

# Public Document Pack

## **EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a meeting of East Hertfordshire District Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Wallfields, Hertford on Wednesday 18th October, 2023 at 7.00 pm, for the purpose of transacting the business set out in the Agenda below, and you are hereby summoned to attend.

Date this 11 day of October 2023

*James Ellis*  
Head of Legal and  
Democratic Services

*Note: Prayers will be said before the meeting commences. Those Members who do not wish to participate will be invited to enter the Chamber at their conclusion*

This meeting will be live streamed on the Council's Youtube page:  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/EastHertsDistrict>

### **AGENDA**

1. Election of a Chairman

To elect the Chairman of the Council for the remainder of 2023/24 following which the Chairman will make the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

2. Election of a Vice-Chairman

To elect the Vice-Chairman of the Council for the remainder of 2023/24 following which the Vice-Chairman will make the statutory declaration of acceptance of office.

3. Chairman's Announcements

To receive any announcements from the Chairman.

4. Leader's Announcements

To receive any announcements from the Leader of the Council.

5. Apologies for Absence

To receive any Members' apologies for absence.

6. Minutes - 26 July 2023 (Pages 6 - 69)

To approve as a correct record and authorise the Chairman to sign the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 26 July 2023.

7. Declarations of Interest

To receive any Members' declarations of interest.

8. Petitions

To receive any petitions.

9. Public Questions (Pages 70 - 71)

To receive any public questions.

10. Members' Questions (Page 72)

To receive any Members' questions.



11. Executive Report - 5 September and 3 October 2023 (Pages 73 - 76)

To receive a report from the Leader of the Council and to consider recommendations on the matters below:

(A) Birchall Garden Suburb Masterplan\_(Pages 77 - 222)

(B) Review of the East Herts District Plan 2018\_(Pages 223 - 278)

(C) Community Grants Policy and Priorities 2023/24\_(Pages 279 - 291)

12. Independent Remuneration Panel 2023 - Review of Members' Allowances (Pages 292 - 321)

13. Motions on Notice

To receive Motions on Notice.

(A) Reduced Parking Charges for town centre workers in Bishop's Stortford\_(Page 322)

(B) Raw Sewage in Rivers\_(Page 323)

(C) LGA Save Local Services Campaign\_(Pages 324 - 325)

## **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:

- must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
- must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
- must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
- if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
- must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.

## **Public Attendance**

East Herts Council welcomes public attendance at its meetings and meetings will continue to be live streamed and webcasted. For further information, please email [democraticservices@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@eastherts.gov.uk) or call the Council on 01279 655261 and ask to speak to Democratic Services.

The Council operates a paperless policy in respect of agendas at committee meetings and the Council will no longer be providing spare copies of Agendas for the Public at Committee Meetings. The mod.gov app is available to download for free from app stores for electronic devices. You can use the mod.gov app to access, annotate and keep all committee paperwork on your mobile device.

Visit <https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/article/35542/Political-Structure> for details.

## **Audio/Visual Recording of meetings**

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# Agenda Item 6

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL  
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON  
WEDNESDAY 26 JULY 2023, AT 7.00 PM

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PRESENT: Councillor M Butcher (Chairman).  
Councillors I Devonshire, D Andrews,  
S Bull, B Crystall, B Deering, M Goldspink,  
D Hollebon, G McAndrew, C Redfern,  
T Stowe, R Townsend, G Williamson,  
C Wilson, J Wyllie, C Brittain, M Adams,  
V Burt, R Carter, N Clements, M Connolly,  
S Copley, N Cox, A Daar, J Dunlop, Y Estop,  
V Glover-Ward, C Hart, G Hill, A Holt,  
S Hopewell, C Horner, T Hoskin, D Jacobs,  
S Marlow, S Nicholls, A Parsad-Wyatt,  
V Smith, M Swainston, J Thomas,  
D Willcocks and G Williams.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Richard Cassidy	- Chief Executive
James Ellis	- Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer
Steven Linnett	- Head of Strategic Finance and Property
Katie Mogan	- Democratic Services Manager

104 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman reminded Members to use their microphones as the meeting was being webcast.

The Chairman said he had been reflecting on his role as Chairman at recent events he had attended which had made him appreciate the job. He said that in the last week, he had attended and judged a Dog Show at the Southern Country Park in Bishop's Stortford. He said that later in the week he would be going to Stanstead St Margarets to help the council's flytipping officer and the police clear a self-built skate ramp under a bridge which had become a focal point for anti-social behaviour.

#### 105 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader of the Council had a sad announcement to make. He said that Andrew Cowley, the lead Planning Enforcement Officer, had sadly passed away at the beginning of June. He sent his family, friends, and colleagues his thoughts and best wishes for their loss.

Councillor Deering said he had been dealing with Andrew on an issue leading up to his loss and said it was important to note that his colleagues really missed him and held him in the highest regard. He added his group's condolences to those of the Leader's.

A minute's silence was held in memory of Andrew Cowley.

#### 106 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E Buckmaster, R Buckmaster, Boylan, Deffley, Dumont, Watson and Woollcombe.

107 MINUTES - 17 MAY 2023

Councillor Goldspink requested that Councillor Swainston's initial be added to the list of attendees.

Councillor Goldspink proposed, and Councillor Nicholls seconded a motion that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2023, as amended, be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman. On being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2023, as amended, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

108 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Glover-Ward declared an interest in agenda item 9b as she chaired the Kingmead Neighbourhood Plan Group. She would leave the Chamber for the discussion and voting of the item.

109 PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

110 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

## **Question 1**

### **Colin Woodward to ask Councillor Vicky Glover-Ward, the Executive Member for Planning and Growth**

Would the Executive Member for Planning and Growth please confirm the total quantity for Bishop's Stortford of all dwellings, (separately identifying the number designated as 'affordable'), that have already been granted Planning Approval by Development Management to date in comparison to the quantities previously set out in the EHC District Plan to meet projected local needs and clarify the quantity of any further additional dwellings proposed for the Old River Lane development with the rationale for any such proposed additions?

### **Response from Councillor Glover-Ward**

The East Herts District Plan sets out that Bishop's Stortford will accommodate a minimum of 4,426 dwellings up to the year 2033. The 4,426 figure includes seven allocated sites and is also expected to include a proportion of the district's windfall allowance in addition.

The current number of dwellings completed in Bishop's Stortford since the District Plan was adopted in 2018 is 1,842 – and of this number 463 were affordable dwellings. Due to a combination of outline and detailed planning permissions, and some permissions that supersede previous extant permissions it is hard to give a definitive total for dwellings that have been granted permission. However, the latest five year land supply position sets out that there is extant permission for a total of around 3,250 dwellings, in addition to those completed already. Out of

those dwellings there is detailed extant permission for over 800 affordable dwellings, although this figure is likely to be exceeded as detailed reserved matters permissions continue to come forward.

Old River Lane is allocated in the District Plan for mixed use development and around 100 new homes. A planning application has been submitted for up to 225 homes. As with all applications, the proposals will need to be assessed against the District Plan and other material planning considerations.

## **Question 2**

### **Jill Goldsmith to ask Councillor Carl Brittain, the Executive Member for Financial Sustainability**

In the absence of audited accounts for the last 3 full financial years, can Carl Brittain, Executive Member for Financial Sustainability, tell us the current fair value of each element of the Council's land and buildings on the Old River Lane site and provide us with an explanation of how the Council is going to provide assurance to local taxpayers that it is achieving best value from this investment and any associated debt finance and engage with the people of Bishop's Stortford on this matter BEFORE it makes an irreversible contractual commitment to dispose of it?

### **Response from Councillor Brittain**

Fair value, in accounting, is a rational and unbiased estimate of the potential market price of an asset. Not all of the assets at Old River Lane are valued at Fair Value in accordance with the Accounting Code of Practice we are



required to follow to compile our accounts. We therefore do not have the fair value of all assets at Old River Lane. Charringtons House, excluding the part used by the council for customer services, was an investment property and therefore valued at fair value. The customer service centre was valued as an operational building and therefore valued at existing use. The car park outside Charrington's house was an investment property and valued at fair value. The public car parks were valued as existing use. I therefore cannot supply the fair values off all the assets at Old River Lane as we do not have those valuations for the accounts as we do not require them. I will supply the valuations and the basis of the valuations in the accounts to you in writing after this meeting, rather than reading out numbers and taking up more time with this answer.

The valuations can be found at Appendix 1 of the published responses on the website.

The lack of audited accounts has been due to problems within the Local Government Auditing industry, not due to council reluctance to make finances public. There are currently 520 council audits outstanding across the country, dating back to 2015/2016, and only 27% of council audits for 2021/22 have so far been completed. The new council is committed to improving transparency over finances where it can.

As a newly elected council we are also absolutely committed to providing the best value for local taxpayers. The decision to undertake this development in its current form was taken a long time ago under a different administration. At that time the Council opted to work with a developer for this site on the basis that they have the

necessary expertise and access to finance needed to bring the project to fruition. It isn't something that EHC could do directly. The procurement process the council undertook was predicated upon obtaining best value in the overall development and moreover, if Cityheart do make excessive profits it will trigger a 50/50 profit share. There will also be additional benefits to the council from the scheme once completed in terms of business rates from the businesses and council tax from the housing units. During the disposal process the council is also obliged to provide a Section 123 Report to demonstrate that it is not disposing of property for less than what could be reasonably obtained. The council should comfortably pass this test.

As it stands, the value of the buildings and assets on the site are gradually reducing as, with the exception of the URC Hall and 1,2,3 Old River Lane, they are no longer in use. The Council would not enter in an agreement with a developer whereby we are not getting best value and indeed there are regulations which prevent us from doing so. With regards to the Arts Centre, the Delivery Board have agreed that we will consult and engage with residents on the offer.

The financial position we have inherited is one where we believe there is no choice but to proceed as planned with the majority of the ORL development. If we were to stop the entire development and start again the costs incurred so far would need to be written off, and this could create the potential of tipping the council into bankruptcy, which would be the worst possible option of all for the residents of East Herts. Therefore, I believe that the existing arrangements do provide best value for the local taxpayer.

### Question 3

#### **Louise Tennekoon on behalf of Bishop's Stortford Climate Group to ask Councillor Tim Hoskin, the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability**

Can the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability tell us what steps the Council is taking to ensure that the Council and its partner Cityheart pursue plans for the development of the Old River Lane which will ensure it is an exemplar of Net Zero development?

#### **Response from Councillor Hoskin**

I would like to thank Louise Tennekoon for her question. Promoting the sustainability of new development in East Herts is an integral element of the council's Climate Change Strategy and very much at the forefront of the joint administration's thinking.

While our District Plan, which lays out the planning policies developers must comply with, was agreed in 2018 and therefore does not incorporate the latest thinking on net zero development, our Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), subsequently published in 2021, includes some of the most exacting requirements across Hertfordshire and beyond. Of note, our Sustainability SPD actively *'expects planning proposals to incorporate sustainable construction techniques including zero or low carbon energy'* with new development expected to follow a *'hierarchical approach to reducing energy demand and associated carbon emissions'* with clear evidence of carbon reduction.

Already, we have gained Cityheart's commitment to the

reuse of materials generated by the redevelopment when constructing the new buildings. Added to this, given that the council is working closely with Cityheart, we are already discussing how to include best practice in the development and surpass our existing sustainable development requirements with the aim of demonstrating exemplary net zero development principles in action.

The brutal reality is that this administration has inherited an existing scheme and that has tight contractual and financial constraints. These constraints severely hamper what can and cannot be achieved and greatly limit any ambitions of being able to deliver an exemplar of Net Zero development.

This administration is actively exploring the means by which the planning process can be used to drive significant improvements in the built environment including new builds but that process has to start right at the beginning of the process. I guess with limitless resources it would be perfectly possible to reverse engineer the very best environmental ambitions into the existing design but given the financial and contractual constraints that we have inherited this is likely to be impractical.

### **Supplementary question from Louise Tennekoon**

Given the current planning application doesn't include detailed carbon reduction commitments, how will the council hold Cityheart to exemplary net zero standards when the land is handed over for development?

Unfortunately there is a track record, certainly within Bishop's Stortford of developers committing to quite impressive carbon reduction targets and then failing to

deliver them.

### **Response from Councillor Hoskin**

*Awaiting written response*

### **Question 4**

#### **Graham Oxborrow on behalf of Cycle Stortford to ask Councillor Tim Hoskin, the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability**

Noting Motion 3 on the Agenda (Item 12c: Declaration of a Climate Emergency and the Council's response) will the Council agree to adding the following clause to the Motion. "To commit to working with Hertfordshire County Council and town/parish councils to ensure that active travel infrastructure is installed at key locations within the District to achieve demonstrable and measurable modal shift by 2027"

### **Response from Councillor Hoskin**

I would like to thank Mr Oxborrow for his question.

As Mr Oxborrow has noted, later on the agenda I shall be proposing a motion that East Herts Council declares a climate emergency in light of the evidence of global warming and its impact on the people and habitats of East Herts.

While it is not possible for a member of the public to propose an amendment to a council motion, I am very happy to confirm that this council is already fully

committed to working with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and town and parish councils on promoting active travel within the district.

Notably, earlier this year our bid for Defra funding to support active travel promotion was successful. In total, we have received £126,000 to work with schools, local businesses and the town councils in our three Air Quality Management Areas in Bishop's Stortford, Hertford and Sawbridgeworth to map out and publicise active travel routes. This work has started with 11 workshops held in four schools so far with another 11 schools lined up to take part.

While HCC has the largest role to play in the delivery of active travel infrastructure and modal shift monitoring, partnership working is crucial. For example, recently, a scheme for the provision of a new alternative riverside walking route, through a cantilevered boardwalk around Hertford Castle moat, has been granted an initial £300,000 award from The National Lottery Heritage Fund which will enable an application for £2m to bring the plans to fruition.

The council are also currently partnering with HCC in the development of our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). Engagement with key stakeholders is currently underway. When completed, this key document can be used to promote active travel and, importantly, will provide an evidence base when seeking inward investment and also open up funding opportunities for the delivery of schemes on the ground.

With regard to bus use, the council has worked closely with North Herts Council and Hertfordshire County Council on

the introduction of the Herts Lynx on demand response bus service in 2021. This provides on demand bus travel across the northern half of our district and the councils are hopeful that this successful scheme can be extended further in the future.

Looking ahead, the District Plan includes key policies to ensure that applications for major new developments deliver active travel, while our Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document also includes helpful information to assist developers.

Finally, I'd like to mention that in response to a question to be raised by Councillor Devonshire later on the agenda, I shall be describing the council's work to seek a partner to install e-v chargers across both the towns and rural parts of our district. While driving an electric vehicle is not in itself a means of active travel, I believe that for those longer journeys for which car use may be necessary, driving an electric car is far better for our environment and, importantly, electric car use reduces air pollution, which is often the very thing putting people off walking or cycling in the first place.

I very much hope that our and our partners' combined efforts will encourage our residents to make demonstrable modal shifts in their journeys by 2027.

### **Question 5**

#### **Ayeisha Woodward to ask Councillor Vicky Glover-Ward, the Executive Member for Planning and Growth**

Would the Executive Member for Planning and Growth

please confirm whether EHC responded by the pre-election deadline to the Government consultation on proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and if so, does the new administration endorse that response in full or part and has or, will it, be publicly available on the EHC website?

### **Response from Councillor Glover-Ward**

East Herts provided a comprehensive response to the National Planning Policy Framework consultation that was held by the government between December 2022 and March 2023. The response was taken through the Council's non-key decision process and full details of the decision and the response are available on the decision-making section of the Council's website.

The new administration is broadly supportive of the response to the proposed changes to the NPPF.

### **Question 6**

#### **David Royle to ask Councillor Tim Hoskin, the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability**

The SUSTAINABLE SAWBRIDGEWORTH community group is already working closely with HCC's/Sustainable Hertfordshire Clear the Air campaign in providing air quality data, working with local schools. We expect to work in a similar way with EHDC's Defra-funded Breathe Clean campaign.

We would like to clarify the timeframe for installing permanent real-time air quality monitoring sensors in



Sawbridgeworth, which we understand are to be funded by the grant that EHDC has received from DEFRA. How many sensors will there be, where will they be located, and how will residents be able to access the real-time information?

### **Response from Councillor Hoskin**

I'd like to thank David Royle for his question.

The council's successful bid to Defra to promote active travel in the council's three Air Quality Management Areas – in Bishop's Stortford, Hertford and Sawbridgeworth – included funding to acquire and install *one* real-time air quality monitor in *each* of the AQMAs.

Officers are now working with colleagues at Hertfordshire County Council on the exact locations as HCC will have the final say on which lamp-posts the sensors can viably draw power from. At the moment, East Herts officers' preferred location in Sawbridgeworth is on Cambridge Road outside of Leventhorpe School given the relatively high traffic at this location, both vehicular and on foot, associated with accessing the school and the importance of encouraging active travel alternatives to-and-from the school. We are awaiting HCC's assessment of the feasibility of siting a sensor at this location.

We believe that once installed, the data can be streamed directly to the council and then onto the council's website. In addition, we hope to upload the live data to the Herts and Bed Air Quality Monitoring website. This would have the benefit of allowing the public to sign up for real-time air pollution alerts.

HCC are still assessing the viability of different locations and so we will have to wait for them to confirm which lamp-posts can be used. Thus, at this time, I unfortunately cannot give a precise timescale for the installation of the sensors and streaming of the data, however, this is a priority within the current Defra-funded project and the aim is to bring the sensors online by the end of this financial year.

### **Question 7**

#### **Paul Dean, on behalf of the Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation, to ask Councillor Vicky Glover-Ward, the Executive Member for Planning and Growth**

East Herts Council has said it intends to enter into a revised agreement with Cityheart – ORL's planned developer, pausing the leisure and arts elements but continuing with the housing and commercial elements. ORL has the chance to be an iconic development for Bishop's Stortford, but Cityheart has already made non-collaborative Outline and Demolition planning applications, both of which are highly flawed and unpopular.

BSCF is one of over 670 public objectors and twelve of fourteen statutory consultees have objected or recommended refusal. They include the Town Council, Herts Highways and Archaeology, Historic England, the Environment Agency, and EHC's Housing Strategy Unit and Environmental Health Department. BSCF considers that the intention to press ahead with ORL's housing and commercial elements only overlooks issues raised by objectors, and more. It therefore wishes to ask the Executive Member for Planning and Growth:

When will EHC advise Cityheart to withdraw these highly flawed and unpopular planning applications and insist on resuming transparent collaborative masterplanning and public consultation for the whole of the development, not just the arts centre?

### **Response from Councillor Glover-Ward**

As a local planning authority, planning officers have provided feedback to Cityheart on their planning application for ORL. There are a number of issues that need to be resolved, many of which have been raised as part of the consultation on planning application which is not unusual. It is for Cityheart to take on board the issues that have been raised and propose appropriate amendments to the application. The local planning authority has yet to receive any revised plans but if these materialise there will be a further public consultation on the revisions. As with all planning applications, we can only advise and hope that applicants listen to the planning advice being given. The Council as the local planning authority can't insist that Cityheart withdraw their application, only they can do this, although it may be presented to them as an option if sufficient progress isn't made to address the issues that have been raised.

### **Question 8**

**Deborah Munro, on behalf of Parsonage Residents Association, to ask Councillor Tim Hoskin, the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability**

Would the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability please confirm how EHC are going to

mitigate the impact of Air Pollution on Hockerill Crossroads due to the extended length of time a major development will be undertaken in the town centre due to the delay imposed by the present administration's deferment of the Arts element of the ORL project in Bishop's Stortford?

### **Response from Councillor Hoskin**

I would like to thank Deborah Munro for her question.

Air pollution within the Hockerill junction Air Quality Management Area is a key concern for the council and its partners. The figures for 2022, representing the first data after the pandemic, show that air pollution in each of the four roads at the junction, while slightly higher than during the Covid lockdowns, is lower than in 2019, the last full year before the pandemic. Indeed, the overall trend over the last decade remains downward, with pollution in Hockerill Street and Stansted Road still *below* the national target limit of 40 micrograms per cubic metre.

That said, the council is far from complacent about air quality at the junction and actions to mitigate air pollution there will be included in the Air Quality Strategy and Action Plan which we are currently drafting with Hertfordshire County Council and other partners ready for public consultation in the autumn this year.

I'm not entirely sure that the joint administration's decision to look carefully at the arts elements of the Old River Lane project, including asking local people for their views, will of itself lead to increased air pollution at Hockerill junction. I fully recognise, however, concerns about any pressure on air quality in that area and so, I'd like to assure Ms Munro

and others that as a requirement of seeking planning permission for any development at Old River Lane, a traffic assessment will need to be submitted, along with a range of other reports. This assessment will enable the impact on surrounding roads to be fully and carefully considered and appropriate mitigation put in place.

As referred to in the earlier answer there is funding for a real time monitor. The potential location for this real time device is on a lamp post outside 14B Dunmow Road which it is thought would be capable of presenting a representative reading.

## 111 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

### **Question 1**

#### **Councillor Angus Parsad-Wyatt to ask Councillor Ben Crystall, the Leader of the Council**

The new Executive has expanded with the addition of the Executive Member for Resident Engagement. Given engaging with residents is a function of all Councillors' roles, can the Leader please explain what the purpose of this role is, and by what metrics the Member's work will be judged?

#### **Response for Councillor Crystall**

Thank you for the question. You're correct that engaging with residents is already a fundamental part of every councillor's day to day activities – clearly we all spend time answering queries or talking to our residents. And that one-to-one engagement works perfectly well when

questions are single issues or where you're looking for a localised response, from a single street, say or from part of a ward.

But EHC regularly consults residents on new policies or strategies or on planning applications, or wider schemes covering town centres, for example, where there is no single yes/no answer and where the council is looking for residents to address a much broader range of issues.

The key questions here are: 1) how do we engage to ensure that as many residents as possible are notified about a consultation – and again ward councillors have a role to play here – and 2) how do we ensure that the consultations themselves are clear, ask the right kinds of questions and are delivered in the best way to achieve those aims.

In the past we may have posted out questionnaires to everyone but that's expensive and people often miss them amongst junk mail. At the other extreme we have online consultation systems. No single approach works for everyone. You could just accept that we'll always miss some people. I don't think that's good enough and in the last few years I have become acutely aware of large numbers of residents who feel that their voices aren't being heard. This is also about trying to restore trust in local politics.

So the aim of the new post, and the challenge for Councillor Chris Wilson, is to take a careful look at how we consult and engage with our residents, and how we can improve that process, to try to reach as many people as possible, but also to look at opportunities for more in-depth discussions with residents, so that they start to have

a real voice in local democracy.

As far as metrics are concerned, have metrics have ever been applied specifically to executive roles at EHC? The council monitors customer feedback and that could be used as a judge of success. The ultimate metric is the ballot box, as we saw in May. There is also the opportunity for the Overview and Scrutiny committee to be involved in assessing how effective we are at improving consultation and engagement. But if you or anyone else have ideas for metrics that could be effective, please let me know.

### **Supplementary question from Councillor Parsad-Wyatt**

Councillor Parsad-Wyatt said that six of the nine Members in the Executive represented wards in Hertford. He asked how they would ensure that they were working and engaging with all resident across the whole District. He also said that the additional Executive Member position would cost the council an estimated £40,000 over the four-year term of the council and asked where the additional £40,000 would come from and which service charge may be raised or cut to fund the Executive's allowances.

### **Response from Councillor Crystall**

Councillor Crystall responded and said he did not think where the Executive Members' wards were relevant. He said the new role was about how the council engaged with all residents across the district. He said as far as costs were concerned, he said there would be an additional cost but engaging and listening to residents was clearly something that people were very passionate about. He said the council had seen the response at the ballot box and he

said what a lot of councillors had heard on the doorstep came down to anger at feeling disconnected and feeling like they were not listened to. He said he felt it was a cost worth paying for this council and said it was absolutely worth the money to get the public's faith back in democracy.

## **Question 2**

### **Councillor Geoffrey Williamson to ask Councillor Ben Crystall, the Leader of the Council**

There is an inconsistency between the pledge to halt our Old River Lane scheme made by parties leading up to the recent election and comments made in public following the election by the same parties who now form the new administration. Can the Leader please provide clarity on the plans this Council has for the development to proceed?

### **Response from Councillor Crystall**

Councillor Crystall referred the question to Councillor Goldspink, Deputy Leader to provide a response.

I would like to thank Councillor Williamson for his question. The new joint administration of this council wishes very strongly to provide a first class development on the Old River Lane site in Bishop's Stortford and it wishes to proceed with it as soon as possible whilst still allowing time for public consultation on the arts centre element of the proposals. As Councillor Williamson will remember, there was a meeting of the Council in March 2021 at which the Old River Lane scheme was discussed and approved. The



Delivery Board was instructed and authorised to bring the scheme into being. There was a procurement process which the developer, Cityheart, made a successful bid. The Delivery Board duly met regularly and progress was made. However, there was considerable public discontent about the idea of a cinema as the main component of the Arts Centre. In May this year at the local election, there came a change of control at the council. The new joint administration discovered, to its great dismay, that the previous administration run by the Conservatives, had already made some legal and financial commitments on behalf of the Council which it would be impossible to change. In short, the Conservatives have bequeathed to us, the new administration, a project that was beset with problems and lacking in public support and we had very little power to make changes. They had handed us, in effect, a poisoned chalice.

So we now have to pick up the pieces and try to provide as good a development as possible at this important town centre site. The Development Board met on 29<sup>th</sup> June and sought advice from the legal and financial officers. The Board was mindful of the public's concerns about the project and the public's urgent wish to be fully informed. By this time, Cityheart had submitted a planning application for the main part of the development but not for the Arts Centre. Following the advice which it received, the Delivery Board decided to pause the Arts Centre element and to arrange a full public consultation. The residential and retail parts are the subject of planning applications and they will have to run their course and be determined by planning policies and regulations. The Arts Centre Steering Group is being reconstituted with a wider membership this time and its ideas will feed into the public

consultation.

The consultation with the public is being designed at the moment and should be publicised within the next few weeks. We intend to publish the results of the consultation and future decision about the Arts Centre subject to financial and commercial confidentiality and we will make the minutes of the Delivery Board meetings available on the council's website. In fact, there are already some things on the council's website with the frequently asked questions. We do want to be as open and transparent as possible.

In conclusion, the new administration wishes to make positive progress on delivering the development at Old River Lane and intends to keep Members and the public fully informed at frequent intervals.

### **Supplementary question from Councillor Williamson**

Councillor Williamson thanked Councillor Goldspink for her response and said it confirmed that the project would, in part, be put on hold for some period. He said that advice from the S.151 Officer and as reflected in the recent coverage of Old River Lane in the Bishop's Stortford Independent, stopping the scheme would be financial suicide. Equally, even to delay progress in the plans as put down by the previous administration either in whole or in part, comes with severe financial risks to this council as to delay and potentially change the scheme will lead to increased costs due to inflation and would have knock on effects on risk which could put the whole project in jeopardy. What measures are the Executive putting in place to protect the project and counter the financial fallout

which would most likely ensue from any delay in proceedings which could lead to this council going bankrupt?

### **Response from Councillor Goldspink**

We have been taking legal and financial advice about this and we have been advised that a short pause will not cause any financial or legal problems. The development agreement is being redrawn to take account of the fact that the Arts Centre element is being taken out from the original agreement. We have been assured that a short pause of a maximum of nine months will be alright and we will not incur any financial penalties. The delay is for a short time to allow the consultation to take place and be assessed and a new design to be drawn up.

### **Question 3**

#### **Councillor Sue Nicholls to ask Councillor Vicky Glover-Ward, the Executive Member for Planning and Growth**

According to DEFRA, nutrient pollution is an urgent problem for the country's freshwater habitats and rivers. Increased levels of nutrients (especially nitrogen and phosphorus) can speed up the growth of certain plants impacting wildlife by the process of eutrophication.

Natural England has previously advised 32 Local Planning Authorities that where protected sites are in an unfavourable condition due to excess nutrients, development should only go ahead if it will not cause additional pollution to sites. In March 2022, Natural

England advised a further 42 LPAs that their areas are covered by this advice.

This advice from Natural England means that new residential development must achieve 'nutrient neutrality' - meaning that the nutrient load created through additional wastewater (including surface water) from the development is mitigated.

Can I ask whether East Herts Officers have been contacted by Natural England over concerns about nutrient neutrality in any of the district's nature reserves, waterways or bodies of water?

### **Response from Councillor Glover-Ward**

At this time East Herts is not one of the LPAs which fall into the areas affected by the nutrient neutrality advice issued by Natural England and Natural England hasn't contacted the Council to identify East Herts as an area of concern regarding nutrient neutrality. Officers will continue to work closely with Natural England who are a statutory consultee on planning matters and will notify members if any advice regarding nutrient neutrality changes in the future.

### **Supplementary question from Councillor Nicholls**

Does the council have any protected sites where excess nutrient levels should be a concern even though the council may not have been advised of them?

### **Response from Councillor Glover-Ward**

Officers are not aware of any protected sites in the district

where excess nutrient levels are a concern. Officers will continue to work with Natural England to ensure that their advice on nutrient neutrality is considered in both plan-making and decision-making.

#### **Question 4**

#### **Councillor Ian Devonshire to ask Councillor Tim Hoskin, the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability**

At the recent Much Hadham Parish Council Annual General Meeting, a concerned resident raised the issue of EV chargers for the village hall. I recall that there was a previous call to parish councils and a Teams meeting was arranged to request their buy-in on this matter.

Additionally, I understand that the previous Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability expressed enthusiasm for East Herts' collaboration with suppliers of EV chargers to ensure wide coverage of appropriate charging infrastructure, including Fast Rapid and Ultra Rapid chargers throughout East Herts.

Therefore, I would like to enquire about the current progress of the EV charging infrastructure in East Herts District Council. Can the Executive Member provide a comprehensive progress report on the situation? Specifically, I am interested in knowing the status of the Much Hadham Parish Council's request for EV chargers at the village hall and the overall implementation of the initiative to ensure a wide coverage of appropriate EV charging.

#### **Response from Councillor Hoskin**

Thank you, Councillor Devonshire for your question.

I am aware of the work of the previous administration regarding e-v chargers and I'd like to confirm the joint administration's commitment to continuing this and, if anything, accelerating charger roll out.

To this end, in June this year, the council invited tenders for the provision of e-v chargers in the council's car parks and/or land owned by our partners, such as parish councils and village halls.

The default position is for the installation of *fast* chargers. These are suitable as an alternative to on-drive charging. That said, the tender includes a requirement to also install some *rapid* chargers in at least Hertford and Bishop's Stortford. At the same time, the council recognises that national power infrastructure and capacity may mean that in some rural areas, only *standard* chargers may be practicable.

Of crucial importance, tenderers have been required to make proposals which do *not* rely on financial input from the council, beyond officer support, and indeed the income to the council from the parking spaces must still be provided for any spaces used for chargers. In this way, the council, and thus residents, can benefit from the rapidly evolving commercial e-v charger market. Of course, the council will continue to work with Hertfordshire County Council and partners on identifying any subsidy which could be channelled to the successful bidder to further increase the number of chargers installed.

I am particularly pleased that the specification requires the successful company to install at least 20% of all chargers in more rural locations outside of our five market towns. Thus, residents in rural areas won't miss out as the company will be required to cross-subsidy less viable, rural locations from their income from the more heavily used town centre e-v chargers.

The council specification listed the locations are every village hall in the district, including, of course, Much Hadham's. In due course, the council, successful tenderer and village halls and parish councils will work together to assess the viability of individual locations and priorities for installation.

The bidding window closed on Monday, just two days ago, and while officers are now starting the tender evaluation process, I am very pleased to announce that six tenders have been received which I believe demonstrates the high level of market interest in working with the council to increase e-v charger coverage across the whole of the district. I look forward to sharing the outcome of the evaluation with members later this summer and the installation programme being mobilised as soon as possible thereafter.

## **Question 5**

### **Councillor David Willcocks to ask Councillor Sarah Hopewell, Executive Member for Wellbeing**

Cool spaces provide opportunities for people to shelter from the sun, cool down and rest during hot weather, for example, Libraries, leisure centres, places of worship and

community centres. Cool spaces can offer respite and recovery in urban areas during hot weather and may contribute to reducing heat-related harm to health. Following record-breaking temperatures exceeding 40C in the UK last year, and with further extreme weather events predicted this summer, have the council any plans to list and advertise available cool spaces for the residents of East Herts?

### **Response from Councillor Hopewell**

Thank you very much Councillor Willcocks for this question, and it highlights a really important issue. We are fortunate to have so far been spared from the extreme heat that has been hitting so many parts of Europe. However, we know that climate change means we can expect to see more intense heat in the future, for which it is essential that we as the council take robust measures to help protect residents, especially those at higher risk.

In terms of advertising available cool spaces, last winter East Herts Council started to set up a warm spaces directory separate from that by Hertfordshire County Council. However, it quickly became apparent that hosting a separate directory was not helpful, and the preferable option was for us to support the countywide directly developed by HCC. For cool spaces, we similarly plan to fully support the cool spaces directory already set up by Hertfordshire County Council. We have already put information and links to this on the East Herts Council website, and this page can be found here: [Find a cool space | East Herts District Council](#). We will also share the information on social media platforms and via our weekly



email update ahead of any anticipated heatwaves.

I appreciate of course, that some of the most vulnerable residents, and those most in need of cool spaces facilities will not necessarily have internet access, and we want to ensure that we take all steps to reach these residents with information. We will do this by working with our partners through the Healthy Hub, where there is a strong network of partners organisations, including Citizens Advice East Herts, Age Concern Bishops Stortford, Herts Mind Network, and Carers in Herts. We will also share information with local housing associations. Collectively, these organisations and partners have regular interactions with residents in the community and provide an important avenue for ensuring the information gets out. We will also support any measures recommended by HCC.

While I hope these measures will collectively reach everyone who needs the information, if there are any other avenues that you feel we should be exploring, please do let me know. Lastly, in the event that anyone here knows of a suitable venue or space that could provide a 'cool space', I encourage members to register this space on HCC's website. The page for this including all the related about the scheme, can be found here: [Community Spaces - professionals area | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

Thank you again for your question.

## **Question 6**

**Councillor David Jacobs to ask Councillor Joseph Dumont, Executive Member for Corporate Services**

Following the recent changes to voter ID requirements, will the Executive Member for Corporate Services confirm in the elections of 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023:

- a) how many polling station electors were refused a ballot paper due to insufficient or invalid Voter ID at the polling station?
- b) How many of those refused polling station electors returned with valid IDs and proceeded to vote?

### **Response from Councillor Dumont**

Collated figures show that 26,713 electors voted at the 100 polling stations across the district on 4 May. The data shows that 99.9% of electors voting in polling stations brought photo ID that met newly introduced voter ID requirements.

At the end of polling day, 23 electors who tried to vote in a polling station were not given a ballot paper because they did not meet the new voter ID requirements – 0.1%.

The figures also show while 68 electors were initially turned away, 45 returned with acceptable ID and were able to vote. This means 66.2% of those initially turned away returned and were issued with a ballot paper.

### **Question 7**

**Councillor Nahum Clements to ask Councillor Sarah Hopewell, Executive Member for Wellbeing**

The Hertford Theatre will be a thriving hub for arts and culture in Hertford and the surrounding area. It stands to be a fantastic asset for residents and community groups. However, the previous administration committed to spending significant sums on the project and concerns were raised about the viability of the original business plan. It is important that we exercise great care when spending public money.

Will the Executive Member for Wellbeing please confirm:

1. The total spending committed to the Hertford Theatre project to date; and
2. Which aspects of the project are still to be funded, and the estimated cost of each; and
3. What funding the council has secured for the remainder of the project; and
4. When the Hertford Theatre business plan was last updated; and
5. What plans are in place for addressing any shortfall in funding

### **Response from Councillor Hopewell**

Thank you Councillor Clements for this question. As it is in five parts, I have taken each part in turn. I hope this information is helpful.

1. **The total spending committed to the Hertford Theatre project to date;**

The current committed budget is £24.105 million.

2. **Which aspects of the project are still to be funded, and the estimated cost of each;**

£24.105 million is fully funded as part of the Capital Programme approved by full Council on 1 March 2023. The council is working with our consultants, Bristow Consulting, and remain in dialogue with GPF Lewis to agree the final guaranteed maximum price (GMP). With discussions on going, this is commercially sensitive information and so we are unable to share further details in an open meeting or via a written response after the meeting. I am hopeful that this decision will be made soon, and I would be happy to share any further information with regards to this question, once agreed.

3. **What funding the council has secured for the remainder of the project;**

The funding shortfall was addressed through a Heritage Lottery Fund bid, support from Hertford Town Council, and the reprofiling of 2022/23 capital budgets to allow underspent contingency on Hartham Leisure Centre to be transferred to the Theatre. The revenue costs of the Hartham project were already built into the base budget so there were no additional costs from this transfer.

4. **When the Hertford Theatre business plan was last updated;**

Barker Langham, our consultants who have extensive experience of the cultural sector, reran the business plan in March 2023, with updated costs and reflecting current audience habits. This showed the theatre maintaining the medium term financial plan assumed

contribution to the savings target and also generating additional surplus to repay the borrowing attributed to it by the transfer of the unused Hartham contingency.

**5. What plans are in place for addressing any shortfall in funding**

Officers are working through the implications of any cost increases by examining the specification of spaces fit out and, where necessary, seeking to reduce the cost by altering the specification. Officers are also considering the implications of phasing the opening of certain parts of the building to a later date. Fundraising through sponsorship is also being considered. This could include offering the public the opportunity to sponsor a seat, for example, which has been successful elsewhere. Elements of the grounds work outside the building are now being taken forward through a Lottery Grant.

The overriding priority for officers is to ensure the main auditorium and cinema screens are opened, and that the overall budget envelope for the scheme is kept to at this stage. Any overrun on budget will directly impact the other projects in the capital programme as their budgets would need to be reduced. The section 151 officer has advised Members that increasing overall borrowing is neither affordable nor prudent.

I hope this information answers your question, and I will endeavour to provide updates on this project as it continues.

Many thanks again for the question, answers to which I understand are important both to members here and to the residents of East Herts.

112 EXECUTIVE REPORT - 11 JULY 2023

The Leader of the Council presented a report setting out recommendations to the Council made by the Executive at its meeting on 11 July 2023.

112 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2024 - 25

The Executive Member for Financial Sustainability presented the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2024-25 recommendation. He said that it was a government requirement that the Council gave the scheme annual approval. He said the recommendation was that the scheme was to remain unchanged and it would be monitored in relation to case numbers, any changes to Universal Credit and improvements to automation and efficiency. He said that the scheme had remained unchanged since 2013 and there was no persuasive argument to make changes, giving certainty to residents.

Councillor Brittain proposed that the recommendation in the report be supported. Councillor Goldspink seconded the proposal and thanked Officers for their detailed work on the report and confirmed that it had been discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive.

Councillor Williamson said that there had been a consistent view from the Council from the inception of the scheme and was pleased to see that the new administration had seen fit to not alter it.

The motion to support the recommendation having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** - That no changes be made to the Council Tax Support scheme for 2024/25.

112 ADOPTION OF KINGSMEAD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The Leader of the Council presented the recommendation for the Adoption of the Kingsmead Neighbourhood Plan. He said that the plan went to a referendum on 4 May 2023 and 93% of people who voted, supported it. He said the examiner paid tribute to the Neighbourhood Plan group.

Councillor Williams proposed that the recommendation in the report be supported.  
Councillor Wilson seconded the proposal.

Councillor Deering said that the Conservative Group supported the recommendation.

The motion to support the recommendation having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** - That the Kingsmead Neighbourhood Area Plan 2019-2033 formally made (adopted).

113 PROPOSED COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Leader of the Council presented the Proposed Community Governance Review. He said that Council agreed in principle to undertake a Community Governance Review in Ware Town and neighbouring parishes and the Rush Green area at their meeting on 16 November 2022. He said that this review came from the result of the Local Government Boundary Commission Review of East Herts which was completed last year.

The Leader of the Council said that the previous report said the reviews would take place after the local elections and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services would bring the draft terms of reference back to Council. This report presents these draft terms for the proposed reviews identified in Ware and Rush Green. The report also identifies further areas of the district that governance reviews may be beneficial; Thorley, Sawbridgeworth and Tewin.

Councillor Crystall proposed that the recommendations in the report be supported. Councillor Townsend seconded the proposal.

Councillor Deering said that the Conservative group were content with the proposal. He said that for the benefit of the viewing public, he said it was important to understand the Council were discussing the review and not pre-determining its outcome.

Councillor Jacobs referred to recommendation (D) and Town and Parish Councils being consulted on the proposals. He asked if the reviews would continue if councils were consulted and were happy with their



current arrangements.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services said that the council would have to see what came out of the consultations. He said he did not want to pre-determine the outcome.

Councillor Jacobs said he thought it was important to respect the councils wishes and asked the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to confirm this.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services said the council would take into consideration if town and parish councils did not want the review. He said the council would not impose a review on those who did not want it.

The motion to support the recommendation having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** – That (A) a community governance review be undertaken of Ware Town and parts of Wareside and Thundridge Parishes and that the draft terms of reference and indicative timetable for the review be agreed as attached at Appendix B;

(B) a community governance review be undertaken of the area covered by the Rush Green roundabout and that the draft terms of reference and indicative timetable for the review be agreed as attached at Appendix C;

(C) the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be

authorised to progress the community governance reviews at (A) and(B) above including making any minor amendments necessary to the terms of reference and timetable for the reviews prior to formal publication; and

(D) Tewin Parish Council, Thorley Parish Council and Sawbridgeworth Town Council be consulted as to whether they would support a community governance review being undertaken of their respective areas to address the issues regarding warding of their town/parish councils as set out at paragraphs 2.24 to 2.31 of the report.

#### 114 CONFIRMATION OF MINOR AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services presented the report which detailed minor amendments which had recently been incorporated into the Constitution. He said that under paragraph 2.6.3(b) of the Council's Constitution, the Monitoring Officer had delegated authority to make minor amendments to it in certain circumstance and any such changes must be reported back to Members at the next meeting of the Full Council.

