is as follows:

- *Purpose 1 (a) – PASS:* The land parcel is at the edge of the Greater London large built-up area (Hinchley Wood).
- *Purpose 1 (b) – 3:* The local area is connected to the large built-up area of Greater London (Hinchley Wood) on its eastern edge.

The boundary is generally strong and durable, following the backs of properties with rectilinear gardens bounded by clearly defined natural and man-made features, for example, narrow and established planting buffers. There are some minor anomalies in the south-west of the parcel where the boundary cuts across car parks.

The Green Belt serves as an additional barrier to sprawl.

- *Purpose 2 – 5:* The land parcel forms much of the essential gap between the non-Green Belt settlements of Hinchley Wood (Greater London), Claygate and Esher, preventing development that would significantly reduce the actual distance between the settlements.

The gap is particularly narrow here and any development is likely to result in coalescence.

- *Purpose 3 – 3:* 3% of the local area is covered by built development.

Despite a relatively urban context, the parcel largely remains open, consisting of open fields and pony paddocks, and a golf course to the south. East of Oaken Lane is a rugby club, which has more of a managed character.

Development is restricted to a small number of farm buildings and facilities for the rugby club.

Overall, the parcel maintains a largely rural character.

**Overall Summary: Strong**

## Absolute Constraints

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Within the Functional Floodplain: **No.**

Within a Site of Special Scientific Interest: **No.**

Within a Special Protection Area/Ramsar site: **No.**

Within a Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace: **No.**

Within an area of Ancient Woodland: **No.**

Within a Registered Park and Garden: **No.**

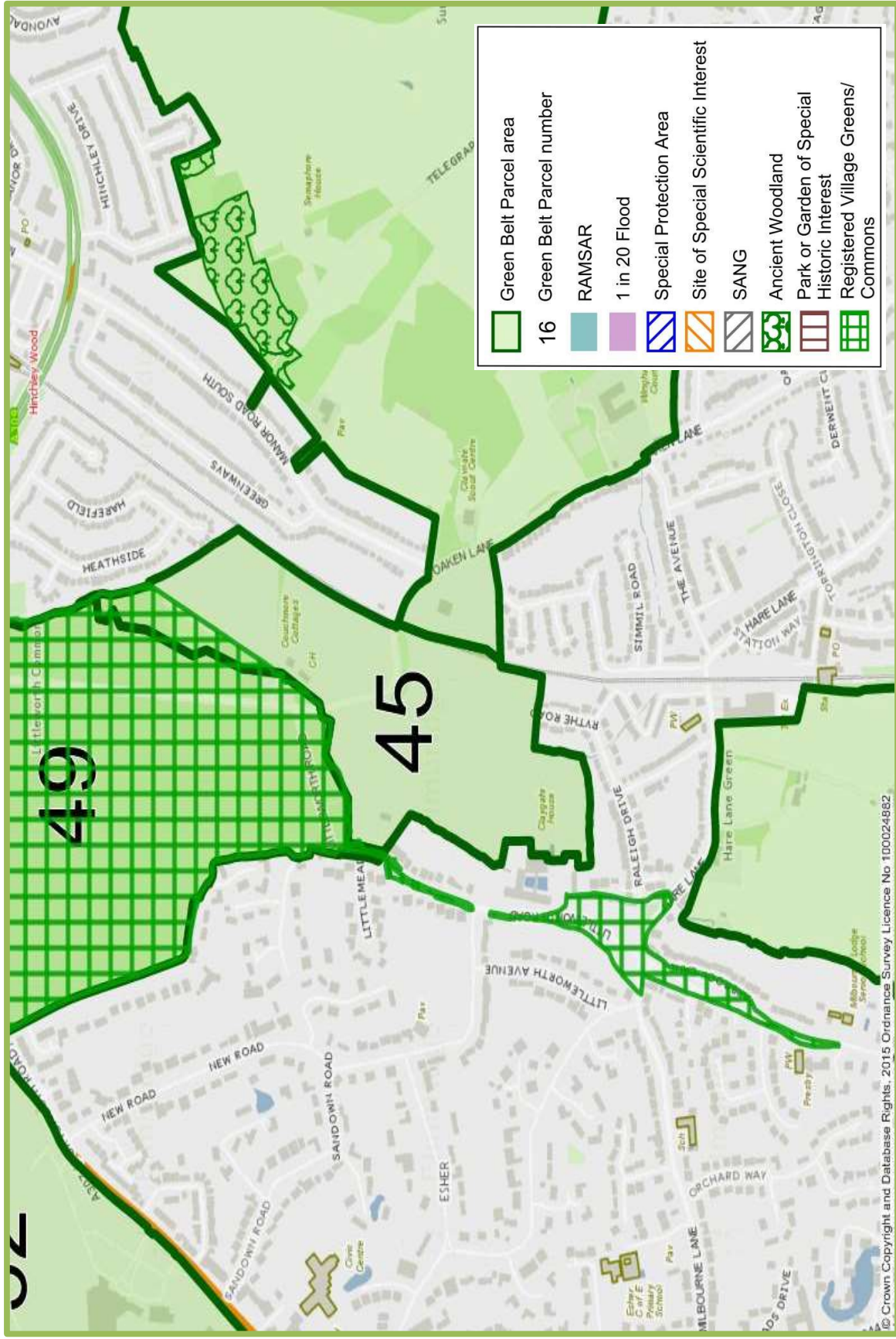
Within a Registered Common or Village Green: **Yes.** A small part of the parcel towards the North is occupied by Littleworth Common (1.6 ha / 8%) (see Figure 3).

## Summary of Absolute Constraints

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**Affected by Absolute Constraints: Partial.** A small part of the parcel towards the North is occupied by Littleworth Common (1.6 ha / 8%).

18.9 ha / 92% of the parcel is not affected by any absolute constraints (see Figure 3).



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Figure 3: Absolute Constraints map

## Green Belt Parcel Ref: 34

### Key Information

Parcel area: 231.4 ha within Elmbridge Borough



Figure 1: Location map (aerial)

### Summary of Green Belt Boundary Review Information

#### Strategic Area Assessment: A/B

The parcel is located in an area of convergence between Strategic Area A and B. Approximately 2% of the parcel is within Area B to

the south, 2% in both A and B, the remainder of the parcel to the north is located within Strategic Area A. (see figure 2).

**Strategic Area A** - is part of a narrow but essential arc of Green Belt and plays an important role in meeting the fundamental aim of preventing the sprawl of Greater London built-up area and its coalescence with towns in Surrey, as well as acting to maintain separation between the Surrey towns themselves.

