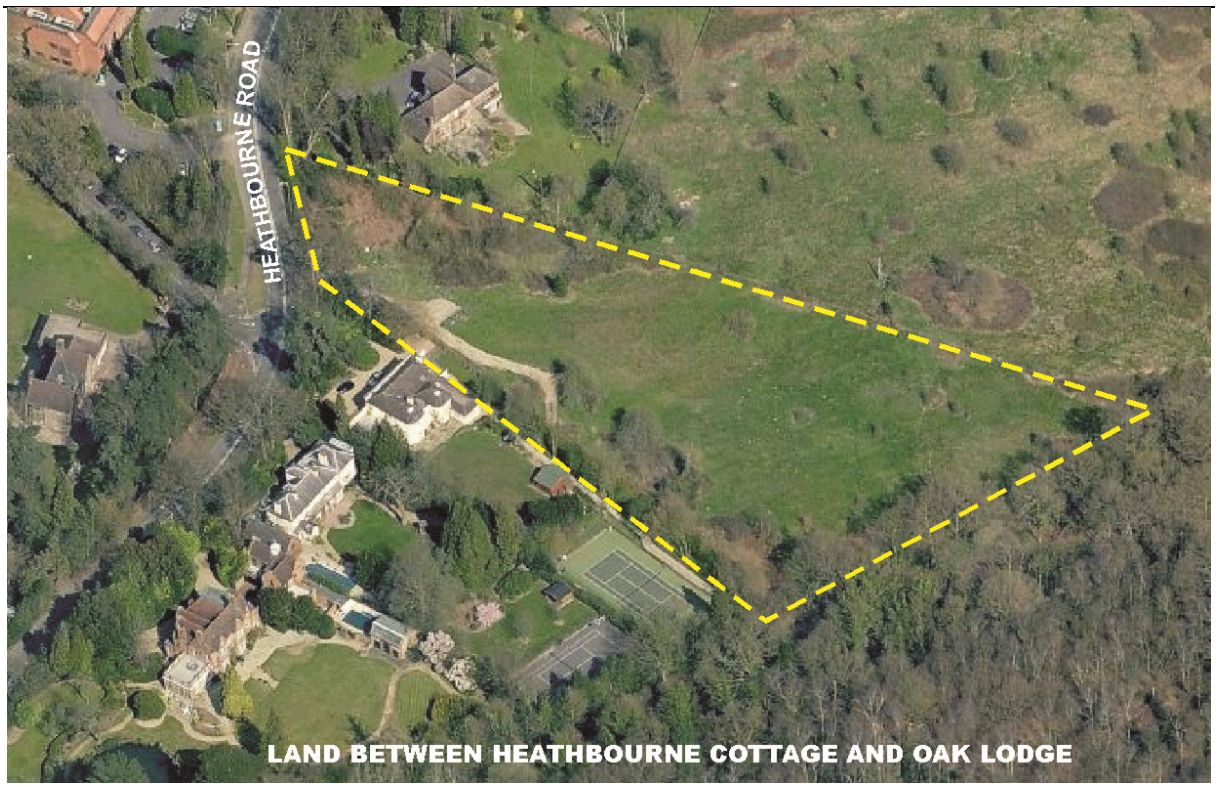
HERTSMERE

SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES PLAN - PUBLICATION STAGE REPRESENTATION

POLICY SADM23 - GREEN BELT BOUNDARY



on behalf of

Mr Richard Werth, Heathbourne Cottage, Heathbourne Road, Bushey, Hertfordshire, WD23 1PA

by:

Robert Young Associates (Hungerford) Ltd
Millstone, Smitham Bridge Road
Hungerford, Berkshire, RG17 0QP

Date: 14th October 2015

Robert Young Associates

www.planningberkshire.com

boby106@aol.com

Introduction

1.1 This report considers the Soundness of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (SADM) in respect of changes proposed along Heathbourne Road, Bushey.

Summary

2.1 The report concludes that in order for the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan to be sound, the extent and nature of changes proposed on the western side of Heathbourne Road need to be reflected in review of the Green Belt boundary on the opposite side of the road, with the Policies Map to be amended to exclude from the Green Belt, a ribbon of predominantly residential land on the east side of Heathbourne Road.

Changes adjacent to Heathbourne proposed under the SADM

3.1 There are three principal changes proposed along the western side of Heathbourne Road:

i) Policy SADM1 allocates Birchville Court and adjoining haulage yard as a site for housing development of 17 x 2 and 3-storey homes.

ii) Policy SADM2 allocates the land bounded by Heathbourne Road, Windmill Lane and Clay Lane as Safeguarded Land for Housing (reserve housing site).

iii) The Green Belt boundary is to be revised to exclude the Spire Hospital site.