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services said that the changes were set out in section 2 of the report and in Appendix 1 to the report.

Councillor Goldspink proposed that the recommendations in the report be supported. Councillor Daar seconded the proposal.

Councillor Goldspink said that the council had been doing what was required of it and this report was to tidy up the Constitution.

Councillor Deering said the Conservative group supported the recommendation. He said the Constitution was a large document and he had previously been involved in the Member Review Group to keep it up to date and ensure it was a modern document. He thanked the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Democratic Services Manager for their role in keeping the Constitution up to date.

The motion to support the recommendation having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** – that the report be received, as required by the Constitution, outlining the minor amendments made to the Constitution by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services acting under paragraph 2.6.3 (b) of the Constitution.

#### 115 CLOSURE OF RAIL TICKET OFFICES

Councillor Wilson presented his motion on notice. He said that the consultation had now been extended to 1 September 2023. He said that he was travelling on a train before the meeting and his journey had been delayed as a passenger had taken ill and he said that it was a reminder that trains were a public service. Trains were the only way to travel for some people and had become a monopoly. He said that there was no other

sustainable transport into London.

Councillor Wilson said that there were many reasons why people could not drive and if the ticket offices were closed, those who did not understand the different types of ticket would not be able to travel and could get fined if they purchased the wrong ticket. He said that train franchise owners were being pushed to cut budgets by the government and it was a political choice to decide as a nation how to spend its money.

Councillor Clements seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Deering thanked Councillor Wilson for his motion. He noted that the consultation had been extended and said this incapsulated the position of the Conservative group. He said they were concerned that elderly and vulnerable people might be challenged when buying tickets but on the other hand, he said it might be better to relocate staff from behind the glass into the body of the station so they were available to all customer. He said he did not know the outcome of the consultation and said the Conservative group would be abstaining from the vote but acknowledged the issues on both sides of the argument.

Councillor Goldspink said she strongly supported the motion. She said that machines were not as good as humans for dealing with problems. She said that the staff at Bishop's Stortford station were excellent and provided good advice about the best routes to take and the best ticket option. She highlighted that the Royal National Institute of Blind People were very

concerned about the proposed ticket office closures.

Councillor Hopewell said she also supported the motion. She said she had personally benefitted from the staff at Hertford North station when she was travelling with her children as it was difficult to know what the cheapest ticket option was. She referred to Councillor Goldspink's point about visually impaired people and said if the staff were not at the ticket office, they would not be able to find a staff member on the platforms.

Councillor Parsad-Wyatt echoed the comments so far from councillors. However, he felt that it was missing the point that the consultation was trying to achieve and was assuming that all ticket offices would be closed which he did not think was the case. He said that there were some benefits to having staff being in visible locations, for example, they could help prevent suicides. He said he would be abstaining from the vote and would await the consultation results.

Councillor Clements thanked the Liberal Democrat group for submitting the motion. He highlighted that the loss of ticket offices would have a disproportionate effect on elderly and disabled people and the value of ticket offices was more than just a place to buy tickets. Passengers had certainty where they could access help and there was the risk with no ticket offices that customers would have to hunt down a member of staff for help. He felt that there was a responsibility on everyone to create an environment that was welcome to all in society. He encouraged Members to exert their influence and support the motion.

Councillor Hart said that moving staff from the ticket offices onto the platforms was not about staffing, but a commercial decision to cut costs. She said that staff were unlikely to be retained if offices were closed.

Councillor Crystall said that Members had made some good points. He said that having staff in the right places was critical and the worry was that if people did not make their voices heard now, then it could be seen as an opportunity to do the things people were concerned about. He said that the motion was trying to be proactive in trying to prevent the worst that could happen. He said it was important to make the statement now and he fully supported the motion.

Councillor Swainston said that staff employed in the ticket offices might not be able to carry out duties on the platforms as it required a different skill set.

Councillor Wilson responded to the points made in the debate. He thanked the Labour group for their support on the motion. He said there were other ways to cut costs and said that train stations in Switzerland had diversified what they sold in the office to make money.

The motion, having been proposed and seconded, was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED. It was noted that the Conservative group abstained from the vote.

**RESOLVED** - Council notes with concern the announcement by the Rail Delivery Group that train companies are pressing ahead with plans to close up to 1000 rail ticket offices across England over the next 3 years, including those in

Bishop's Stortford, Hertford North, Hertford East, Sawbridgeworth, Ware, Stanstead St Margarets and Watton-at-Stone.

Council believes that ticket offices provide a vital service to residents in East Herts District and support passenger safety, security and accessibility. Having a clearly sign-posted place in the station for people with ticket enquiries provides certainty and confidence for customers who may struggle to otherwise locate station staff and also acts as a point of safety for passengers. At many stations, access to facilities such as toilets and waiting rooms is reliant on ticket office staff.

Not all residents are able to use station ticket machines or online ticketing platforms. Many journeys require human assistance to ensure customers purchase the most appropriate and cheapest tickets, and do not incur penalties or pay more than necessary for their journey.

Council is concerned the closure of ticket offices will disproportionately effect elderly and disabled residents in East Herts District – as well as those with poor literacy and IT skills or on lower incomes.

Council notes the statistics from Age UK that 3 million elderly people in the UK do not have access to the internet, and statistics from the Royal National Institute for Blind People that only 3% of those with partial or full sight loss

feel able to use ticket machines.

Council is also concerned about the possible implications for current station staff and the risk of staff redundancies – given that there will be no regulations for minimum staffing levels at stations and on platforms. Council therefore resolves to:

- Instruct the Leader of the Council to write to Mark Harper MP Secretary of State for Transport, and the Chief Executive of the Rail Delivery Group, expressing Council's opposition to the possible closure of staffed rail ticket offices – and in particular the offices at Bishop's Stortford, Hertford East, Hertford North, Sawbridgeworth, Ware, Stanstead St Margarets and Watton-at-Stone: and also expressing opposition to the closure of ticket offices at Tottenham Hale as these would have impact on East Herts Residents when travelling.
- Instruct the Leader of the Council to write to Greater Anglia, Great Northern, Thameslink, and Southern rail expressing the Council's opposition to any plans to close the staffed ticket offices at Hertford East, Hertford North, Bishop's Stortford, Sawbridgeworth, Ware, Stanstead St Margarets, Watton-at-Stone and Tottenham Hale.
- Instruct the Leader of the Council to send copies of the letters mentioned above to our local MPs, Ms Julie Marson and Mr Oliver Heald, asking that they should write similar letters, expressing their



own opposition to the proposed closures.

- Invite the Leaders of all the Political groups on the Council to also sign the letters which the Leader of the Council sends if they so wish.
- Request that all councillors respond to the consultations to confirm their support for ticket offices remaining open and for properly staffed rail stations.

#### 116 OLD RIVER LANE

Councillor Jacobs presented his motion on notice. He said that the project had come to symbolise everything that was wrong with its own relationship with the council. He said that the project was being done to Bishop's Stortford, not with and had been championed by people who did not live there or were interested in the residents' concerns. He said that the Delivery Board had met in secret and even the Town Council had withdrawn its support for the project. He believed the project was the reason for the outcome of the local elections in Bishop's Stortford in May 2023.

Councillor Jacobs said that residents had reasonably assumed that after the election, a change in administration would result in a change of direction for the project and that the administration would take the time to understand the finances and business case to build a better vision for the Old River Lane site. He said that a better vision was still possible as per the steps outlined in the motion. He said this required a change in direction from the new administration and a good start would be a commitment to

reassess all capital projects in light of the current finances which was a commitment signed by both parties in the administration in their shared objectives document. He said there had been little transparency in the project previously and the last set of minutes published from the Delivery Board was June 2022. He said that the new membership of the board had not been published nor its meeting schedule. He said that the Board should meet in public with its meeting broadcasted like the council's committee meeting.

Councillor Jacobs said that development on the site had been promised since 2010 and a few more months of scrutiny was time worth spending. He urged the joint administration to honour its election commitments and do the right thing.

Councillor Estop seconded the motion and said that progress with the development had been tightly constrained by the tender submission which had not been transparent or been scrutinised. The motion pressed for urgent scrutiny of the relationship between the council as landowner and Cityheart as the preferred developer. Councillor Estop said that councillors had now had the benefit of helpful officer briefings with background information which had largely been hidden previously.

Councillor Williamson said that the Old River Lane development was a fantastic project which would deliver real benefits to residents and it was not acceptable that it was being jeopardised by delays. He said that the motion suggested that concerns amongst residents was widespread but questioned where the evidence of this was. He reminded Members that all meetings of the

Delivery Board had been minuted and published on the website and disagreed strongly that Members had not had the opportunity to consider the financial and legal implications.

Councillor Williamson added that millions of pounds had been provided by the LEP which added to the credibility of the project. He said that when the Liberal Democrats joined the Council in 2019, they were provided with a position on the Delivery Board which was taken up by Councillor Goldspink and this was a courtesy that had not been extended to the Conservative group this term. He said in terms of consultation with residents, the council had already been through several stages of consultation to help shape the scheme and Members would recall that risks of delaying were made clear in the recent officer briefings. He said that the resolution of the motion would add delays to the scheme with severe financial risks and the Conservatives left a legacy of a project that was ready to go. He said there was nothing to be gained and everything to be lost by not getting on with it.

Councillor Goldspink said she had some sympathy with parts of the preamble to the motion but said she could not support it. She agreed with the first statement that there was widespread concern amongst residents and also that prolonged uncertainty was damaging. She said she could not support point 1 of the resolution about carrying out further due diligence with Cityheart as this would prolong the uncertainty, causing further delay and increasing costs. Councillor Goldspink said she could also not support point 2 either as it would lay the council open to legal challenge. With her objections to points 1 and 2, she said that she could not support the motion.

Councillor Wilson said he was surprised to hear that Councillor Williamson did not think that residents were concerned about the development in Bishop's Stortford. He said that since the council said that the large theatre element could not be delivered, there had been a lot of concern in the town. He said that there was regret that the URC Hall could not be saved but the council had received advice from a King's Counsel that it would be dangerous and problematic for it to be saved. He made the point that his role as Executive Member for Resident Engagement was to ensure that the public felt involved and listened to and not feel that they were being imposed on. He wanted to stop that perception and get trust back again.

Councillor Devonshire said that the new administration had not invited the opposition groups onto the Delivery Board which was a lack of transparency and felt that at the very least, the Bishop's Stortford councillors should be invited onto the Board.

Councillor Wyllie said it was interesting that Councillor Wilson mentioned the URC Hall as it was a Liberal Democrat election pledge to stop the demolition of the hall. He also said it was disappointing that Councillor Crystall had mentioned restoring the trust in local politicians when one party in the joint administration made a pledge and was now backing down on it. He said that Councillor Goldspink sat on the ORL Delivery Board so knew the Hall could not be saved and she should not have promised the people of Bishop's Stortford something that could not be realised.

Councillor Copley said that everyone on the Delivery Board

would have known that the URC Hall could not be saved and there were Conservative Members of the Board who went out campaigning for the election also saying that the Hall could be saved. She said that the public were upset at the lack of consultation and Councillor Wilson in his new role will ensure the council was listening to the electorate instead of continually telling them what to do. She said she was pleased to be part of the Board and deliver the project with proper public consultation.

Councillor Goldspink addressed a point of personal explanation in response to Councillor Wyllie's comments. She said that she was on the ORL Delivery Board and was privy to some information but not about the URC Hall. She said there was a Conservative Councillor on the Board and he proposed a motion at Bishop's Stortford Town Council to consider buying the Hall to preserve it so he also clearly thought the Hall could be saved.

Councillor Glover-Ward clarified that the membership of the Delivery Board was constituted of the ward members and certain Executive Members. She said that no Conservative councillors held these positions which was why they were not on the Delivery Board.

Councillor Deering said the ORL development was a fantastic project designed to benefit the residents of Bishop's Stortford and any further delay or dithering would have a huge impact. He said that earlier in the meeting, Councillor Goldspink said the administration were contemplating a delay of nine months and with inflation at 8%, this could equal an additional cost of £900,000. He said the previous administration had left the project on a plate for it to be moved forward.

Councillor Townsend said that parts of the development could be fantastic but he said that most of the concerns comes from residents having been promised a large theatre but this was not possible anymore and so original proposals had been diluted. He said that some aspects of the project were great but times had changed and what was now being offered was not fit for purpose and the administration wanted to deliver a suitable development for the town.

Councillor Swainston said she represented the ward that the development was in and said she could not support the motion which would have financial consequences for the council.

Councillor Crystall said he understood the sentiment of the motion but said he could not support it. He felt that the wording was contradictory. He understood that rapid progress was expected of the new administration but it was also imperative that residents were listened to in the consultation process. He said that the motion did not propose any solutions and within the first few weeks of the new administration, the Delivery Board met and looked at the evidence and impact of different options and made a decision based on the evidence that was available. He said that short pause of six to nine months would allow for genuine and meaningful public consultation. The consultation would be launched imminently, and the retail and housing element of the project had already been submitted as a planning application and would go through the decision making process. He added that the development agreement was available to all members and had asked for further financial details to be added onto the

council's website.

Councillor Jacobs summed up by saying that the project dated back to 2010 so a few months of further delay to look at the project and decide on reasonable steps moving forward would not be a huge ask. He referred to the council minutes of March 2023 where Councillor Goldspink was recorded saying that it would be foolish to commit the council to 30 years of repayments. He said if it was foolish then, it was foolish now.

At least five Members of the Council requested a recorded vote on the motion under paragraph 3.24.5 of the Constitution. The result was as follows:

FOR

Councillors Clements, Estop, Jacobs, Redfern and Willcocks.  
(5)

AGAINST

Councillors Adams, Andrews, Brittain, Bull, Burt, Carter, Connolly, Copley, Crystall, Daar, Deering, Devonshire, Dunlop, Glover-Ward, Goldspink, Hollebon, Holt, Hopewell, Horner, Hoskin, Marlow, McAndrew, Nicholls, Parsad-Wyatt, Smith, Stowe, Swainston, Thomas, Townsend, Williamson, Wilson and Wyllie. (32)

ABSTAINED

Councillors Butcher, Cox, Hart, Hill and Williams. (5)

The motion was declared LOST.

117 DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE

Under paragraph 3.22.7, Councillor Hoskin presented an altered motion to Council following cross party discussions.

The altered motion was as follows:

This Council endorses the evidence that climate change is seriously affecting the health and wellbeing of residents and the environment in East Herts and that these negative impacts are set to increase.

This Council is of the view that the consequences of the global temperature increasing by more than 1.5°C are so severe that humanity's number one priority must be to prevent this from happening.

This Council recognises it must use its powerful voice to advocate on behalf of local communities and habitats, lead change, improve resilience and inspire residents and businesses to act to protect our precious district from the impacts of Climate Breakdown.

This Council therefore in reaffirming its commitment to protecting our environment:

- declares a Climate Emergency
- strengthen its resolve to act by bringing forward its commitment from 2030 to March 2027 to reduce its own carbon footprint to an absolute minimum and to identify a pathway to offset its residual carbon, so that



the council will be able to continue providing high quality services but with net zero carbon emissions.

- prioritises carbon offsetting investment within East Herts to maximise local benefits,
- commits to publishing annual eco-audits of the council's progress to net zero carbon that residents and businesses will be invited to scrutinise and input to, including through an annual meeting,
- ensures that the council and its staff and services are ready to adapt to future climates and extreme weather to enable business continuity,
- commits to providing advice and assistance to East Herts residents and businesses to inspire and encourage their own shifts away from carbon producing activities,
- commits to ensuring council policies and practices, including commercial operations and investments, are compatible with its drive to achieve net zero carbon, including through the review of the District Plan,
- recognises that bold action to tackle the Climate Emergency can deliver economic benefits to local people and businesses in terms of new jobs, economic savings and market opportunities,
- commits to seeking inward investment to support efforts to achieve net zero carbon by the council, residents and businesses,
- commits to continuing its full participation in relevant external bodies,
- commits to participating fully in developing a

Countywide Local Nature Recovery Strategy in anticipation of the national Environment Bill

- calls on all levels of government to do everything within their powers to limit the negative impacts of Climate Breakdown, while recognising that this Council will not sit back and wait for national government intervention.

Councillor Redfern proposed, and Councillor Wilson seconded a motion that the meeting be adjourned for a short period for Members to consider the altered motion. The motion was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** – that the meeting be adjourned at 21:00 and reconvened at 21:05.

Councillor Hoskin presented the altered motion. He said that climate change was not something that may or may not happen in the future, there was gathering evidence that the effects of climate change were being felt around the world now. He said that the consequences of the global temperature increasing by more than 1.5°C were so severe that humanity's number one priority must be to prevent it. The use of the phrase Climate Breakdown sought to recognise the danger to the delicate biodiversity that was immediately under threat under a Climate Emergency.

Councillor Hoskin said that it was almost certain that limiting global warming to 1.5°C was a lost cause and researchers now said there was a 66% chance that the target would be exceeded between now and 2027. That means that a target that was actively talked about at COP

26 in 2021 was now highly likely to be unachievable. He said that in proposing this Climate Change Emergency, he wanted to thank the previous administration and Councillor McAndrew for the solid foundation that has been created since the Climate Change declaration in 2019. It should be acknowledged that a significant amount of effort had been put in to get from a standing start to the current position.

Councillor Hoskin said the motion required the council to declare a climate emergency and take the necessary steps to act consistently with an emergency and accelerate the use of its resources to drive to net zero for the council's own premises, people and services it delivers, use its regulatory powers to promote action by others and drive actions that influence and encourage others.

Councillor Hoskin said that the deadline for achieving a minimal carbon footprint for the direct activities of East Herts Council has been brought forward from 2030 to March 2027 which coincides with the end of the four-year period of the current administration. The motion recognised that in 2027 there would be a residual EHC directly managed carbon footprint that needs to be offset and seeks to maximise the offsetting schemes that produce benefit for within the EHC area. Examples included community based power generation and solar together, formally registered and maintained tree planting schemes, insulation advice and installation across the "leakiest" housing stock and the wider community and example led high specification building techniques to provide insight and further challenge to developers on claims of prohibitive costs.

Councillor Hoskin said in summary, the motion aimed to deliver a faster more focussed achievement of net zero, a greater community-based involvement in both generating solutions, and the monitoring and scrutiny of progress, a continuous and locally based offsetting approach using inward investment to produce fully auditable carbon credentials to minimise the residual carbon footprint in 2027 and send a strong signal to residents that stronger action is being taken.

Councillor Hoskin thanked Councillor McAndrew for a constructive debate and his input into the altered motion and was pleased to have cross party support on such an important motion.

Councillor Swainston seconded the motion and reserved her right to speak.

Councillor McAndrew said he was delighted to embrace the opportunity re-examine the council's current commitment to climate change. He said it was imperative to focus on recognising the challenges and provide genuine intent in the motion and the substance was more important than terminology. He said the council should work together to make a significant impact and lead by example.

Councillor Estop said she welcomed and supported the motion. She proposed an amendment to the motion as follows:

To add under 'This Council resolves' –

- to ask the Planning Department to consider whether it is possible to commit the council to ensuring

council policies and practices relating to use of land and existing buildings, entails whole-life cost assessment, including carbon cost of the existing building, before considering demolition and new construction; and to ask the council as property owner to consider commissioning WLC assessments, to set a best practice example.

Councillor Jacobs seconded the amendment.

Councillor Estop said that by demolishing buildings, including its foundations, to replace it with a similar building meant energy was being lost in construction. The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors recommended the use of carbon methodology and increasingly, clients were commissioning whole life cost assessments. She said that the refurbishment of buildings had better whole life costs and environmental and community values.

Councillor Andrews said he was not alone in supporting the thematic element of the proposed amendment but said he was surprised that the Chairman of the Development Management Committee had not taken the time to understand how policy works as it was based on the direction of government and legislation. He said the council could not change that and urged caution around the quasi-legal element that the council does not have control over.

Councillor Glover-Ward said that BREAM commonly used both carbon cost considerations and whole life costs considerations. She had been proving life cycling

costing for over thirty years in her professional life and said the two elements should be kept separate. She explained that carbon cost dealt with the cost to the environment and whole life cost dealt with money and said that the two did not go hand in hand. She did not think it could be a planning consideration but could be something to look at in the District Plan.

Councillor Deering felt the amendment was not the time or the place to be looking at planning policy. He said he would not be supporting the amendment.

Councillor Cox said he wished that the amendment had been worded differently and he would have been able to support it.

Councillor Hart echoed the comments from Councillor Cox and said it was a good amendment in principle but it needed to be considered in the relevant forum.

Councillor Hoskin responded to the amendment and said it was not within the council's control to decide planning policy. He referred Members to the Sustainability Supplementary Document which envisaged this process and strongly urged developers to take a whole life approach. He said this was the correct approach to review it in the District Plan review which then would become policy of the council. He said he was not dismissing the idea but said this was not the correct forum.

The motion to support the amendment having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared LOST.

The meeting returned to debating the original motion.

Councillor Deering thanked Councillor Hoskin for his gracious comments about the previous administration. He said that Councillor McAndrew had worked tirelessly in this area for years. He said that there were many comments in the media about Conservative attitudes to climate change but he said he wanted his grandchildren to grow up and live in the world as he had known it. He said he was fully supportive of any measures the council could implement to help lessen the effects of climate change and was supportive of the altered motion.

Councillor Hopewell said she was pleased to see collaboration across the Chamber. She asked for clarification about the additional point about ensuring that the council and its staff were ready to adapt to future climates and asked for some examples.

Councillor McAndrew responded that every staff member at the council had a responsibility to work towards improving measures to respond to climate change.

Councillor Redfern said she fully supported the motion and said she admired the work of Councillor McAndrew when he was the Executive Member. She hoped progress would continue quickly.

Councillor Hoskin said the motion would send a strong signal to residents that they could trust the council to do the right thing.

The motion to support the amendment having been proposed and seconded was put to the meeting and upon a vote being taken, was declared CARRIED.

**RESOLVED** – That this Council endorses the evidence that climate change is seriously affecting the health and wellbeing of residents and the environment in East Herts and that these negative impacts are set to increase.

This Council is of the view that the consequences of the global temperature increasing by more than 1.5°C are so severe that humanity's number one priority must be to prevent this from happening.

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- prioritises carbon offsetting investment within East Herts to maximise local benefits,
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- recognises that bold action to tackle the Climate Emergency can deliver economic benefits to local people and businesses in terms of new jobs, economic savings and

market opportunities,

- commits to seeking inward investment to support efforts to achieve net zero carbon by the council, residents and businesses,
- commits to continuing its full participation in relevant external bodies,
- commits to participating fully in developing a Countywide Local Nature Recovery Strategy in anticipation of the national Environment Bill,
- calls on all levels of government to do everything within their powers to limit the negative impacts of Climate Breakdown, while recognising that this Council will not sit back and wait for national government intervention.

The meeting closed at 9.34 pm

Chairman .....
Date .....



# Agenda Item 9

COUNCIL – 18 OCTOBER 2023

## PUBLIC QUESTIONS

<b>Question 1</b>	<b>Charlotte Lipscomb to ask Cllr Vicky Glover-Ward, the Executive Member for Member for Planning and Growth</b>
<p>The AMA festival took place at The Silver Leys Polo Club in Bury Green on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> September, having been granted a licence by East Herts Council at a hearing on 14<sup>th</sup> August. The festival left a trail of disruption in its wake, affecting all our local roads through Bury Green and our neighbouring hamlets and blocked the designated route for emergency vehicles. Local residents experienced not only gridlocked traffic which left us trapped in our homes but also indiscriminate parking on roads and verges, along with issues related to noise, litter, and anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Residents endured a weekend of mayhem. Examples include an eighty four year old resident directing traffic in order to try and mitigate the gridlock, a 93 year old man terrified in his house and surrounded by festival goers trying to retrieve abandoned vehicles, an elderly and confused lady in her last weeks of life who was moved to residential care for 2 weeks in anticipation of the event and children aged 10 and 12 too terrified to pick blackberries on the green, even with adult supervision. Young and old were profoundly and adversely affected.</p> <p>Can the Executive Member responsible for licensing please explain how the decision was made to allow the festival to take place, despite the strong objections from residents, the parish Council, our local councillor, the County Council Highways Dept and the police, all of whom were all able to accurately foresee the havoc the festival would create.</p>	



# Agenda Item 10

COUNCIL – 18 OCTOBER 2023

## MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

<b>Question 1</b>	<b>Cllr George Williams to ask Cllr Vicky Glover-Ward, the Executive Member for Planning and Growth</b>
Given the protections for nesting birds under the wildlife and countryside act, do the council and its providers have a responsibility and the powers to postpone or decline planning applications for non-urgent roofing works in known swift nesting sites?	
<b>Question 2</b>	<b>Cllr Diane Hollebon to ask Cllr Vicky Glover-Ward, the Executive Member for Planning and Growth</b>
Can the Executive Member for Planning and Growth confirm to me that she is aware that the proposed community centre in the St James's Park development, Bishop's Stortford South, is being offered on a 100-year lease hold basis when it's being funded by section 106 funds and should therefore be a community asset in perpetuity. Who allowed this and why?	

## Council

**Date of Meeting:** 18 October 2023

**Report by:** Councillor Ben Crystall, Leader of the Council

**Report title:** Executive Report – 5 September and 3 October 2023

**Ward(s) affected:** All

---

## Summary

- This report details the recommendations to Council made by the Executive at its meetings on 5 September and 3 October 2023.

### **1.0 Item considered and recommended to Council**

1.1 Since the last Council meeting, the Executive met on 5 September and 3 October 2023. At these meetings the Executive considered and supported a number of recommendations for Council on the following items:

- 1.1.1 Birchall Garden Suburb Masterplan
- 1.1.2 Review of the East Herts District Plan 2018
- 1.1.3 Community Grants Policy and Priorities 2023/24

1.2 This report sets out the recommendation for the above items. The full report, including the Appendix, may be viewed on the council's website.

1.3 This report excludes items also considered by the Executive where those reports are separate agenda items on the Council

agenda.

## 2.0 Birchall Garden Suburb Masterplan

- 2.1 The Executive was asked to consider the Masterplan document for Birchall Garden Suburb; site allocation Policy EWEL1 Land East of Welwyn Garden City and support the recommendation that it is agreed as a material planning consideration.

### **RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:**

- (a) That the Birchall Garden Suburb Masterplan for the strategic allocation known as EWEL1 Land East of Welwyn Garden City, as detailed in Appendix A, be agreed as a material consideration for Development Management purposes**

## 3.0 Review of the East Herts District Plan 2018

- 3.1 The Executive was asked to assess the requirement of whether a review of the District Plan is required within five years from its adoption (i.e. by the end of October 2023).

### **RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:**

- (a) That having assessed the East Herts District Plan 2018 in accordance with regulation 10A of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2017, it is agreed that, in order that the Council can continue to fulfil its statutory duties, the District Plan needs updating;**
- (b) That work commences during 2023/24 on updating the technical studies needed to provide a robust**



**evidence base to inform an update of the District Plan;**

- (c) That a 'Call for Sites' is undertaken during 2023/24;**
- (d) That the District Planning Executive Panel is reconvened with membership drawn from the Executive in accordance with paragraph 8.5.2 of the Constitution;**
- (e) That an engagement strategy is prepared which sets out the Council's approach to consulting and engaging the community and stakeholders;**
- (f) That a further report on the detailed scope of the update and the timetable for its preparation is prepared at the earliest opportunity once the implications of the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are better understood, the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill has received Royal Assent, and the statutory framework required to implement the reforms has been approved.**

#### **4.0 Community Grants Policy and Priorities for 2023/24**

**4.1** The Executive was asked to consider the updated Community Grants Policy and Priorities for 2023/24, within a slightly reworded policy.

#### **RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL:**

- (a) That the revised Community Grants Policy including the priorities for 2023/24 be approved.**

## **5.0 Executive Decisions**

4.1 Other matters determined by the Executive are detailed in the Minutes of the meeting.

## **5.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material**

5.1 Executive minutes – 5 September and 3 October 2023

5.2 Birchall Garden Suburb Masterplan

5.3 Review of District Plan appendices

5.4 Community Grants Policy

### **Contact Member**

Councillor Ben Crystall – Leader of the Council

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### **Report Author**

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# BIRCHALL GARDEN SUBURB

DRAFT MASTERPLAN







# CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>DESIGN APPROACH AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>63</b>
1.1	BIRCHALL GARDEN SUBURB	6			
1.2	PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY	8	3.1	VISION AND APPROACH	64
1.3	STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	10	3.2	KEY THEMES AND PRINCIPLES	65
1.4	PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT	12	3.3	LAND USE	66
1.5	GARDEN CITY CONTEXT	18	3.4	MOVEMENT	68
			3.5	PLACEMAKING	70
			3.6	GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE	72
			3.7	SUSTAINABILITY	74
<b>2</b>	<b>SITE ANALYSIS</b>	<b>21</b>			
2.1	CONTEXT	22			
2.2	SITE LOCATION	24			
2.3	LAND USES	26	<b>4</b>	<b>MASTERPLAN</b>	<b>77</b>
2.4	LOCAL AMENITIES	28	4.1	CONCEPT EVOLUTION	78
2.5	VEHICULAR MOVEMENT	30	4.2	THE MASTERPLAN	82
2.6	ACTIVE MOVEMENT	32	4.3	LAND USE STRATEGY	84
2.7	LOCAL VERNACULAR	34	4.4	MOVEMENT STRATEGY	90
2.8	URBAN STRUCTURE AND CHARACTER	36	4.5	PLACEMAKING STRATEGY	100
2.9	NEIGHBOURHOOD STRUCTURE	38	4.6	GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY	114
2.10	HERITAGE ASSETS	40	4.7	SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY	128
2.11	LANDSCAPE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE	42	4.8	THE NEIGHBOURHOODS	132
2.12	ECOLOGICAL DESIGNATIONS	44			
2.13	GREEN CORRIDOR	46			
2.14	HYDROLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY	48			
2.15	RECREATIONAL GREEN SPACE	50			
2.16	VISUAL AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER	52			
2.17	ECOLOGICAL AND HERITAGE BUFFERS	54			
2.18	SITE CONDITIONS	56			
2.19	CONSTRAINTS	58			
2.20	OPPORTUNITIES	60			





# Introduction

# 1.1 BIRCHALL GARDEN SUBURB

The Birchall Garden Suburb Masterplan sets out the potential for a high quality, sustainable and mixed-use new community, set within a rich and varied landscape on the south eastern edge of Welwyn Garden City. The area has been identified within the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Draft Local Plan and East Herts District Plan as a suitable location for integrated neighbourhoods that draw inspiration from Welwyn's Garden City origins and respond to the distinctive setting and local landscape attributes. The proposed 1,950 new homes will be supported by schools, community uses and local shops and services and will encourage sustainable lifestyles.

## Masterplan role and status

The masterplan provides a long-term strategy and development framework which responds to the local and wider needs and issues affecting the Authorities. The masterplan is not designed to be a prescriptive blueprint for how development will come forward, but provides a clear steer on priorities and principles for the new neighbourhoods, and sets parameters for design proposals that can inform detailed masterplans and planning applications for the site.

The masterplan will be a material consideration in planning decisions relating to the site for Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and East Herts District Council and will be a reference for Hertfordshire County Council with regard to transport and highways and education provision. It is, therefore, intended to be reference tool and steer for land owners, developers and designers preparing planning applications and design codes for the site. It is also designed to be a useful reference for local representatives and community members.

## Process towards planning applications









## 1.2 PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

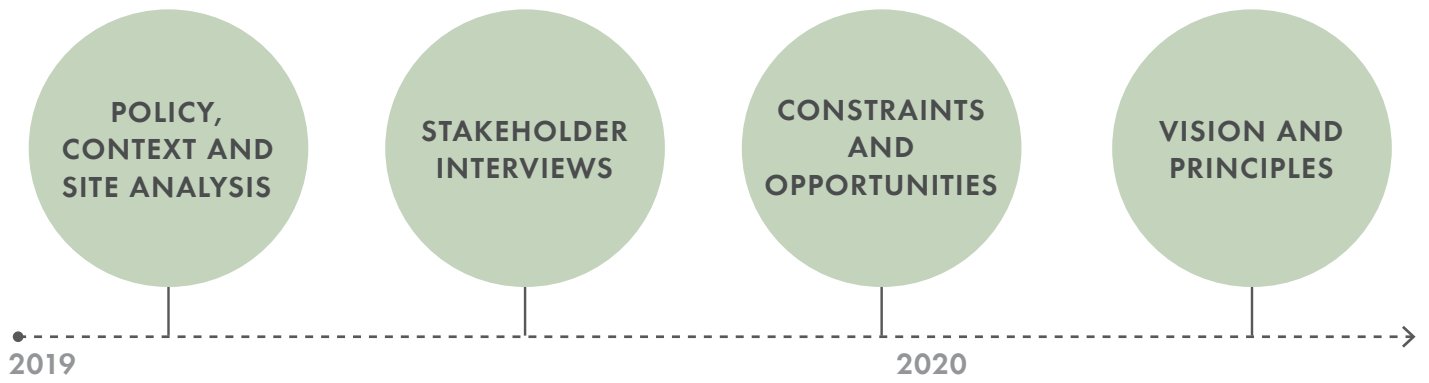
The masterplan is designed to help support the delivery of the site and the report has a number of practical functions, including:

- Guiding the creation of a new sustainable community incorporating Garden City principles
- Setting out the quantum and distribution of land uses, access, sustainable design and layout principles
- Providing a high level design framework that sets out principles for any future development that will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications relating to the site
- Responding to technical concerns raised at the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan review, including strategic views, screening new development and buffering between uses and landscapes

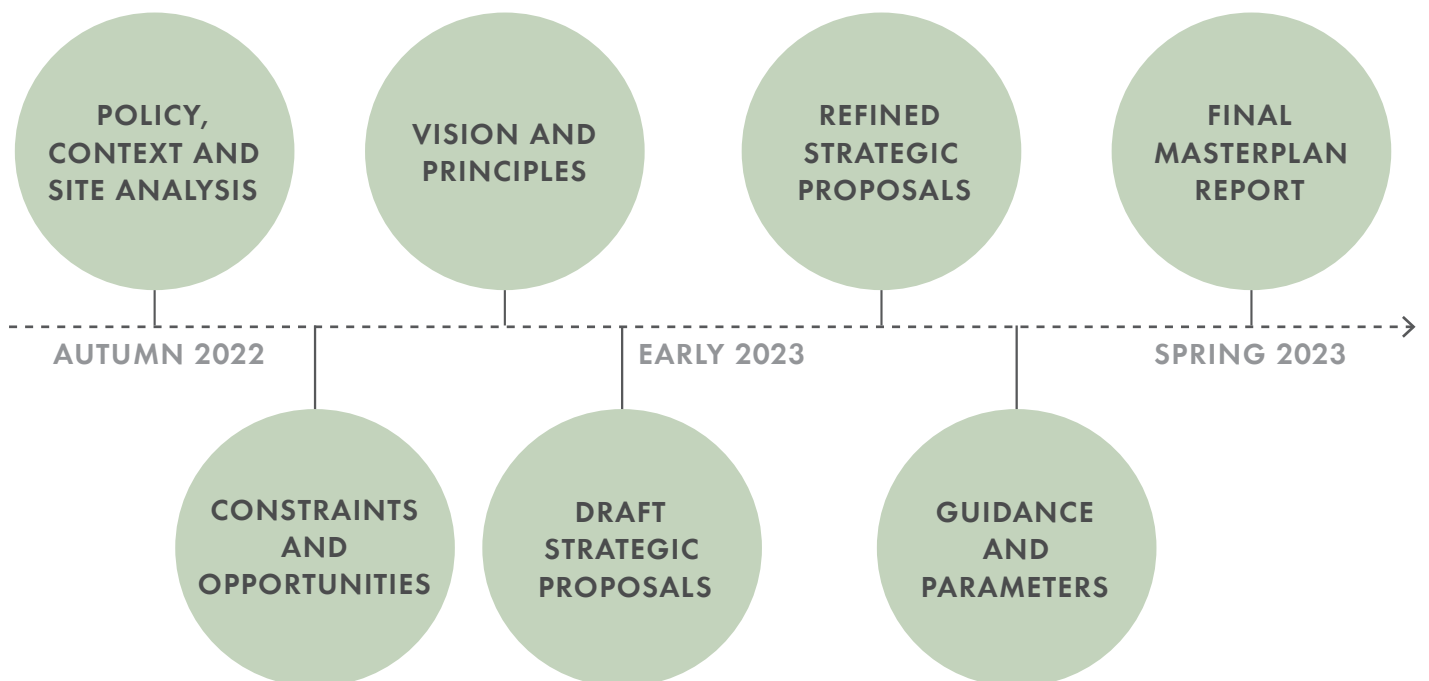
### Masterplanning Process

Allies and Morrison was appointed in 2019 by Welwyn Hatfield and East Herts Councils to prepare a masterplan for Birchall Garden Suburb for provision of up to 2,500 new homes within mixed-use new neighbourhoods. This paused during the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan Examination in Public and was resumed in 2022 to respond to a smaller site area providing 1,950 homes, reflecting the Inspector's recommendations on the draft Local Plan.

The masterplan has been informed by liaison with relevant officers at Welwyn Hatfield and East Herts planning authorities and Hertfordshire County Council. Key statutory and local stakeholders have also contributed to the process and informed the preparation of proposals and guidance.



**WELWYN  
HATFIELD  
LOCAL PLAN EIP**



# 1.3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

## Stakeholder Steering Group

The stakeholder Steering Group for the project was established in autumn 2022 and has met regularly throughout the project process.

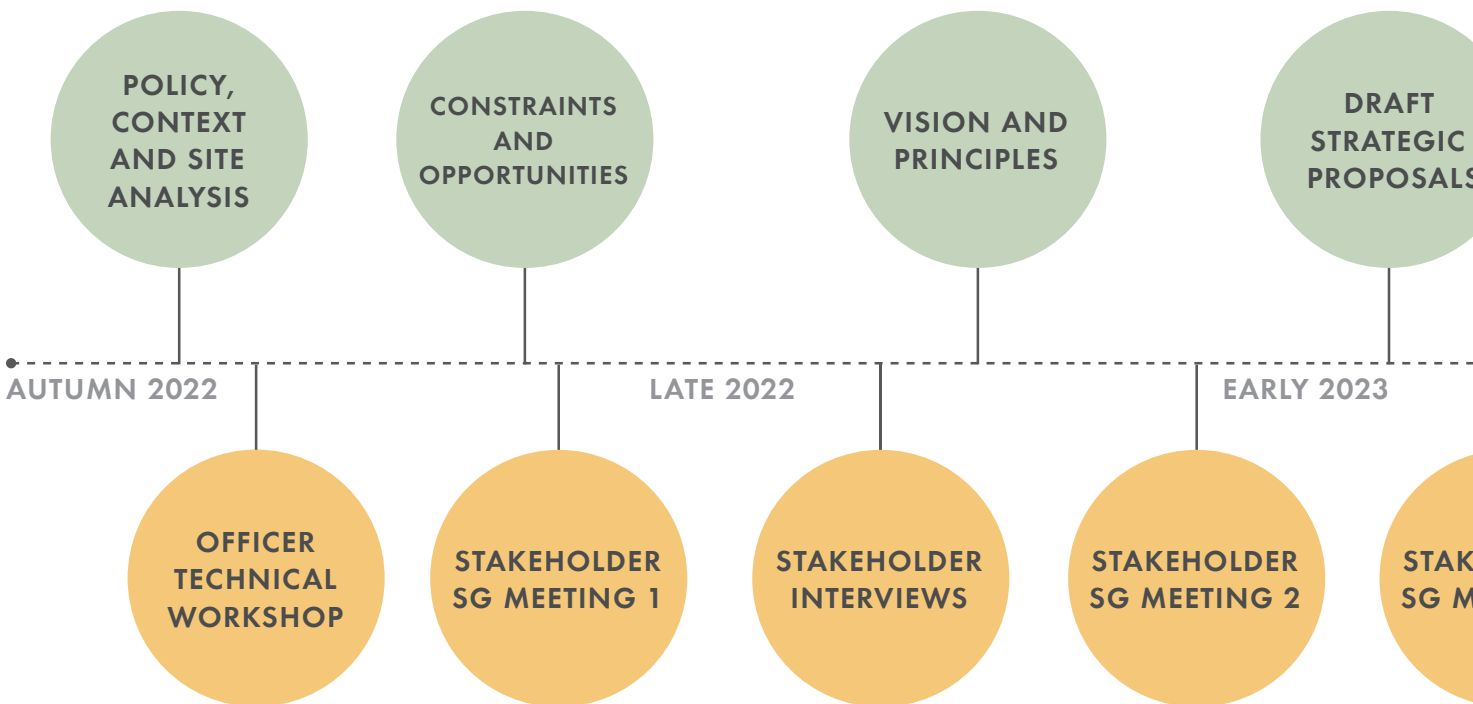
The Steering Group comprises:

- Officers from Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
- Officers from East Herts District Council
- Officers from Hertfordshire County Council
- Portfolio holders and Parish Councillors
- Representatives of civic and special interest groups
- The landowner for the site and design team

## Stakeholder Interviews

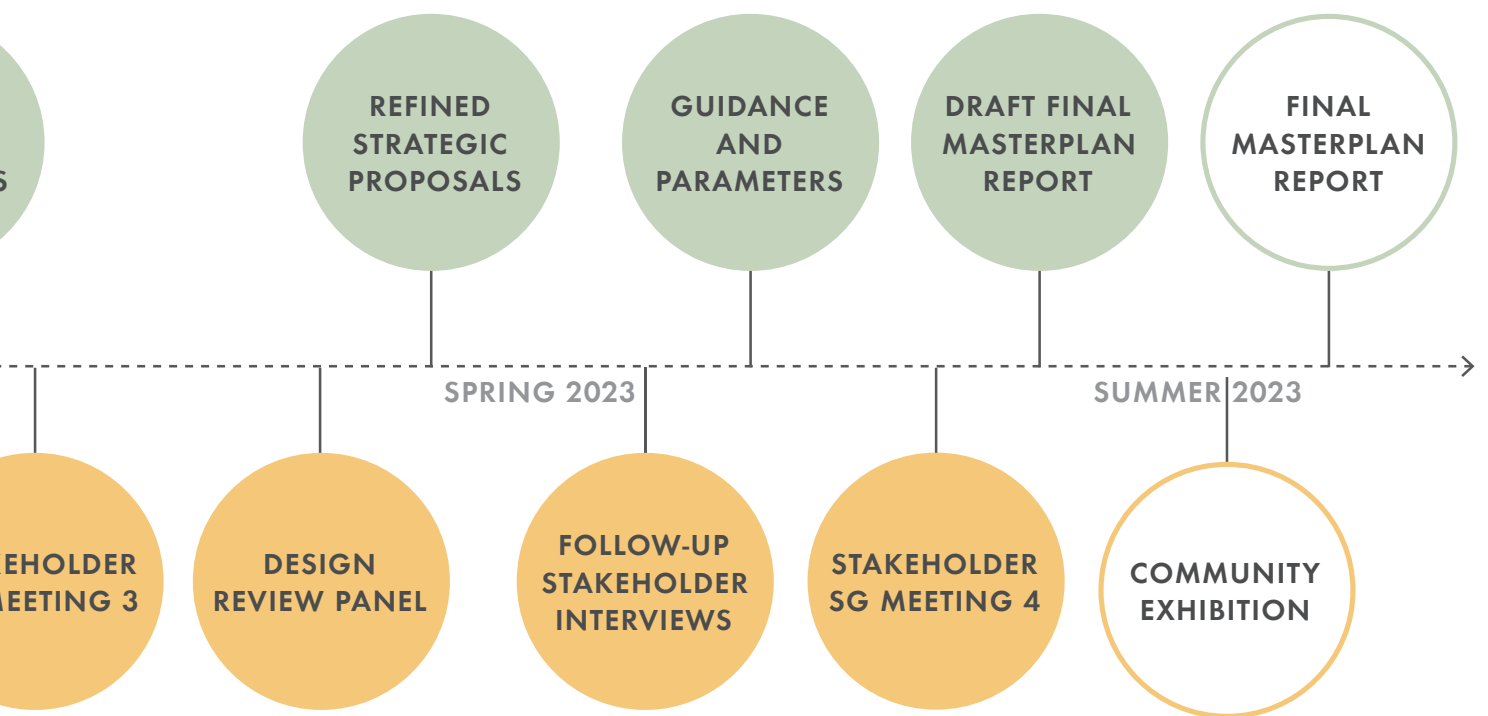
A number of stakeholder interviews were undertaken for the project with statutory consultees, officers and special interest groups. These included:

- Historic England
- Hertfordshire Gardens Trust
- Welwyn Green Corridor Group
- Hertingfordbury Parish Council
- Essendon Parish Council
- BP Mitchell waste site agent
- Land Use Consultants (LUC) (preparing the Green Corridor SPD in 2019)
- Education and highways officers from HCC



## Design Review Panel (DRP)

The team presented draft principles and strategic proposals to the Hertfordshire County Council Design Review Panel (DRP) in late January 2023. This provided an objective and strategic review of the masterplanning, movement, landscape, design and delivery aspects of the emerging masterplan. The feedback from the design review session was incorporated into refined strategic plans and guidance for the Birchall Garden Suburb masterplan.