Assessment of the Strategic Area against the relevant NPPF purposes is as follows:

- **Purpose 1** – meets the purpose **very strongly** by acting as an important barrier to potential sprawl from Greater London built-up area (including Molesey / Thames Ditton / Long Ditton) and a number of large built-up areas within Surrey (for example Walton-on-Thames / Weybridge / Hersham, and Sunbury-on-Thames).
- **Purpose 2** – meets the purpose **very strongly** by establishing important gaps between a number of Surrey towns from merging into one another and the Greater London built-up area.
- **Purpose 3** - meets the purpose **weakly** due to the fragmented nature of the Green Belt and the prevalence of man-made / industrial uses, in particular the western section of the Strategic Area.

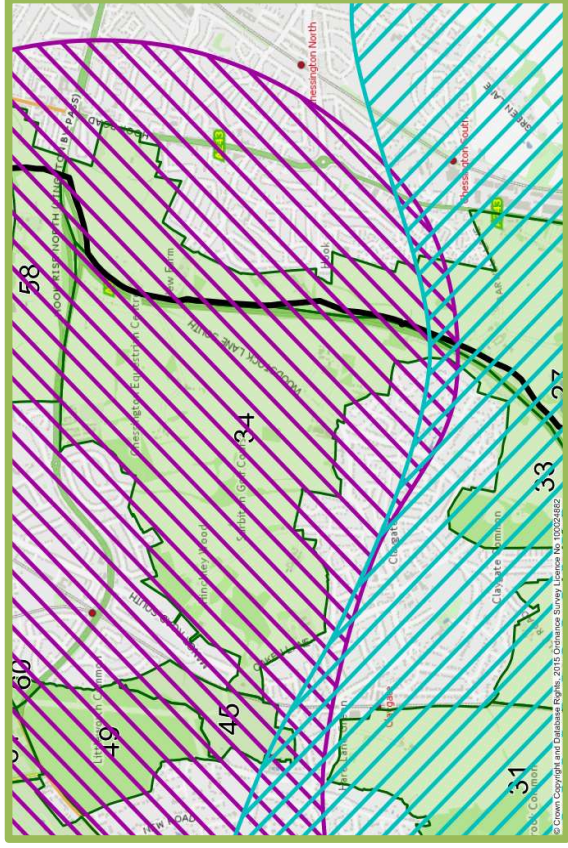
*Sensitivity to Change* – the importance of the Strategic Area as part of the wider Green Belt network must be acknowledged, yet there is a sense that, in some of the more fragmented and/or degraded

parts of the Green Belt, change could be accommodated without causing any further harm to its integrity.

Egham / Englefield Green, Addlestone; Chertsey; and Woking / Byfleet / Woodham.

- Purpose 2 – meets the purpose strongly by establishing important gaps between a number of Surrey towns from merging into one another.
- Purpose 3 - meets the purpose moderately (there is some variation across the Strategic Area) by preventing encroachment into some relatively unspoilt areas of the countryside.

Sensitivity to Change – given the Strategic Area protects a series of particularly narrow gaps between settlements; the character of the area could be altered significantly by alterations to Green Belt boundaries. Consideration should also be given to the area’s particular sense of rurality. Some areas of Green Belt which already contain development, such as St. George’s Hill, maybe less sensitive to change



**Figure 2: Strategic Areas Map**

Strategic Area B – maintains a series of narrow gaps between Elmbridge’s towns, as well as settlements in adjacent boroughs and, on this axis, consists of the first sizeable swathe of countryside outside Greater London. The Strategic Area plays an important role in meeting the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy to prevent urban sprawl, in this case the sprawl of settlements in Surrey, by keeping land permanently open.

Assessment of the Strategic Area against the relevant NPPF purposes is as follows:

- Purpose 1 – meets the purpose strongly by acting as an important barrier to potential sprawl from large built-up areas such as Walton-on-Thames / Weybridge / Hersham; Staines-up-Thames;



### Local Area Assessment:

Assessment of the Local Area against the relevant NPPF purposes is as follows:

- *Purpose 1(a) – PASS:* The local area is at the edge of the Greater London large built-up area.
- *Purpose 1 (b) – 3:* The local area is connected to the large built-up area of Greater London along its northern edge and prevents its sprawl into open land.

The boundary is strong and durable, following the A309 for a short distance to the north and, where no linear features exist, the backs of residential properties with regular, clearly bounded gardens, utilising a mixture of durable man-made and established natural features which are likely to be permanent.

The local area provides an additional barrier to sprawl.

- *Purpose 2 – 5:* The local area forms the essential gap between Claygate and Greater London.

While perceptually this gap appears larger than it is physically, as a result of topographical change over the land parcel and a series of wooded areas which provide a visual buffer between the two settlements, it is very narrow in terms of distance.

Any development in the local area is likely to lead to the physical coalescence of the settlements, with the southwestern corner particularly sensitive to change.

- *Purpose 3 – 3:* 3% of the local area is covered by development.

The local area is particularly open and rural, consisting predominantly of large paddocks and arable fields. Surbiton Golf Course, in the centre of the parcel, diminishes the sense of rurality slightly, though the effect is limited. The southwest of the local area has suffered encroachment, with the majority of built development focused here. This consists of artificial sports pitches, a Scout hut and a school.

Whilst the edge of Claygate is relatively prominent, other urbanising influences such as Hinchley Wood to the north and the A3 to the east are screened from the wider countryside by dense planting buffers.

Overall, the local area retains a largely rural character.

**Overall Summary: Strong**

## **Absolute Constraints**

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**Within the Functional Floodplain: No.**

**Within a Site of Special Scientific Interest: No.**

**Within a Special Protection Area/Ramsar site: No.**

**Within a Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace: No.**

**Within an area of Ancient Woodland: Yes.** There are three areas (4.7ha/ 2%) of Ancient Woodlands. There is one section located to the north west of the parcel and two towards the south east (see Figure 3).

**Within a Registered Park and Garden: No.**

**Within a Registered Common or Village Green: No**

## **Summary of Absolute Constraints**

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**Affected by Absolute Constraints: Partial.** There are three areas (4.7 ha/ 2%) of Ancient Woodlands. There is one section located to the north west of the parcel and two towards the south east (see Figure 3).

226.7 ha/ 98% of the land is not affected by any absolute constraint.