3.2 Whilst removal of the Spire Hospital site from the Green Belt is largely retrospective, the consecutive changes affect a c. 0.6km length of Heathbourne Road and will have a significant cumulative impact on the character of Heathbourne Road.

Soundness of the Plan

4.1 Soundness requires that the Plan be ‘justified’ in terms of being the most appropriate strategy when considered against alternatives and available evidence. In this respect it is suggested that sites cannot be considered in isolation when they are put forward, but that the most appropriate strategy is to consider sites within their wider context.

4.2 In respect of Heathbourne Road, it is thus suggested that the allocation of the 2 sites and removal of Spire Hospital from within the Green Belt needs to be accompanied by a more general review of the Green Belt boundary in the area, and that without such a review, the Plan is unsound.

Review of the Green Belt boundary along Heathbourne Road

5.1 At present there is a distinct ribbon of development along the eastern side of Heathbourne Road, running from Heathbourne House northwards to Blue Shutters.

5.2 With the western side of the road destined to become developed, this situation will become increasingly anomalous, with, for example, the gap between Oak Lodge and Heathbourne Cottage appearing out of keeping within the ribbon of development on the eastern side of the road in the context of opposite housing development and hospital site. Green Belt policies prevent viable use or development of this plot, which represents an inefficient use of land within the developed nature of land lining this section of Heathbourne Road. At the same time, development of the land could respect the Local Wildlife Site to the rear and maintain good separation from the boundaries so as to maintain the openness and character of the area.

5.3 It is thus submitted that a more appropriate strategy would be for the Green Belt boundary to be revised so as to omit the ribbon of land along the eastern side of Heathbourne Road, allowing for development and efficient use of land appropriate to the evolving character of the area.