# 1.4 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

## 1.4.1 Planning

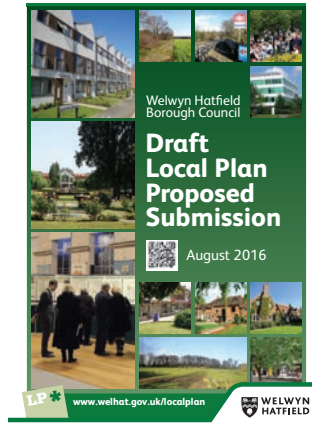
The site is located across the boundary of East Herts District and the Borough of Welwyn and Hatfield.

### East Herts District

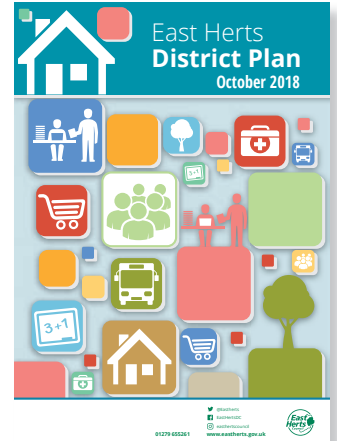
In the East Hertfordshire District Plan (2018) Policy EWEL1 states "Land at Birchall Garden Suburb is allocated for development in both the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (SDS2) and the East Herts District Plan (EWEL1), to accommodate approximately 2,550 new homes over the plan period, of which 1,200 will be in Welwyn Hatfield Borough and 1,350 in East Herts District'.

### Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan

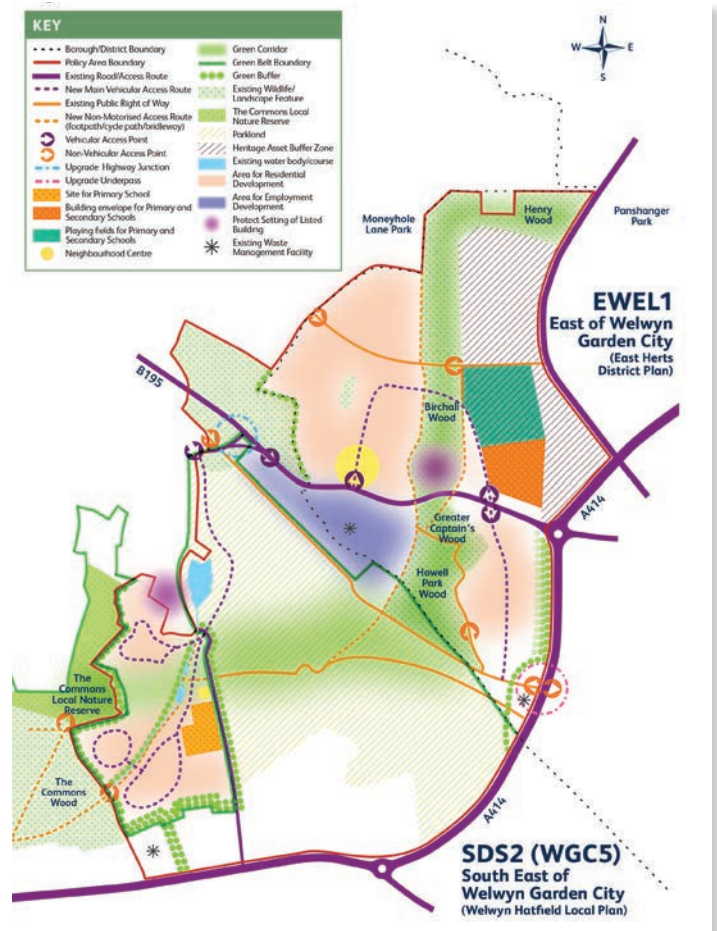
Welwyn Hatfield consulted on Main Modifications to its Local Plan, reflecting recommendations from the Planning Inspector from 4th January-15th February 2023. The previous policy submitted for the Welwyn Hatfield part of the site was to be allocated for 1200 homes, a small neighbourhood centre, and a 2FE primary School. The Local Plan Inspector concluded that it would not be a sound outcome to allocate the fields to the immediate north of the A414 for residential development. As a result, the number of dwellings in the Welwyn Hatfield portion of the site have been reduced from 1,200 homes to 600 homes, and subsequently, the connection to the A414 has been removed for general traffic. The Inspector specifically notes that the land to the south would not provide a sound outcome because of the impact such development would have on the visual openness of the wider Green Belt and the consequent experience of users of the open countryside to the south, as well as the potential harm to the setting of heritage assets.



Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Draft Local Plan 2016



East Herts District Plan 2018



WHBC 2022 Main Modifications Local Plan diagram

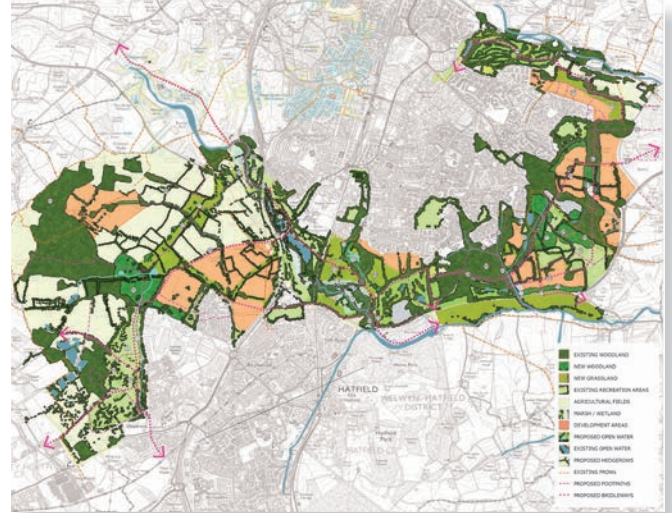
## 1.4.2 Green Infrastructure

### Central Parkland

Due to previous land uses, including mineral workings and landfill operations, it is not possible to develop the central portion of the site. The Hertfordshire Ecological Network (HEN) notes the potential to restore areas of grassland, scrub and woodland within the north of the site. Furthermore, it encourages opportunities to maintain and enhance the ponds in the north and woodland copse to the south.

### Green Corridor

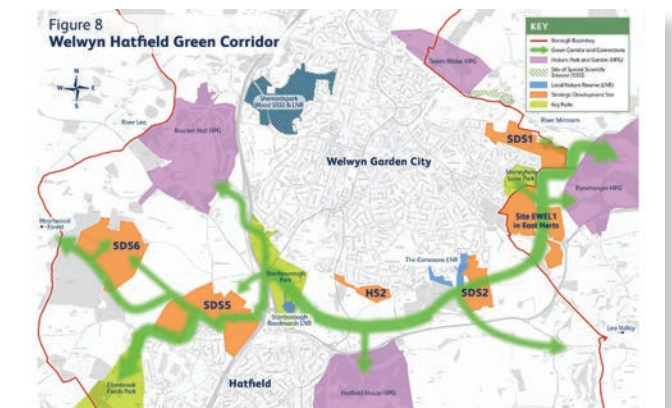
In 2019, LUC established a Green Infrastructure Masterplan, which incorporated a Green Corridor within the site. The Welwyn Hatfield Green Corridor is located between Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield New Town and runs west to east, and is bound to the south by the A414 Hertford Road. The corridor interfaces with the suburban fringe of Welwyn Garden City to the south and east, and wraps around the north-west area of Hatfield. The Green Corridor is a linear network of green infrastructure, intended to aid the movement of wildlife and people, connecting existing green infrastructure in the form of cycleways, bridleway and footpaths. It will provide a strategic green link between Panshanger Park, in the east and Symondshyde Great Wood and Ellenbrook Country Park in the west. In the context of the site, "The inclusion of a Green Corridor within the BGS site will help to conserve features of natural and cultural heritage importance, help communities respond to the anticipated impacts of a changing climate, secure overall net gains to biodiversity through the development and will help mitigate potential impacts on land which is currently not heavily influenced by human involvement." (2019 LUC BGS Green Corridor Consultation).



2019 LUC Green Corridor Masterplan



2019 LUC BGS Green Corridor Consultation



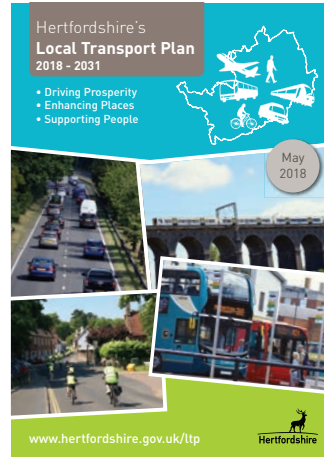
2021 Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan Green Corridor



## 1.4.3 Transport

### Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)

LTP4 was adopted in 2018 and covers the period up to 2031. It provides a framework to guide all future transport planning and investment. The plan sets out a balanced approach to transport which seeks to encourage a switch from private cars to sustainable modes of transport. The plan highlights that Hertfordshire has high levels of car ownership, poor east-west connections, high levels of cross boundary commuting and complicated movement patterns, resulting in congestion, rail overcrowding and air quality problems. To create a transport plan which aims to increase the highway capacity would have a number of negative impacts, and thus the plan seeks to encourage alternative modes of sustainable transport.



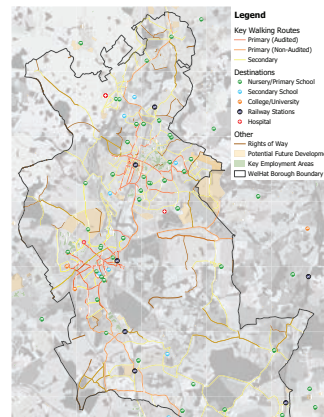
Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (LTP4, 2018-2031)



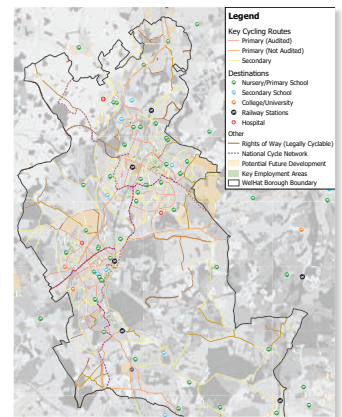
Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (Department for Transport, 2017)

### Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP)

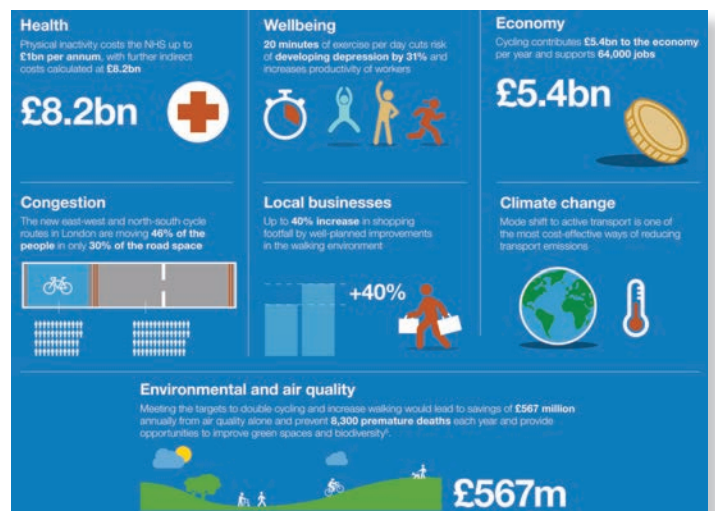
In 2017 the Department for Transport (DfT) published a technical guidance to help local authorities develop LCWIP's. The overarching ambition of LCWIP is to make walking and cycling the desired mode of transport for both short and (parts of) longer journeys. Furthermore, it aimed to decrease the number of cycling fatalities and accidents and increase the number of children (ages 5-10) that walk to school. Welwyn Hatfield produced its own LCWIP in 2022 demonstrating HCC's and WHBC's shared ambition for walking and cycling.



Key walking routes (LCWIP, Welwyn Hatfield Borough, 2022)



Key cycling routes (LCWIP, Welwyn Hatfield Borough, 2022)



(right) Benefits of Cycling and Walking (produced by Gear Change who gathers existing research on the benefits of active travel. Infographic published in England Cycling and Walking Strategy, by the Department for Transport, 2020



## 1.4.4 Housing

### Overall housing figures in site allocation

The East Herts Local Plan allocates the northern part of the Birchall Garden Suburb area for 1,350 homes and the Welwyn Hatfield Main Modifications Local Plan allocates the southern part of the masterplan area for 600 homes.

### Housing range and mix

For large developments such as at Birchall Garden Suburb, a range of home sizes and types should be provided, including a mix of starter homes, family homes; specialist residences for older people (flexi-care and residential care homes); and self-build and custom housing (EH Local Plan policies HOU1-HOU10 and WH policy SP7). East Herts identifies a need for 4 Gypsy and Traveller pitches within BGS. Welwyn Hatfield identifies the need for 11 pitches.

East Herts housing policy requires 40% of homes to be developed as affordable (policy HOU3 and Affordable Housing SPD). Welwyn Hatfield identifies 30% of homes to be affordable (policy SP7), including affordable rent and intermediate affordable housing. This should be provided on-site and integrated within neighbourhoods.

### Density range

Both local planning authorities suggest gross densities of 30-35 dwellings per hectare (dph) for Birchall Garden Suburb. This includes making efficient use of land and being informed by the character of the local area. It should be noted that the HCC Design Review Panel recommended higher densities than this, to support a sustainable approach to masterplanning.

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Draft Local Plan 2016

East Herts Affordable Housing SPD

East Herts Housing Strategy 2022-2027

## 1.4.5 Sustainability

### International Policy

The UN have set out 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth - all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests. SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities - should form a core part in developing a holistic approach to the masterplan's design and development.

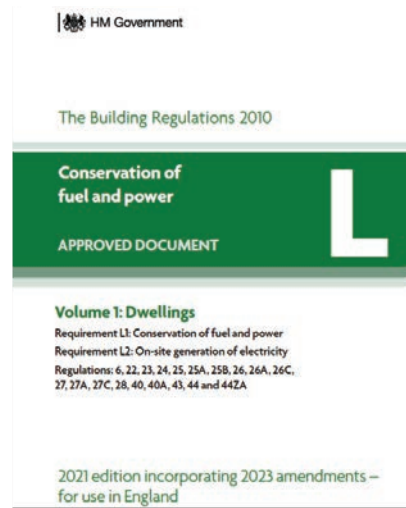
### National Policy

In conjunction with the NPPF, updates to the UK Building Regulations put sustainable communities and sustainable design and construction to the forefront. Part L 2021, as well as the introduction on Part O, set out new building performance standards and ensuring overheating risk is correctly assessed.

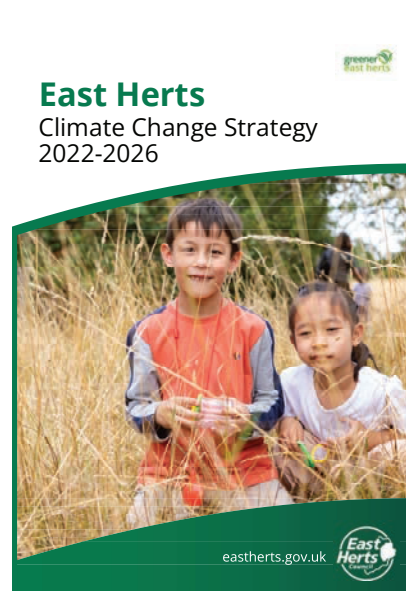
### Local Policy

In 2019 Welwyn Hatfield and East Herts declared a Climate Emergency and subsequently outlined respective Climate Change Strategies to recognise the gravity of the emergency. Both Councils have set an ambition of reaching net-zero by 2030 for their own operations.

Each Council also have extensive policies on sustainability, conservation and improvement of the natural environment and promoting healthy lifestyles.



Part L 2021

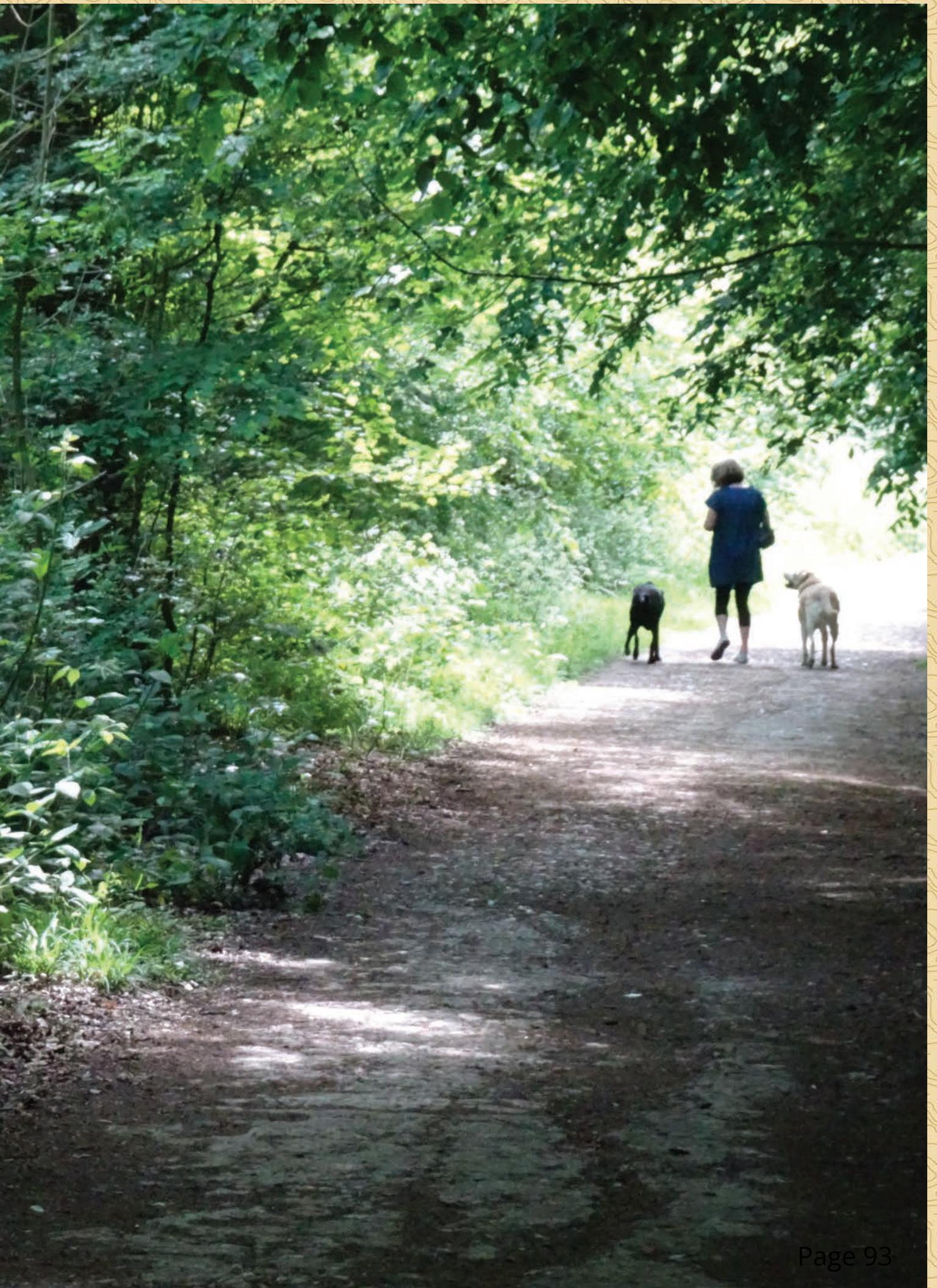


East Herts Climate Change Strategy 2022-2026



Global UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)







## 1.5 GARDEN CITY CONTEXT

Welwyn Garden City has served as a prototype for Garden Cities, setting the benchmark and providing radical and inspirational contributions to urban planning.

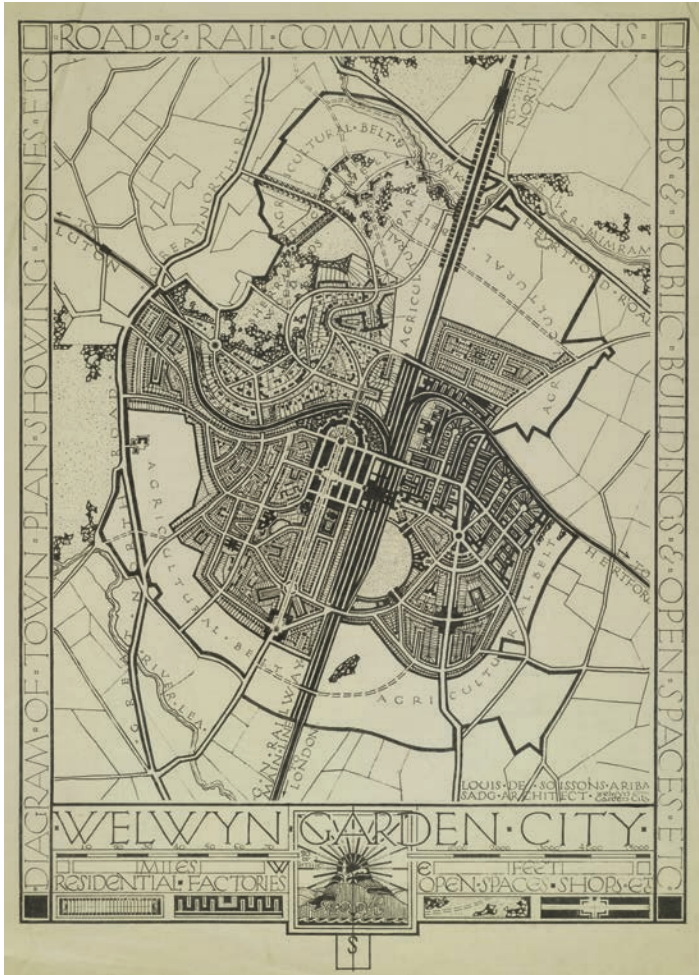
Welwyn Garden City was created in 1920 as England's second Garden City, based on ideas formulated by the Garden City Movement, founded by Ebenezer Howard in 1899, which was later realised by Louis de Soissons. Howard's vision was to reverse the depopulation of the countryside and to decentralise the population of Greater London. London's inner neighbourhoods of the time were overcrowded and residents suffered from poor sanitation and living conditions. Garden Cities were designed to give residents their own homes with outdoor space, indoor toilets, reliable heating and light and airy conditions, in direct response to the conditions of inner London. They were also intended to provide the best of both the town and the country, which was demonstrated in Howard's three magnets diagram.

De Soissons self-sufficient and community focused approach saw plans for Welwyn Garden City include a wide variety of houses, civic and community buildings, industrial buildings, churches, schools, shops, a public theatre and open space. The masterplan was largely landscape-led; Howard's vision of a great central garden was realised through a mile-long Parkway. The whole city was encircled by an agricultural belt as per Howard's garden city concept. Housing densities were low, with no more than 12 houses to an acre (translating as 30 houses a hectare). Many of the city's new roads incorporated mature trees, with few being cut down, and many new trees being planted, creating a green haven for residents.

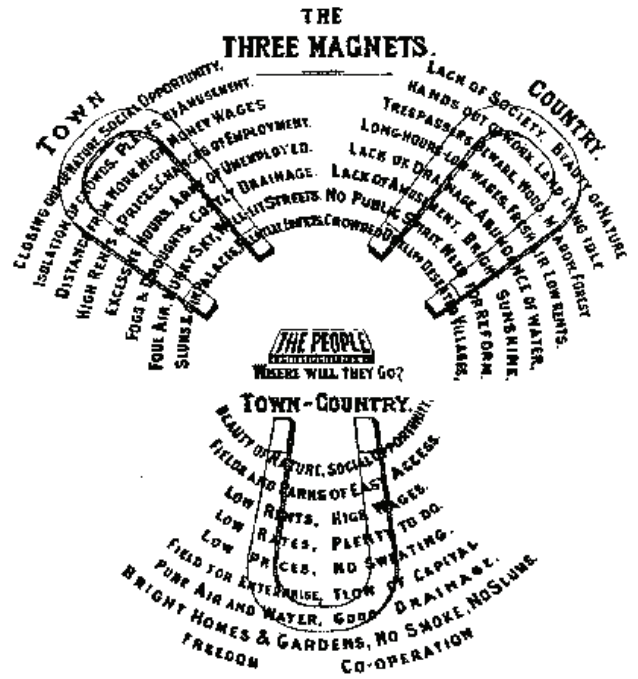
### Garden City Principles (TCPA)

The Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) defines nine key principles of a Garden City which are listed below:

- 1. Land value capture for the benefit of the community.**
- 2. Strong vision, leadership and community engagement.**
- 3. Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets.**
- 4. Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable.**
- 5. A wide range of local jobs in the Garden City within easy commuting distance of homes.**
- 6. Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities, and including opportunities to grow food.**
- 7. Development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience.**
- 8. Strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods.**
- 9. Integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport.**



Louise de Soissons' Welwyn Garden City masterplan, June 1920



The three magnets diagram by Ebenezer Howard, which addressed the question 'Where will the people go?', with the choices 'Town', 'Country' or 'Town-Country'





# Site Analysis



## 2.1 CONTEXT



Welwyn Garden City is a town, located in the Welwyn Hatfield borough, within the administrative and historic county of Hertfordshire, located southeast-central England. It is located 32km north of London, and 60km south of Cambridge.

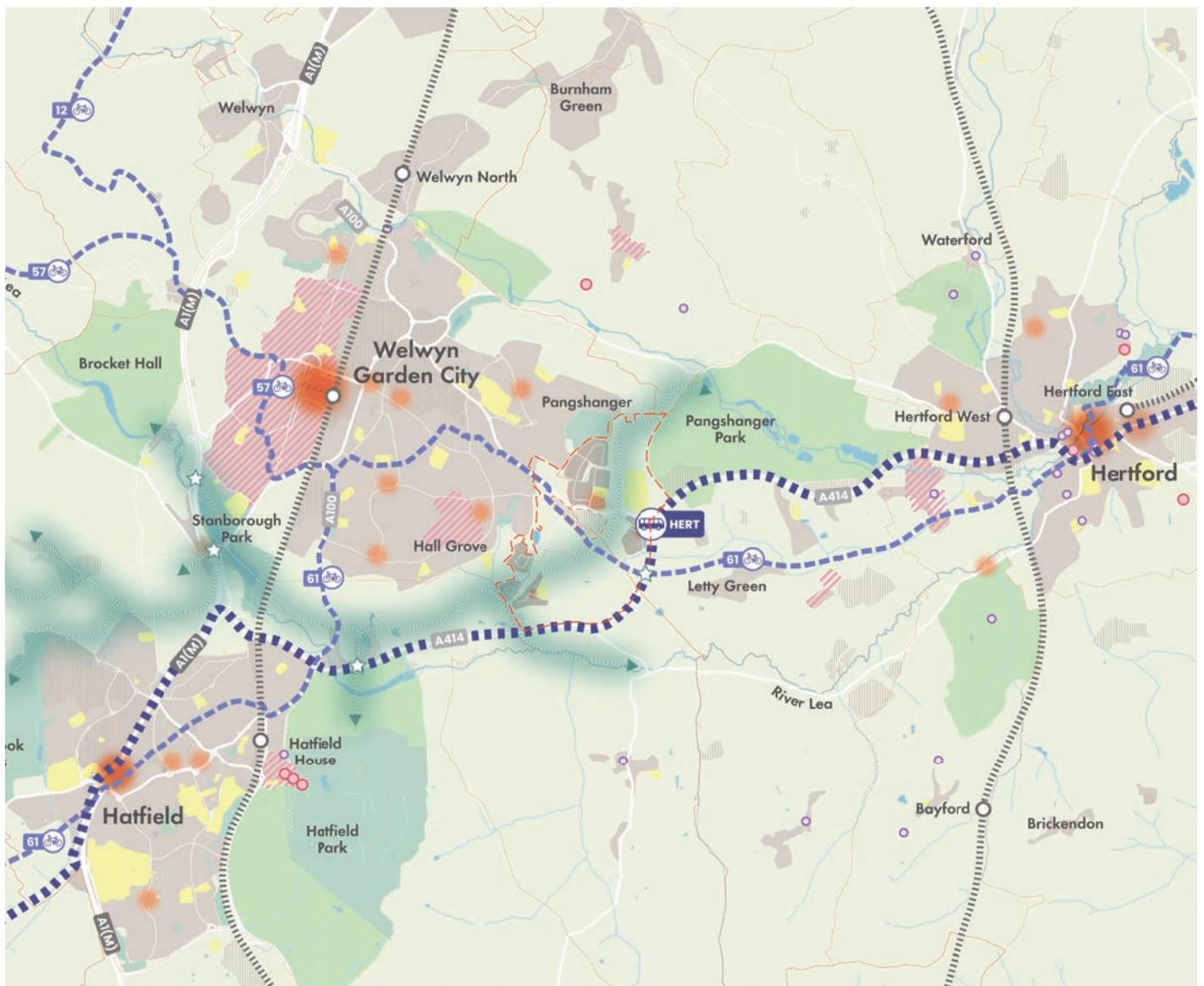


The site is located approximately 2.8km east of Welwyn Garden City town centre, and 475m west of Cole Green. Welwyn Garden City is well-served by major arterial roads. The A1(M) located with the west of Welwyn and Hatfield, and goes from Potters Bar in Outer London, to Stotfold, which is located a few miles north of Letchworth. Junction 5 of the A1(M) provided access to Welwyn Garden City and junction 4 provides access to the A414. The A414 runs along the south and eastern boundary of the site and connects east to Hertford and further on to Harlow.

In addition to these road links, there are connections to St Albans, Harpenden and Luton via the B653, Hatfield via the A1000 and A1001 and Hertford via the B1000.

Welwyn Garden City has a railway station in the town centre with excellent rail links and services south to London King's Cross in an average journey time of 31 minutes, and north east to Cambridge in an average of 56 minutes.

The closest international airport to the site is London Luton airport, located approximately 12.3 miles from Welwyn Garden City, near junction 10 of the M1.



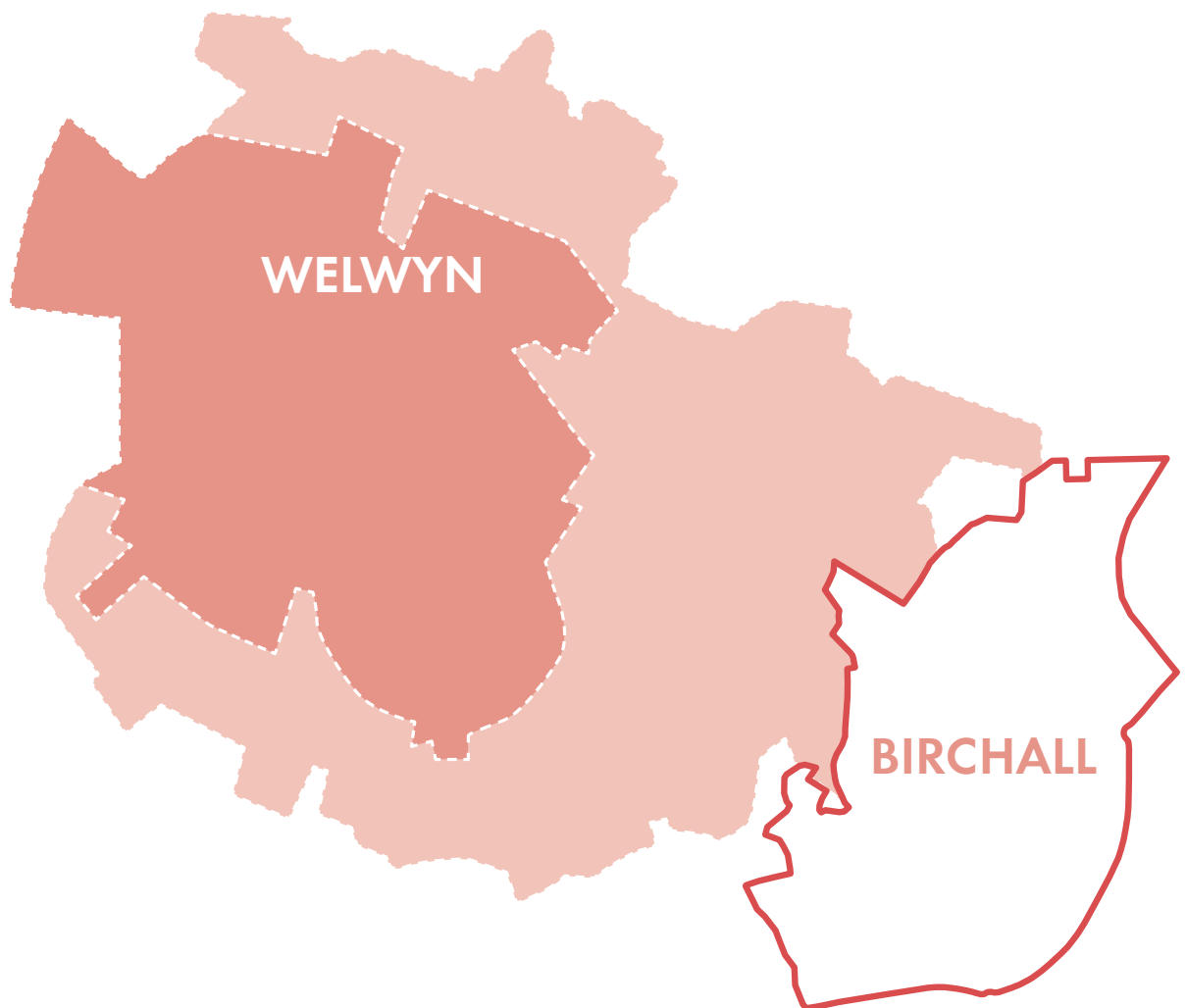
## 2.2 SITE LOCATION

Welwyn has evolved over time, with a number of new layers of development. Birchall Garden Suburb would represent the latest of these evolutions.

The site occupies an area that has been released from the green belt, including agricultural land that will accommodate homes, and a former landfill site that has been redundant since the 1950s and will accommodate parkland.

The site is located to the west of the existing Welwyn Garden City neighbourhoods Panshanger and Hall Grove. To the east of the site are Panshanger Park and a cluster of villages, including Cole Green, Letty Green, Birch Green and Hertingfordbury. To the south are the villages of Essendon and West End.

To the north of the site, the former Panshanger Aerodrome has planning permission for a new residential neighbourhood with a primary school, community uses and local shops.







PANSHANGER

Panshanger Aerodrome

Moneyhole Lane Park

Henry Wood

Panshanger Park

Birchall Wood

High Grove

Panshanger Quarry

Rolls Wood

Blackthorn Wood

Howicks Wood

Greater Captains Wood

COLE GREEN

HALL GROVE

Holwell Hyde

Holwell Park Wood

HATFIELD HYDE

The Commons Local Nature Reserve

Commons Woodland

Burnside

Holwell Court

A414

Holwell Place

River Lea

River Lea

Essendon Brook



## 2.3 LAND USES

Within the Birchall Garden Suburb allocated area, there are very few active land uses. The most substantial uses are:

- The waste recycling facility, operated by BP Mitchell, called Burnside, which is located to the south west of the site;
- The Cole Green Lane BP Mitchell site processing, storing and supplying construction materials including concrete, sand and chalk;
- The logistics hub based on Cole Green Lane

All three of these uses require access for articulated lorries.

In addition to the industry, the Birchall Farm building, barn and stables operates from the north side of Birchall Lane. This also serves as a residential building, close to the homes found on Birchall Lane.



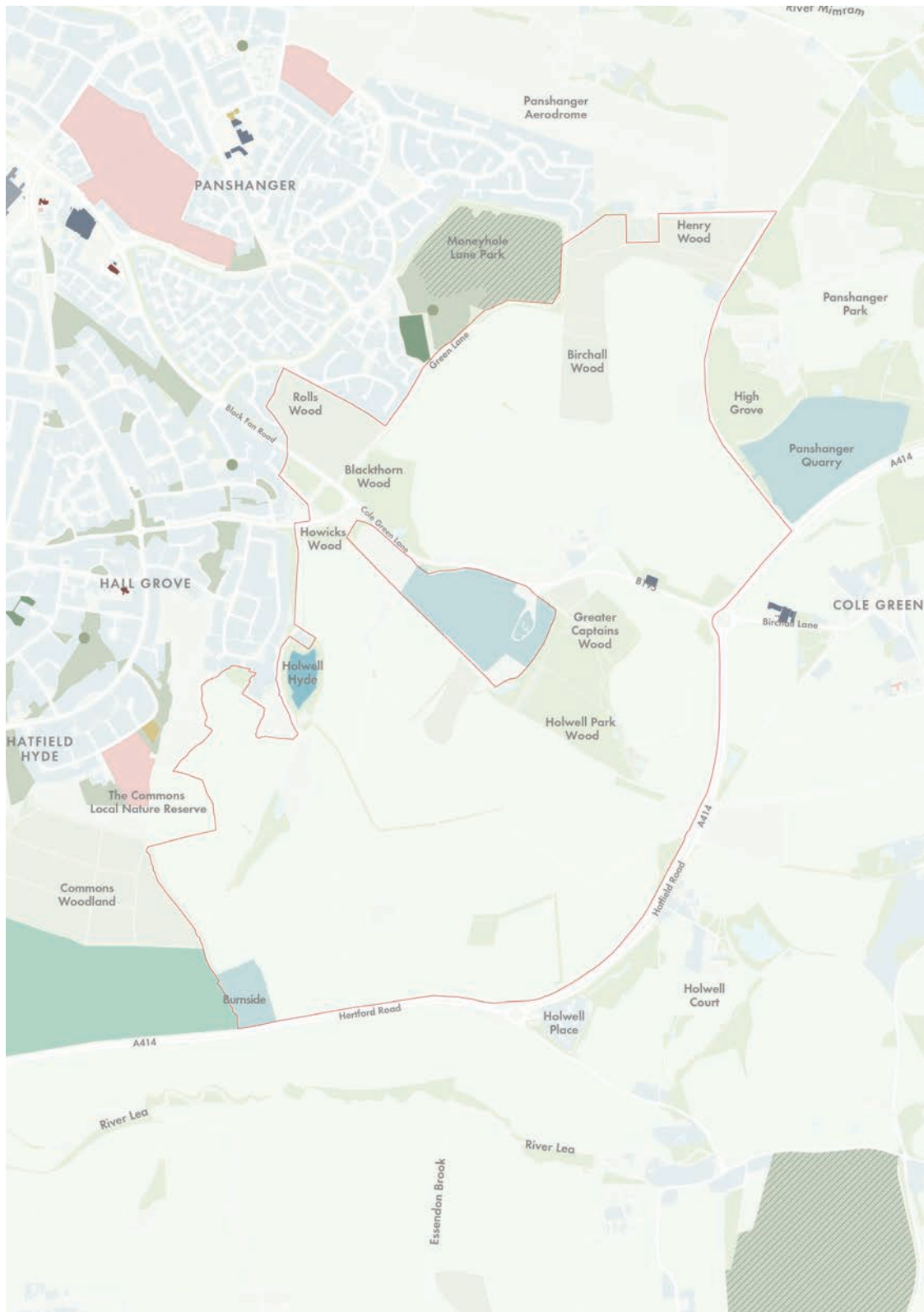
Birchall Farm



Birchall Farm



Holwell Hyde Angling Lake



- Site boundary
- Residential
- Industrial Employment
- Retail/Employment
- Restaurants/cafe/pubs
- Business park
- Education (schools & Nursery)
- Places of worship
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Open space
- Fishing lake
- Golf course
- Allotments
- Play area



## 2.4 LOCAL AMENITIES

The majority of existing local amenities nearby are found in the Panshanger and Hall Grove neighbourhoods, each of which have local shops, a community centre, nursery, church and medical centre. Additionally, Panshanger additionally benefits from a local supermarket and Hall Grove includes a care home and pharmacy. Cole Green village also has nursery provision. Allotments are found to the south of Moneyhole Lane Park, next to the Panshanger neighbourhood.