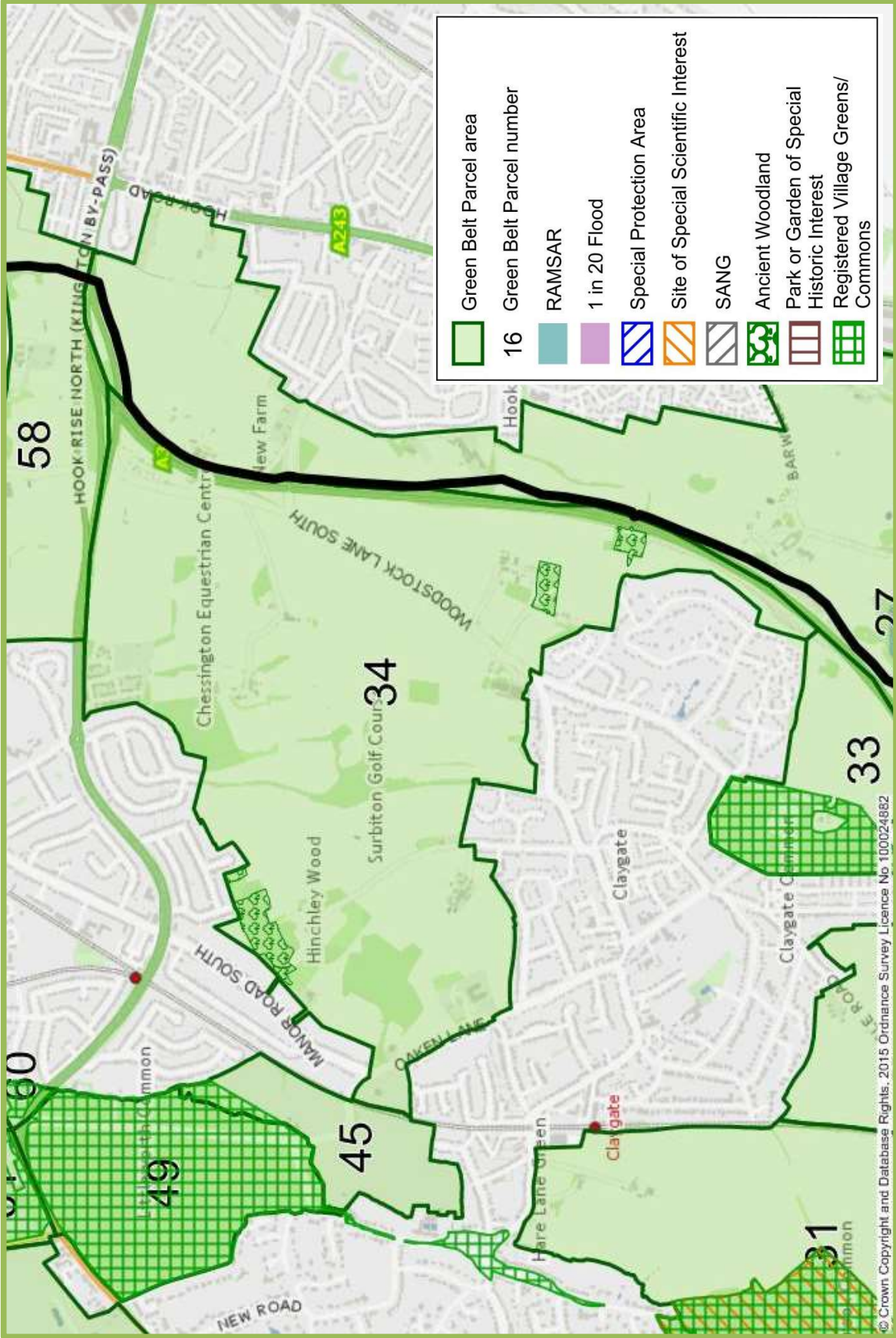


Figure 3: Absolute Constraints Map

## Green Belt Parcel Ref: 33

### Key Information

Parcel area: 35.8 ha within Elmbridge Borough

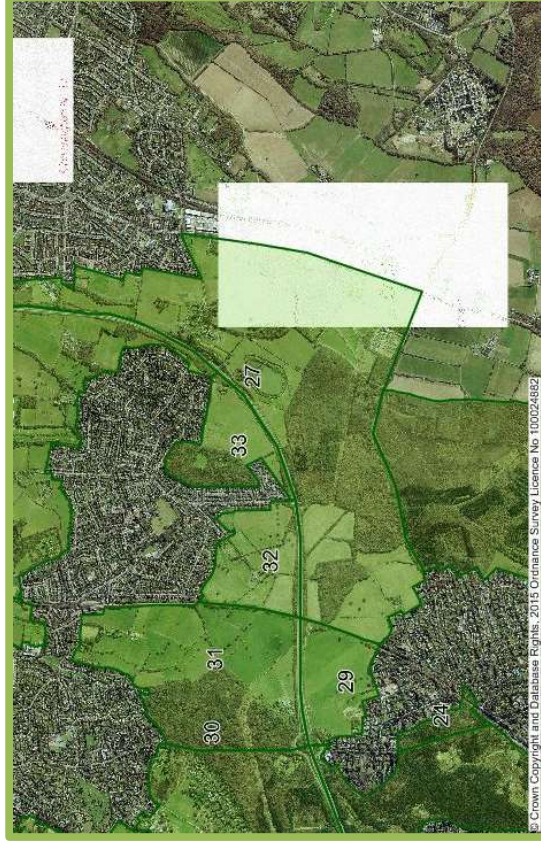


Figure 1: Location map (aerial)

### Summary of Green Belt Boundary Review Information

#### Strategic Area Assessment: B

**Strategic Area B** – maintains a series of narrow gaps between Elmbridge's towns, as well as settlements in adjacent boroughs and, on this axis, consists of the first sizeable swathe of countryside outside Greater London. The Strategic Area plays an important role

in meeting the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy to prevent urban sprawl, in this case the sprawl of settlements in Surrey, by keeping land permanently open.

Assessment of the Strategic Area against the relevant NPPF purposes is as follows:

- **Purpose 1** – meets the purpose **strongly** by acting as an important barrier to potential sprawl from large built-up areas such as Walton-on-Thames / Weybridge / Hersham; Staines-up-Thames; Egham / Englefield Green, Addlestone; Chertsey; and Woking / Byfleet / Woodham.
- **Purpose 2** – meets the purpose **strongly** by establishing important gaps between a number of Surrey towns from merging into one another.
- **Purpose 3** – meets the purpose **moderately** (there is some variation across the Strategic Area) by preventing encroachment into some relatively unspoilt areas of the countryside.

