

Appendix 1 – Guidance note for completing site assessments

General

The majority of the form should be completed on site. Some of the data (highlighted as grey text) needs to be identified as part of a desktop assessment. It is suggested that these sections are completed after the site visit in case further sub-division of parcels is necessary. Reviewers should however familiarise themselves with the constraints maps provided before visiting the parcels. In reviewing each parcel consideration should also be given to the relationship of the space with open land which sits beyond the borough boundary. Maps showing the extent of MOL and Green Belt in the adjoining boroughs is saved in the folder.

Photos should be taken of each site, and these should be appropriately named and dated.

Part A(i) & Part A(ii)

Part A(i) should be completed where a site is presently designated as Green Belt, or where a site is undesignated at present, and has been identified for possible inclusion.

Part A(ii) should be completed where a site is presently designated as Metropolitan Open Land, or where a site is undesignated at present, and has been identified for possible review and inclusion.

Where a site performs poor against its current designation, it will also be appropriate to consider whether the site more closely resembles the characteristics of the other designation. For example where a site is presently designated as Green Belt, but performs poorly against this designation, but shares characteristics common with MOL land, the site should also be assessed against the MOL designation. In this regard particular consideration should therefore be given to the location of the open space within the borough relative to its relationship with the edge of the conurbation, and its setting (if it is embedded/forms an island) in the urban fabric. In this scenario, both sections of the pro-forma should be completed. Ultimately then some Green Belt land might revert to MOL and vice versa.

For each parcel it will be necessary to judge and record the level of significance/contribution of that parcel to each of the purposes/criteria. Notes can also be recorded where needed. The categories are broadly defined as follows:

- **Critical importance** to Green Belt/MOL purposes – where land is ‘fundamental’ to the purpose, justifying its continued retention and protection within Green Belt/MOL;
- **Major importance** to Green Belt/MOL purposes – where land is of ‘major’ importance to the Green Belt/MOL purpose;
- **Moderate Importance** to Green Belt/MOL purposes – where land is of ‘Moderate’ importance to the Green Belt/MOL;
- **Slight/Negligible** importance to Green Belt/MOL purposes – where land is of Minor/Negligible importance to the Green Belt/MOL Purpose; and
- **No importance** to Green Belt/MOL purpose.

The following parameters/characteristics have also been defined for each ‘significance’ category, in relation to the purposes, to assist the reviewer in scoring the parcel against the objectives:

Table A(i) – Green Belt

1: To check unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	
Significance/Contribution/Score	Defining Characteristics
Critical importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land is contiguous with a large built-up area - Land provides a barrier to a large built-up area, which is weakly bordered. The urban area may lack prominent features. The open area in contrast may have a clearly defined edge, defined by landscape features.
Major importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land is contiguous with or connected to a large built up area - Land provides a barrier to a large built-up area, which has some boundary features, but these are limited and lack permanence
Moderate importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land is contiguous with or connected to a large built up area - Land provides an additional barrier to a large built up area, which already contains some prominent boundary features
Slight/Negligible importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land is connected to a built area, although is of low density and the built form is fairly dispersed. - Land provides an additional barrier to a large built up area, which contains many prominent boundary features (i.e. railway line/waterway)
Not important/doesn't contribute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land is not connected/contiguous with a large built area, or - The urban land already contains prominent and permanent boundary features.

2: To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	
Significance/Contribution/Score	Defining Characteristics
Critical importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The land forms a gap between the edge of London and settlements outside. - The land forms an essential gap where its loss to development would significantly visually or physically reduce the perceived or actual distances between settlements/character areas. Any reduction in extent would result in physical coalescence, or a perception of merging that would erode the distinct separate identity and character of either/both settlements.
Major importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The land forms a gap between the edge of London and settlements outside.
Moderate importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The land forms a gap between smaller local settlements/character areas.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some limited development may be possible without causing merger or perception of merging, although the area is unlikely to accommodate a strategic level of development.
Slight/Negligible importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The land forms a gap between smaller local settlements/character areas. - The land forms a less essential gap, which is of sufficient scale and character that well planned development is unlikely to cause merging between settlements/character areas.
Not important/doesn't contribute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The gap doesn't separate defined settlements.