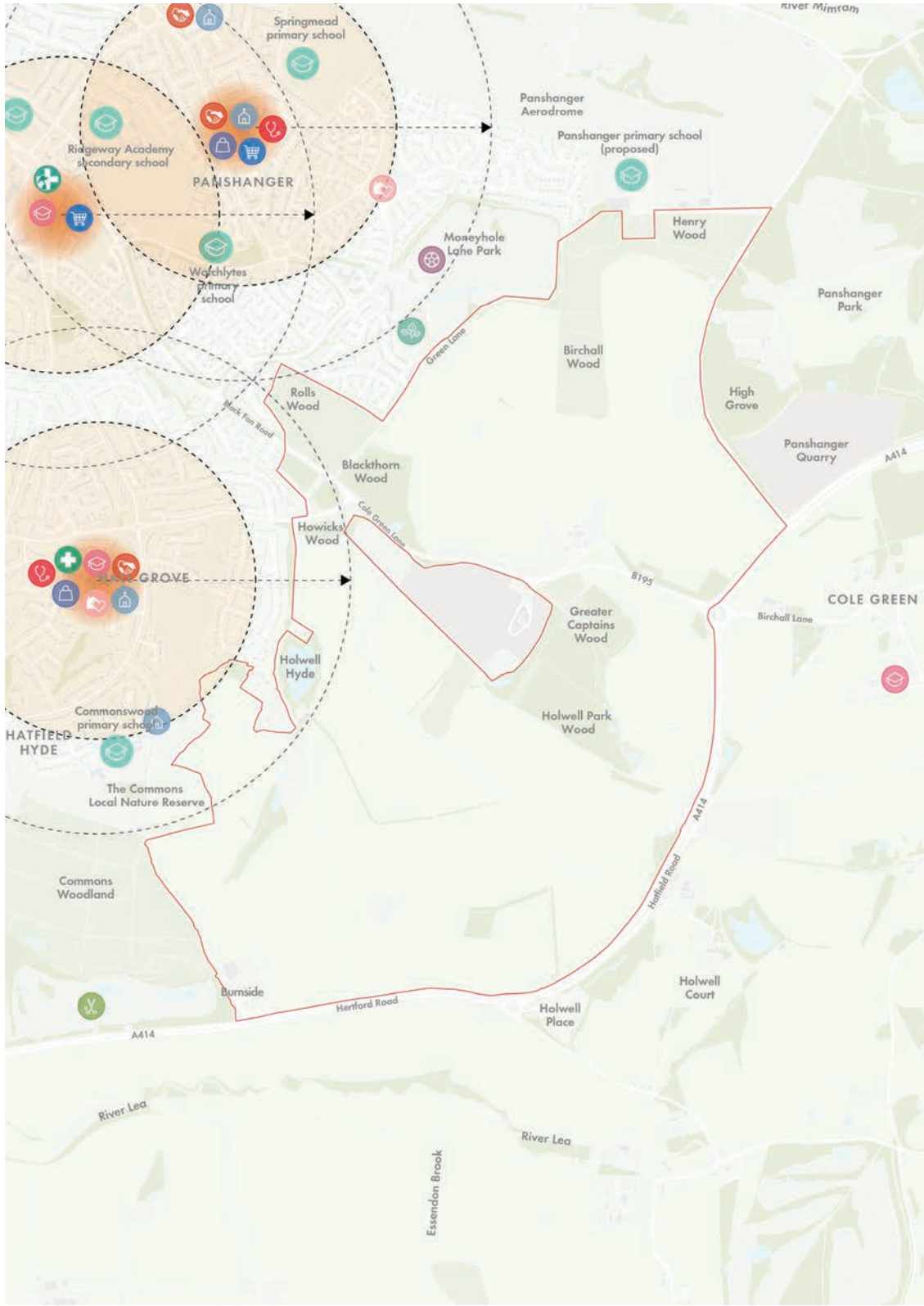
A number of primary schools are found at Commonswood, Watchlytes and Springmead, along with the Ridgeway Academy secondary school. A primary school is also proposed to the north of the site, at the former Panshanger Airfield site.



Attimore Park pub in Panshanger



Local shops in Hall Grove



- Site boundary
- School
- Nursery
- Church
- Community Centre
- Medical Centre
- Allotments
- Football pitch
- Golf course
- Care Home
- Pharmacy
- Local shop
- Supermarket
- Veterinary Hospital
- Local Central
- 500m catchment
- 800m catchment

## 2.5 VEHICULAR MOVEMENT

### Vehicular Movement

Birchall Garden Suburb sits within the A414 strategic road which wraps around the southern side of Welwyn Garden City. This provides good access locally to Hertford and Hatfield, and more widely to the M25 and M1. However, the road acts as a significant barrier for the villages located to the east and the south of the site (The Greens, Hertingfordbury and Essendon), from Welwyn Garden City.

The area is connected to the town centre via Blackfan Road and Cole Green Lane, which runs through Hall Grove and through to the station. This road currently has a 50 mph speed limit as it passes the Birchall Garden Suburb site.

There are currently no roads which extend into the EH Birchall Garden Suburb area. Holwell Hyde Lane extends south from Cole Green Lane to Holwell Hyde Brook, towards the WH neighbourhoods within Birchall Garden Suburb.

A Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) extends southwards from Hall Grove to the A414 Hertford Road, although there are no crossings on the A414 at the southern end of the byway.

### Public transport

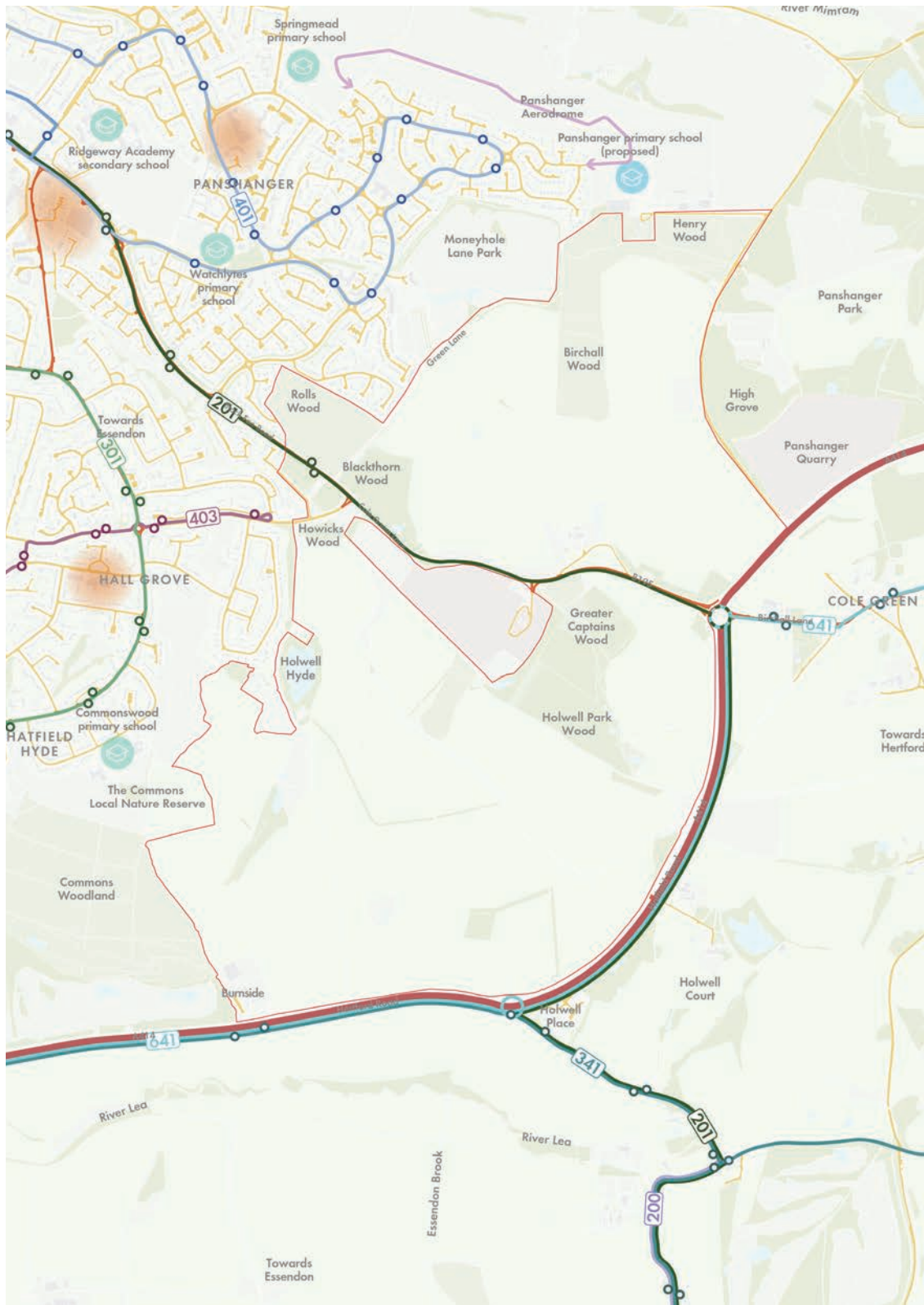
The adjacent Hall Grove area is currently served by the 301 and 403 bus routes. The Panshanger area is served by the 401 bus route. The 401 route is very likely to be extended in the future to serve the proposed neighbourhood at the former Panshanger Aerodrome. Some of these routes could be extended in the future to serve the Birchall Garden Suburb area.

The nearby villages are served by the 641, 341, 201 and 200 which all run along the A414. The 201 runs along Blackfan Road and Birchall Lane, which could easily serve Birchall Garden Suburb in the future.

A Bus Rapid Transit - HERT - is proposed to run between St Albans to the west and Harlow to the east, and extending on to Stansted Airport. The Birchall Garden Suburb area has been identified as a suitable location for a stop on the HERT.

Welwyn Garden Station has direct links to London, Cambridge and Peterborough.





- Site boundary
- A road
- B road
- Neighbourhood road
- 401 Bus route
- 201 Bus route
- 403 Bus route
- 641 Bus route
- 341 Bus route
- 200 Bus route
- 301 Bus route
- Existing local centre

## 2.6 ACTIVE MOVEMENT

The Birchall Garden Suburb area is traversed by a number of existing Public Rights of Way (PRoW), bridleways, byways, footpaths and tracks. However, these do not currently combine to create a full network, with some areas such as Birchall Wood far better served than others.

These routes often run through ancient woodland, wildlife sites and the Local Nature Reserve at The Commons. There are three entrances to The Commons LNR which can be found on Holands, The Commons and Cornfield open space.

Key routes within the masterplan area include:

- A public footpath which extends from the eastern boundary of the masterplan area to the byway and then south-eastwards to the A414 Hatfield Road near to Holwell Court Farm.
- A public footpath which follows Green Lane along the northern boundary of the EH masterplan area and links Rolls Wood to Money Hole Lane Park.
- A public footpath which extends east-west across the EH masterplan area providing access from Welwyn Garden City towards Panshanger Park.
- The byway between Holwell Hyde Farm and Hertford Road (A414), which is a popular walking route and provides access to the angling lake at Holwell Hyde. The byway also takes walkers to the informal access space on the former Holwell Hyde waste disposal/ land fill area.

Public access is available at The Commons Local Nature Reserve which is located to the west of the BGS site. There is limited permissive access over The Commons Woods, which are located to the south of the LNR.

There are walking connections to nearby neighbourhoods Panshanger and Hall Grove although these are not particularly legible or well-maintained. Walking connections to the nearby villages are even more challenging, with pedestrian crossings across the A414 very limited and unsafe.

The Cole Green Way is a non-motorised transport route, which follows the former Hertford to Welwyn Garden City branch rail line. It is part of the National Cycle Route 61 which provides a valuable connection between Hertford and Welwyn Garden City for cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians. The cycle lane continues along Blackfan Road into Welwyn Garden City town centre. However, other than this link cycling provision is limited in the area.





- Site boundary
- Non-motorised access point
- PRoW
- National Cycleway
- Cycle route
- Bridleway
- Footpath/desire lines
- Byway
- Track
- Local centre
- School

## 2.7 LOCAL VERNACULAR

The local vernacular of Welwyn Garden City's original neighbourhoods and later additions close to the site give design clues for the development that can help it to reflect and sit comfortably in its context.

### Welwyn Garden City

The original residential and street character of Welwyn Garden City was developed in a Neo-Georgian style, with symmetry, generously sized windows and a range of articulated building façades to give interest to the street. Red brick is the dominant material, with pitched roofs and chimney stacks evident. Many buildings were designed to create double aspect internal rooms, either through shallow or L shaped building footprints. The scale and density of buildings varied, however, with one and a half storey cottages and three storey maisonettes incorporated in the earlier phases of the Garden City.

Clear boundaries between private and public space were important, with many residences having front gardens and others being defined by hedgerows. In some cases, homes were set back or away from through roads, creating a mews environment.

Later development at Panshanger (close to the Birchall Garden Suburb site) reflected a more Modernist design aesthetic, with asymmetric windows and roof pitches (top left). The focus on creating light-filled interiors remained, however.

Later phases of development in the Panshanger area also included self-build developments including the Panway Self-Build Group (middle left) which was developed over an 18 month period.





## Site Context

There are very few buildings within and immediately adjacent to the Birchall Garden Suburb site area. However, these include the Grade II Listed Birchall Farmhouse, barn and stable buildings just to the north of Birchall Lane, built in the 17th and 18th Centuries in red brick and wooden clapboard, with a moat surrounding the site at one point. The Grade II Listed Holwell Hyde Farm buildings just to the west of Holwell Hyde Lane were built in the 17th Century, with 19th Century additions. Each of these heritage assets will need to be respected in terms of their setting. Further information on these is provided in the heritage section of the site analysis.

Residential buildings are located on the north side of Birchall Lane and these are excluded from the site allocation. These are red brick, 1.5 storey chalet bungalow style buildings, with tall pitched roofs and hung tiles on the gable ends. They are set back from the road, with privet hedges screening the buildings from the road.

More recently, a logistics hub has been developed on the south side of Cole Green Lane which provides a tall, single storey block with graduated sage green cladding. The building backs onto the road and provides parking to the rear.

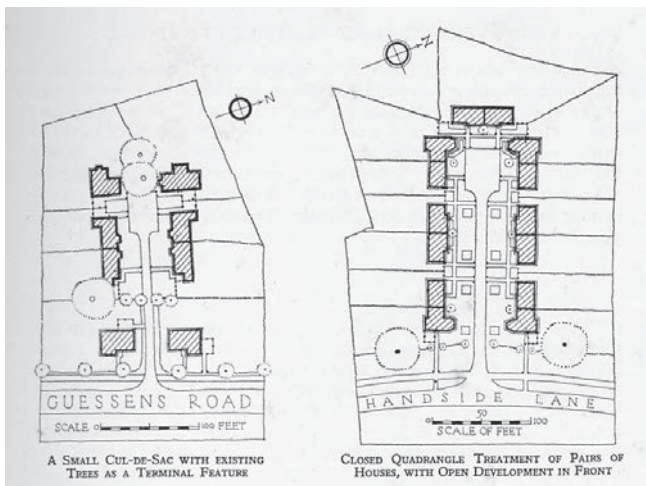
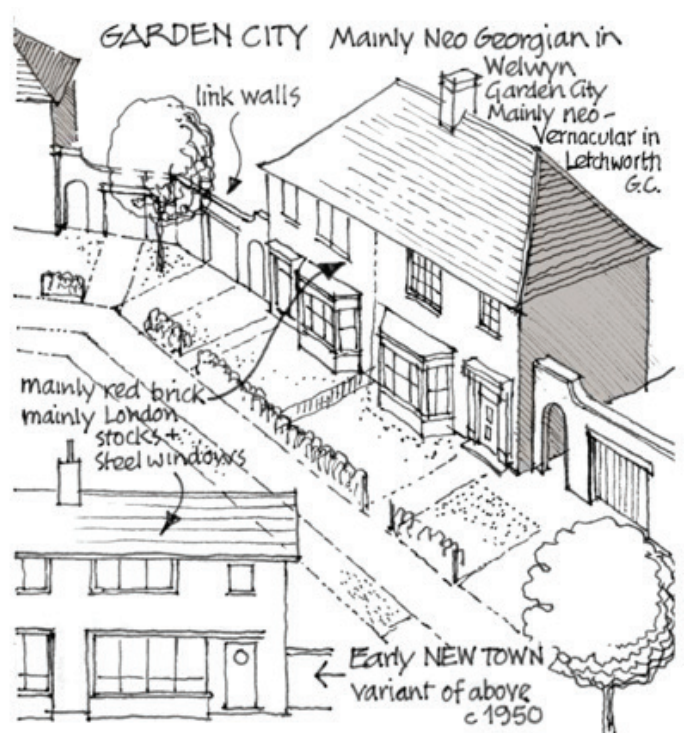
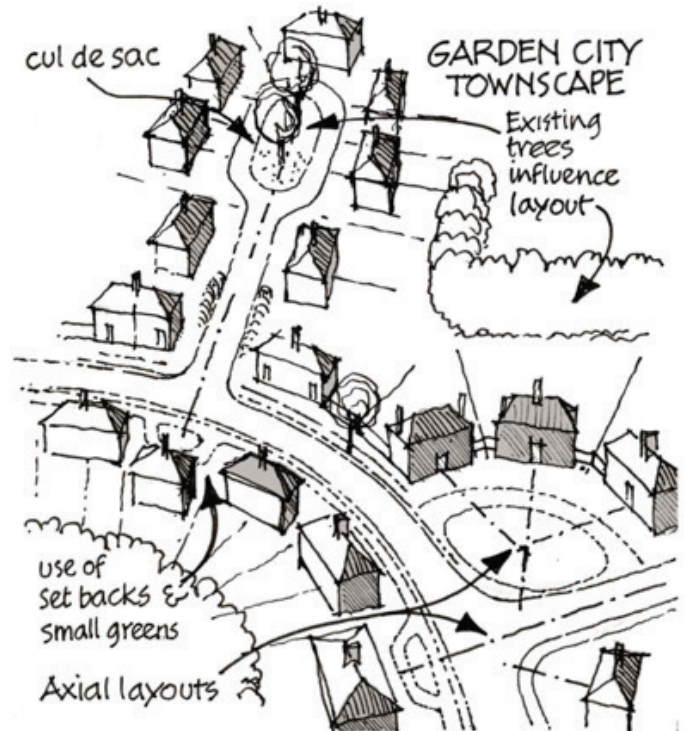




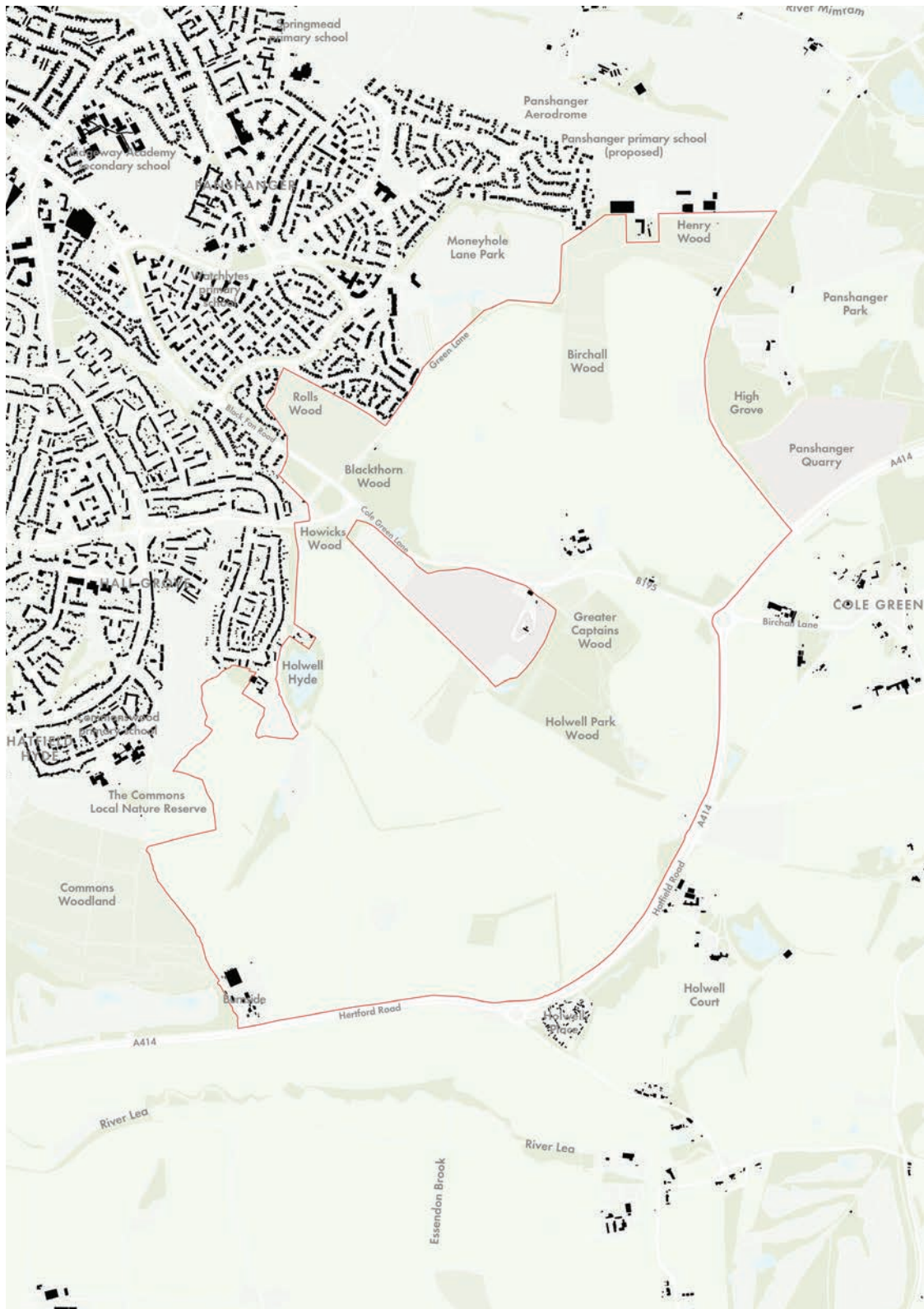
## 2.8 URBAN STRUCTURE AND CHARACTER

Welwyn's original neighbourhoods were set out as generous boulevards, with connected streets and set pieces around communal green space. Louis de Soissons created variation in the street scene by varying the distance from front facade to road between houses. More recent development at Panshanger and Hall Grove reflect standard suburban developments, with semi-detached and detached homes set out along residential streets, some of which connect and some which operate as cul-de-sacs. Street patterns are less pronounced and legible in the suburban developments. However, both in Welwyn Garden City's original neighbourhoods and more recent additions, homes tend to front onto public open spaces. Welwyn Garden City's original neighbourhoods were set at 12 homes per acre (c.30 dph). Density levels nearby are generally 25–35 dwellings per hectare with family homes being two-storeys with pitched roofs.

The surrounding villages of Cole Green, Letty Green, Birch Green and Essendon have more informal layouts with compact village cores but more dispersed homes beyond these, which provide overall lower density levels of 5-15 dwellings per hectare







### Figureground plan

The figureground plan gives clues to the morphology, density and structure of existing neighbourhoods by highlighting building footprints against roads and open spaces. This information is further analysed on the following pages.



## 2.9 NEIGHBOURHOOD STRUCTURE

A tissue study comparison between original Welwyn Garden City neighbourhoods and more recent suburban development shows some striking differences in form and structure.

The original Garden City neighbourhoods had a far clearer structure and associated legibility than their later suburban counterparts. This formal structure enabled a far more efficient layout and use of land. This means that the density levels (dph) of the suburbs and the garden

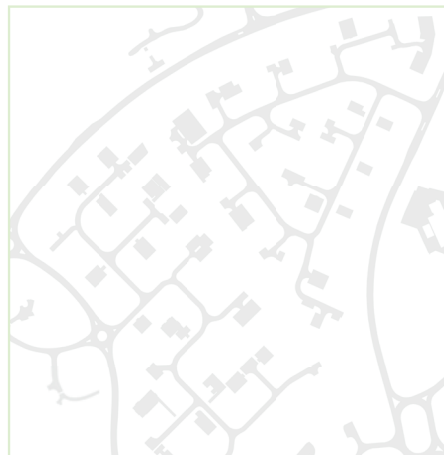
city neighbourhoods are very similar, despite the suburbs having far smaller gardens and a far less spacious character.

This provides a valuable steer for masterplanning new neighbourhoods at Birchall Garden Suburb, which can reflect the more structured character of the original Garden City neighbourhoods to establish a more sustainable approach of slightly higher densities whilst retaining a spacious character.

### Street Hierarchy

Far more space is given over to roads and parking areas - 'grey infrastructure' - in the suburb, which lowers density without improving the environment. There are far more cul-de-sacs within the suburban area

### SUBURB



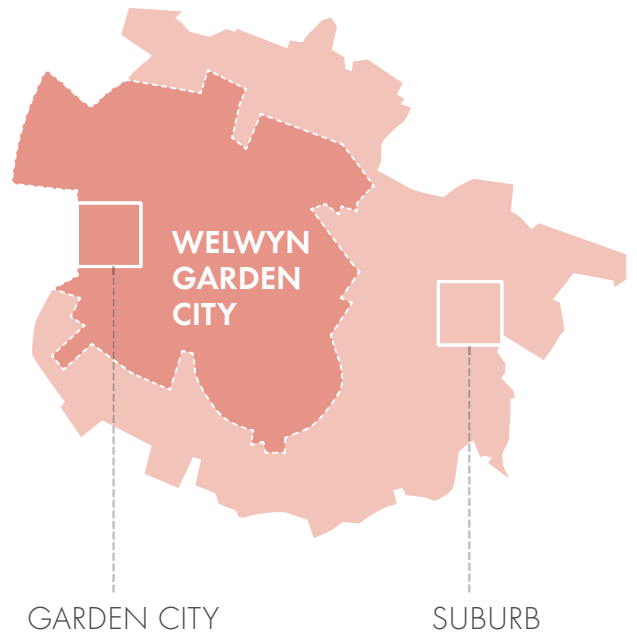
### GARDEN CITY



### Figure Ground

The figureground demonstrates the lack of legibility within suburban neighbourhoods. Without these being clearly marked, it is almost impossible to identify where the roads are, revealing a lack of structure and road hierarchy





## SUBURB

## GARDEN CITY

### Private gardens

Private gardens in the original Welwyn Garden City neighbourhoods are far more generous than within the suburbs. It is surprising then that densities are very similar



### Morphology

The striking differences between the two neighbourhood areas are revealed by isolating the different aspects of the spatial layout. These characteristics combine to provide a more familiar plan of each area





## 2.10 HERITAGE ASSETS

Birchall Farmhouse (late C18th) and the associated Stables and Barn are Grade II Listed and located in the EH area of the site, north of Greater Captains Wood. The Grade II Listed Holwell Hyde Farmhouse (circa late C16th) is located just outside of the north-western boundary of the WH area of the site. The farmhouse is relatively well enclosed, with trees to the south and Holwell Hyde lake to the east. Panshanger Park (circa early C19th) is located to the north-east of the EH area of the site. Numerous grade II listed buildings are included within Panshanger Park including the walled garden and gardeners house.

The setting of Birchall Farm and its associated buildings will be further protected by the presence of the Green Corridor. Furthermore the Green Corridor will protect the historical landscape character through the conservation and restoration of hedgerows.

The plan identifies a open landscape buffer adjacent to Panshanger Park. Additional buffers are located at Birchall Farm and Holwell Hyde Farmhouse.

Hatfield House (Grade I listed) and its Registered Park and Garden (Grade I listed), is located approximately 1.5km southwest of the site (located off the plan). There are open rural views to the south, east and northeast of Hatfield House. Whilst extensive mature tree planting within the north of the park and garden softens the relationship with the A414 and Welwyn, there are some long views and inter-visibility through the landscape and open fields, facilitated by the topography of the land. The rural nature of the Lea valley contributes strongly to the setting of Hatfield House.

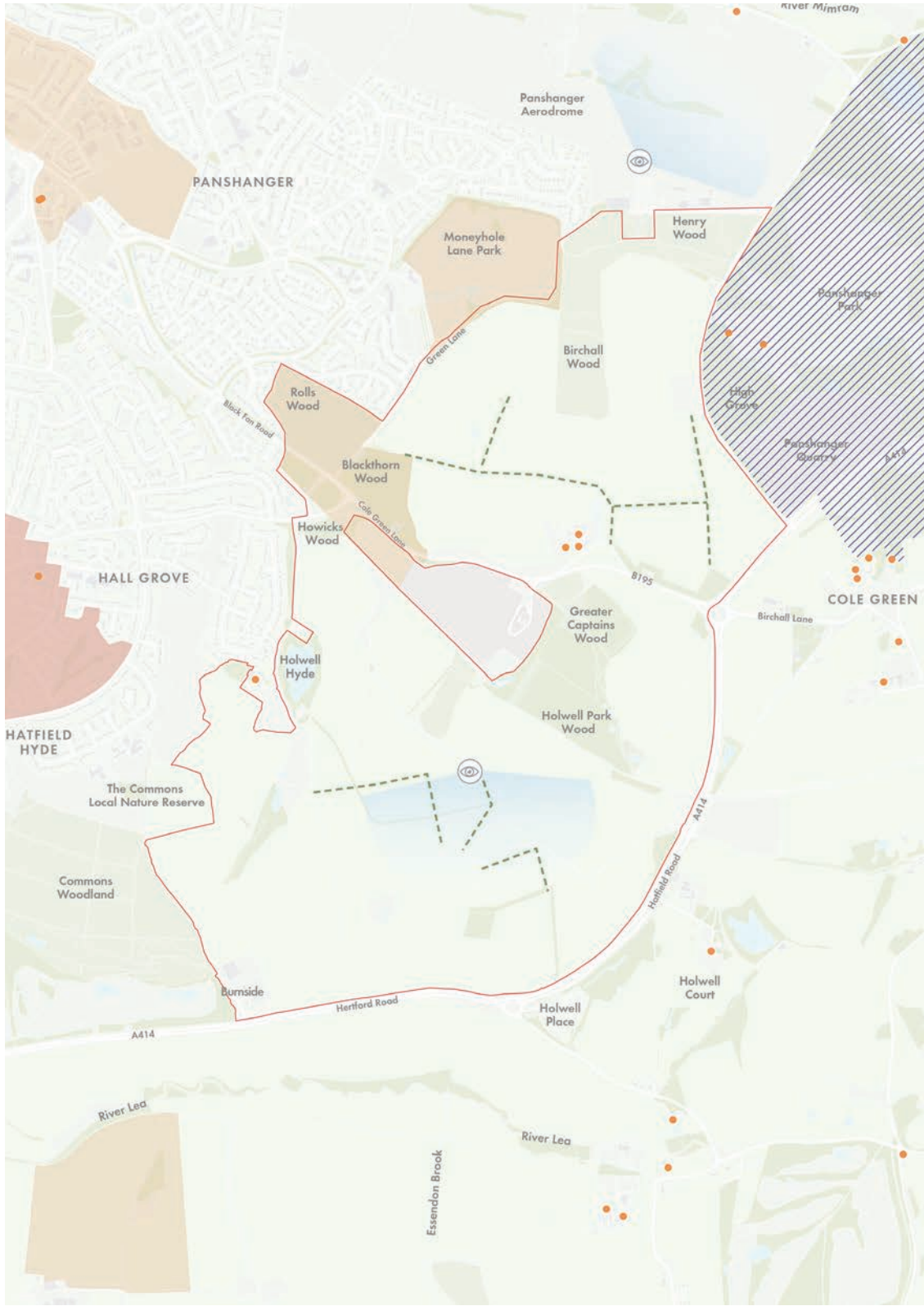
Any development should respect the setting of Panshanger Registered Parks and Gardens by providing sufficient landscape buffering and noise mitigation measures.



**Birchall Farm Barn**



**Birchall Farm southern block**



- Site boundary
- Grade II listed building
- Area of Archaeological significance
- Grade II\* Registered Park and Garden
- Conservation Area
- View points
- Historic hedgerows



## 2.11 LANDSCAPE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Much of the land within the site is managed as arable agriculture, interspersed with large areas of semi-improved grassland, blocks of broad-leaved woodland, remnant field boundaries, dense scrub, and water bodies, which include ditches and ponds.

Much of the agricultural land on the site will support a range of ecosystem services, including carbon storage, water infiltration, nutrient cycling and food provision. Natural England (NE) highlight that due to the loss of a portion of this agricultural land to development, there is a need to retain as much as possible of the soils important functions and services.

The plan identifies a central area of land in the site which was previously used for mineral workings and landfill operations. Central Herts Green Corridor Group (CHGC) have identified areas of Leachate breakout, as a result of the former landfill waste disposal operations. These are located predominantly within the scrub and grassland mix close to the water course in the WH area. These have been identified on the plan as blue flags.

The CHGC have also identified an area of ancient fen within the Commons LNR which is a highly important site, including the water source that supports it.

Within the EH area of the site Blackthorn Wood, Rolls Wood and Holwell Hyde and Howick's Woods are covered by TPO. Outside of the site boundary, there are TPOs on areas of woodland where Henry Wood meets Panshanger Park.

The water bodies within the site, and network of trees, hedges and woodland, support a variety of wildlife, contributing to the wider network of habitats within area. Despite this, much of the woodland and green spaces are relatively fragmented, limiting the movement of wildlife biodiversity.

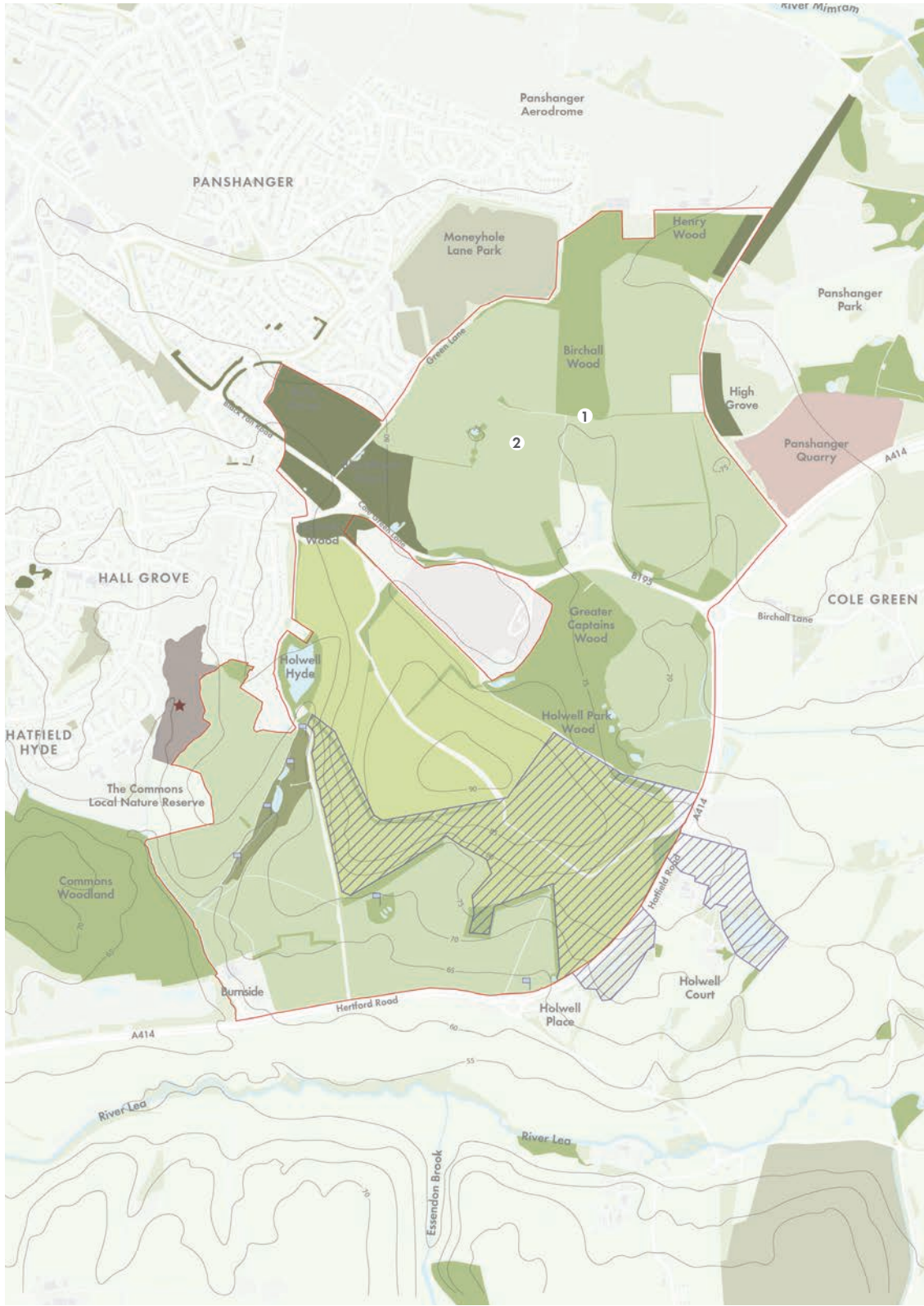


**Birchall Wood (south) (1)**



**Undulating landscape in EH area of site (2)**





- Site boundary
- Contours
- Grassland
- Agricultural land
- Scrub and grassland mix
- Trees/hedges/woodland
- Area of trees with Tree Preservation Order (TPO)
- Water bodies
- Quarry area
- Green space site
- ▨ Disused mineral extraction
- Identified by CHGC:**
- ★ Ancient Fen
- Blackfan Fen area
- ▨ Leachate breakout



## 2.12 ECOLOGICAL DESIGNATIONS

### Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)

Located both within and around the site are several broadleaved woodlands, which are designated as LWS's. These include Rolls and Blackthorn Woods LWS, Greater Captain's and Holwell park Wood LWS, Cole Green Way (western end) LWS, Henry and Birchall Woods LWS, The Commons LWS, and Panshanger Park LWS. Located to the north of the site, along the River Mimram is the Archers Green LWS, which includes rare chalk streams, home to a rich variety of wildlife including Kingfishers, bees and endangered Water Voles.

### Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

The Commons LNR is located to the south west of the site, adjoining the western edge of the WH site area. This 15 hectares includes a mosaic of habitats including broadleaved woodland and is designated for its grassland indicators, Blackfan valley fen and swamp. The boundaries of the LNR have remained the same since 1840.

### Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Tewinbury SSSI is located approximately 1.8km north west of the site boundary and comprises a series of alluvial meadows and marshes bordering the River Mimram. There are several Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) radiating out from the SSSI with varying conditions applied to them. An IRZ covers much of the EH portion of the site, which will impact major infrastructure and roads.

### Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)

Henry Wood, and parts of Greater Captain's and Holwell Park Wood are designated as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland. Birchall Wood is designated as Planted Ancient Woodland Site.

### Panshanger Registered Park and Garden

Panshanger Park includes a variety of mature tree planting, which forms a strong visual barrier to the site.