*Sensitivity to Change* – given the Strategic Area protects a series of particularly narrow gaps between settlements; the character of the area could be altered significantly by alterations to Green Belt boundaries. Consideration should also be given to the area's particular sense of rurality. Some areas of Green Belt which already contain development, such as St. George's Hill, may be less sensitive to change.

### Local Area Assessment:

Assessment of the Local Area against the relevant NPPF purposes is as follows:

- *Purpose 1 (a) – FAIL:* The local area is not at the edge of a large built-up area.
- *Purpose 1 (b) – 0:* The local area is not at the edge of a large built-up area.
- *Purpose 2 – 1:* The local area forms a small part of the gap between Claygate and Greater London.

In respect of the general gap, although it contributes to its general openness, the local area is less essential, making only a very limited contribution in terms of its general scale. Overall, the gap is of sufficient scale and character that development here is unlikely to cause the merging of these settlements.

- *Purpose 3 – 5:* Less than 1% of the local area is covered by development.

The local area consists of two distinct parts. In the west, Claygate Common consists of dense deciduous woodland, while to the east the settlement opens out to large arable fields. Local topography allows for south-facing vistas to wooded rolling hills and open countryside.

Urbanising influences such as the A3 to the south and residential areas of Claygate to the north are sheltered by significant tree buffers and the parcel is almost completely free of encroachment. Development is restricted to a very small number of structures at Claygate Common.

Overall, the local area retains a strong un-spoilt rural character with almost no built development.

**Overall Summary: Strong**

## **Absolute Constraints**

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**Within the Functional Floodplain: No.**

**Within a Site of Special Scientific Interest: No.**

**Within a Special Protection Area/Ramsar site: No.**

**Within a Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace: No.**

**Within an area of Ancient Woodland: No.**

**Within a Registered Park and Garden: No.**

**Within a Registered Common or Village Green: Yes.** The North West of the parcel adjoining Claygate settlement area is occupied by Claygate Common (14 ha / 38%).

## **Summary of Absolute Constraints**

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**Affected by Absolute Constraints: Partial.** 14 ha / 38% towards the North West of the parcel is occupied by Claygate Common.

22 ha / 62% of the parcel is not affected by any absolute constraints.

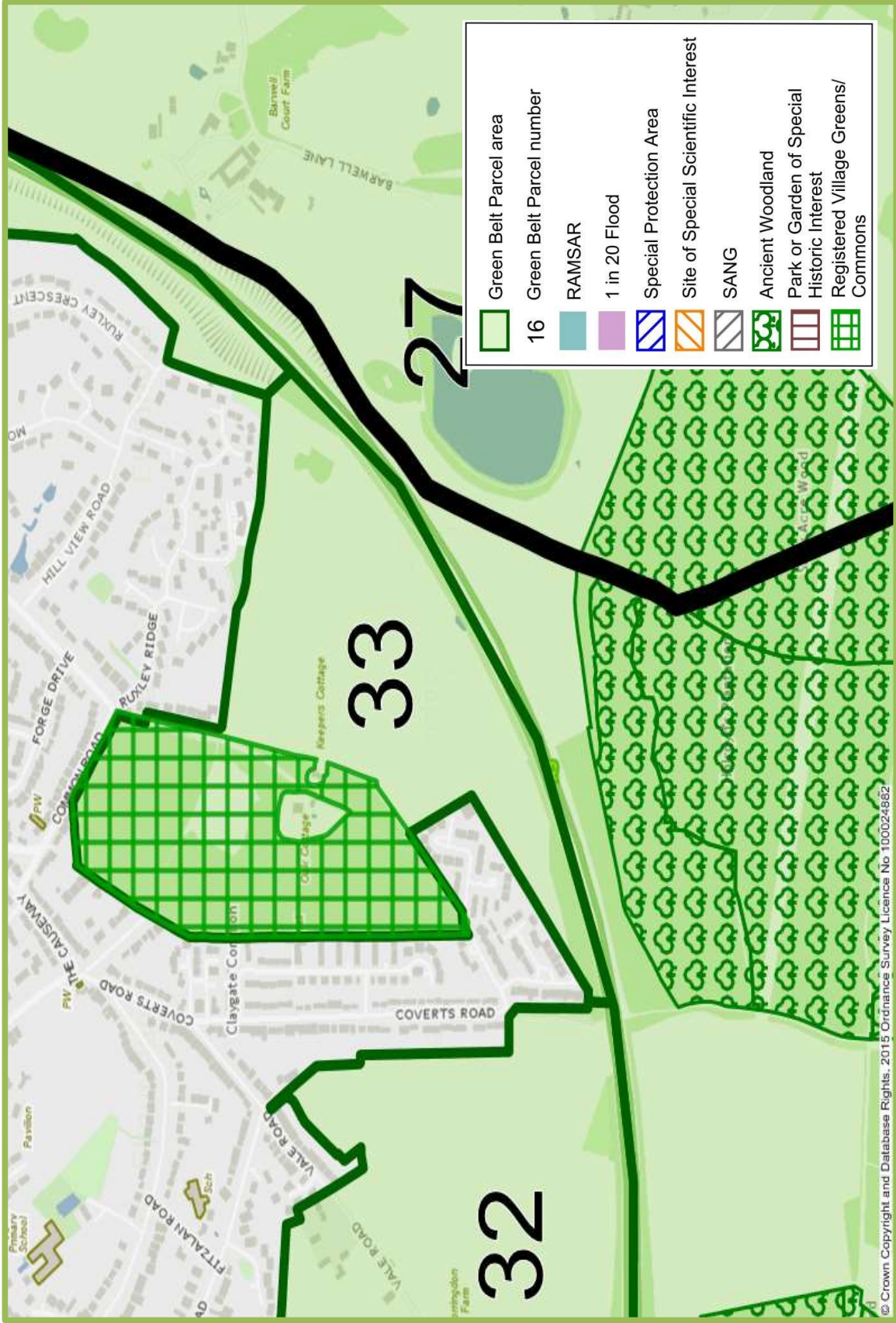


Figure 2: Absolute Constraints Map

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## Green Belt Parcel Ref: 32

### Key Information

Parcel area: 41.3 ha within Elmbridge Borough



Figure 1: Location map (aerial)

### Summary of Green Belt Boundary Review Information

#### Strategic Area Assessment: B

**Strategic Area B** – maintains a series of narrow gaps between Elmbridge's towns, as well as settlements in adjacent boroughs and, on this axis, consists of the first sizeable swathe of countryside outside Greater London. The Strategic Area plays an important role

in meeting the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy to prevent urban sprawl, in this case the sprawl of settlements in Surrey, by keeping land permanently open.