3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

Significance/Contribution/Score	Defining Characteristics
Critical importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The land possesses a strong, unspoilt rural character which the GB designation protects. The land has an absence of built development (less than 10%) and is characterised by rural land uses including agriculture.
Major importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The land possesses a predominantly rural character, with a general absence of built development (less than 20%), largely characterised by rural land uses including agriculture, but with some sporadic development and man-made structures.
Moderate importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The land possesses a semi-urban character, which contains a mix of urban and rural land use. Built form constitutes between 20-30%.
Slight/Negligible importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The land possesses a semi-urban character, which contains a mix of urban and rural land use. Built form constitutes between 30-40%.
Not important/doesn't contribute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The land possesses an urban character which is predominately characterised by urban land uses, including physical developments such as residential or commercial, or urban managed parks. Contains more than 50% built form

Table A (ii) - MOL

A – It contributes to the physical structure of London by being clearly distinguishable from the built up area

Applicability/Significance	Defining Characteristics
Crucial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The land forms an essential and substantial gap in the built form. The space serves as a boundary between different localities in the borough and assists in emphasising the separate identity of these areas. The land is of a sufficient scale providing tranquillity to users from the built area. The boundary of the open area is clearly defined and distinguishable from the neighbouring built-up area. The open area is visible

	from public vantage points. The land is predominantly open with less than 10% built form.
Major importance	- The land forms a substantial gap in the built form, and the boundary of the area is clearly defined and distinguishable from the neighbouring area. The land is predominately open with less than 20% built form.
Moderate importance	- The land forms a break in the urban form, although its scale is less significant at a strategic level. The boundary of the open area is reasonably well defined. Less than 30% of the land is built on.
Slight/Negligible importance	- The land forms a less obvious gap in the urban form.
Not important/doesn't contribute	- The land doesn't form a gap and isn't distinguishable from the built up area.

B – It includes open air facilities, especially for leisure, recreation sports, arts and cultural activities, which serve either the whole or significant parts of London

Applicability/Significance	Defining Characteristics
Crucial	- The land accommodates multiple activities of strategic significance or a single activity which could serve the whole of London or beyond, whose delivery would be affected by all development (apart from ancillary development).
Major importance	- The land accommodates activities of strategic significance serving significant part of London.
Moderate importance	- The site presently only accommodates activities of local importance although has the potential to be enhanced to a level whereby it could serve a wider catchment. Enabling development of an acceptable scale could be accommodated without significantly undermining this function(s).
Slight/Negligible importance	- The site previously accommodated such activities, but is now unused or underutilised, although it has potential to be enhanced. Enabling development of an acceptable scale could be accommodated without significantly undermining this function(s).
Not important/doesn't contribute	- The site is vacant and accommodates no such activities, and is of limited priority for investment.

C – It contains features or landscapes (historic, recreational, biodiversity) of national or metropolitan value

Applicability/Significance	Defining Characteristics
Crucial	- The land contains features or landscape of national value e.g. a Registered Park or Garden, SAC, SPA, Ramsar or SSSI

Major importance	- The land contains features or landscape of regional value e.g. Heritage Land, SMI or RIGS.
Moderate importance	- The land contains features or landscapes of a national or metropolitan value, although these occupy and have a bearing on only a small section of the site.
Slight/Negligible importance	- The site presently only accommodates features or landscape of local importance although has the potential to be enhanced. Enabling development of an acceptable scale could be accommodated without significantly undermining its status.
Not important/doesn't contribute	- The site contains no such features/landscape.

D – It forms part of a green chain or link in the network of green infrastructure and meets one of the above criteria

Applicability/Significance	Defining Characteristics
Crucial	- The land is contiguous with other MOL/Green Belt, or designated green links which are established and largely unbroken from built form.
Major importance	- The land adjoins other MOL/Green Belt, or designated green links which are established although may be broken in part by some built form (roads, railway lines, fragmented but small scale built development).
Moderate importance	- The land adjoins designated green links (Green Corridor/Blue Ribbon Network), although these green links are not fully established or publicly accessible.
Slight/Negligible importance/potential	- The land doesn't presently form part of a green link, although potential exists to establish such a link.
Not important/doesn't contribute	- The site is isolated from other green space/infrastructure.

In carrying out this review where notable variations (in their contribution, function, and purpose) are identified across the site, it may be appropriate to sub-divide the parcel into further smaller areas. This is particularly important where a part of the site does not in any way contribute to the Green Belt/MOL objectives. This might be the case for example where land has already been built on, or part of the parcel is detached from the main open area. The subdivision of parcels will need to be noted on the map, and each subdivided parcel will require separate assessment. Where a parcel is subdivided a letter prefix should be added. For example, parcel 7 might be split into 7a, 7b and 7c, and so on. Any open space contiguous with the site which is not presently designated but warrants potential inclusion should also be noted and reviewed.