The Commons LNR



Birchall Wood - Ancient Woodland



- Site boundary
- Local wildlife site
- Conservation area
- Local Nature Reserve
- Tewinbury SSSI IRZ
- Ancient woodland (ASNW & Re-planted ancient woodland)



## 2.13 GREEN CORRIDOR

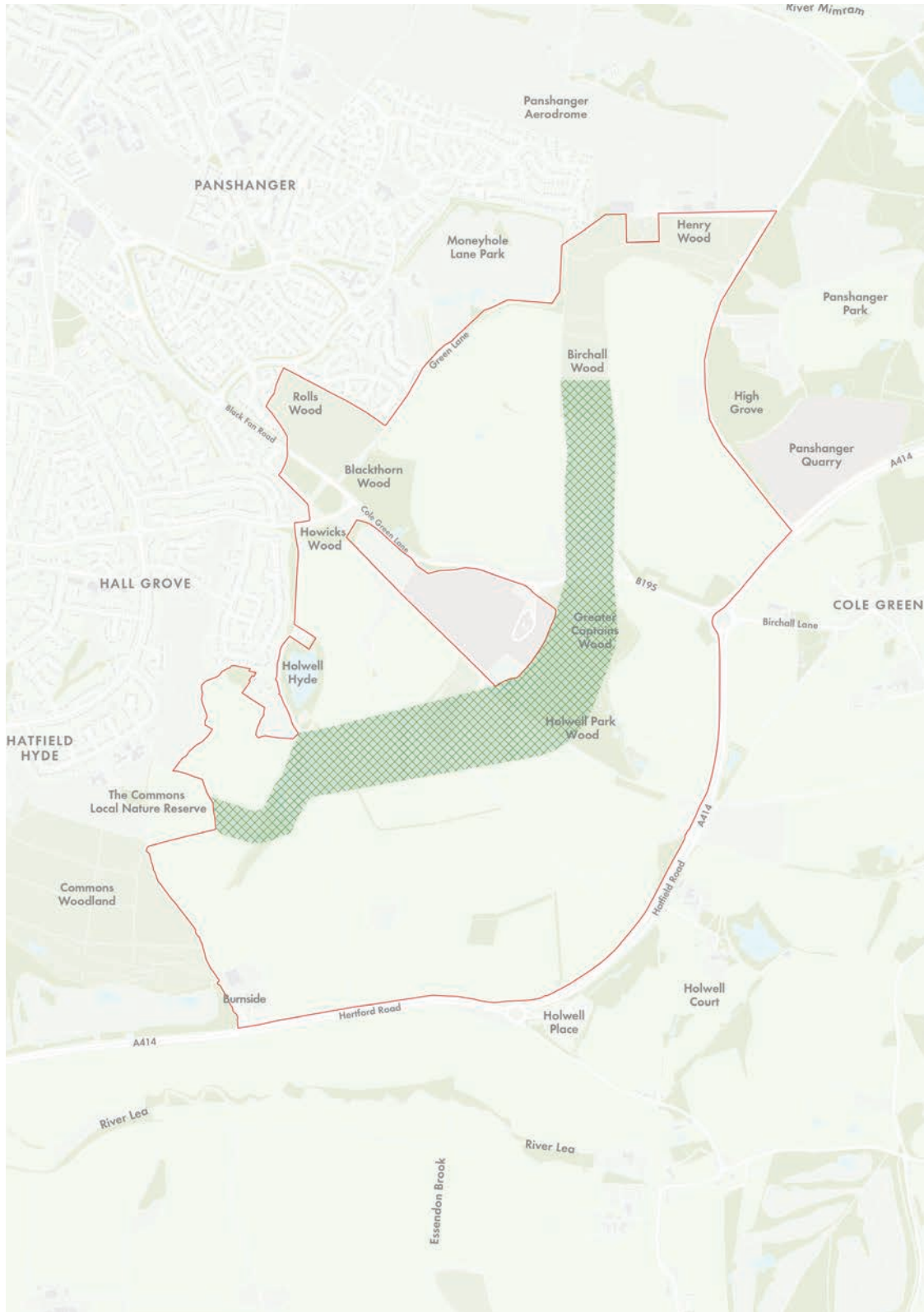
The Green Corridor has been introduced as part of the emerging Draft Local Plan (Policy SP12 - Green Infrastructure). WHBC will work with partners and developers to enable the delivery of a Green Corridor. Within the site, the Green Corridor is intended to connect key nature conservation assets including the Commons LNR, Local Wildlife Sites and Ancient Woodland. It extends from The Commons Local Nature Reserve on the western boundary of the WH area of the site, north-east wards through Greater Captain's and Holwell Park Woods and Birchall Farm before travelling north and connecting with Birchall Wood. Its strategic position allows for the movement of wildlife between the key nature conservation assets.

LUC have identified a number of key considerations for the creation of the Green Corridor. These include:

- **supporting the conservation and enhancement of Birchall Farm, associated building and environs, as well as other cultural heritage features including Burnt Mound and the Grade II listed Holwell Hyde Farmhouse.**
- **supporting the conservation and restoration of the historic landscape character through the retention and creation of hedgerows.**
- **enabling the connection of existing footpaths and future proposed pedestrian and cycle routes**
- **supporting the enhancement of the existing chain of ponds and ditches, to create a network of sustainable drainage which will contribute to the attenuation of water, before reaching the Brook.**

- **contribute to air cooling, water management and moderating air quality, which will help mitigate the effect of climate change.**

The CHGC Group have identified several species within the site including barn owl, polecat, brown hare, harvest mouse, bats and several declining bird species such as yellowhammer, linnet and grey partridge. A low population of water vole have been identified in the eastern boundary of the EH area, south of the B195 adjacent to the A414 (SLR, 2017).



- Site boundary
- Proposed Green Corridor
- Water Vole
- The below ecological assets have been identified by the CHGC (2019)
- Badger sighting
- Great Crested Newt sighting
- Barn owl sighting
- Barn owl hunting area



## 2.14 HYDROLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

### Hydrology and Flood Risk

The site contains a network of water bodies including ditches and ponds. The site is located on higher ground, between the River Mimram to the north, and the River Lea to the south. The River Mimram flows south easterly to meet the River Lea in Hertford.

There are two primary watercourses within the site. Within the WH area of the site, Hatfield Hyde Brook (1) is located along the western boundary, and is made up of three main channels; two of which flow from the Welwyn Garden City area, and the third joining from the Holwell Hyde Brook, located within the site. The Hatfield Hyde Brook (2) is tributary of the River Lea, which is located south of the A414, approximately 400m from the site boundary. A ditch flows south-westwards from the Holwell Hyde lake which connects to the Holwell Hyde Brook.

There is one fishing lake located in the WH area of the site called Holwell Hyde, which was previously used for mineral extraction that was not in-filled. Within the southern portion of the EH area, there are several ponds and brooks adjacent to Holwell Park Wood. Several ponds are also located in both Great Captains Wood and Blackthorn Wood. The site is predominantly outside of Flood Zone 2 and 3. In the south of the WH area, Flood Zone 3 slightly encroaches into the site boundary.

### Topography

The WH area of the site slopes north from point 4, down towards River Lea in the south.

The CHGC have identified a ridge (3) from which rain-water seeps westwards to support the fens and wetland areas within The Commons LNR.



Holwell Hyde Farm Lake



Mimram River (near Panshanger Park)



Holwell Hyde Brook





- Site boundary
- Water body
- Flood zone 2
- Flood zone 3
- Contours
- Ridge with direction of water flow



## 2.15 RECREATIONAL GREEN SPACE

Whilst the majority of the site is not specifically an area for recreation, a series of pedestrian rights of way (PRoW's), footpaths, bridleways and byways provide access into the site, allowing people to enjoy walking, cycling and riding horses through it.

Moneyhole Lane Park is located to the north-west of the site and provides opportunities for formal recreation activities, including a multi-activity area, 3 youth football pitches, a tennis court and children's playground.

Holwell Hyde is a well-established angling lake, open to members only. Mill Green Golf Course is located on the south-western boundary of the site and is open to members and visitors.

The Commons Woodland is enjoyed by walkers and includes a range of habitats including oak woodland, calcareous fen, meadows, ditches and ponds.



Moneyhole Lane Park



Moneyhole Lane Park



c. Julian Paren

Panshanger Park Run



- Site boundary
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Open space
- Fishing lake
- Golf course
- Allotments
- Play area



## 2.16 VISUAL AND LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The site is located on the western residential settlement edge of Welwyn Garden City. To the north, east, and south of the site lies a combination of woodlands and open fields and parks. This rural context, together with the sites green open landscape, interspersed with woodlands, creates a strong rural character for the site.

The western portion of the WH area of land is relatively flat. The land north of the A414 slopes upwards and is visible from higher ground to the south of the River Lea.

The northern area within EH is mostly flat, with a slight undulation in the land south of Birchall wood, located within the proposed Green Corridor.



Site aerial with photograph numbers, indicating location of picture and direction of view.

### Outward



### Inward





1



2



3



3



4



5



7



8



9



## 2.17 ECOLOGICAL AND HERITAGE BUFFERS

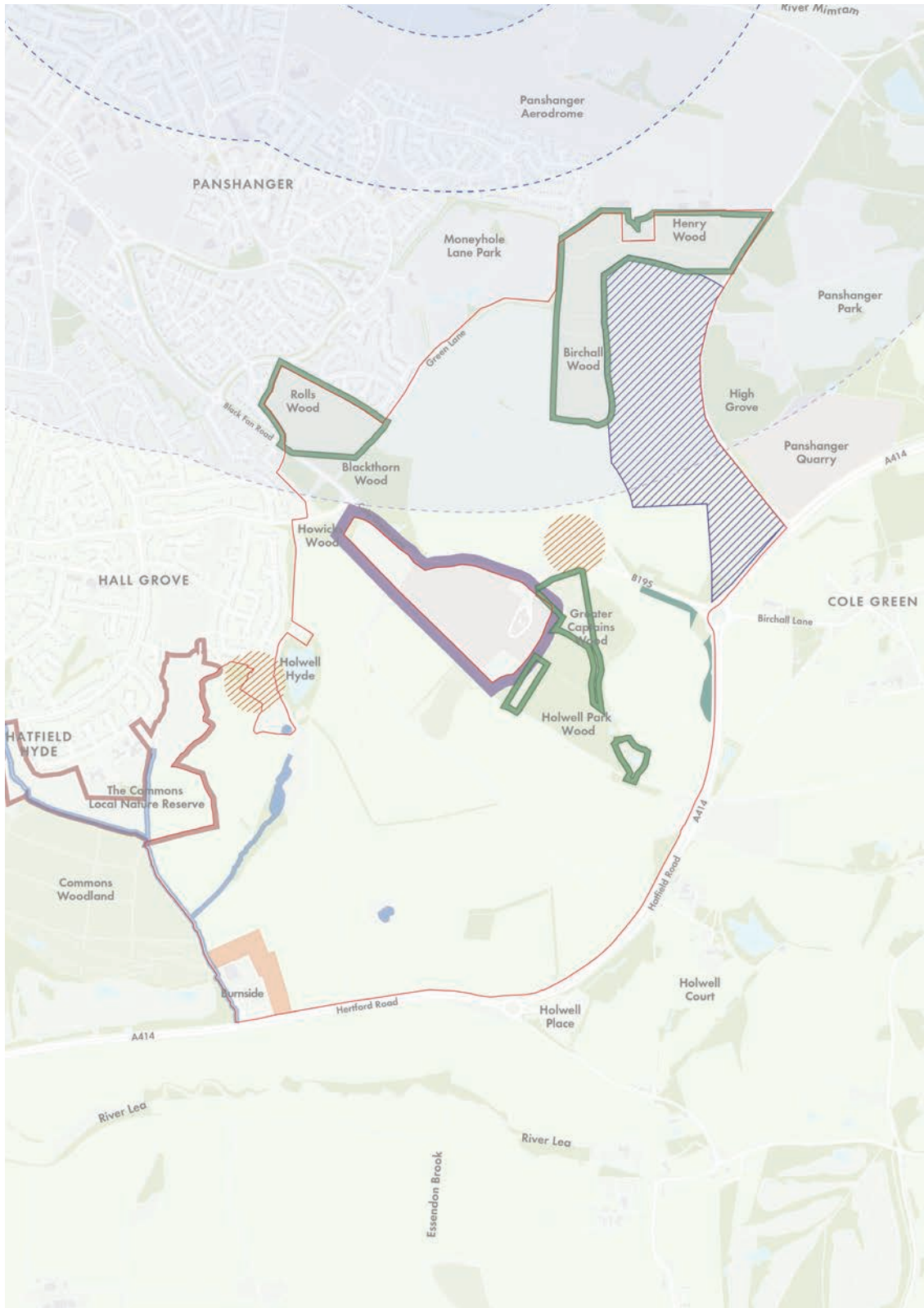
Buffer zones are used to protect sensitive areas from the impacts of development. Buffers may vary from landscaped features with planted trees or shrubs, or may be areas of land left undeveloped. The nature of the buffer zone will vary depending on the asset which it is protecting. The buffer zones identified below represent best practice.

A minimum of 8m undeveloped buffer is required along both the Hatfield Hyde and Holwell Hyde brook. There must also be sufficient maintenance access to the main rivers.

A 15m minimum buffer zone from the boundary of Ancient Woodland is required in policy to avoid root damage of the trees. Where ancient or veteran trees are present, there must be a buffer of at least 15 times larger than the diameter of the tree.

A 65m buffer zone is required around Burnside, which must include both a 5m planted bund and a 14m solid barrier. This buffer will provide visual screening and ensure that homes and other land uses are not adversely affected by noise and air pollution impacts. The buffer will also contribute in providing a visual screen to the A414, and mitigate harm to heritage assets located to the south of the site.

A buffer is also be recommended to Cole Green Lane employment area, with a 5m high planted bund. However, the longer term shift in character of this road should also be considered, should the waste site relocate and be replaced with commercial uses that do not have associated noise and dust pollution issues.



- Site boundary
- Buffer to Burnside (65m)
- Buffer to Commons LNR
- Buffer to brook (8m)
- Buffer to historic asset
- Buffer to Ancient Woodland (ASNW & PAWS) (15m)
- Buffer to Registered Park and Garden
- Buffer to road
- Buffer to Employment site
- Tewinbury SSSI IRZ

## 2.18 SITE CONDITIONS

### Ground Contamination

Much of the Green Corridor area is a former landfill site, which was decommissioned in the middle of the 20th Century. Knowledge of the contents within the landfill is not complete, although some information is known for each of the areas, which is set out in the plan to the right. A thorough assessment of ground contamination and the likely remediation requirements will be needed at the detailed planning application stage.

### Services and Utilities

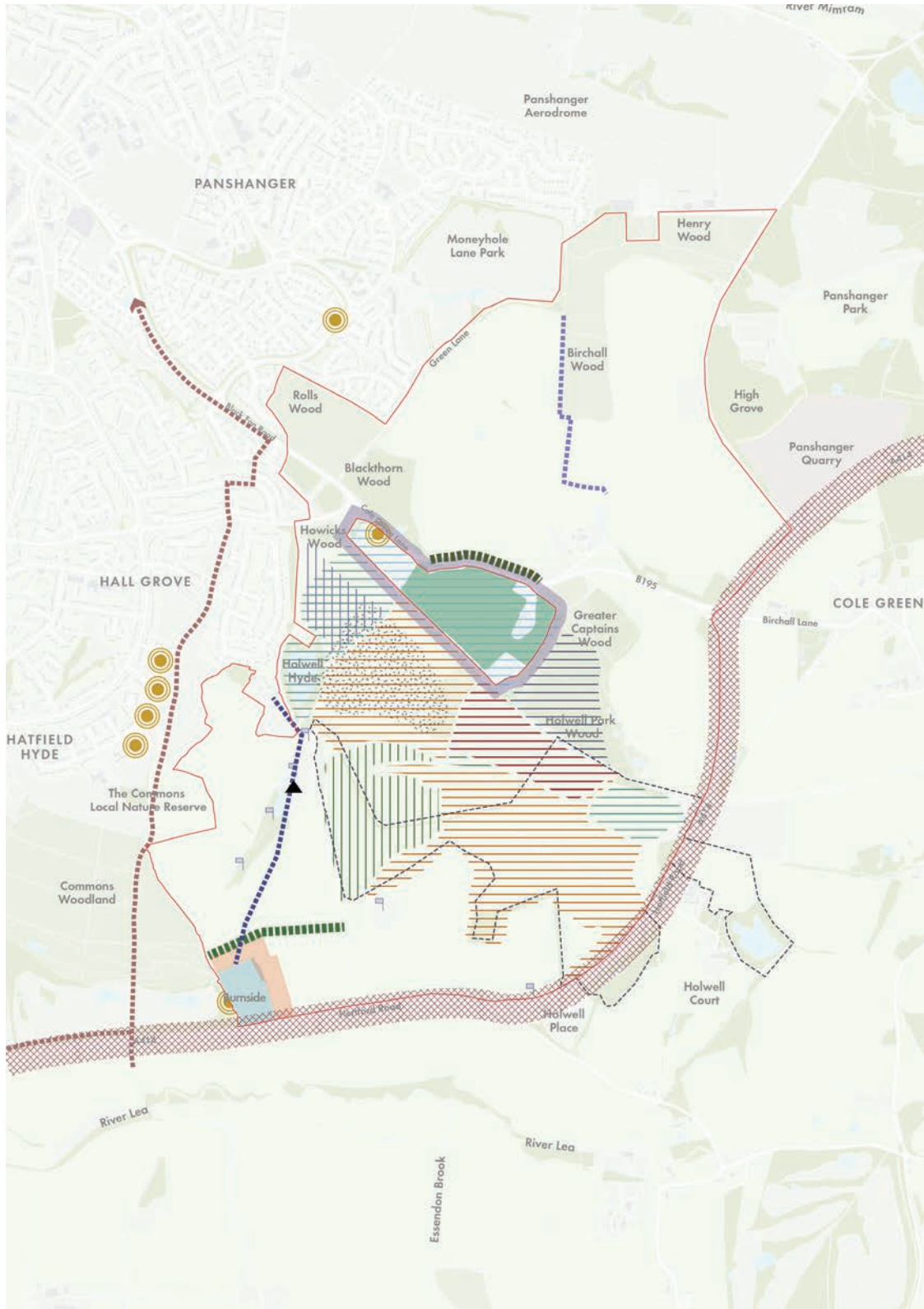
A gas pipeline has been identified, which runs to the immediate west of the masterplan area and may be a relevant concern for homes developed in the WH neighbourhood areas.

Both overhead and underground high voltage power lines have been identified within the masterplan area, with the overground lines within the WH area and the underground lines within the EH area.

### Noise and Pollutions

The two BP Mitchell waste sites at Burnside (on the A414) and Cole Green Lane are considered to be sources of noise pollution that would need to be mitigated for any new residents. For this reason, landscape buffers and bunds are suggested for each within policy. For Burnside, a 65m landscape buffer with a 5m high planted bund is recommended. A 14m solid wall facade is also required for the buildings to the north of the bund. For the Cole Green Lane waste site, a 5m planted bund is required on the north side of Cole Green Lane.













































- Ground Conditions**
- Site boundary
  - Filled Area (material unknown) (Hertfordshire County Council Act 1935)
  - Filled Area (material unknown) (Hertfordshire County Council Act 1935)
  - Hertfordshire County Council Act 1935. Includes 80m inert corridor at western boundary
  - Area filled prior to 1956 (material unknown)
  - Biodegradable waste
  - Refuse and liquid waste
  - Excavated spoil and inert rubble only
  - Putrescible waste in S.E. area. Non-putrescible waste in N.W. area, however location was previously used for putrescible waste
  - Pollution Incidents
  - Leachate breakout (identified by CHGC)
- Services and Utilities**
- Gas pipeline
  - Overhead HV
  - Underground HV
  - Pumping station
- Noise pollution**
- Noise of A414
  - Burnside industrial area
  - Cole Green industrial area
  - 65m buffer to Burnside industrial area
  - 5m Landscaped bund required at Burnside industrial area
  - Buffer to Cole Green industrial area
  - 5m landscaped bund required at Cole Green Employment Area

## 2.19 CONSTRAINTS

An in-depth analysis of the site and the surrounding area has provided an understanding of the various constraints which will influence the proposals for the site. The degree to which the different constraints affect the site varies and a sensitive approach to the site's key features must be taken. Details of each constraint can be found in the previous sections of this report.

	<b>Key</b> Site boundary		
	Contours		
	<b>Flood Risk</b>		
	Water body		
	Flood zone 2		
	Flood zone 3		
	<b>Ecological Designations</b>		
	Registered Parks and Gardens		
	Local wildlife site		
	Conservation area		
	Local Nature Reserve		
	Ancient woodland (ASNW & PAWS)		
	Proposed Green Corridor		
	Water Vole		
	Area of Blackfan Fen		
	Tree preservation order (TPO)		
	<b>The below ecological assets have been identified by the CHGC (2019)</b>		
	Badger sighting		
	Great Crested Newt sighting		
	Barn owl sighting		
	Barn owl hunting area		
	Ancient fen		
	<b>Ecological and Heritage Buffers</b>		
	Buffer to Burnside (65m)		
	Buffer to Commons LNR		
	Buffer to brook (8m)		
	Buffer to historic asset		
	Buffer to Ancient Woodland (ASNW & PAWS) (15m)		
	Buffer to Panshanger Registered Park and Garden		
	Buffer to road		
	Buffer to Employment site		
	Tewinbury SSSI IRZ		
	Mineral extraction area		
	Buffer to historic views of Hatfield House		
	<b>Heritage</b>		
	Grade II listed building		
	Area of Archaeological significance		
	Grade II* Registered Park and Garden		
	<b>Movement</b>		
	PRoW		
	National Cycleway		
	Cycle way		
	Bridleway		
	Footpath		
	Byway		
	Track		







## 2.20 OPPORTUNITIES

The site has an abundance of rich opportunities which focus on creating a vibrant and sociable community, which is highly connected through modes of sustainable active travel. Ecological opportunities to retain and enhance the existing environment should be pursued to provide biodiversity net gain and ecological enhancement. Opportunities for the site include:

### Landscape and ecology

1. Retain areas of open space and create new areas of green amenity space
2. Strengthen existing planting and/or create new tree planting for screening
3. Active management at The Commons LNR to protect and enhance scrub and fenland
4. Water courses and bodies, namely Holwell Hyde Brook, Hatfield Hyde Brook and Holwell Hyde lake, protected as key blue infrastructure
5. Open neutral grassland is retained and enhanced on former landfill site, with scattered tree planting and habitats for small mammals and reptiles
6. Woodland retained and managed at Henry Wood, with opportunities for coppicing and clearance to promote biodiversity
7. Woodland and scrub planting to enhance the woodland along the perimeter of the site adjacent to Moneyhole Lane Park
8. Landscaped buffers along Commons Wood Local Nature Reserve, protecting rural context and existing habitats
9. View point with interpretation or cultural heritage feature
10. New woodland planting
11. New planting along historic hedgerows
12. Retained open space, protecting rural context and views into/from Panshanger Park and Heritage assets to the south of the site

### Movement

13. New Vehicular connections with safe pedestrian and cycle crossing points
14. New and improved connections and wayfinding with the existing walking and cycle network, integrating the new development with surrounding communities
15. Creating new walking and cycling routes within the site, through key amenity green spaces
16. Opportunity to create safe junction for the National Cycle Route, both crossing the A414 and the B195
17. Opportunity for new public transport connection with bus stops close to homes and key destinations

### Place-making

18. New development parcels integrated into the landscape
19. Opportunity for primary schools located within the local centre with close walking distance to homes
20. Opportunity for secondary school
21. Proposed local Centres at the heart of the new communities









# Design Approach and Development Objectives

# 3.1 VISION AND APPROACH

The design approach for Birchall Garden Suburb is underpinned by nine Garden City Principles. These have been developed as a combination of the original Ebenezer Howard Garden City Principles and the TCPA Garden Community Principles (set out in section 1.8), which most reflect the desired approach for Birchall Garden Suburb.

**1**  **CLEAR IDENTITY**  
a distinctive local identity as a new garden community, including at its heart an attractive and functioning centre and public realm

**2**  **SUSTAINABLE SCALE**  
allow the community to function self-sufficiently, with the capacity for future growth

**3**  **WELL-DESIGNED PLACES**  
vibrant mixed-use communities

**4**  **STRONG LOCAL VISION AND ENGAGEMENT**  
design and execute vision with the engagement of the existing local community, and future residents and businesses to reflect and respect natural and historic environment

**5**  **INTEGRATED, FORWARD LOOKING AND ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT**  
promotion of public transport, walking, and cycling so that settlements are easy and efficient to navigate

**6**  **HEALTHY PLACES**  
choices and chances for all to live a healthy life and prioritise wellbeing

**7**  **GREEN SPACES**  
Generous, accessible, and good quality green and blue infrastructure

**8**  **LEGACY AND STEWARDSHIP**  
care for the whole community

**9**  **FUTURE PROOFED**  
resilient places that allow for changing demographics, future growth, and the impacts of climate change



## 3.2 KEY THEMES AND PRINCIPLES

Five key themes have been identified which underpin the masterplan framework for the site. These include:

- Land use: a well functioning place
- Movement: an integrated place
- Placemaking: an attractive and diverse place
- Landscape and Green Infrastructure: a landscape led approach
- Sustainability: a resilient place

The five themes create the overarching structure to explain how the masterplan has been developed. Each theme has a set of three key principles which help to guide development and growth of the site. For each principle, a series of guidance and indicators have been developed, which help to shape and inform future detailed masterplanning for the Birchall Garden Suburb area.



## 3.3 LAND USE

# a well functioning place

### Vibrant and diverse communities

1. Neighbourhood centres will co-locate shops, community uses and schools to help establish a critical mass to support these and help encourage linked trips
2. Local centres shall be located where they are visually and physically accessible to local residents, to maximise their profile and support these active uses
3. A range of homes including sizes, types, tenures and delivery models will support mixed and balanced communities and cater to different life stages and budgets.
4. A phased approach will see homes delivered close to existing local centres or for infrastructure and new local centres to be delivered early, to establish communities and encourage sustainable behaviours.
5. Gypsy and Traveller sites will have close access to schools and services, with high quality pitching facilities that meet their everyday needs.

### Safe and secure

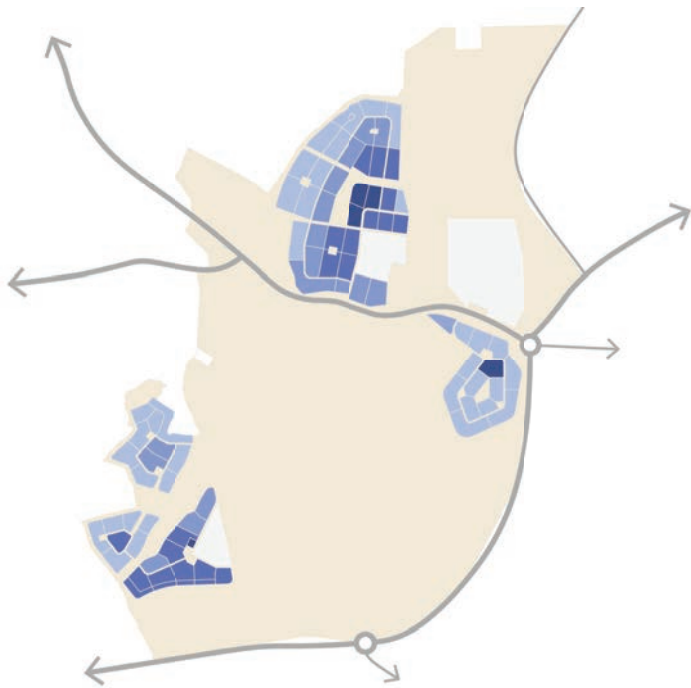
6. Overlooked community play areas will be provided in space that can also support community events
7. Public uses such as schools and community spaces will have legible and welcoming entrances and be well lit, so they feel safe and comfortable
8. Key routes to schools, community uses and local centres will be well-lit and safe
9. Thresholds between private and public spaces will be clearly defined, with all streets and open spaces fronted by front doors and windows, maximising active frontages and animating public spaces.
10. Open spaces will be fronted, to provide natural surveillance and a sense of safety
11. Parking courts without overlooking from surrounding homes will be avoided

### Supporting businesses and communities

12. Existing workspace within the areas such as at Birchall Farm, and the waste sites at Burnside and on Cole Green Lane shall be retained while this is viable
13. Design mechanisms such as landscape buffering and bunds will help to mediate between employment uses and new homes.
14. Homes will be designed to support home working and have high-speed fibre-optic cable
15. The potential to include flexible work space in the EH local centre will be explored



## Creating activity, responding to context



The local centre could include a cafe use and associated seating (example from Lincolnshire Lakes)



Shops and community spaces could support co-working space



Garden City Principles



Overlooked play areas will be provided, in spaces that can also support community events



## 3.4 MOVEMENT

# a well-connected place

### Prioritising sustainable movement

1. Any future development will be developed with the sustainable transport hierarchy in mind and in line with HCC policy LTP4.
2. Neighbourhoods will be directly served by local bus routes to and from Welwyn Garden City town centre that form a loop through BGS. These can be extensions of existing routes.
3. The Birchall Garden Suburb area will have a stop for the HERT rapid transit system in an accessible location for residents.
4. Parking provision will be carefully considered and car clubs will be explored, to encourage people to use alternatives to private cars, where possible.
5. Electric charging points will be provided for cars and bikes, at residences, on street and/or in key locations.

### Walkable and cycle-friendly neighbourhoods

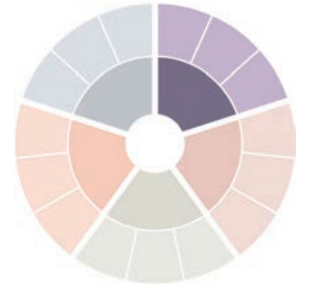
6. Good and safe pedestrian and cycle links will be provided within and between new neighbourhoods; and to/from existing neighbourhoods such as Hall Grove and Panshanger.
7. New developments will be designed to promote physical activity and active lifestyles through the built and natural environment. Walking and cycling will be prioritised, with direct routes for both and priority at signalled junctions. Key cycle routes will be segregated from vehicular traffic.

8. Local centres and schools will have ample cycle and scooter parking, and infrastructure such as cycle pumps and tools, to encourage active travel to the schools and for local journeys.
9. Homes will be designed with easily accessible cycle storage, to make it simple to use a bike for transport.
10. Improvements to strategic cycle connections will be explored with the Councils, particularly towards Welwyn Garden City train station and to Hatfield.

### A Permeable, attractive street network

11. Design proposals will take design cues from the original Garden City neighbourhoods, including the road structure and hierarchy, and relationship between roads and spaces, rather than more recent suburban neighbourhoods.
12. Streets will be integrated and permeable, with direct connections, particularly for walking and cycling, and cul-de-sacs avoided.
13. Homes and other buildings will front onto streets and reinforce a clear hierarchy and structure of connected streets.
14. Street sections will provide sufficient space for all users - walking, cycling and driving - alongside sustainable urban drainage and on-street parking where this is possible.
15. Detailed masterplanning will consider innovative parking responses that can adapt over time to provide green space, should demand fall.





## Establishing a permeable street network



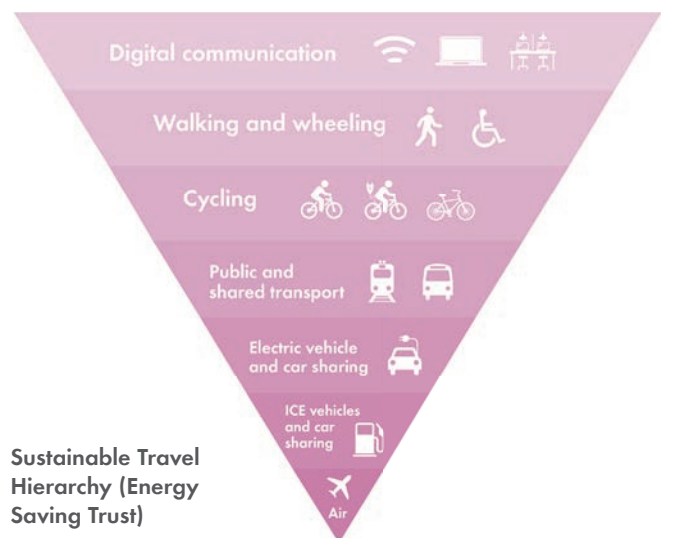
Safe, segregated cycle routes will be provided to local schools (example Cambridge)



Cycle hubs could be a good model for providing safe cycle parking and maintenance tools (examples Waltham Forest)



Garden City Principles



Sustainable Travel Hierarchy (Energy Saving Trust)

## 3.5 PLACEMAKING

# an attractive and distinctive place

### Responding to character and context

1. The form and structure of neighbourhoods, including spine roads and civic building locations will take their cue from local topography, views and landscape features, so that they sit comfortably in terms of its scale, massing and orientation.
2. The setting of local heritage buildings including Birchall Farmhouse, Stable and Barn; and Holwell Hyde Farmhouse will be preserved through buffer zones and landscape design.
3. The setting of Panshanger Park will be protected by avoiding buildings (other than the school) in land to the east of the Green Corridor in the Birchall Gardens neighbourhood.
4. Buildings will take characteristics of Welwyn Garden City as design cues, helping to inform materials, colour palette, form and structure and design proposals will demonstrate how this has been done.

### A varied mix of typologies and tenure

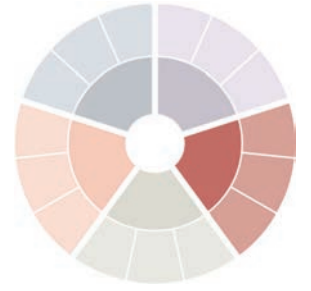
5. A tenure-blind mix of homes will be provided, including ownership occupied, private rented, affordable and social rented, and alternative housing models such as co-housing.
6. Net density levels will typically be between 30 and 60 dph with the variation in density facilitating the range in housing types that will create a mixed and balanced community.

7. Slightly higher densities will be focused at the local centre, amenities and public transport stops, to help support these uses.

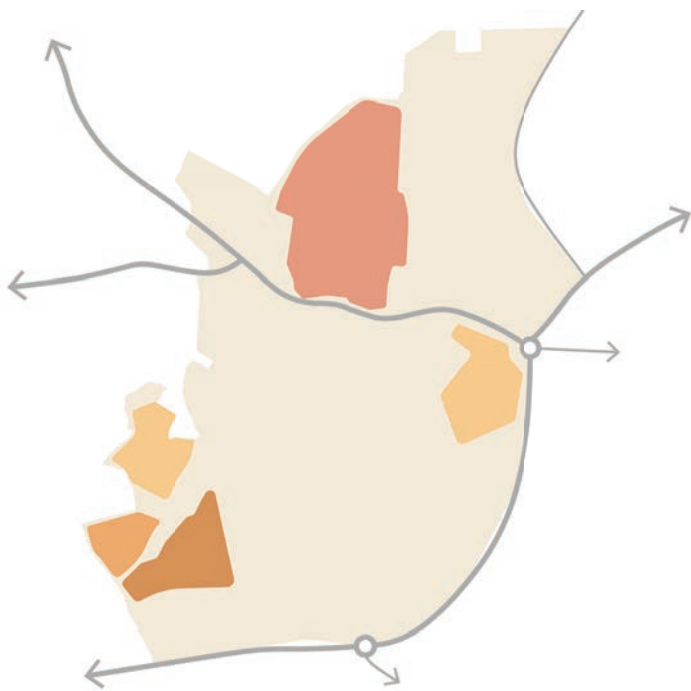
### Resilient and distinctive design

8. Birchall Garden Suburb will have a clear, overall identity and read as one cohesive place. However, within this, each neighbourhood will have a distinctive character and design ethos
9. Buildings will be designed with scope to adapt to the changing needs of occupants in years to come, with potential for example, for loft conversions or rear extensions.
10. Buildings will front onto streets and community open spaces, reflecting the approach within Welwyn Garden City's original and more recent neighbourhoods.
11. Roofscapes will be varied with terraced rooflines avoided so that the roofline is fragmented and punctuated by trees and greenery.
12. Clear delineation will be provided between public and private space through landscaping measures.
13. Detailed masterplanning will be undertaken as part of a participatory design process with local communities, to help ensure the new neighbourhoods respond to local needs and preferences.





## Distinctive neighbourhood characters



Homes will front onto green spaces to support community use and activity



Density can be slightly higher in the local centre, next to shops and services but also open space



Garden City Principles



## 3.6 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

# a landscape-led approach

### Integrated with the landscape

1. The masterplanning process will identify, protect, enhance and expand the natural systems unique to the site.
2. The existing landscape will shape new development, which will retain and respond to existing woodland, waterways at Holwell Hyde and Hatfield Hyde brooks, historic hedgerows and topography.
3. Views into and out of the neighbourhoods from the surrounding landscape will be carefully considered and inform designs.
4. The Welwyn Garden City Green Corridor will be accommodated, with a minimum width of 100m to this green infrastructure link, to allow for continuity of wildlife habitats.
5. Designs will work with natural drainage patterns and existing water features, and will be enhanced to maximise sustainable urban drainage.

### High quality public space and landscaping

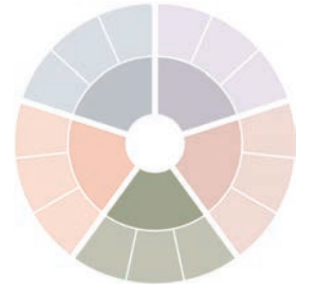
6. Each neighbourhood will have communal, public space located close to amenities such as local shops and/or a primary school.
7. Active open spaces will be multi-functional and support a variety of uses such as play, exercise and community events for residents. Particular attention will be given to designing activity spaces that are welcoming and accessible to girls.

8. A large central park will be established between the neighbourhoods with areas of community access and areas protected as wildlife habitats.
9. Streets and key routes will be important landscape corridors, as part of a green/blue infrastructure strategy.
10. Tree lined streets will provide shaded pavements, access to nature and help to screen rooflines.
11. Neighbourhood growing spaces will support the health and well-being of residents, including allotments and orchards.
12. Access points will be provided to the Green Corridor from each neighbourhood, so this can provide public amenity space.
13. Green infrastructure including planting and drainage will happen early in the development process, so it matures as places are established.

### Space for nature

14. Ancient woodland, The Commons Local Nature Reserve and wildlife rich areas within the central park will be protected and enhanced.
15. Continuity of wildlife habitats will be carefully maintained and enhanced, with barriers mitigated.
16. Existing mature trees will be retained and complemented by new tree planting of native species and to create interest throughout the year.
17. These investments will mean that the development will result in a biodiversity net gain. A strategy to achieve this will be developed at detailed masterplanning stage.





## Embedded in the natural landscape



Attenuation ponds retain run-off and remove contaminants before draining into a water course.



Allotments will play an important role in creating social and healthy places.



Garden City Principles



Sociable green spaces and play will be integrated into the neighbourhoods

## 3.7 SUSTAINABILITY

# a resilient place

### Sustainable design and construction

1. All homes should target the highest levels of energy and material efficiency - i.e. reducing operational energy and embodied carbon.
2. Buildings will be designed to encourage low carbon living.
3. Employ highly energy-efficient means of heat and power delivery, following the energy hierarchy described in Policies SADM13 & CC2.
4. All Development should assess the whole life carbon impact.
5. This development should be considered an opportunity for exploring sustainable construction methods and materials.
6. Density of housing along with co-location of services should be maximised to an appropriate level. As per policies SP1 & CC2.

### Supporting sustainable lifestyles

7. Minimising waste streams throughout the development.
8. Maximising circular waste stream possibilities; where not, maximising recycling rate.
9. Provide homes with appropriate internal and external storage for recycling and landfill waste.
10. New developments should demonstrate how lower domestic energy use, reduced utility bills and increased rates of recycling will be achieved.
11. Provide access to green spaces and biodiverse areas.
12. Create and maintain food-growth areas such as community allotments and orchards.
13. Encourage a shift to more sustainable means of transport such as cycling or walking. As per Policies SADM3 & TRA1.

### Future-proofed and resilient neighbourhoods

14. All homes should consider the impacts of climate change, including hotter weather conditions and flood risk.
15. Designs should endeavour to make all buildings highly water-efficient including rainwater harvesting and recycling of grey-water.
16. All new homes and commercial buildings shall be designed to demonstrate their adaptability for future growth and innovations in energy generation and conservation technology.
17. Minimising peak electricity loads of the development.



## Adapting to climate challenges

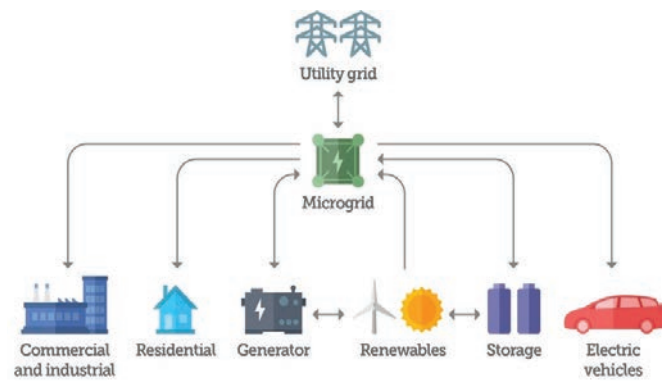
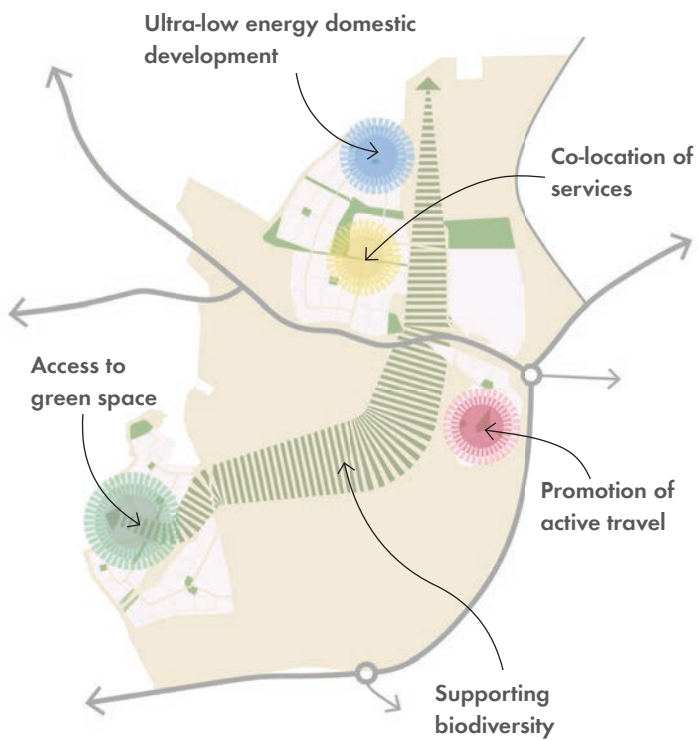


Diagram showing how a microgrid could function



SUDs incorporated into the residential landscape









# 4

## Masterplan

## 4.1 DESIGN OPTIONS



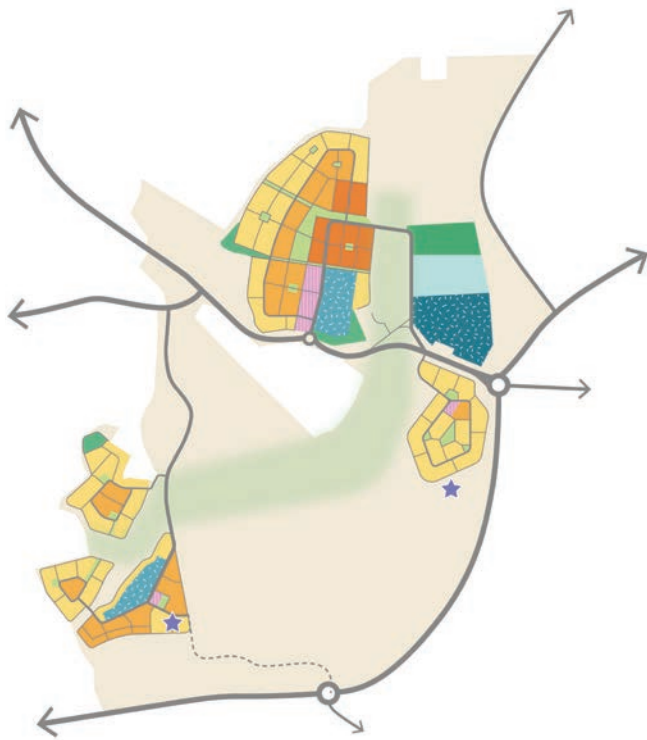
**Option 1**

Within the East Herts area, the proposed primary and secondary school are co-located in the east of the site. The local centre is located adjacent to the B195, in the south of the EH community. Within the WH area, the primary school is located within a triangular parcel, to the east of the primary spine road. In this option, the EH Gypsy and Traveller (G&T) site is proposed off a new junction along the A414 on the former waste site. However, this relies on the waste site being decommissioned and relocated to another location and remediation works being undertaken. The WH G&T site is proposed along the edge of the northern neighbourhood. Allotments are provided on the edge of neighbourhoods, alongside the green corridor and to the north of Birchall Farm in the EH area; and alongside woodland in the WH area.