Assessment of the Strategic Area against the relevant NPPF purposes is as follows:

- **Purpose 1** – meets the purpose **strongly** by acting as an important barrier to potential sprawl from large built-up areas such as Walton-on-Thames / Weybridge / Hersham; Staines-up-Thames; Egham / Englefield Green, Addlestone; Chertsey; and Woking / Byfleet / Woodham.
- **Purpose 2** – meets the purpose **strongly** by establishing important gaps between a number of Surrey towns from merging into one another.
- **Purpose 3** – meets the purpose **moderately** (there is some variation across the Strategic Area) by preventing encroachment into some relatively unspoilt areas of the countryside.

*Sensitivity to Change* – given the Strategic Area protects a series of particularly narrow gaps between settlements; the character of the area could be altered significantly by alterations to Green Belt boundaries. Consideration should also be given to the area's particular sense of rurality. Some areas of Green Belt which already contain development, such as St. George's Hill, may be less sensitive to change.



### Local Area Assessment:

Assessment of the Local Area against the relevant NPPF purposes is as follows:

- *Purpose 1 (a) – FAIL:* The local area is not at the edge of a large built-up area.
- *Purpose 1 (b) – 0:* The local area is not at the edge of a large built-up area.
- *Purpose 2 – 3:* The local area forms part of the wider gap between Cobham / Oxshott and Esher.

The parcel is important to maintain the general openness of the gap, which is particularly strong.

However, despite this, longer views south from Oxshott are interrupted by the A3 and areas of woodland to the south. This increases the perceptual distance between the two settlements and some development may be possible in the north or east of the local area without causing coalescence.

- *Purpose 3 – 5:* 1.5% of the local area is covered by development.

There is a sharp transition from the urban area of Claygate to the countryside. The local area has a distinctly rural feel, consisting largely of arable and grazing fields.

Despite the presence of urbanising influences in the form of Claygate to the north and the A3 to the south, the parcel is almost completely free of encroachment. Development is restricted to a number of small-scale agricultural buildings along Vale Road, but these have little impact on the overall openness of the parcel.

Overall, the local area retains a strong unspoilt rural character with almost no built development.

**Overall Summary: Strong**

## **Absolute Constraints**

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**Within the Functional Floodplain: No.**

**Within a Site of Special Scientific Interest: No.**

**Within a Special Protection Area/Ramsar site: No.**

**Within a Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace: No.**

**Within an area of Ancient Woodland: No.**

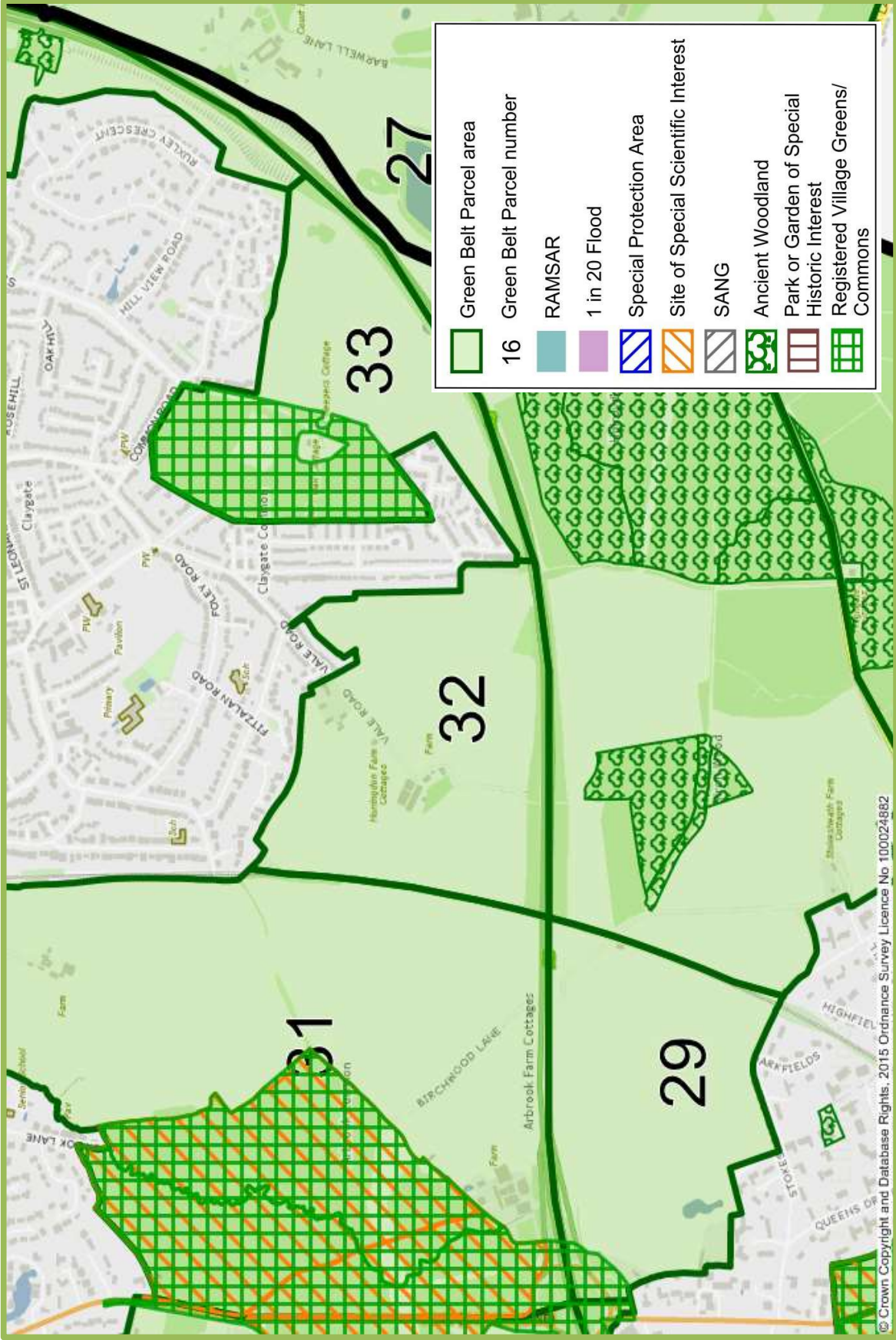
**Within a Registered Park and Garden: No.**

**Within a Registered Common or Village Green: No**

## **Summary of Absolute Constraints**

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**Affected by Absolute Constraints: No.** 41.3 ha / 100% of the parcel is not affected by any absolute constraints.