5.4 Figure 5.1 on the following page shows the suggested revision.

SADM23 - PROPOSED REVISION TO GREEN BELT BOUNDARY TO MAKE SOUND

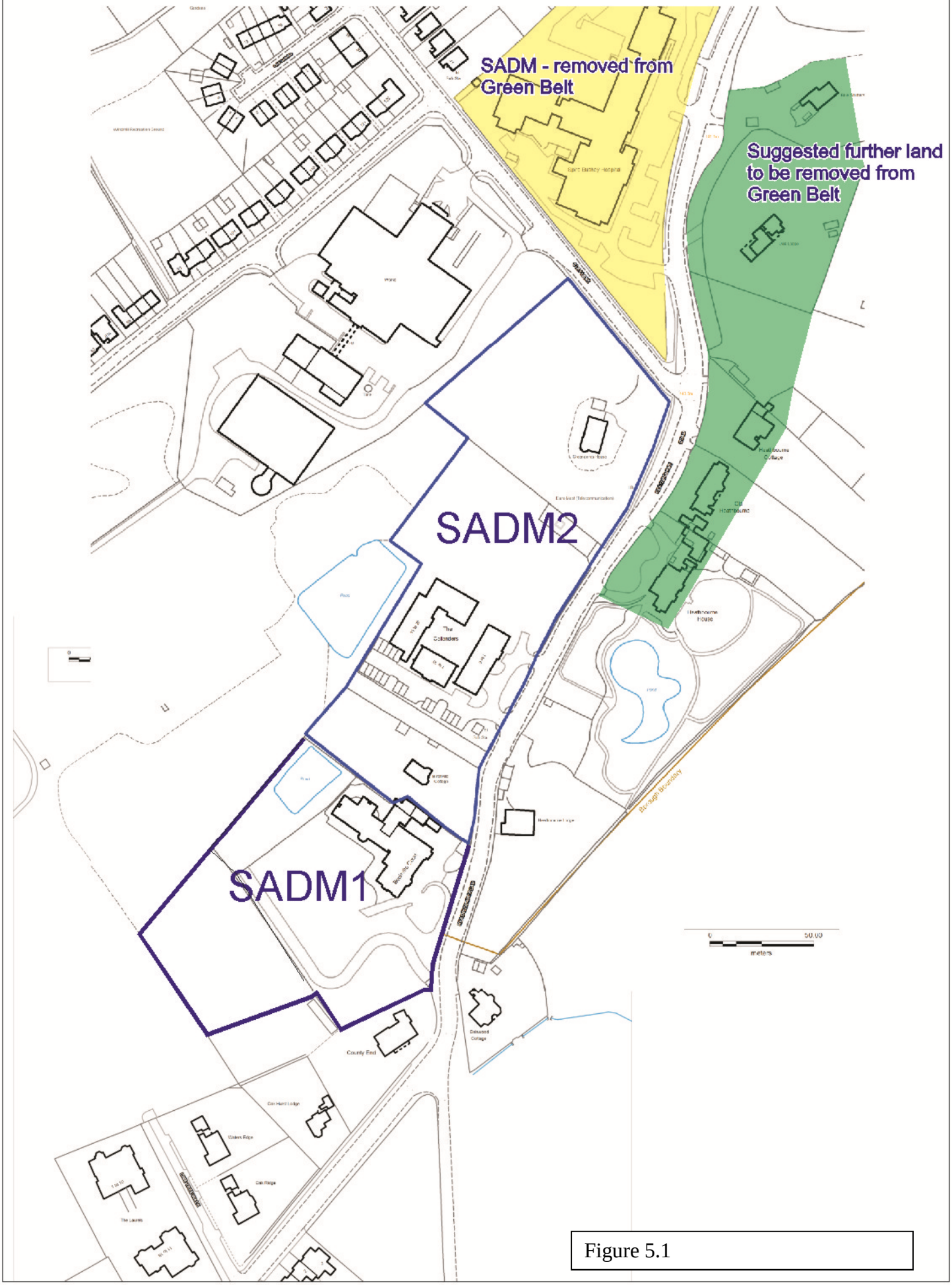


Figure 5.1

5.6 By way of precedent for this, it is to be noted that c. 200m to the south of SADM1 site H10, a similar situation is to be found along Magpie Hall Road, where the ribbon of residential land along Magpie Hall Road is excluded from the Harrow Green Belt:

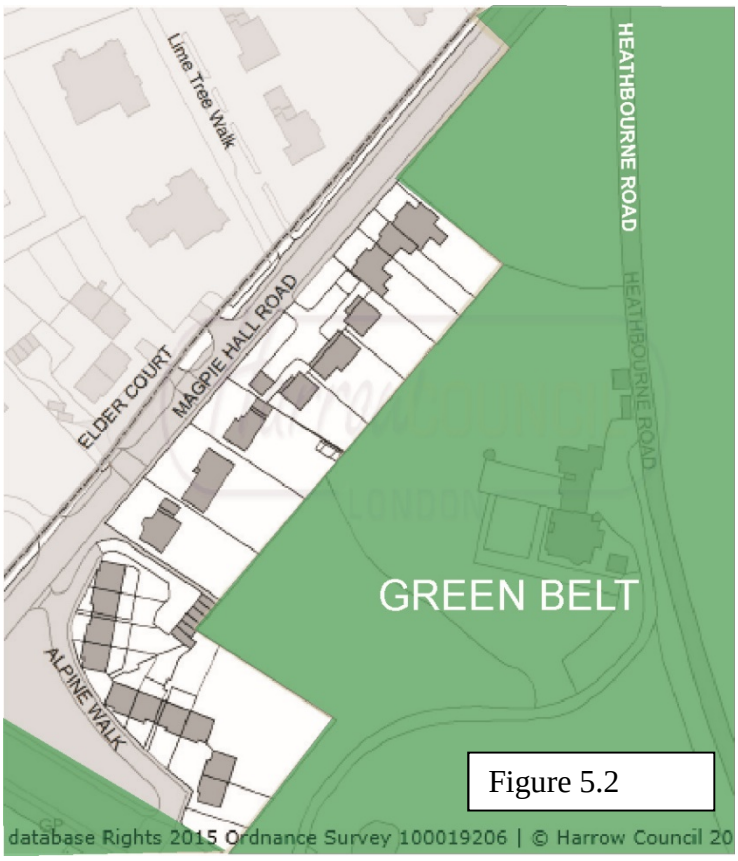


Figure 5.2

www.harrow.gov.uk

5.7 The proposed revision would thus be fully in accordance with the local precedent for Green Belt boundaries and would help ensure the soundness of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan.

Conclusion

6.1 The land adjoining Heathbourne Cottage is now considered to represent an anomaly in view of the Council's current proposals as identified in this statement.

6.2 Heathbourne Cottage and adjoining properties represent ribbon development within an established built up area. A large area of land to the rear of the land in question has been left as Green Belt to maintain openness and safeguard the wildlife corridor. The Council is therefore respectfully asked to consider the proposed adjustment to the Green belt boundary.

Robert Young October 15/010/2015