**Option 2**

Within Option 2, the primary school in the East Herts area has been moved closer into the centre of the new community. The local centre remains in the south of the community, however, its orientation has changed to provide active frontage onto the proposed primary road within the neighbourhood. Given concerns about co-location of the G&T site and the household waste site in EH, this has been relocated to an area along the edge of the secondary school playing fields. The allotments within EH are tested alongside Blackthorn Wood.



### Option 3

Within Option 3, the EH primary school is tested on a north-south orientation to the east of the spine road and the local centre is moved northwards, to front the road and establish a strong relationship with the school. Allotments are provided alongside Blackthorn Woods and to the south of the school, buffering the green corridor and Birchall Farm. Community sports pitches are introduced to the north of the secondary school fields. The G&T site is tested south of Holwell Park neighbourhood, accessed either from the A414 or through the neighbourhood.

The WH primary school is tested to the west of the main spine road to be more centrally located but results in a very linear site and creates a difficult relationship with Holwell Hyde Brook and woodland. The WH G&T site is relocated away from sensitive woodland and Holwell Hyde Farm, at the south east corner of development. An emergency services access and bus route is introduced from the WH neighbourhoods to Holwell roundabout.



### Option 4

Within Option 4, the EH primary school and local centre are moved northwards, to a more central neighbourhood location based on Design Review Panel feedback. The allotments are kept in the same positions, but with their shape and size adjusted. The G&T site is relocated to a site to the western of Holwell Park, close to the entrance, to address access issues.

The WH primary school is relocated to the east of the spine road following testing of potential layout options. The WH G&T site retained in the same location, to the south of the school site.

Throughout the options, densities have been tested through overall layouts and tissue studies at street scale. These have broadly remained the same, with areas of higher density adjusting to respond to active use locations.

## 4.2 CONCEPT EVOLUTION



### 1. Retaining Existing Assets

Existing woodlands, trees and hedgerows will be retained and form the structure of the landscape for the new development. The existing brooks, Hatfield Hyde and Holwell Hyde, will be protected supporting the Commons Local Nature Reserve.



### 2. Enhancing green infrastructure and biodiversity

Existing tree belts will be strengthened forming connected green buffers, enhancing biodiversity and screening views to the new development. A parkland will form the central green open space, with a Green Corridor navigating from west to north, connecting key woodlands and nature reserves. Additional Green Corridors will be set along key desire lines and footpaths and will connect woodlands and green spaces. Two areas of retained open space will preserve long-distant views and the rural setting of surrounding heritage assets. Green buffers around the edges of the site will restrict the new development infringing on woodland and assist in screening views to neighbouring settlements.





### 3. Establishing landscape-led neighbourhoods

Development parcels are integrated into the landscape structure and will sensitively respond to the buffers, Green Corridors and heritage assets surrounding the site.



### 4. Creating permeable neighbourhoods

Existing walking and cycle paths will be retained and new routes will be introduced to develop a legible, connected and accessible network within and between the communities. Vehicular access will be provided off Birchall Lane for the EH neighbourhoods and Cole Green Lane to the WH neighbourhoods. A network of secondary and tertiary routes will provide further permeability through the site. A bus route will navigate through the neighbourhoods with bus stops at key destinations.



## 5. Social, supportive neighbourhoods

New green amenity spaces will be integrated within the neighbourhoods and connected along pedestrian and cycle routes. They will support a variety of sports, play and community activities including allotments and community orchards. The communities will be further supported with a local centre in both EH and WH which include a variety of facilities and amenities for the community. One secondary school and two primary schools will be carefully situated within accessible, safe and close walking distances to homes.



## 6. Connecting to surrounding communities and green spaces

The future development will be seamless with both the social fabric and natural landscape of the existing context. Walking and cycling routes will connect with the existing network and new access points will provide further permeability between neighbourhoods and surrounding open spaces including Panshanger Park and The Commons LNR. Improvements to junctions and key routes such as the Cole Green Way will make accessing the site safer.





## 4.3 THE MASTERPLAN

### Introduction

The Birchall Garden Suburb masterplan has been designed to establish a series of distinctive but integrated neighbourhoods that respond to the significant local landscape assets and sensitivities and sit comfortably in their setting. They will forge relationships with existing neighbourhoods rather than sit in isolation and it is intended that after a few years, it should feel as if the neighbourhoods have always been there. The new neighbourhoods will draw on the best of the Garden City ethos, and respond to this with contemporary characteristics and features.

Once developed, Birchall Garden Suburb will establish neighbourhoods and patterns of living that should last 100 years or more. For this reason, the masterplan is designed to support sustainable and healthy lifestyles and respond to the need for climate change adaptation and mitigation. The masterplan has been designed to avoid embedding 20th century models of living that may fail to adapt or be inappropriate to respond to the climate and environmental challenges of the 21st and 22nd Centuries.

Over the following pages, a series of masterplan strategies are provided according to the themes identified for the projects:

- A well-functioning place, which covers land-uses and activities
- A well-connected place, which covers active travel, public transport and vehicular access
- An attractive and distinctive place, which covers the approach to densities, typologies, layout and building design
- A landscape-led approach, which covers green infrastructure of all types and biodiversity
- A resilient place, which covers the approach to sustainability

For each of these sections, masterplan diagrams are provided which indicate the suggested approach for the masterplan, though are not intended to be prescriptive. Each section also includes 'Key characteristics and guidance', which any future detailed masterplanning should respond to.

Following this, the various neighbourhoods are introduced, with information on the nature and character of each.





BIRCHALL  
GARDENS

HOLWELL PARK

HOLWELL  
GREEN

COMMONS  
WOOD

HATFIELD  
DOWNS



## 4.4 LAND USE STRATEGY

### Overview

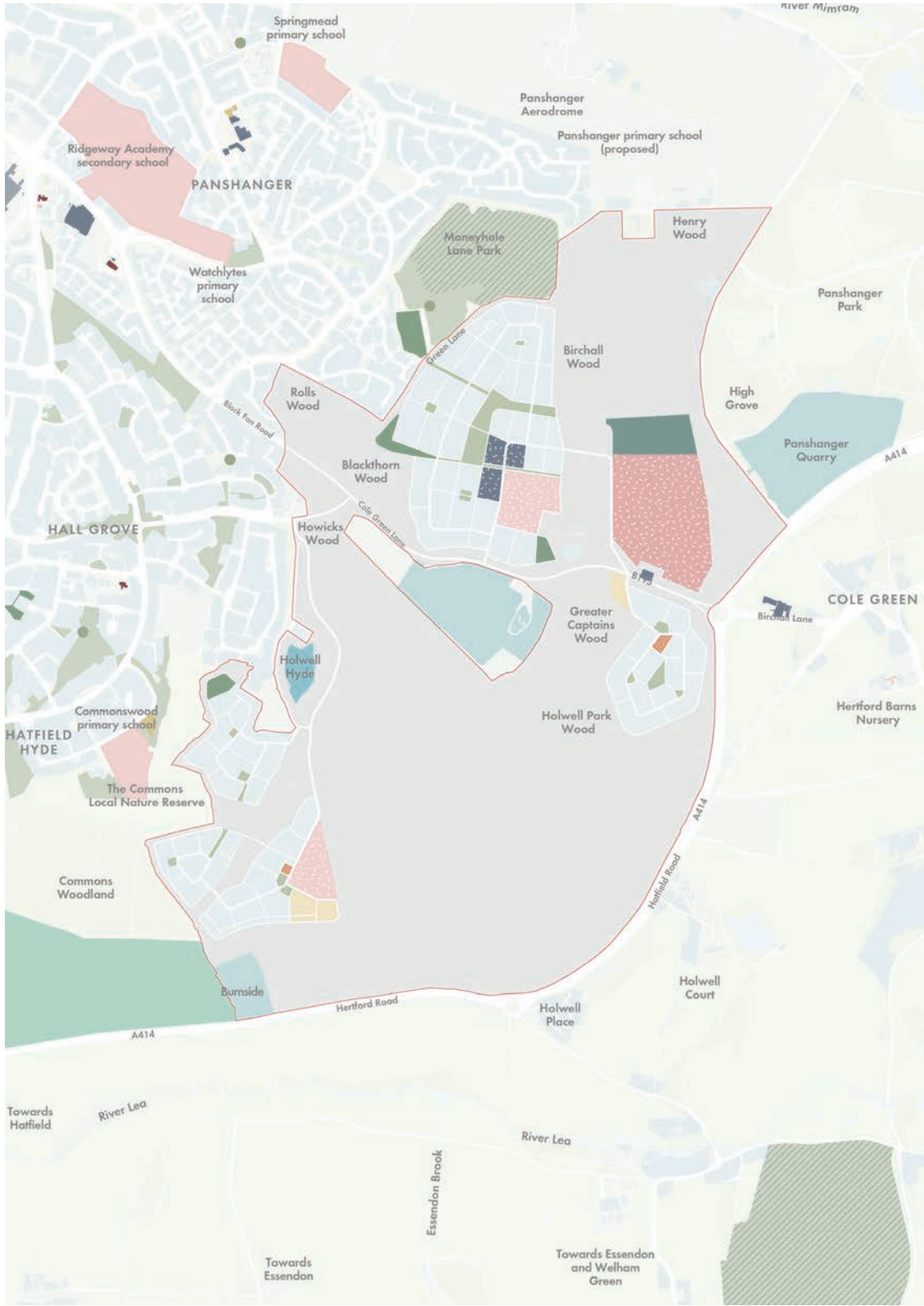
The masterplan has been developed to establish sociable and self-sufficient neighbourhoods, with local shops, community uses and amenities positioned in an accessible location for residents and co-located to provide a critical mass for these uses and encourage linked trips.

### Key characteristics and guidance

1. A local centre within the large East Herts neighbourhood (Birchall Gardens) should be centrally located and be closely related to both the primary school and community open space.
2. Community uses, including community space and a children's centre, should be provided in the larger of the Welwyn Hatfield neighbourhoods, and this should be located close to the primary school.
3. A small local shop or community use, such as a nursery, should be explored for the Holwell Park small neighbourhood within the East Herts area. This should be located in a central, visible location and relate to open space.
4. A visible employment site should be established on Cole Green Lane, should the relocation of the waste site from this location become viable. Careful thought should be given to the landscape treatment along Birchall Lane, to successfully accommodate this shift, should it happen at a later date.
5. The local centre should come forward in an early phase of the detailed masterplan delivery, to support new residents.



Recently developed community centres at Fulham and Nunhead



- Site boundary
- Proposed local centre
- Proposed amenities
- Proposed primary school
- Proposed secondary school
- Proposed gypsy and traveller homes
- Proposed green amenity spaces
- Proposed allotments
- Proposed community sports pitches
- Residential
- Industrial employment
- Retail/employment
- Restaurants/cafe/pubs
- Business park
- Education (schools & Nursery)
- Places of worship
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Open space
- Fishing lake
- Golf course
- Allotments
- Play area



## Local Centres and amenities

During the first phase of development, the local centre and community uses may not yet be delivered and the nearby local centres at Panshanger and Hall Grove will, therefore, be important in meeting the everyday needs of new residents. As new facilities are delivered, local amenities will be within easy access of residents in all of the neighbourhoods, with good links between the villages and, particularly, to the Birchall Gardens neighbourhood local centre.

### Key characteristics and guidance

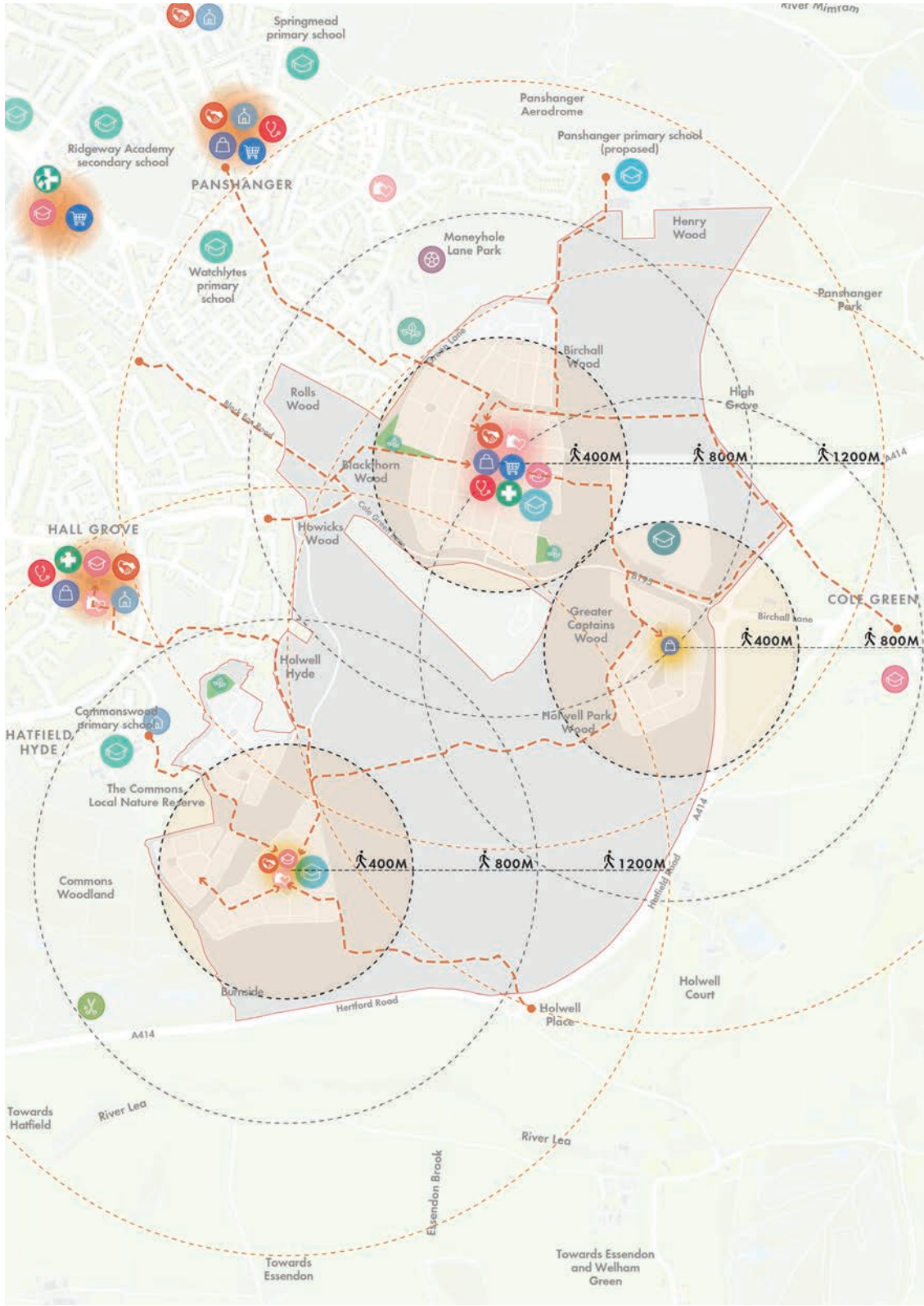
1. The local centre within the EH Birchall Gardens neighbourhood should include shops and a grocery store, healthcare facilities, a children's centre, community space and the potential for small, flexible employment space. The centre should be highly accessible by walking and cycling and broadly within 5 minutes walk (400-500m) from homes within the Birchall Gardens neighbourhood.
2. The community space and children's centre within the Hatfield Downs WH neighbourhood could be combined within one building, providing that there is no conflict between the operational requirements of both. This should be explored at the detailed masterplanning stage.
3. Safe and comfortable walking and cycling routes should be provided to the local centre and community spaces to encourage people to walk or cycle to these rather than take private car, with associated health, wellbeing, air quality and sustainability benefits. Suggested key connections to these are identified on the plan.

4. The masterplan identifies key routes to access existing local centres in Panshanger and Hall Grove for the period before these services are delivered within BGS. Detailed masterplans should also identify these routes and investment needed to make these safe and comfortable connections to surrounding amenities.



Barnsbury community centre and a cafe at Poundbury in Dorset





- Site boundary
- Proposed local centre
- Proposed amenities
- 🎓 Proposed primary school
- 🎓 Proposed secondary school
- Key routes to local centres
- 🎓 School
- 👶 Nursery
- ⛪ Church
- 🏠 Community Centre
- 🏥 Medical Centre
- 🌿 Allotments
- ⚽ Football pitch
- 🏌️ Golf course
- 🏠 Care Home
- 🏥 Pharmacy
- 🛒 Local shop
- 🛒 Supermarket
- 🏥 Veterinary Hospital
- 📍 Local Central
- 400m isochrone
- 800m isochrone
- 1200m isochrone (15 minute walking)

## Education

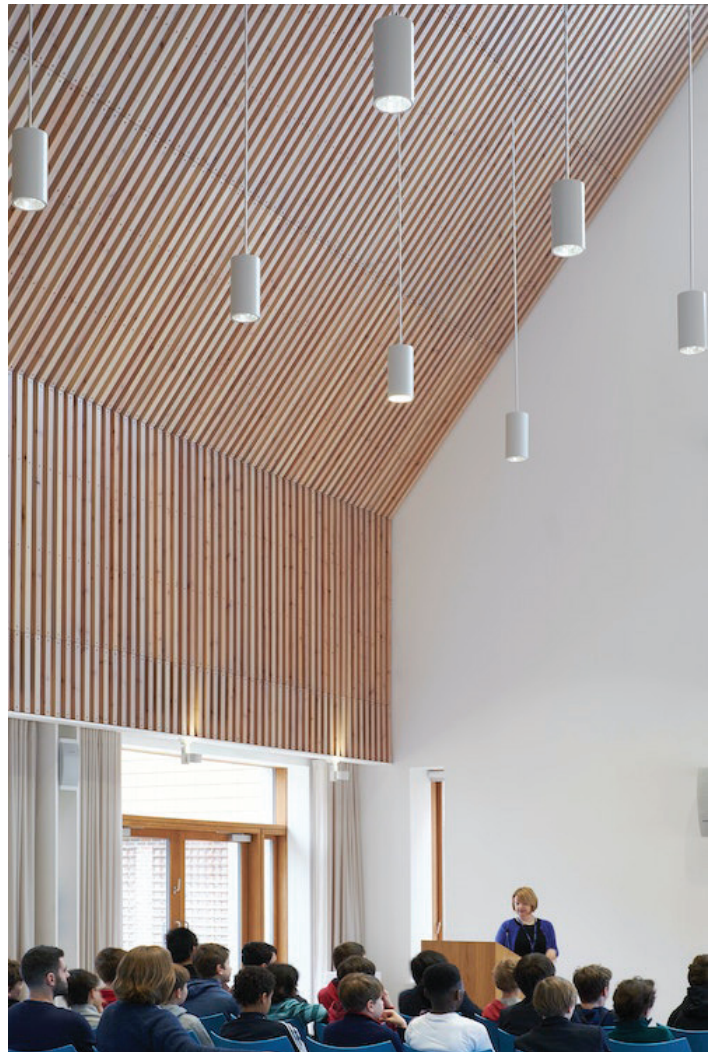
A 3-form entry primary school with early years provision and an 8-form entry secondary school will be provided within the EH Birchall Gardens neighbourhood. A two-form entry primary school will be provided within the WH Hatfield Downs neighbourhood.

### Key characteristics and guidance

1. The EH primary school should be located in a central neighbourhood position so that it is within a 5 minute walk (400-500m) from most of the homes with the Birchall Gardens neighbourhood and within ideally a 10 minute walk (800m) of all new homes within EH. It should be close to the local centre.
2. The WH primary school should be located within the eastern Hatfield Downs neighbourhood and co-located with the community uses.
3. The EH secondary school should be located to the east of the Green Corridor, providing a buffer to Panshanger Park and protecting the setting of the historic park. The school building should be on the southern portion of the site, south of the ancient hedgerow
4. Safe and attractive cycling routes should be provided to the primary and secondary schools to encourage parents and then pupils to walk or cycle to school rather than take private car, with associated health, wellbeing, air quality and sustainability benefits. These key routes should be lit so that they are safe for children to use during winter months when it gets dark at 3pm.

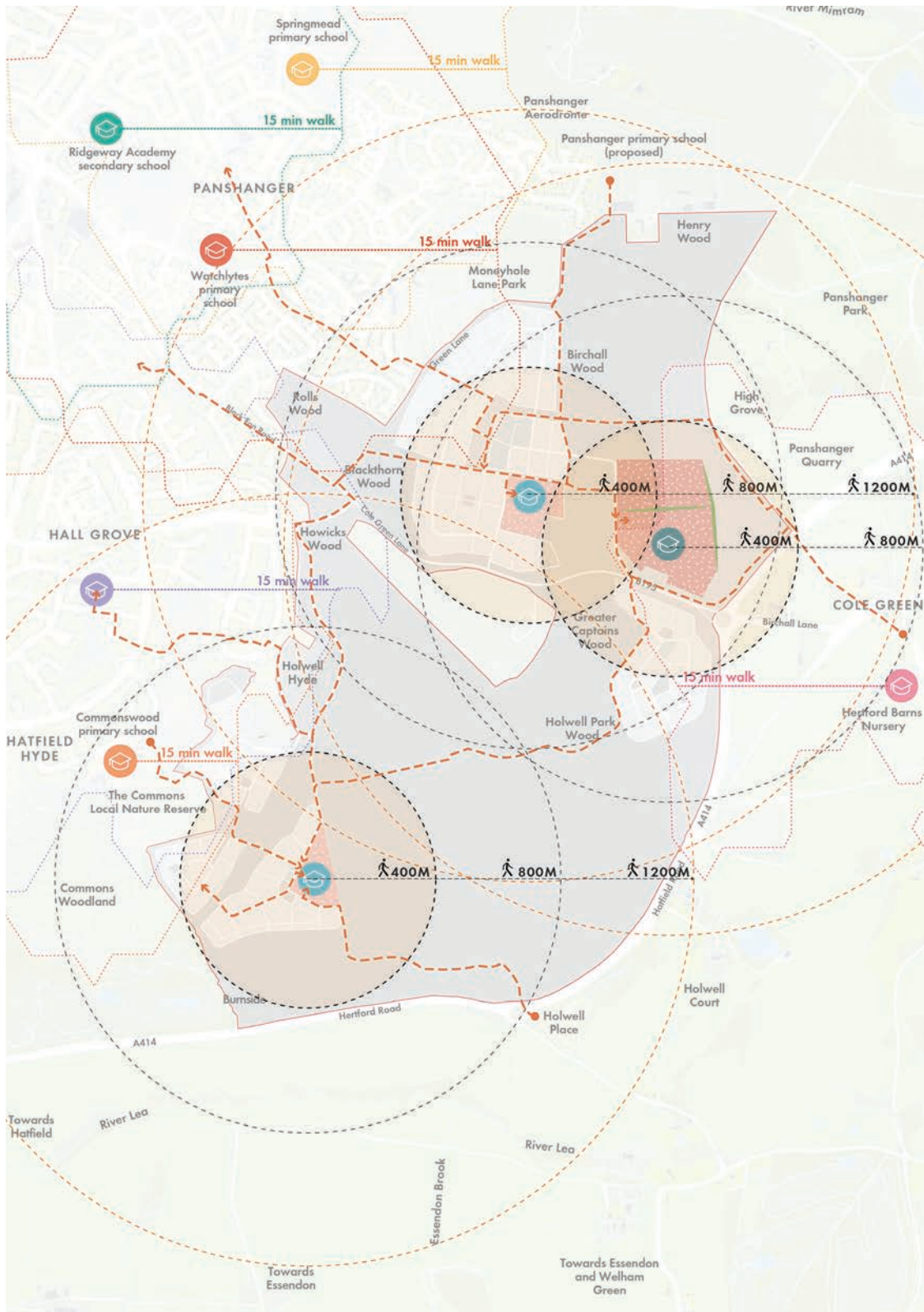


Recently developed Kings College school in Wimbledon (Allies and Morrison architects)



Recently developed Kings College school in Wimbledon (Allies and Morrison architects)





- Site boundary
- Ⓜ Proposed secondary school
- Ⓜ Proposed primary school
- Retained and enhanced hedgerow
- - - Key walking routes to proposed schools
- Ⓜ Springmead School
- Ⓜ 15 minutes walk
- Ⓜ Ridgeway Academy
- Ⓜ 15 minute walk
- Ⓜ Watchlytes School
- Ⓜ 15 minute walk
- Ⓜ Hall Grove School
- Ⓜ 15 minute walk
- Ⓜ Commonswood School
- Ⓜ 15 minute walk
- Ⓜ Munns Farm Day Nursery
- Ⓜ 15 minute walk
- Ⓜ 400m isochrone
- Ⓜ 800m isochrone
- Ⓜ 1200m isochrone (15 minute walking)

## EH Primary school and local centre location

The EH primary school location has been shifted from the local authority policy diagram (co-located with the secondary school to the east of the Green Corridor) to a central location within the Birchall Gardens neighbourhood. This is based on research and analysis on encouraging walking and cycling to the primary school and feedback from the Hertfordshire Design Review Panel. It also helps to support a movement approach informed by the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy (see Movement principles section) and aligns with HCC's Local Transport Plan (LTP4).

The benefits of walking or cycling to school are now widely accepted. The Living Streets 2018 report summarises the following positive impacts:

- Improved physical and mental health and wellbeing for pupils, which is an increasing national priority
- Road safety and social skills, and levels of independence for pupils
- Improved air quality for all as a result of fewer vehicles on the roads
- Associated reduced peak time congestion
- Safer streets for the community
- Pupils arrive at school ready to learn

The key barriers identified for students walking to school are the distance and the associated time it takes to make the journey. This is followed by the comfort and safety of the walking or cycling route.

Research has been undertaken by the University of Granada into the thresholds at which distances to school become too far and prompt car journeys rather than

walking or cycling. These were identified on average as 875m in urban areas (c.11 minutes) and 675m in rural areas (c. 7 minutes) for 7-18 year olds. For younger children of 5-10 years old, a shorter distance of 400-500m will likely be the threshold that prompts car journeys rather than active travel.

This suggests that relocating the primary school will bring many health and wellbeing benefits for the community and establish neighbourhoods that can adapt to the environmental priorities and changing lifestyles of the 21st Century.

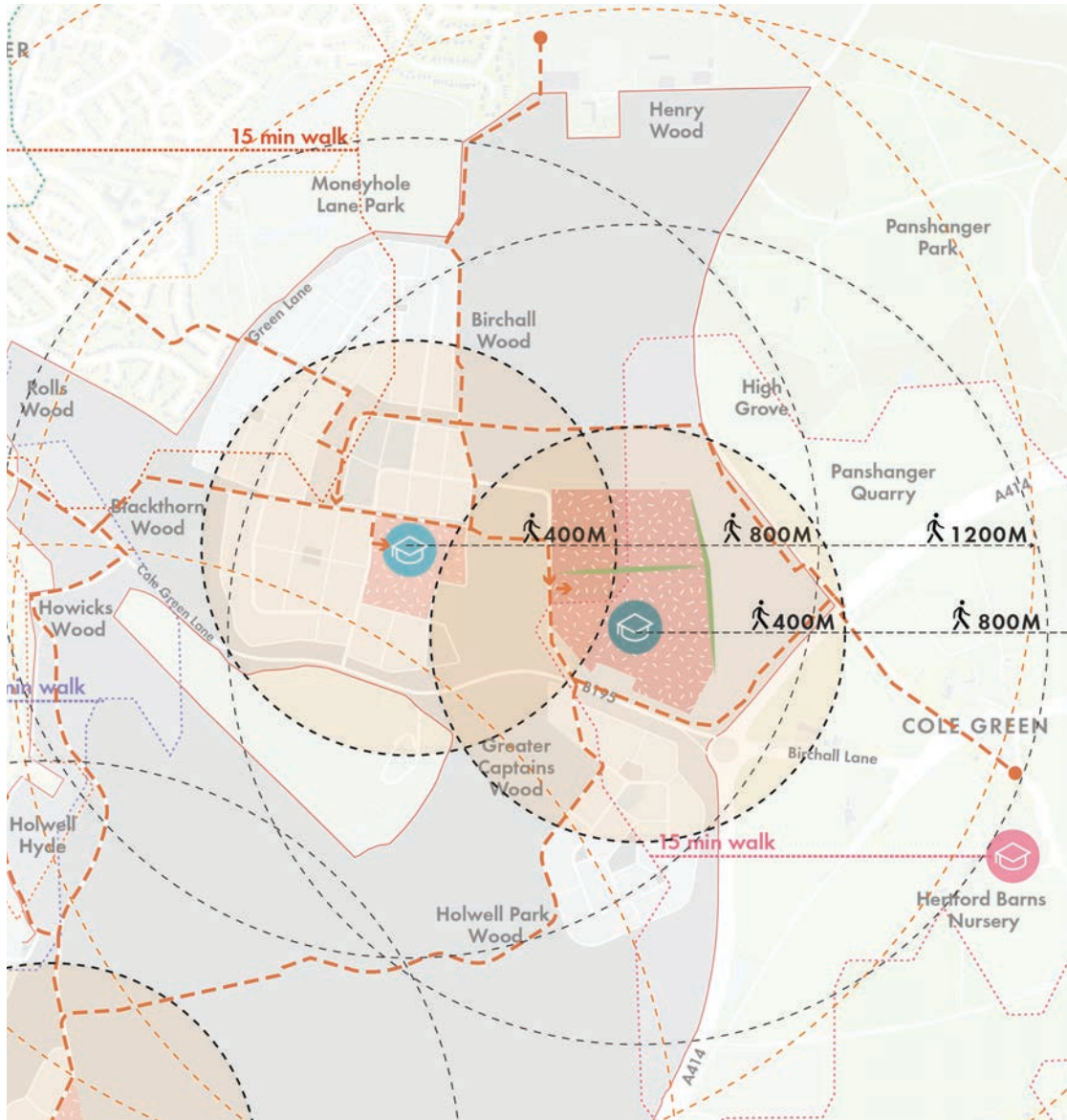
The local centre has similarly shifted northwards to the centre of the Birchall Gardens neighbourhood, remaining on the primary spine route and activating this with commercial and community frontage. This will similarly encourage residents to walk or cycle to shops and services and give a 'heart' to the community. Co-locating the local centre and primary school in a central neighbourhood location will additionally encourage meaningful community interaction and help to support local shops through linked trips. This has been chosen as the priority over visibility of the local centre from the B195, which would be challenging to achieve if a bund and landscape buffer is required between the road and the local centre to buffer the Cole Green Lane employment site to the south.

The masterplan locations of the primary school and local centre represent the Council's preferred position. However, it is expected that this will be further explored at the application stage. See the masterplan evolution pages for more information on the options testing for this.

**80% BOYS**  
**72% GIRLS**  
**ARE PHYSICALLY**  
**INACTIVE**

**30%**  
**CHILDREN ARE**  
**OVERWEIGHT**  
**OR OBESE**





- Site boundary
- Proposed secondary school
- Proposed primary school
- Retained and enhanced hedgerow
- Key walking routes to proposed schools
- 400m isochrone
- 800m isochrone
- 1200m isochrone (15 minute walking)

**15%**  
CHILDREN SHOW SYMPTOMS OF MENTAL ILL-HEALTH

**60%**  
PARENTS CONCERNED ABOUT TRAFFIC SPEEDS

**30%**  
PARENTS CONCERNED ABOUT TRAFFIC OVERCROWDING

Data from Living Street 2018 report Swap the School Run for a School Walk

## 4.5 MOVEMENT STRATEGY

### Active travel

Birchall Garden Suburb will be designed to be well-integrated with existing adjacent neighbourhoods (which previous periods of growth in Welwyn Garden City have failed to do). The urban structure and layout will encourage healthy and sustainable lifestyles through active travel.

### Key characteristics and guidance

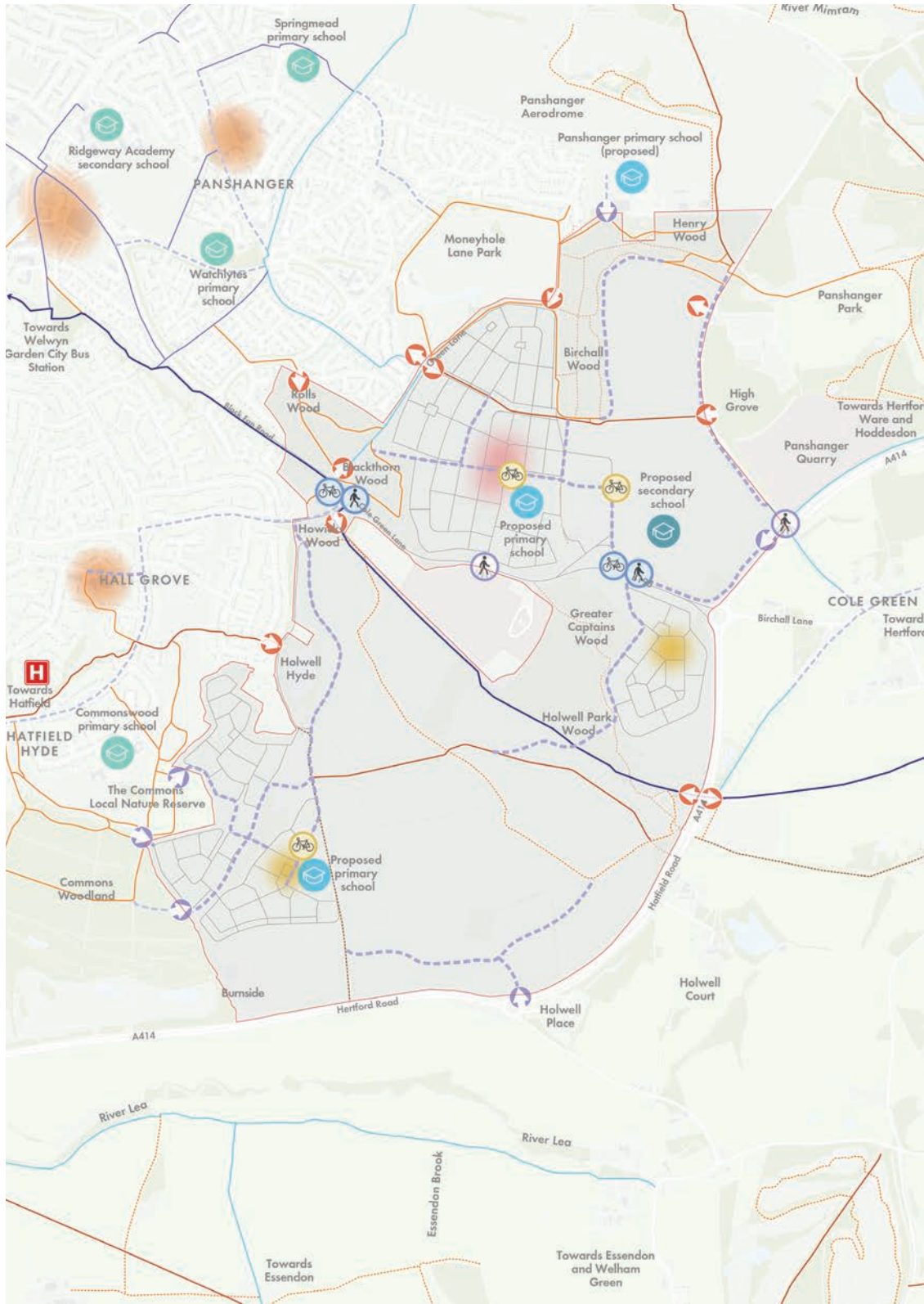
Priorities for new or improved connections as part of the masterplan have been identified as:

1. Direct, segregated and prioritised walking and cycling links at the junction of Cole Green Lane/ Black Fan Road and on Birchall Lane by the secondary school site and Holwell Park EH neighbourhood.
2. A pedestrian crossing at the main vehicular access point to Birchall Gardens, connecting from the footpath by the entrance to the waste site.
3. Improved signage and junction management at the 'fiveways' junction that is already a busy walking and cycling route and will connect Birchall Gardens with the Panshanger neighbourhood.
4. Cycle hubs or similar infrastructure with parking and maintenance tools at the local centre, EH secondary school and WH primary school / community centre.
5. Improvement to the rights of way network for new routes and to accommodate the increased use, particularly between the WH neighbourhoods and Commonswood / Hall Grove.
6. A potential cycle route is identified to Hatfield station within the green infrastructure plan on page 120. This route should be enhanced through public realm investment as funding becomes available.
7. Enhancement of the Cole Green way to provide a safe and attractive route to key destinations within and beyond the site. Particular focus at the underpass beneath the A414 to provide a usable route year-round.
8. Coordination with the pedestrian link to/from the forthcoming Panshanger Airfield neighbourhood.
9. A high quality, safe connection across the A414 between Cole Green and Panshanger Lane, to overcome issues of poor rural connectivity and enable nearby village residents to access the amenities of the BGS area. This should be grade separated.
10. Pedestrian access and enhanced bus stop provision in the area of Holwell Roundabout.
11. A signage strategy across the BGS area, to ensure routes to the local centre, schools, community uses and local assets such as Panshanger Park are clear.
12. Connections to the LCWIP network, which should be constructed and funded by the site developer.



Walking and cycling routes such as the Cole Green Way and local signage should be improved





- Site boundary
- Proposed non-motorised access point
- Proposed pedestrian crossing
- Proposed pedestrian and cycle crossing
- Proposed cycle hub
- Proposed pedestrian and cycle route
- Proposed primary school
- Proposed secondary school
- Proposed local centre
- Proposed amenities
- Existing Non-motorised access point
- Existing PRoW
- Existing National Cycleway
- Existing Cycleway
- Existing Bridleway
- Existing Footpath
- Existing Byway
- Existing Track
- Existing non-strategic walking route
- Existing local centre
- Existing hospital
- Existing schools

## Public transport

Providing viable public transport options that represent a preferred alternative to private cars will be central to supporting a modal-shift amongst new residents. This will need to be well-integrated with the cycle network to support multi-mode sustainable trips where possible.

### Key characteristics and guidance

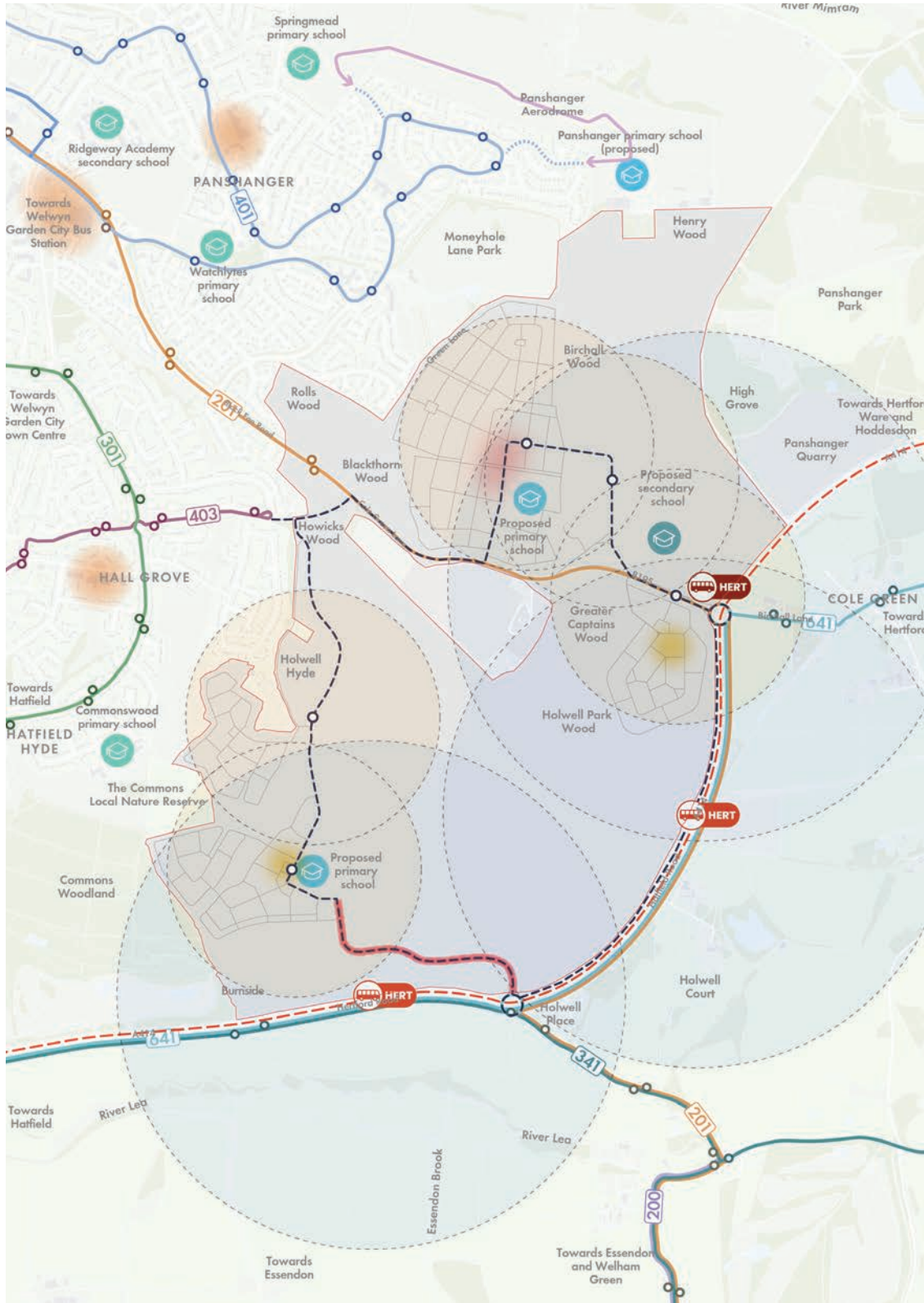
1. Local bus stops should be provided at regular intervals in the larger neighbourhoods and should be located close to the local centre and to schools and amenities. These could form an extension to, ideally, both of the 403 and 201 existing bus routes.
2. Bus stops should be within an approximately five minute walk (400m) of all new homes within the Birchall Garden Suburb community.
3. Direct and comfortable walking routes should be provided for Birchall Gardens residents to pick up the 401 bus route; and for WH neighbourhood residents to access the 301 bus route.
4. A bus and emergency service access only road will need to be included between the Hatfield Downs WH neighbourhood and Holwell roundabout. This will support a bus loop that can circle the neighbourhoods before returning to Welwyn Garden City town centre.
5. A minimum of one stop for the HERT should be provided at a point that is well-integrated with the proposed A414 route and within a 10 minute walk (800m) of as many homes as possible. Proximity to key uses such as the secondary school should also

be considered, along with interchange with local bus services. Suggested indicative locations are shown on the masterplan, but these should be tested and refined during the detailed masterplan process.