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Figure 2: Absolute Constraints Map

## Green Belt Parcel Ref: 31

### Key Information

Parcel area: 123.6 ha within Elmbridge Borough



Figure 1: Location map (aerial)

### Summary of Green Belt Boundary Review Information

#### Strategic Area Assessment: B

**Strategic Area B** – maintains a series of narrow gaps between Elmbridge's towns, as well as settlements in adjacent boroughs

and, on this axis, consists of the first sizeable swathe of countryside outside Greater London. The Strategic Area plays an important role in meeting the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy to prevent urban sprawl, in this case the sprawl of settlements in Surrey, by keeping land permanently open.

Assessment of the Strategic Area against the relevant NPPF purposes is as follows:

- **Purpose 1** – meets the purpose **strongly** by acting as an important barrier to potential sprawl from large built-up areas such as Walton-on-Thames / Weybridge / Hersham; Staines-up-Thames; Egham / Englefield Green, Addlestone; Chertsey; and Woking / Byfleet / Woodham.
- **Purpose 2** – meets the purpose **strongly** by establishing important gaps between a number of Surrey towns from merging into one another.
- **Purpose 3** – meets the purpose **moderately** (there is some variation across the Strategic Area) by preventing encroachment into some relatively unspoilt areas of the countryside.

**Sensitivity to Change** – given the Strategic Area protects a series of particularly narrow gaps between settlements; the character of the area could be altered significantly by alterations to Green Belt boundaries. Consideration should also be given to the area's particular sense of rurality. Some areas of Green Belt which already contain development, such as St. George's Hill, may be less sensitive to change.

### Local Area Assessment:

Assessment of the Local Area against the relevant NPPF purposes is as follows:

- *Purpose 1 (a) – FAIL:* The local area is not at the edge of a large built-up area.
- *Purpose 1 (b) – 0:* The local area is not at the edge of a large built-up area.
- *Purpose 2 – 5:* The local area forms a significant part of the narrow gap between Oxshott, and Esher and Claygate.

The parcel is important to maintaining the general openness of the gap, which is particularly strong, and also preventing ribbon development along the A244.

Additionally, due to local topography, there are long vistas across the parcel southwards from Claygate towards Oxshott beyond. The erosion of this gap may result in the perceptual and visual coalescence of these settlements.

- *Purpose 3 – 5:* 1.5% of the local area is covered by development.

The local area consists of two distinct landscape areas, both of which contribute to a strong sense of rurality. To the east are large pasture and arable fields while to the west is a dense area of deciduous woodland at Arbrook Common.

Despite the presence of urbanising influences in the form of Esher to the north and the A3 to the south, the parcel is almost completely free of encroachment. Development is restricted to dispersed, small-scale agricultural buildings and occasional dwellings, but these do not detract from the overall openness of the parcel.

Overall, the local area retains a strong unspoilt rural character with almost no built development.

**Overall Summary: Strong**

## **Absolute Constraints**

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**Within the Functional Floodplain: No.**

**Within a Site of Special Scientific Interest: Yes.** The Esher Commons SSSI occupies 41.3 ha / 33% of the parcel towards the west (see Figure 2). This is also a Registered Common.

**Within a Special Protection Area/Ramsar site: No.**

**Within a Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace: No.**

**Within an area of Ancient Woodland: No.**

**Within a Registered Park and Garden: No.**

**Within a Registered Common or Village Green: Yes.** Part of Esher Common and Arbrook Common occupy 43 ha / 35% of the parcel towards the west. The majority of this is also designated as a SSSI (see Figure 2).

## **Summary of Absolute Constraints**

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**Affected by Absolute Constraints: Partial.** Part of Esher Common and Arbrook Common occupy 43 ha / 35% of the parcel towards the west. The majority of this (41.3 ha / 33%) also forms part of Esher Commons SSSI (see Figure 2). In total 43 ha / 35% of the parcel is affected by absolute constraints.

81 ha / 65% of the parcel is not affected by any absolute constraints.

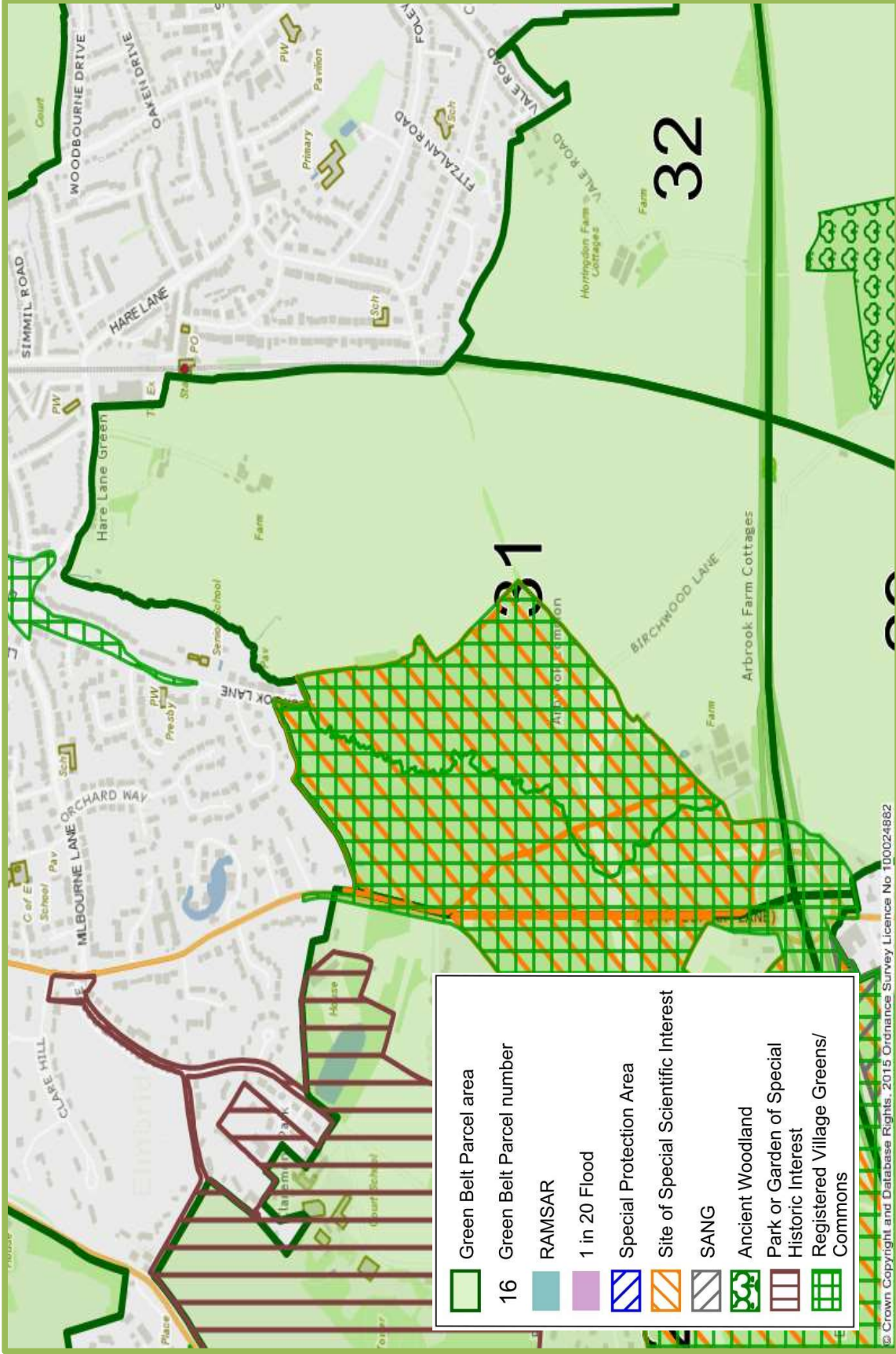


Figure 2: Absolute Constraints Map

## Green Belt Parcel Ref: 27

### Key Information

**Parcel area:** 125.1 ha within Elmbridge Borough (344.8 ha in total)  
The parcel straddles the borough boundary with The Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames to the west.



Figure 1: Location map (aerial)

### Summary of Green Belt Boundary Review Information

#### **Strategic Area Assessment: A/B**

The northern section of the parcel (approx. 45%) is located within Strategic Area A. There is a small section (approx.5%), in the

middle of the parcel that is within an area of convergence between Strategic Areas A and B. The southern section of the parcel (approx.50%) is located within area B.

**Strategic Area A** - is part of a narrow but essential arc of Green Belt and plays an important role in meeting the fundamental aim of preventing the sprawl of Greater London built-up area and its coalescence with towns in Surrey, as well as acting to maintain separation between the Surrey towns themselves.

Assessment of the Strategic Area against the relevant NPPF purposes is as follows:

- **Purpose 1** – meets the purpose **very strongly** by acting as an important barrier to potential sprawl from Greater London built-up area (including Molesey / Thames Ditton / Long Ditton) and a number of large built-up areas within Surrey (for example Walton-on-Thames / Weybridge / Hersham, and Sunbury-on-Thames).
- **Purpose 2** – meets the purpose **very strongly** by establishing important gaps between a number of Surrey towns from merging into one another and the Greater London built-up area.
- **Purpose 3** - meets the purpose **weakly** due to the fragmented nature of the Green Belt and the prevalence of man-made / industrial uses, in particular the western section of the Strategic Area.

*Sensitivity to Change* – the importance of the Strategic Area as part of the a wider Green Belt network must be acknowledged, yet there



is a sense that, in some of the more fragmented and/or degraded parts of the Green Belt, change could be accommodated without causing any further harm to its integrity.

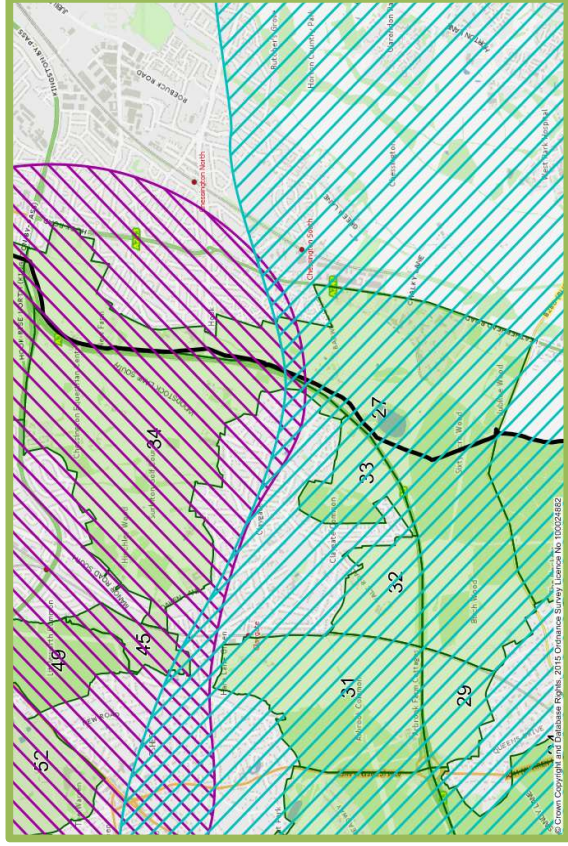


Figure 2: Strategic Map (aerial)

**Strategic Area B** – maintains a series of narrow gaps between Elmbridge's towns, as well as settlements in adjacent boroughs and, on this axis, consists of the first sizeable swathe of countryside outside Greater London. The Strategic Area plays an important role in meeting the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy to prevent urban sprawl, in this case the sprawl of settlements in Surrey, by keeping land permanently open.

Assessment of the Strategic Area against the relevant NPPF purposes is as follows:

- **Purpose 1** – meets the purpose **strongly** by acting as an important barrier to potential sprawl from large built-up areas

such as Walton-on-Thames / Weybridge / Hersham; Staines-up-Thames; Egham / Englefield Green, Addlestone; Chertsey; and Woking / Byfleet / Woodham.

- **Purpose 2** – meets the purpose **strongly** by establishing important gaps between a number of Surrey towns from merging into one another.
- **Purpose 3** – meets the purpose **moderately** (there is some variation across the Strategic Area) by preventing encroachment into some relatively unspoilt areas of the countryside.

**Sensitivity to Change** – given the Strategic Area protects a series of particularly narrow gaps between settlements; the character of the area could be altered significantly by alterations to Green Belt boundaries. Consideration should also be given to the area's particular sense of rurality. Some areas of Green Belt which already contain development, such as St. George's Hill, may be less sensitive to change.

### Local Area Assessment:

Assessment of the Local Area against the relevant NPPF purposes is as follows:

- **Purpose 1 (a) – PASS:** The local area is at the edge of the Greater London large built-up area.
- **Purpose 1 (b) – 3:** The local area is connected to the large built-up area of Greater London on its eastern edge, preventing its outward sprawl into open land.