The Cambridge and Donegal rapid bus transit systems





- Site boundary
- Proposed bus route
- Proposed bus stops
- 400m walking distance from bus stops
- Proposed HERT route
- Proposed HERT stops
- Preferred proposed HERT stop
- 800m walking distance from HERT stops
- Proposed emergency access/bus route
- Proposed Panshanger route
- Potential proposed extension of bus route 401
- 401 Bus route
- 201 Bus route
- 403 Bus route
- 641 Bus route
- 341 Bus route
- 200 Bus route
- 301 Bus route
- Existing schools
- Proposed primary school
- Proposed secondary school
- Proposed local centre
- Proposed amenities
- Existing local centre

## Vehicular movement

A clear hierarchy of streets is proposed within the masterplan area, to aid legibility and to create a natural sorting of travel modes, with a vehicular focus to spine streets and a walking and cycling focus to residential streets.

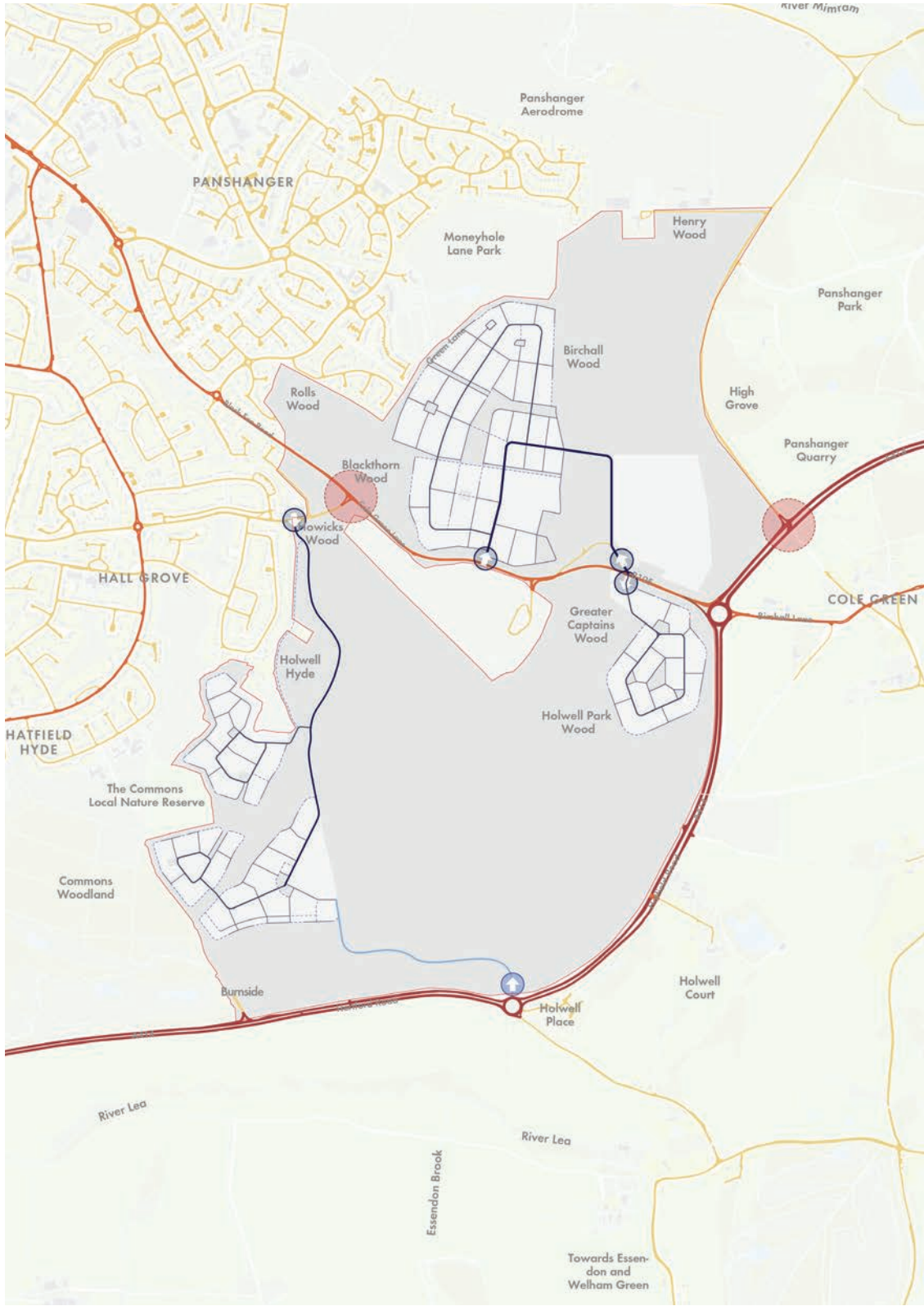
### Key characteristics and guidance

1. A clear spine road loop should be provided to the EH Birchall Gardens neighbourhood, which will run past the local centre. This could run past the primary school and secondary schools. At its northern point, it should be pulled back from the Birchall Wood ancient woodland.
2. A clear spine road should be provided from Cole Green Lane to the WH neighbourhoods, which will run to the east of Holwell Hyde angling pond.
3. Each neighbourhood should have a secondary loop serving the core residential streets. These lightly trafficked streets will feed into the main movement corridor and have local streets emanating from them. Modal filters should be used to retain the street form whilst removing unwanted vehicle movement.
4. As set out in the principles, the roads should follow Welwyn Garden City's traditional character, with set pieces and long, framed views, where possible
5. An emergency services access route should be provided between the WH Hatfield Downs neighbourhood and Holwell roundabout on the A414. This will need to have a solid sub-structure to support 12 tonnes emergency service vehicles (and buses). However, the route need not be lit, or could have low level lighting to limit impacts on biodiversity and strategic views. The design of this route will need to be given careful thought at the detailed masterplan stage, including surfacing options, so that it can have minimal impact on strategic views. Designs should not preclude the route from becoming a general access route for all vehicles at some point in the future
6. Improvements will be needed to the Cole Green Lane/ Black Fan Road junction and new junctions will be required on Birchall Lane at the primary entrance point to the EH Birchall Gardens neighbourhood and at the entrance point to the EH Holwell Park neighbourhood (on the south side of the road). (see the pages on the B195 for further information).
7. Careful consideration will be needed for the new junction created by the current access point to Holwell Hyde Lane. This will need to accommodate far greater levels of traffic; avoid conflict with movements to/from Holwell Hyde residential street; and accommodate an important cycle route between the WH neighbourhoods and to Black Fan Road and towards Moneyhole Lane Park area (see the pages on the B195 for further information).
8. Access and impacts to the A414 will require detailed understanding and suitable mitigation measures, likely at Holwell roundabout and Birchall Lane Roundabout.



The Cambridge Busway is an examples of a solid sub-structure road that can read as a 'lane'.





- Site boundary
- A road
- B road
- Neighbourhood road
- Proposed vehicular access point
- Proposed emergency access and bus access
- Proposed emergency access route
- Proposed primary road
- Proposed secondary road
- Proposed tertiary route
- Proposed tertiary route (local access only)
- Proposed junction improvements

## Role and character of the B195

The character of the B195 will play an important role in establishing successful neighbourhoods at Birchall Garden Suburb. It has the potential to be a significant active travel and psychological barrier between the neighbourhoods to the north and south and will require careful design to ensure this can be overcome.

The road will form the entrance to both Birchall Garden Suburb and to Welwyn Garden City. In the short-medium term the road will continue to read as a 'lane', with trees on both sides and a landscape bund to the north, designed to mitigate noise pollution from the waste site.

However, in the medium-long term, with the possible relocation of the waste site, the road has the potential to shift in character to a 'street'. A visible employment site can be established on the south side of the road with active frontages to the road. At this point, it may be possible to review the role of the landscape bund (see the landscape and green infrastructure section for further information) and remove this to create a visual connection with the Birchall Gardens neighbourhood.

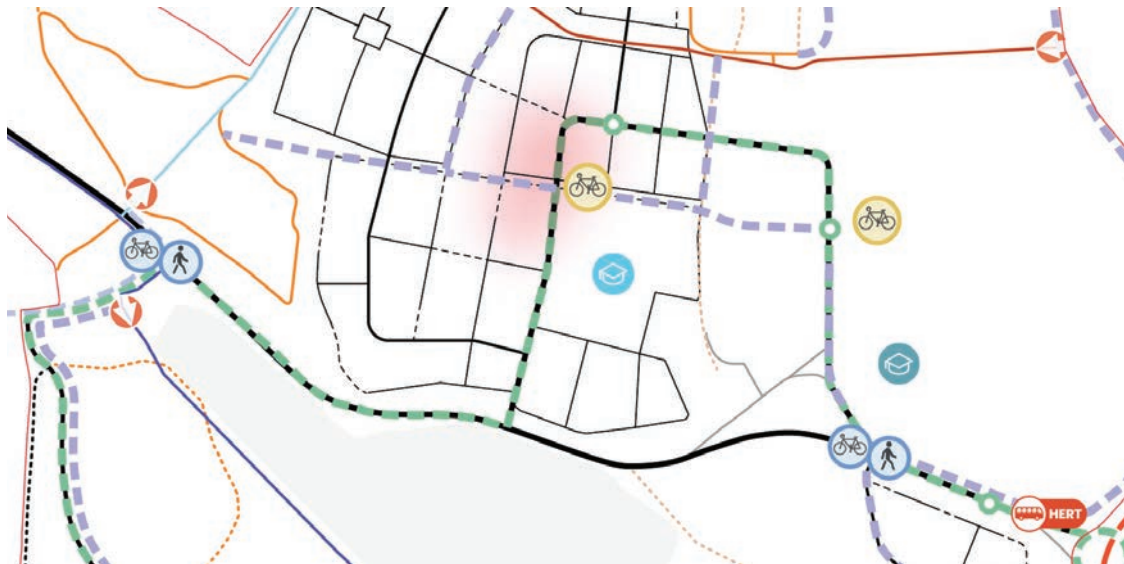


**Birchall Lane is currently framed by trees on two sides and this will remain in the short-medium term**

## Key characteristics and guidance:

1. Pedestrians and cyclists should have direct and prioritised access at signalled junctions along the road, to facilitate easy access to the schools and local centre and to avoid the Holwell Park neighbourhood from being isolated. Roundabouts are not considered appropriate to deliver these characteristics.
2. HCC's emerging strategy has a 'place and movement' strategy. Within this, the B195 corridor will move from a purely movement function to a place function. The design of the road should take account of this future change in role and associated character and avoid designs that do not support a future 'place' function of the street. Designs should help remove severance and support Birchall Lane as an attractive corridor for the new community.
3. Working with HCC and the Police, the speed limit on the road should be lowered, for example to 40 mph in the short term, and to 30 mph in the longer term, as potential future active frontage change the designated role of the road.
4. An indicative layout is provided for the Cole Green Lane/Blackfan Road junction, to demonstrate how the competing requirements of walking, cycling and vehicular movements could be accommodated. This will be an important movement node for all modes and so should be carefully considered. This layout should be tested and worked up at detailed masterplan stage, along with consideration and balance of different transport modes at the new junctions on the B195.

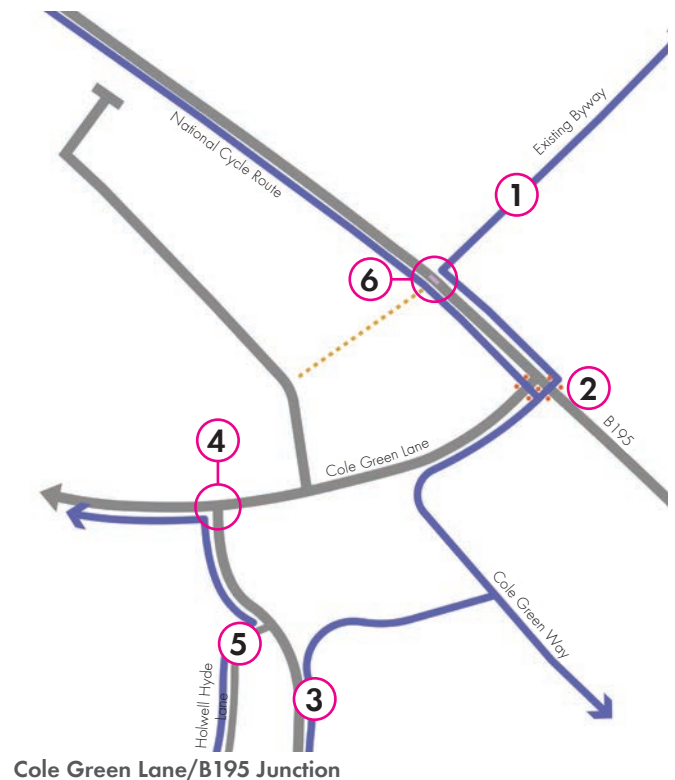




- Primary vehicular road
- Secondary vehicular road
- Tertiary vehicular road
- - - Tertiary vehicular road (local access only)
- - - Proposed Bus route
- Existing non-motorised access point
- Existing PRow
- Existing footpath
- - - Existing non-strategic walking route
- - - Existing track
- Existing cycle route
- - - Proposed footpath and cycleway
- ⚡ Proposed pedestrian crossing
- ⚡ Proposed pedestrian/cycle crossing
- ⚡ Proposed cycle hub
- Proposed Local centre
- ⚡ Proposed secondary school
- ⚡ Proposed primary school

**Plan of the proposed vehicular, public transport, and active travel routes**

1. Existing byway as primary point of access for pedestrians and cyclists to the Birchall Gardens neighbourhood area. Opportunities to upgrade and improve the byway should be explored.
2. The Cole Green Way cycle route could be diverted to a junction where cyclists and pedestrian can either cross west to the National Cycle Route 61 or north toward to existing byway.
3. Proposed two-way cycle route along proposed primary vehicular route.
4. Proposed access point utilising existing Holwell Hyde Lane access point.
5. Holwell Hyde Lane to be diverted to a junction onto proposed vehicular route. Cycle route to be maintained for cyclists turning left at Cole Green Lane, towards the tow centre
6. Opportunity for an island to allow pedestrians to access the footpath through the woodland.

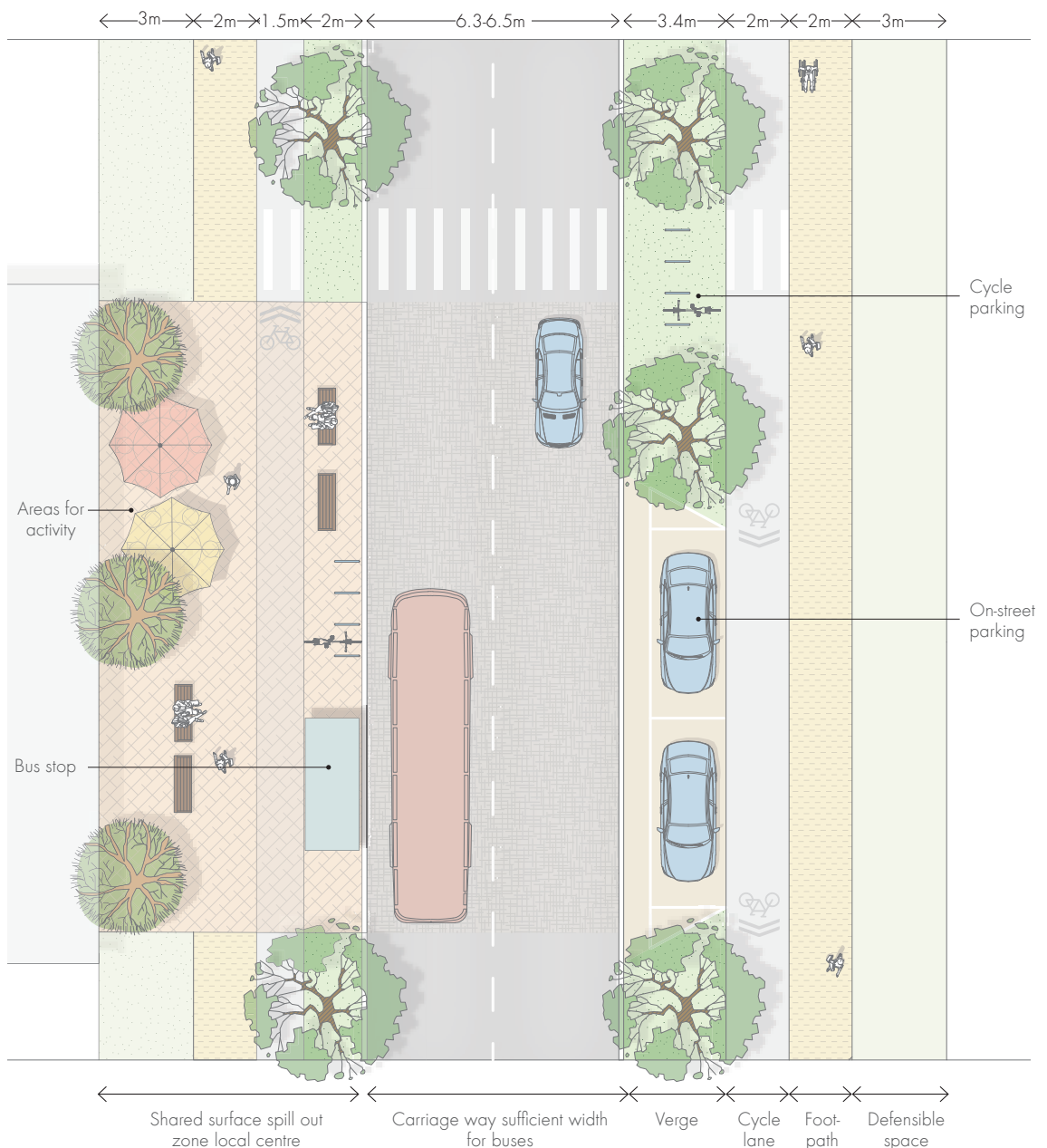


## Example street sections

The following four street plans show examples of how different hierarchies of road could look and function. The roads act as both movement corridors and places within themselves for people to socialise and relax. As such, each street type should be designed to reflect their location in the masterplan, function and priority for cars and pedestrian and cyclists.

## Primary Road

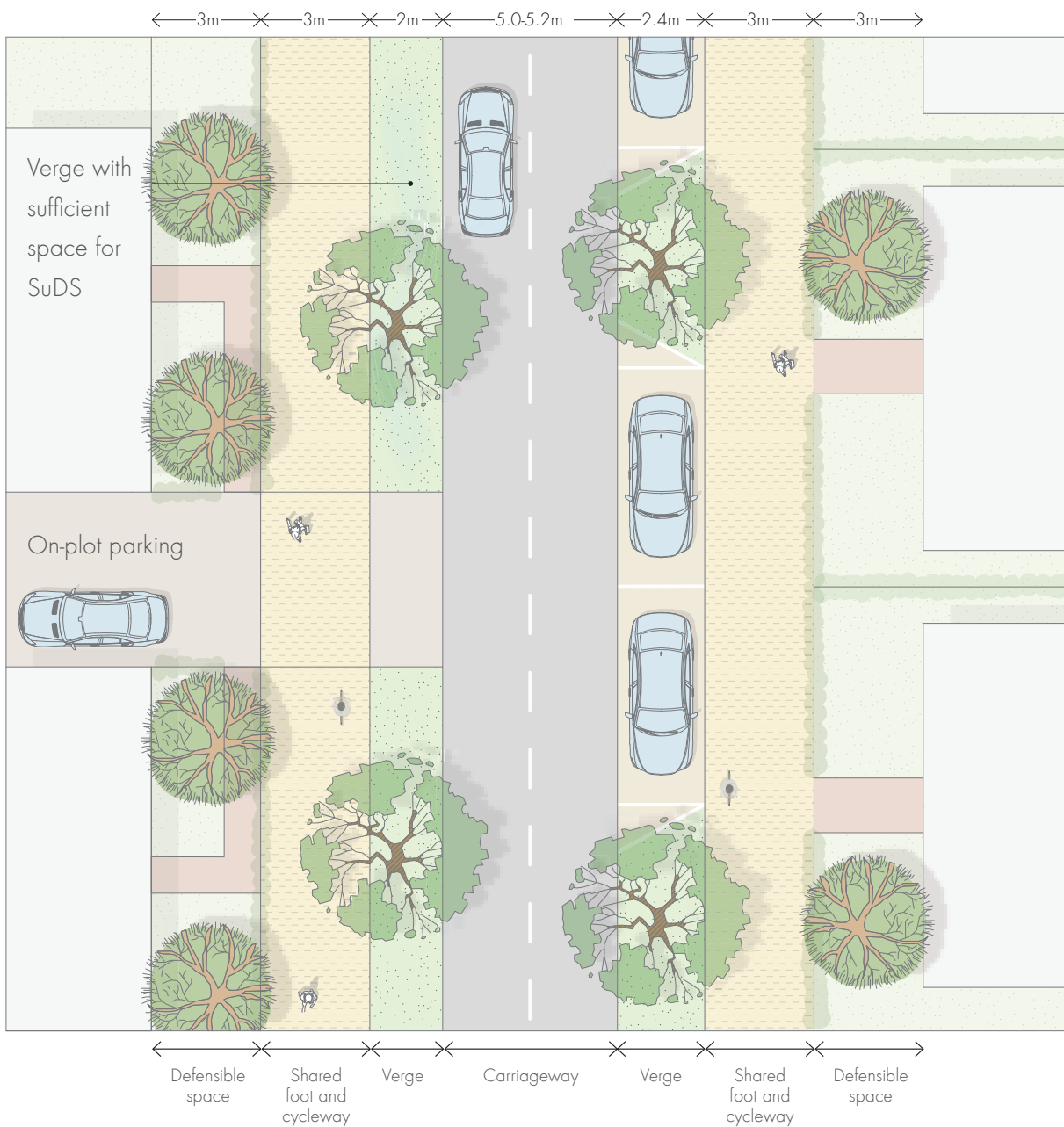
The main function of the primary road is to connect residents with the proposed local centre, amenities and schools. The plan below shows an example of how the primary road could look near the EH Local Centre. This area includes segregated cycle routes with areas dedicated to cycle parking, sitting and socialising, create a vibrant and active local centre.





## Secondary Road

Secondary roads are accessed off the primary road. There should be opportunities for both on-plot and on-street parking. Street trees are used as traffic calming measures with the opportunity to integrate SuDS into the verge. In this example, cycle provision is provided on generous shared cycle/footpaths. Opportunities for safe on-carriageway cycle paths could be explored.

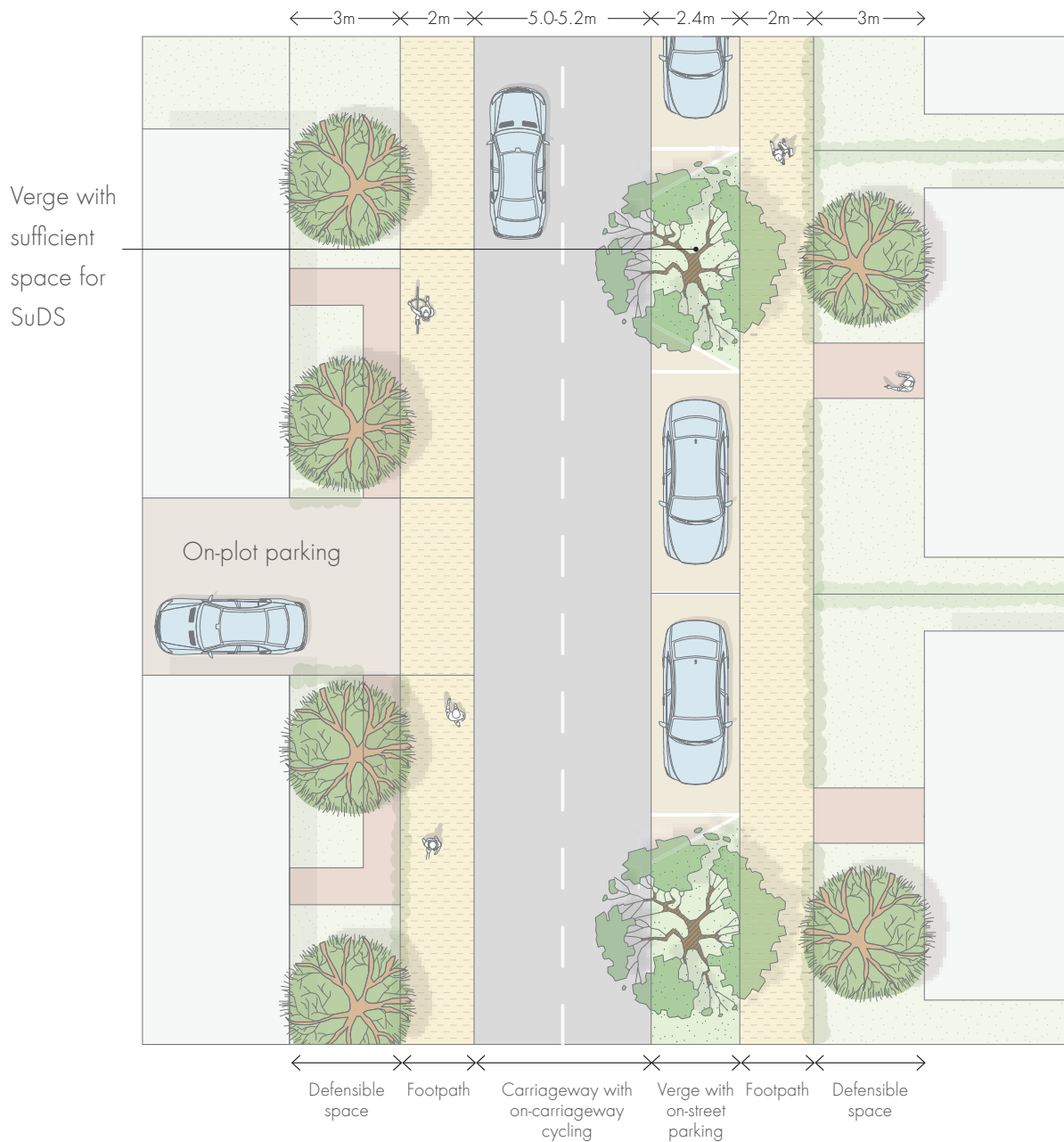




## Tertiary Road

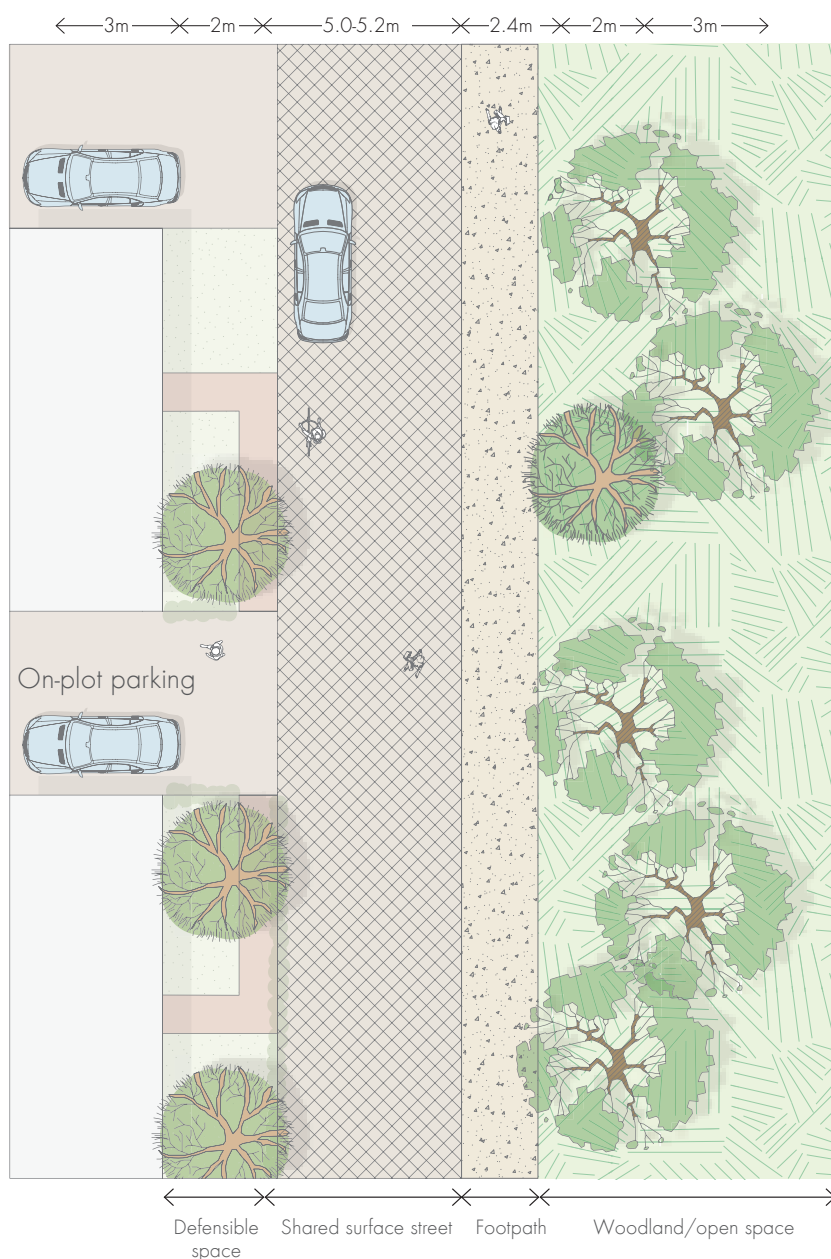
Tertiary roads provide permeability through the neighbourhood and access to dwellings. As quiet residential roads, measures to minimise traffic speeds are important. The plan example presents on-carriageway cycle with a footpath on either one or both sides of the carriageway.

Opportunities for both on-plot parking and either on-street parking or a green verge with planting and SuDS to improve biodiversity.



## Local access tertiary road

The local access tertiary roads are the lowest order of streets, and they should be designed in a way to minimise vehicular access and provide safe footpaths and cycle routes. They should have an informal character and be used solely to provide access to the homes they feed into. They may include shared surfaces with on-street parking and/or on-plot parking. Along these streets, priority should be given to cyclists and pedestrians.



## 4.6 PLACEMAKING STRATEGY

### Housing typologies

To establish a mixed and balanced community it will be important to provide a range of housing types within Birchall Garden Suburb, homes should cater to people buying their first home; sizing up to accommodate a growing family, or moving somewhere more accessible or with care options as they get older. Homes should also cater to a range of budgets, including affordable housing to respond to WHBC and EH Plan requirements.

The plan on the following page shows the range of homes that can be included and suitable locations for these. However, it is not intended to be prescriptive in terms of those locations or the balance between the types. The principles of variation is the important aspect.

#### Key characteristics and guidance

1. A range of housing types should be provided, including detached, semi-detached, terrace, town house and maisonette. This range will help to improve legibility within the overall area and will help to establish distinctive characters for each of the neighbourhoods.
2. Maisonettes are more suited to central locations, close to the local centre and community amenities, and where height is required in the Hatfield Downs neighbourhood, to mitigate noise pollution from the Burnside waste site to the south (see more on this in the section on contextual and high quality design)
3. Terraces and town houses are more suited to spine roads and secondary residential streets; and overlooking community green spaces

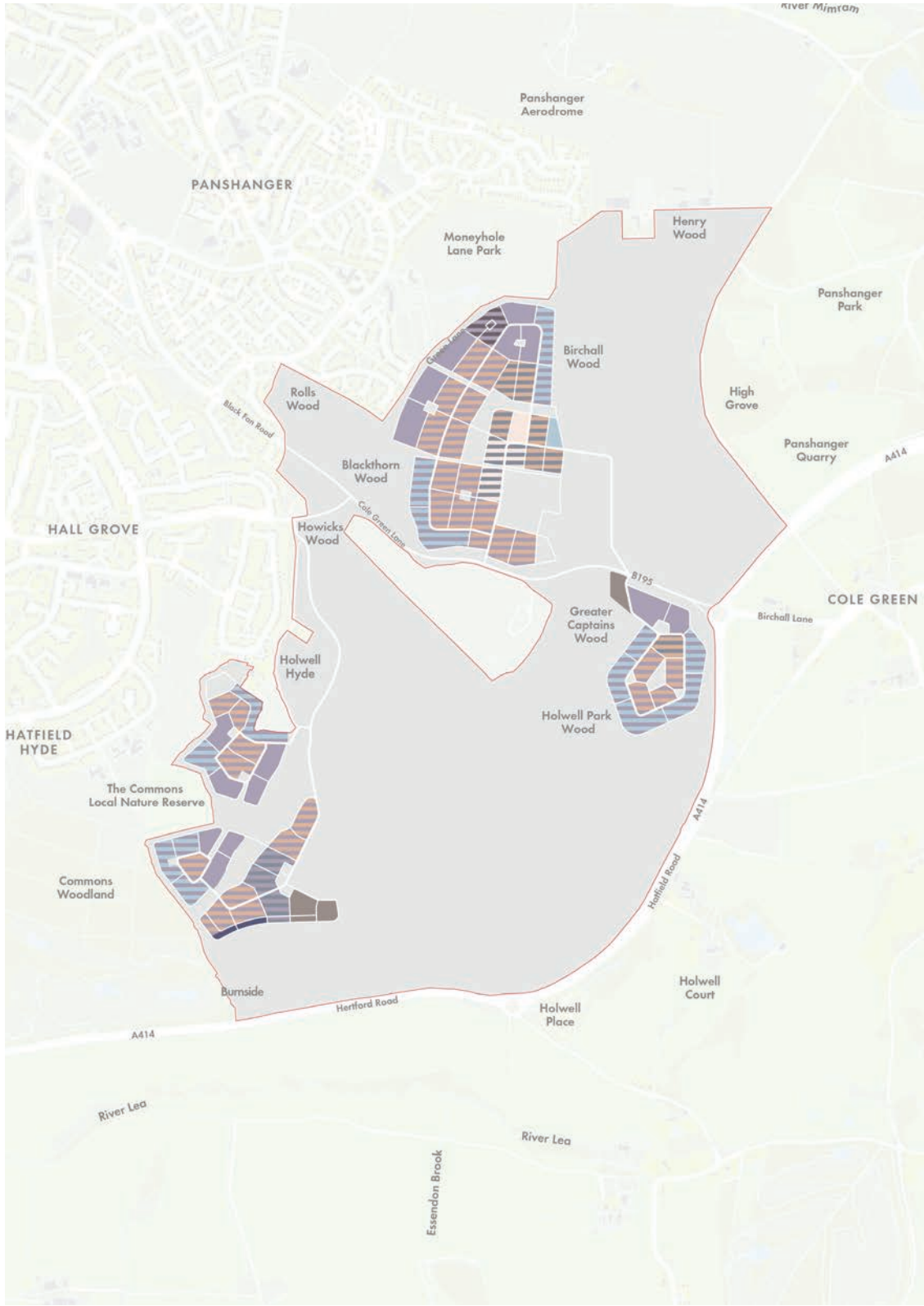
4. Semi-detached and detached homes are more suited to tertiary and perimeter streets, which overlook more natural landscapes, such as the Green Corridor, and areas of woodland buffer
5. Examples of each type of housing generally exist within Welwyn Garden City's original neighbourhoods, and a study of these dwellings should be undertaken during the detailed masterplanning to understand their key characteristics.

A brief profile of different housing typologies is provided in the density pages. Designs are for reference only and do not represent homes within a Garden City tradition. See section on contextual and high quality design for more information on this.



Examples of terraces, maisonettes and semi-detached homes from Welwyn GC earlier neighbourhoods





- Site boundary
- Detached
- Semi-detached
- Apartments
- Gypsy and Traveller site
- Semi-detached/detached
- Semi-detached/terrace
- Semi-detached/maisonette
- Maisonette/Terrace
- Semi-detached/mews
- Apartments/maisonettes
- Stacked maisonettes

## Housing offer

The housing typologies developed at Birchall Garden Suburb will have a close relationship with the mixed and varied housing offer to be provided within the neighbourhoods. Both WHBC and EHDC have policy guidance within their Plans regarding housing offer, which is included below.

The plan identifying locations for different types of housing officer is intended to be indicative rather than prescriptive. However, there may well be limited locations for house types such as later living and Gypsy and Traveller pitches within the masterplan area.

### Key characteristics and guidance

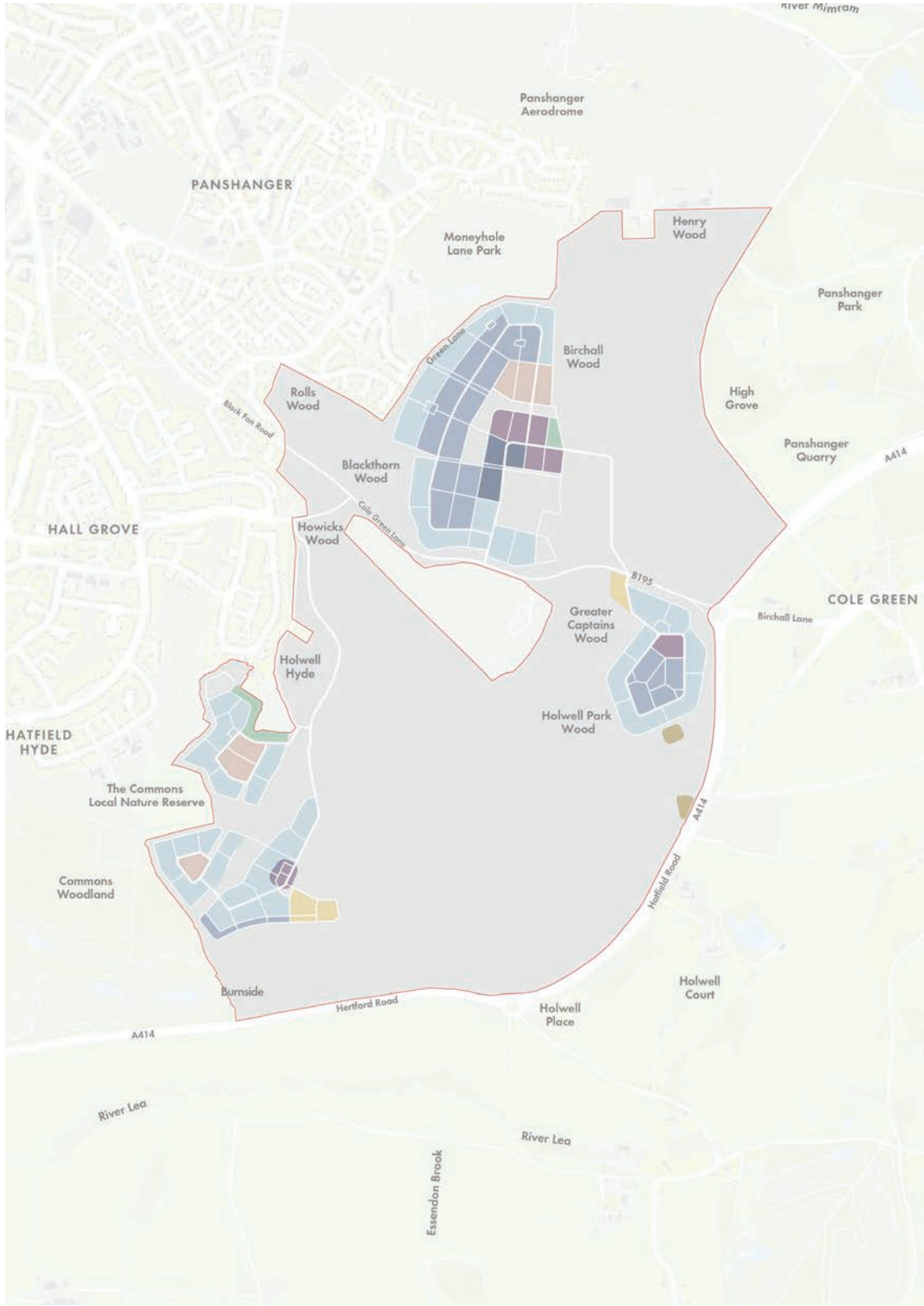
1. Within WH neighbourhoods, 30% of homes should be affordable. Within EH neighbourhoods, 40% of homes should be affordable. These should include affordable rent and intermediate housing
2. Flexible homes should be provided for later living, such as retirement bungalows/apartments, flexi-care housing and/or residential care homes. These should be located close to shops and community services and to green, open space, and should consider inclusion of the sociable, communal spaces provided in successful co-living models.
3. Co-living housing models could also be considered for other groups such as younger people and families starting out in their first homes or for all-female developments. Both of which have proved popular elsewhere.
4. 11 Gypsy and Traveller pitches should be provided within WH and 4 pitches within EH. These pitches should be reasonably close to local

shops and amenities but not located centrally within neighbourhoods. They should not be located directly adjacent to any operational waste sites. In each case, scope should be considered for future expansion.