The boundary between the Green Belt and Greater London is strong and durable, partly aligned with public roads (including Leatherhead Road, Barwell Lane and Hook Road) and, where no linear boundary features are present, following the backs of residential properties with regular, strongly bounded gardens.

The local area provides an additional barrier to sprawl.

- **Purpose 2 – 3:** The local area plays a role in the gaps between Claygate and Oxshott, and between Claygate and Greater London, as well as the wider gap between Claygate, Ashted and Epsom. In particular, some parts of the gap between Claygate and Greater London are particularly narrow, with the parcel forming much of the separation.

The local area is important for maintaining the overall openness of these gaps and preventing ribbon development along the B280 and A243.

Although the scale of the gap is important to restricting the merging of these settlements, there may be scope for some development without causing physical or perceptual coalescence, particularly in the south-west of the area adjacent to Cobham / Oxshott (where areas of woodland

and the A3, a significant physical barrier, would reduce the visual impact on the overall separation from Claygate).

- **Purpose 3 – 3:** 7% of the local area is covered by built development.

There is a marked transition in character through the parcel. The south-west maintains a strong sense of rurality, consisting of pasture and arable fields adjacent to Oxshott, interspersed with small patches of woodland and, further east, more sizeable forested areas at Great Oaks and Sixty Acre Woods.

Moving north and east through the parcel, the countryside has suffered sizeable levels of encroachment at the edge of Greater London, which reduces openness at the local level. Significant developments include the Chessington World of Adventures theme park, dwelling houses, a school and an equestrian centre. Additionally, significant areas of open land have more of an urban managed feel, with several parks and areas of allotment gardens. This part of the local area feels distinctly urban fringe.

While the character of the local area is affected by urbanising influences in places, it does overall maintain a largely rural character.

**Overall Summary: Moderate**

## **Absolute Constraints**

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**Within the Functional Floodplain: No.**

**Within a Site of Special Scientific Interest: No.**

**Within a Special Protection Area/Ramsar site: No.**

**Within a Suitable Accessible Natural Greenspace: No.**

**Within an area of Ancient Woodland: Yes.** There are two areas (47.2 ha / 38%) of Ancient Woodland to the south east of the parcel within Elmbridge Borough. Part of the larger area falls within the neighbouring borough of Kingston upon Thames to the east (see Figure 3).

**Within a Registered Park and Garden: No.**

**Within a Registered Common or Village Green: No**

## **Summary of Absolute Constraints**

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**Affected by Absolute Constraints: Partial.** There are two areas (47.2 ha / 38%) of Ancient Woodland to the south east of the parcel within Elmbridge Borough. Part of the larger area falls within the neighbouring borough of Kingston upon Thames to the east (see Figure 3).

77.9 ha/ 62% of the parcel is not affected by any absolute constraints.

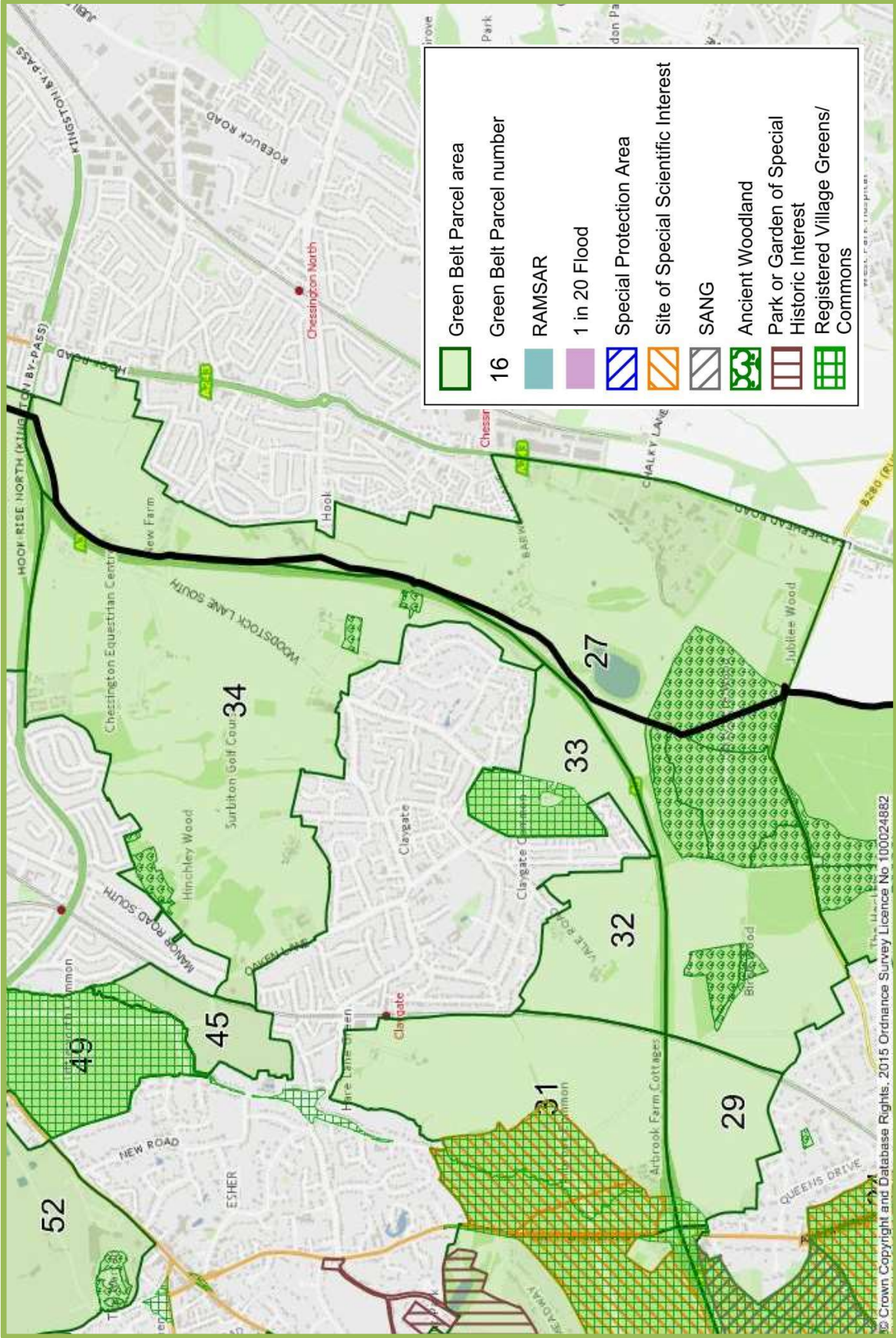


Figure 3: Absolute Constraints Map