5. Whilst withdrawn from government policy, the 2008 Good Practice Guide on Designing Gypsy and Traveller Sites provides a useful steer. Contact should be made with GATE Herts during the detailed design process, to fully understand local community needs and preferences.
6. The masterplan suggests locating 11 Gypsy and Traveller pitches to the south of the primary school in the WH Hatfield Downs neighbourhood and 4 pitches close to Birchall Lane and the primary and secondary school, next to the EH Holwell Park neighbourhood. Additional pitches might be possible to the south east of Holwell Park or close to the household waste site, should this be decommissioned. Careful consideration and liaison with HCC would be needed regarding access to these. Direct access from the A414 is not supported by HCC.
7. Self-build and custom housing should be included within both the EH and WH areas of the masterplan. Providing these as a neighbourhood area rather than single plots and partnering with a specialist custom build developer will help to improve deliverability for these areas. Positive examples exist at Marmalade Lane, Cambridge (TOWN) and at Graven Hill, Bicester (Graven Hill Bicester Development Company)



**New Ground at High Barnet and Marmalade Lane in Cambridge. Successful custom-build and co-living schemes (PTE and Mole Architects)**



- Site boundary
- Live-Work
- Late Living/Flexi-care
- Self-build
- Co-living
- Preferred Gypsy and Traveller Site
- Potential Gypsy and Traveller Sites
- Mixed-family
- Market-Family



## Densities

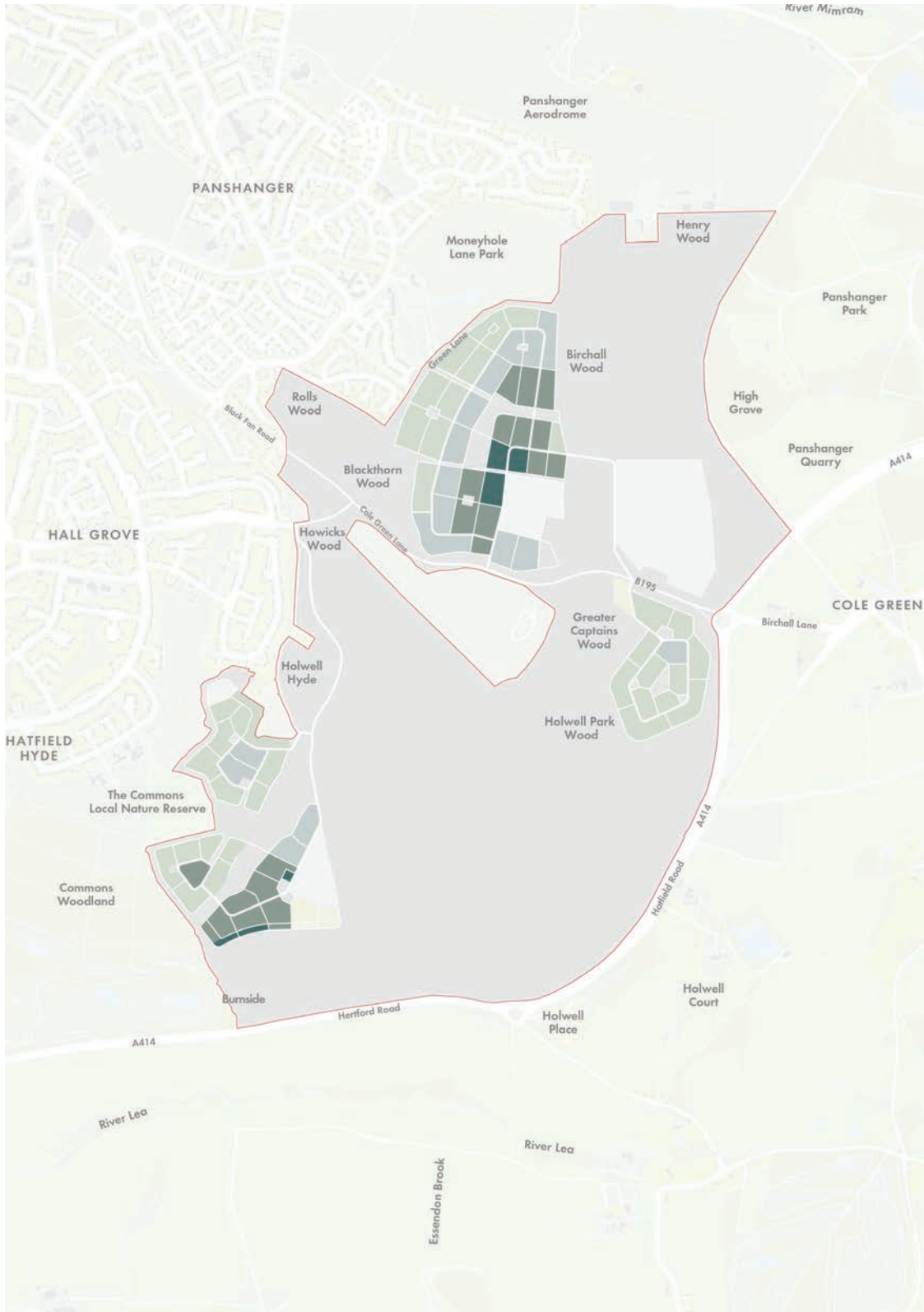
Gross densities for the masterplan area are likely to be in the region of 30-35 dwellings per hectare (dph). This includes all roads and neighbourhood green spaces but excludes sites for the schools. Net densities are proposed to be between 30 and 60 dph. This excludes roads and local green spaces and measures density at the block scale. Slightly higher densities in areas that are well-served by shops and services provide a more sustainable approach, by establishing a critical mass of people to support these uses and by limiting the need for private cars to be used for all activities in these locations. For this to be successful, however, those local facilities must be provided and both public and active travel options must be viable, comfortable and preferred alternatives to using a private car.

Indicative densities are set out in the plan to the right. This is not intended to be prescriptive but to demonstrate the range of densities that will be expressed through accommodating a range of housing typologies and offer.

### Key characteristics and guidance

1. A range of densities should be shown in a detailed masterplan, with higher densities at the local centre within the EH Birchall Gardens neighbourhood.
2. Slightly higher densities are recommended close to the primary school and community centre in the WH Hatfield Downs neighbourhood and close to the suggested local shop or small community use such as childcare within the EH Holwell Park neighbourhood.
3. Higher densities are shown in the southern most edge of the WH Hatfield Downs neighbourhood, which is required to accommodate a solid southern facade of 14m to buffer noise from the Burnside waste facility to the south. This will equate to 3.5-4 storeys, which are therefore very likely to be maisonettes.
4. Lower densities should be included in the WH Holwell Green and Commons Wood neighbourhoods, particularly along the edge of the Green Corridor which runs between these two neighbourhoods and close to the listed Holwell Hyde Farm buildings. For this reason, custom build houses are suggested close to the farm boundary.
5. Lower densities should be included in the EH Holwell Park neighbourhood, and along the northern and western edges of the main Birchall Gardens neighbourhood, as well as close to the listed Birchall Farm buildings. For this reason, allotments are suggested close to the farm buildings.

Examples of the suggested net density levels are shown on the following pages for reference.



- Site boundary
- Lowest (30 DPH)
- Low (40 DPH)
- Low-moderate (50DPH)
- Moderate (50-60PH)



## Profile of development parcel

- Local Authority: Welywn Hatfield
- Neighbourhood: Commonswood
- Geometry: Formal, meandering
- Gross area: 0.65 Hectares
- Gross density: 30 DPH
- Projected capacity: 20 dwellings
- Land uses: Residential
- Edge conditions: Woodland, residential, secondary road

## Masterplan guidance

- Indicative capacity: 28 dwellings
- Net density: 43 DPH
- Amenity: Private gardens, shared garden, landscaped buffer
- Building heights: 2 - 3 storeys
- Building types: Detached, semi-detached houses, mews



**Location** Trumpington Meadows, Cambridge  
**Tenure** Market  
**Homes** 660  
**Density** net 39 dph average  
**Features** Set within parkland, new allotments and orchard. Code for Sustainable Homes 3/4



**Location** Horsted Park, Kent  
**Tenure** Mixed use  
**Homes** 337 homes  
**Density** net 45 dph average  
**Features** Courtyard structure to resemble farmsteads, community facilities, extra-care housing





## Profile of development parcel

- Local Authority: East Herts
- Neighbourhood: Birchall Gardens
- Geometry: Orthogonal, regular
- Gross area: 0.52 Hectares
- Gross density: 50 DPH
- Projected capacity: 26 dwellings
- Land uses: Mixed
- Edge conditions: Park, residential, main road

## Masterplan guidance

- Indicative capacity: 45 dwellings
- Net density: 86 DPH
- Amenity: Shared/private gardens
- Building heights: 2 - 4 storeys
- Building types: Apartments



**Location** Woodside Square, Haringey  
**Tenure** Mixed-tenure  
**Homes** 159  
**Density** net 69 dph average  
**Features** Public square, restored heritage, range of house types, community centre



**Location** Abode, Trumpington, Cambridge  
**Tenure** Mixed-tenure  
**Homes** 450 homes  
**Density** net 47 dph average  
**Features** Central 'great court', range of house types, green lanes and village character



© Jim Stephenson



© Jim Stephenson

### Profile of development parcel

- Local Authority: Welwyn Hatfield
- Neighbourhood: Holwell Green
- Geometry: Informal, linear
- Gross area: 1.1 Hectares
- Gross density: 30 DPH
- Projected capacity: 20 dwellings
- Land uses: Residential
- Edge conditions: Woodland, residential, secondary road

### Masterplan guidance

- Indicative capacity: 33 dwellings
- Net density: 30 DPH
- Amenity: Private gardens
- Building heights: 2-2.5 storeys
- Building types: custom build and detached houses

<b>Location</b>	Lovedon Fields, Hampshire
<b>Tenure</b>	Market
<b>Homes</b>	50
<b>Density</b>	net 22 dph average
<b>Features</b>	Overlooking South Downs AONB, mix of contextual-led and contemporary homes, public realm designed to promote interaction



## Net densities of 30-40 dph

### Large family homes



Typically two to three storeys on large plots with generous and safe outdoor private amenity space. Good connections to communal or doorstep play space. Private garage spaces can be appropriate but should be adaptable for conversion, as should loft spaces.

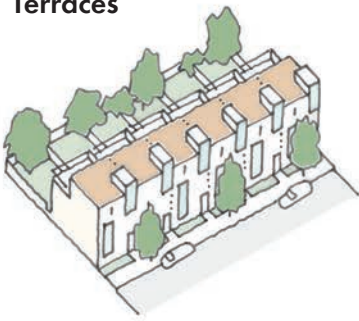
### Semi-detached



Paired dwellings of typically two to three storeys, set back from the street and suburban in character. Off-street parking with strong visual links to front, side and rear gardens. Adaptable to changing needs and lifestyles, particularly that of a family.

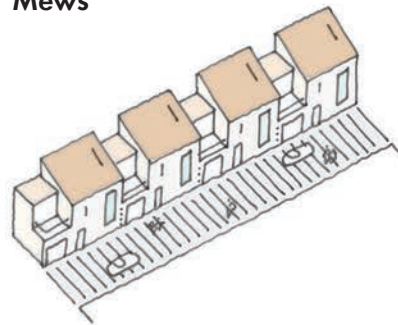
## Net densities of 35-50 dph

### Terraces



Typically one to four storeys terraces can be converted into flats or remain as individual houses, allowing for variation in unit types along any given street. All the while maintaining the desired street condition with well defined fronts and backs.

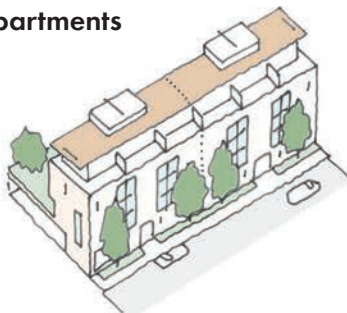
### Mews



Intimate, low-rise style, with private front doors alternating with garage doors. Flexible options to cater to a variety of changing household sizes, needs and lifestyles. Smaller average plot sizes can therefore achieve intermediary to high densities.

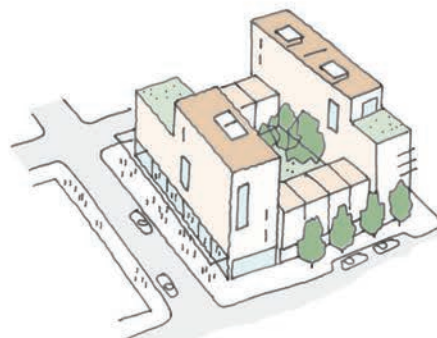
## Net densities of 50-60 dph

### Terraced apartments



Terraced apartments can cater to many needs. Lower-levels can form maisonettes with private entrances or shops; whilst upper level apartments can have private terraces and balconies. Can achieve high densities and can vary in scale to suit local context.

### Local centres



Local centres provide opportunities for apartment perimeter blocks. High densities and a critical mass can be achieved with shops at ground levels to create active fronts. Suitable in urban contexts.

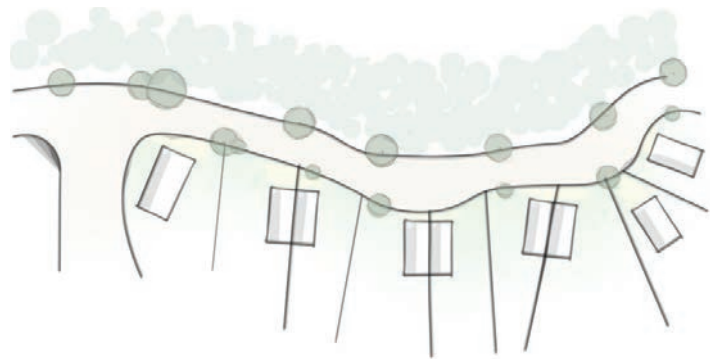


## Edge conditions

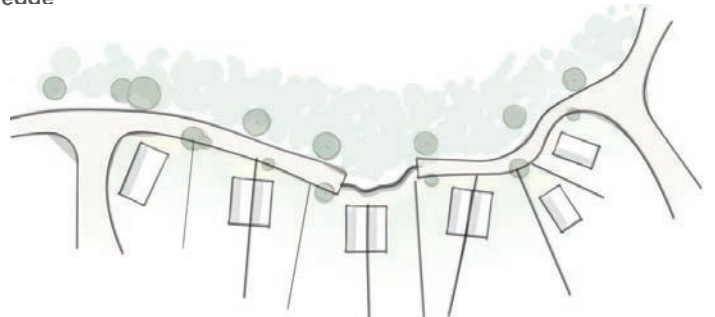
The edge conditions refer to the transition or interface between the proposed development and adjacent land uses or structures. Within the masterplan there are a range of edge conditions, including woodlands, open green spaces, green amenity space including both pocket parks and allotments, new homes, schools and local centres. These edge conditions form the characteristics of the neighbourhoods.

### Key characteristics and guidance

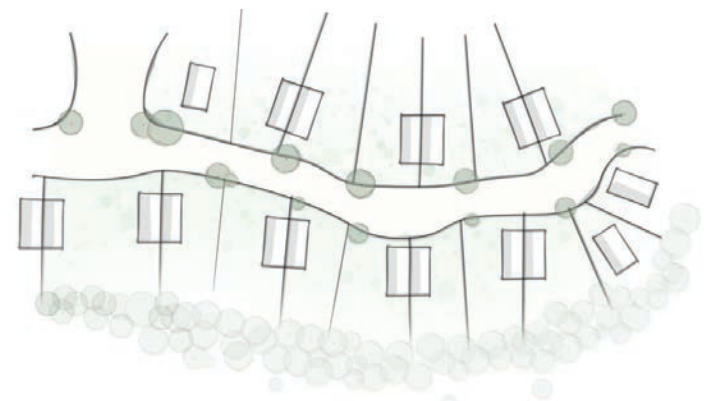
1. All homes should front onto green amenity space, encouraging passive surveillance and instilling a greater sense of safety and 'eyes on the street' within communities.
2. Careful thought should be given to boundaries to the masterplan area with existing wooded areas or pathways. Frontage here could be along a private lane, with perforated vehicle access but continuous walking and cycling routes, to respond to the sensitive context.
3. Where homes are located adjacent to woodlands, detailed masterplans must take into consideration elements such as daylight/sunlight and safety, and assess whether it is appropriate for homes to front or back onto woodlands. It may be appropriate to back onto existing tracks which run along the south western boundary of the WH Commons Wood and Hatfield Downs neighbourhoods, to retain a rural character.
4. Within the development, clear boundaries between public and private space should be provided through privet hedges or low fencing.



**Woodland/open space edge: open informal frontage to landscape edge**



**Woodland/open space edge: open informal frontage with private lanes, appropriate for a more sensitive edge**



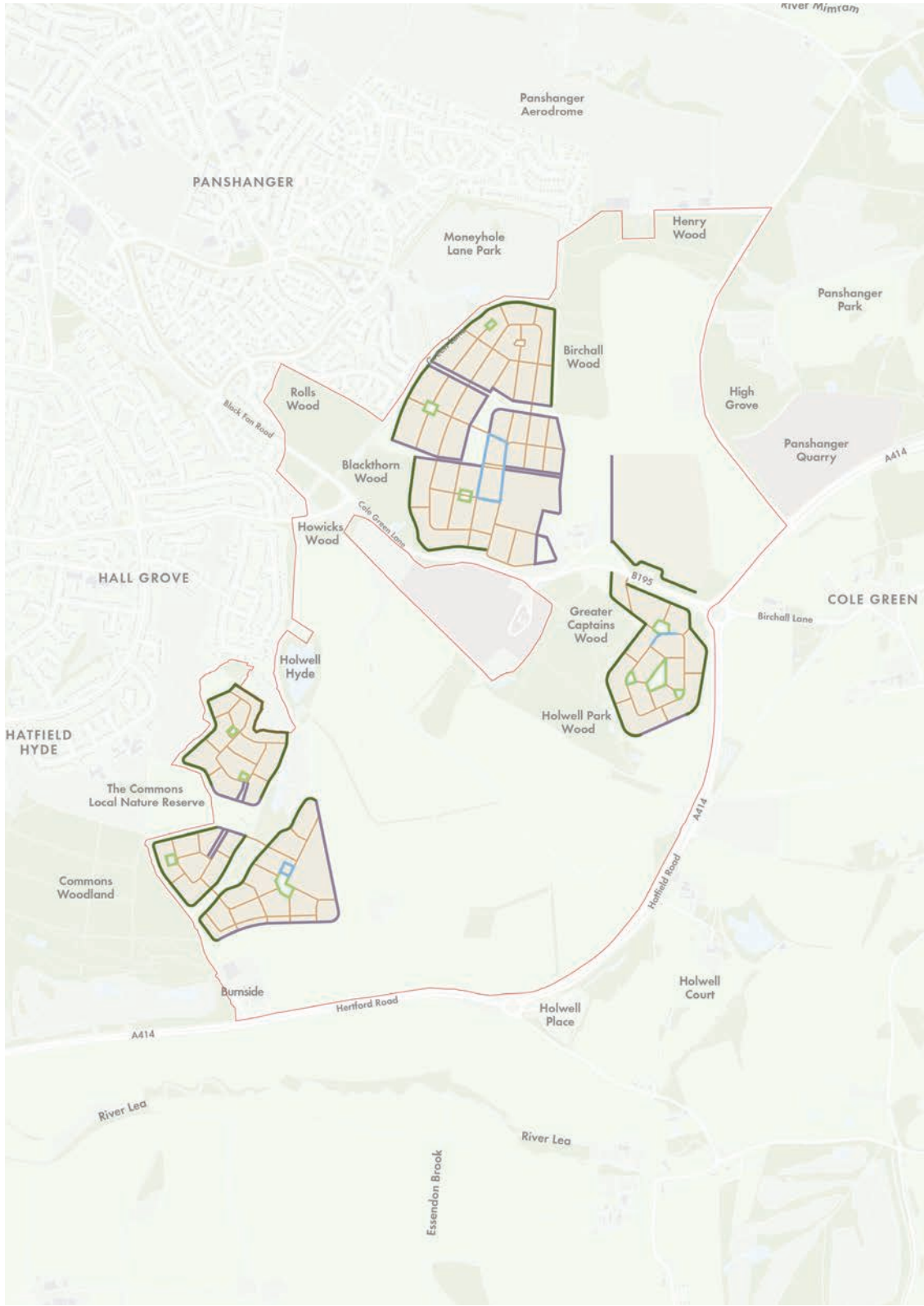
**Woodland edge: rear gardens with new planted shrubbery at the boundary, to retain a rural character**



**The western edge of Birchall Wood, which will meet the eastern edge of the development**



**Western edge of the EH masterplan area,**



- Site boundary
- Residential edge
- Woodland edge
- Open space edge
- Amenity space edge
- Local centre/amenity edge

## Contextual and high quality design

Birchall Garden Suburb should be designed to the highest standards, reflecting its local context and the Garden City tradition within which it will sit; and responding to the contemporary TCPA Garden Communities principles to create new communities that are sustainable, healthy and provide a high quality of life for residents.

### Key characteristics and guidance

1. Building design should take cues from the local vernacular of Welwyn Garden City and the surrounding villages. In terms of materials, this includes the red brickwork, painted timber and tiles found both in the neo-Georgian buildings of Welwyn Garden City and surrounding villages.
2. In terms of rooflines, these should generally be pitched or hipped, and tiled, to reflect local characteristics and help mitigate any harm to heritage assets. Rooflines should also be fragmented and avoid terraces and runs which are parallel to contour lines on any raised ground. The Garden City's original roofs tend to have generous overhangs to the building façades.
3. Welwyn Garden City's original buildings have distinctive Neo-Georgian fenestration, with large, panelled windows and this should be considered in building designs
4. Consideration should be given to providing an articulated building line on streets, to reflect Louis de Soissons original design intent for stepping building, the L-shaped buildings from those original neighbourhoods and the bay windows provided in some original streets
5. Building designs should not preclude contemporary interpretation of Welwyn Garden City's vernacular, making use of 21st century design innovations, particularly where these can help to mitigate and adapt to climate change
6. Where possible, shallow or L-shaped residential buildings should be considered, which allow for double aspect rooms, as is typical of Welwyn Garden City's original neighbourhoods
7. Buildings should generally be two or three storeys in height. Four storeys is considered to be the maximum appropriate height and should be treated as the exception, with design attention paid to integrating these buildings with surroundings. Four storeys are only considered to be appropriate in the EH Birchall Gardens local centre and at the southern boundary of the WH Hatfield Downs neighbourhood, where height is required.
8. Half storeys are encouraged as a useful means of maximising space whilst maintaining a suitable scale and roofline.
9. Homes will benefit from good levels of natural light and ventilation, and single aspect homes will be avoided, wherever possible, particularly those with a due northerly aspect. Proposals will meet the requirements set out in WH policy SADM11 and EH policy DES4 regarding amenity and layout. For BGS, this will be a consideration for homes located close to Burnside, which will require a solid wall/building façade to mitigate noise levels.





Examples of building materials, rooflines and fenestrations within the local area

10. In the WH Hatfield Downs neighbourhood, a building's façade may be required to form the noise barrier to the Burnside waste site. If this is required, it will be important for these homes to have windows to the southern façade. These would be for non-habitable rooms such as kitchens and bathrooms and would be non-openable but will provide valuable daylight for these homes. Innovative layouts should be explored, such as open kitchen-diners or open plan living, meaning that light can fill the space from the south, while ventilation is afforded from windows on the northern facade. It is expected that the approach to these homes should be explored further, with

innovative design solutions to building and internal layouts encouraged. Establishing L-shaped buildings with stepped northern façades will enable side and front windows and encourage more light and airflow in these homes.

## 4.7 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

### Integrating with strategic green infrastructure

Birchall Garden suburb is well-placed within a rich and varied strategic network of green space and connections that surround Welwyn Garden City. Masterplans and subsequent new development should consider these strategic assets and how best to provide good connections to these places for new residents.

Welwyn Garden City Centenary Circular Walk runs along the western boundary of Birchall Garden Suburb, and this should be signposted, with investment in the route for the benefit of residents.

Other strategic natural spaces that provide both amenity but also valuable habitat spaces include:

- Panshanger Park historic gardens to the east
- Moneyhole Lane Park, Caponfield Park and King George V playing fields, all to the west
- Tewinbury SSSI and Archers Green River Valley to the north
- Commons Wood and Home Park to the south west

National Cycle Route 61 runs through BGS and provides good onward links to Sherrardspark Wood and Stanborough Park on the west side of Welwyn Garden City. It will be important for masterplanners to work with WHBC and HCC to strengthen the strategic cycle routes between BGS and both Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield town centres and rail stations. Indicative routes are shown on the plan, but routes would need to be tested and explored with HCC.









## Local green connections

The masterplan retains existing green connections, identifies areas where these need to be improved, and suggests new connections where these will be of value to existing and new communities.

## Key characteristics and guidance

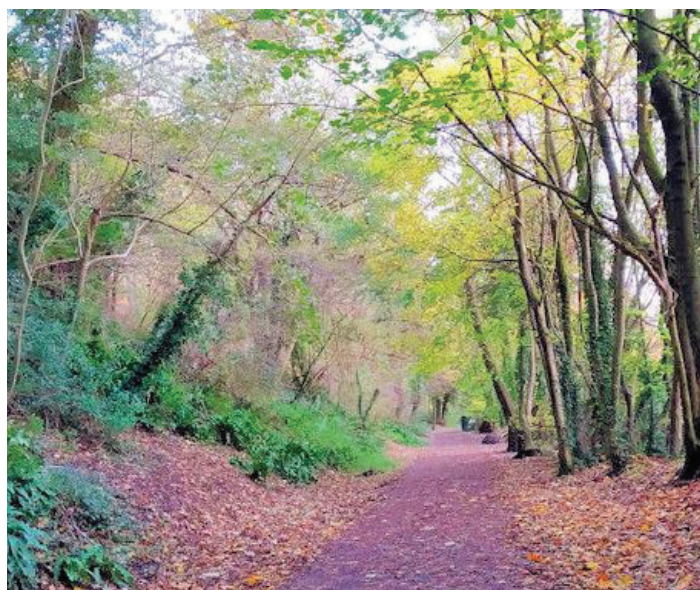
New and improved connections include:

1. A connection north to the proposed Panshanger Airfield neighbourhood and Tewinbury SSSI beyond this
2. A retained and enhanced route from Panshanger through Birchall Gardens to Birchall Wood and onto Panshanger Park
3. A new green route through Birchall Gardens connecting Blackthorn Wood with Birchall Wood
4. Green connections through the central park area, which converge at the highest point to provide views to the south of Essendon Ridge. This area will be an appropriate point for seating and public art.
5. Investment in Cole Green Way cycle and walking route, including the underpass beneath the A414
6. Links to the north and south of The Commons LNR which connect new neighbourhoods with Commons Woodland and Caponfield Park.
7. Routes along the edge of Holwell Hyde Brook and within the 100m Green Corridor, balancing access here with wildlife habitat considerations

Detailed masterplans should give consideration to these local green connections and similarly provide a continuous network of green links within the Birchall Garden Suburb area.



**Dog walking route along the southern edge of Birchall Wood**



**Nailsworth, Stroud walking and cycling track along old Midland rail route. Resurfaced using material mostly made from old tyres**





- Site boundary
- Proposed non-motorised access point
- Existing non-motorised access point
- 🚶 Proposed pedestrian crossing
- 🚶🚲 Proposed pedestrian and cycle crossing
- 🚲 Proposed cycle hub
- Walking and cycling routes

## Community green space

The masterplan proposes a range of community focused green and open spaces that can support the physical and mental well-being of residents and contribute to a high quality environment. These include:

1. The retention and enhancement of existing tree clusters and hedgerows to inform routes and spaces of the neighbourhoods and retain mature vegetation
2. The large central park through which the Green Corridor runs. This has walking trails, view points and wildlife observation.
3. Neighbourhood green spaces with playable landscapes and natural exercise equipment for residents. These have been prioritised with three functions:
  - Co-located with local centres, to provide sociable spaces close to shops and amenities
  - Connected to green fingers which in turn link to broader green infrastructure
  - Centrally within neighbourhoods, to provide an even distribution of green spaces

These spaces should be designed with community activity in mind and the potential to host events such as neighbourhood picnics, May Day activities or other bank holiday activities.

4. Community sports pitches next to the Birchall Gardens larger neighbourhood
5. Allotments for each group of neighbourhoods, often buffering sensitive landscape or heritage features, to avoid building close to these areas. Allotments are also located between new and existing neighbourhoods to bring these communities together
6. A community orchard alongside the Birchall Gardens neighbourhood, within the Green Corridor area, and possibly between WH neighbourhoods, within the Green Corridor
7. Nature trails with incidental play and walking trails within local woodland
8. Improved waterside routes and spaces, with natural paths running alongside these
9. Detailed masterplans should provide a similar hierarchy of open spaces with ample opportunity for active and passive enjoyment by residents of all ages. Examples and precedents of these types of spaces are provided on the following page.
10. Community green spaces should be considered early in the masterplan process and delivered in early stages to support the community and help establish positive social relationships





-  Site boundary
-  Green amenity space
-  Community sports pitches
-  Community allotments
-  Community orchard
-  Green Corridor
-  View point
-  Central parkland

## Community green space examples



Community orchard with information board



Incidental play in community green space



Allotments





Exposing the waterside



Natural materials in play



Trails with signage and wayfinding



Woodland trails with natural materials



Dedicated playgrounds



Play streets and pocket squares



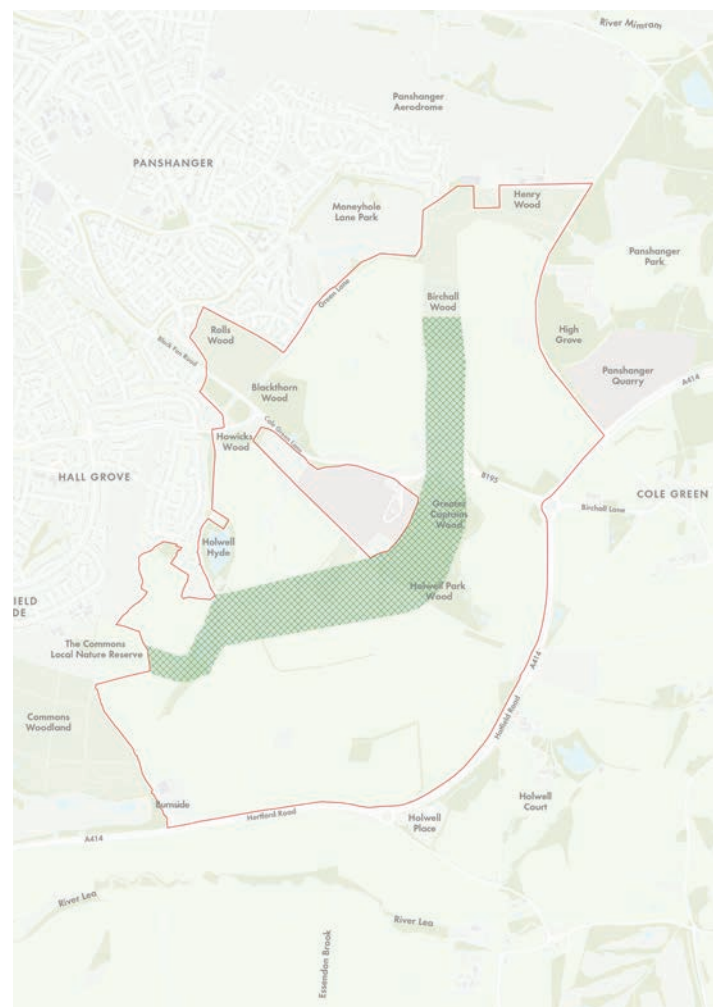
## The Green Corridor

The Green Corridor, as promoted by the WHBC Local Plan under policy SP12 and identified by the LUC masterplan, runs through the site and forms part of a strategic Green Corridor that wraps around the southern edge of Welwyn Garden City. The corridor connects open spaces and parks and provides both a continuous walking route for respectful appreciation of natural spaces around Welwyn Garden City and supports biodiversity in the these area.

### Key characteristics and guidance

1. The Green Corridor must be a minimum of 100m in width at all points and will play an important role in providing habitat continuity between The Commons LNR and open green space to the east.
2. Access should be provided to the Green Corridor from surrounding neighbourhoods with routes then running along the edge of the corridor and limited routes through the corridor. This access should come in the form of green fingers from within neighbourhoods, where possible.
3. Access beyond the Green Corridor as it traverses the central parkland should be limited to key paths, with areas protected for wildlife such as ground nesting birds.
4. However, at the highpoint where routes converge, potential exists to establish a seating area and incorporate public art and/or interpretive information at the high point where routes meet, identified on the plan
5. Enhancement of the Green Corridor will include tree planting, including possible creation of orchards to at the northern point by Birchall Wood, and potentially in a small area between WH neighbourhoods.

6. Habitat continuity will have to be supported through the inclusion of wildlife or badger tunnels beneath the spine road providing access to the WH neighbourhoods. This should be considered carefully to coordinate with transport planning to accommodate buses on this route.
7. Further work is required to fully understand the relationship between the Green Corridor and the natural habitats associated with the river corridors of the River Lea and River Mimram. This should be explored at the detailed masterplanning stage.







The Dream public art at the high point of Sutton Manor Woods in Merseyside



Beulieu development, Chelmsford



Woodhurst Parks, The Oaks



Trumpington Meadows



Lovedon Fields, Hampshire



Trumpington Meadows

## Biodiversity

Biodiversity and habitat enhancement plays a key role in the masterplan's landscape framework. The masterplan aims to protect existing habitats and proposes the introduction of new habitats, promoting ecology, biodiversity and wildlife.

### Key characteristics and guidance

1. Detailed masterplans should demonstrate a thorough understanding of key common or protected species supported within the area, particularly within the LNR, ancient woodland Green Corridor and central park. These include barn owls, ground nesting birds, badgers and great crested newts
2. Masterplans should establish an approach to developing nature networks within the Birchall Garden Suburb area, following guidance from Natural England and the 10 principles needed for this
3. Proposals should be developed in dialogue with HCC Ecology to ensure that the design process addresses ecological considerations
4. Management of The Commons LNR should be given special consideration, including how to manage human access to this and how to maintain habitat continuity between this and the central parkland, including under the spine route to access the WH neighbourhoods
5. Ancient hedgerows should be re-established within the central parkland, along with tree planting at key areas, as identified in the LUC Green Corridor Masterplan. Detailed masterplans should review and take account of proposals within the Green Corridor Masterplan
6. Tree planting should be enhanced and landscape buffers provided where the edge of development runs adjacent to existing LNRs, local wildlife sites, ancient woodland and water corridors
7. A 5m high planted bund is required to mitigate noise pollution from both Burnside and Cole Green Lane waste sites. These should be planted and careful consideration given to how these can support local species and contribute to the biodiversity of the area
8. Proposals will be required to identify clear strategies to manage invasive non-native species through the preparation of a Construction Environment Management Plan. Proposals for planting should be reviewed with the Council with a view to agreeing appropriate native species
9. Ground contamination from the former landfill site and the potential for leaching needs to be thoroughly understood at detailed masterplan stage, and inform designs. A detailed assessment and remediation strategy will be required
10. Proposals for public realm and buildings should maintain dark environments, with appropriate specification of lighting during construction and operational stages. This is vital for biodiversity and proposals should consider any potential impact on ecology including bats. Lighting for routes through the Green Corridor will be particularly sensitive and low-level lighting should be used
11. Homes should also play a role in supporting biodiversity, through inclusion of swift boxes and other measures such as planting shrubs in gardens, and provision of small holes in fences to allow passages for wildlife. This should be explored through detailed masterplans
12. A biodiversity management and maintenance programme should be proposed during the detailed masterplanning stage, to ensure that habitats are not degraded over time





- Site boundary
  - Local Wildlife Sites
  - Local Nature Reserve
  - Retained area of open space
  - Existing trees and hedgerows retained and strengthened
  - Landscaped buffer to road
  - Landscape buffer to sensitive landscape assets
  - Landscape buffer to employment area
  - Grass and shrub area enhanced and maintained
  - Replanted historic hedgerows
  - New woodland planting
  - Orchard planting
  - Green amenity space
  - Green Corridor
  - Water vole
  - Area for barn owl hunting
  - Area for ground nesting birds
  - Wildlife tunnels
- The below ecological assets have been identified by the CHGC (2019)
- Badger sighting
  - Great Crested Newt sighting
  - Barn owl sighting

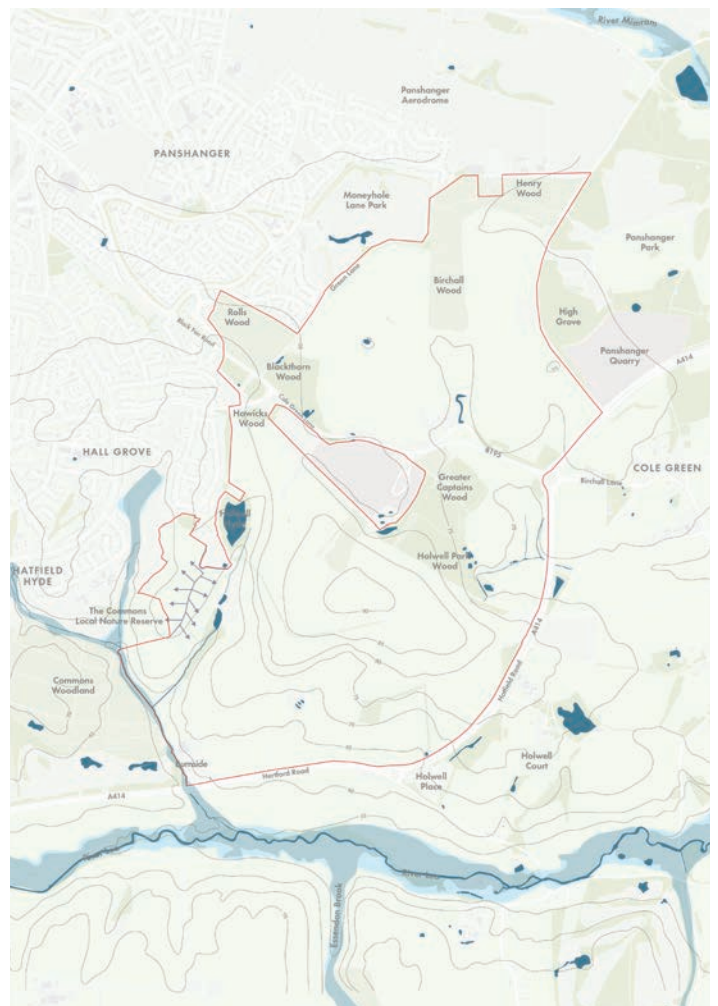
## Blue infrastructure and climate resilience

It will be important for Birchall Garden Suburb to be designed and developed with climate resilience in mind, with measures to mitigate the impacts of climate change and to adapt to changing weather conditions. Establishing a network of sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS) and shaded areas within the neighbourhoods will be central to this.

### Key characteristics and guidance

1. Sustainable drainage solutions should work with the natural topography of the landscape and existing waterways, including Holwell Hyde Brook and Hatfield Hyde Brook, and take account of the drainage basins of the River Mimram and River Lea
2. A minimum of 8m landscape buffers should be provided either side of Holwell Hyde brook
3. Sustainable urban drainage should be incorporated within the design of residential neighbourhoods, with this taken into account for the design of street sections. SuDS can take many forms throughout the development, including swales, wildflower basins and turfs, bio-retention tree pits and permeable surfacing for play areas and for driveways.
4. The 'grey infrastructure' of asphalt for roads and parking areas can significantly limit sustainable drainage and increase the carbon footprint of masterplans and subsequent development. Careful thought should, therefore, be given to how to design these spaces efficiently to limit this impact

5. Tree planting provides visual interest and health and wellbeing benefits but will also play an important role in climate adaptation through establishing both shade and drainage. A detailed tree planting plan should be prepared at the detailed masterplan stage to identify the location, role and suitable species for street tree and local green space planting.







Wildflower turf



Swales creating greener streets



SuDS close to homes



Wildflower basin



Integrating play and drainage



Bio-retention tree pits



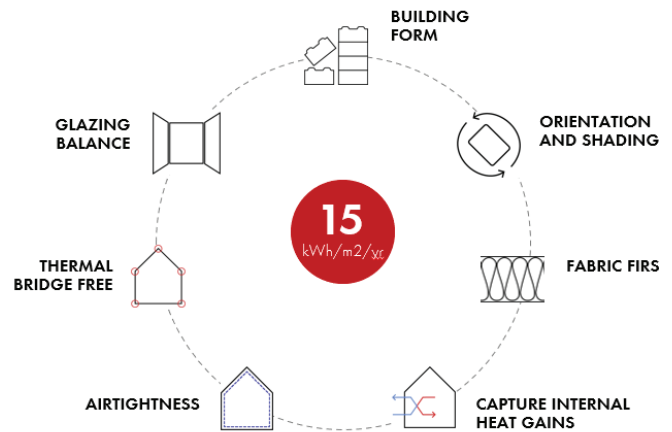
# 4.8 SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

## Sustainable design and construction

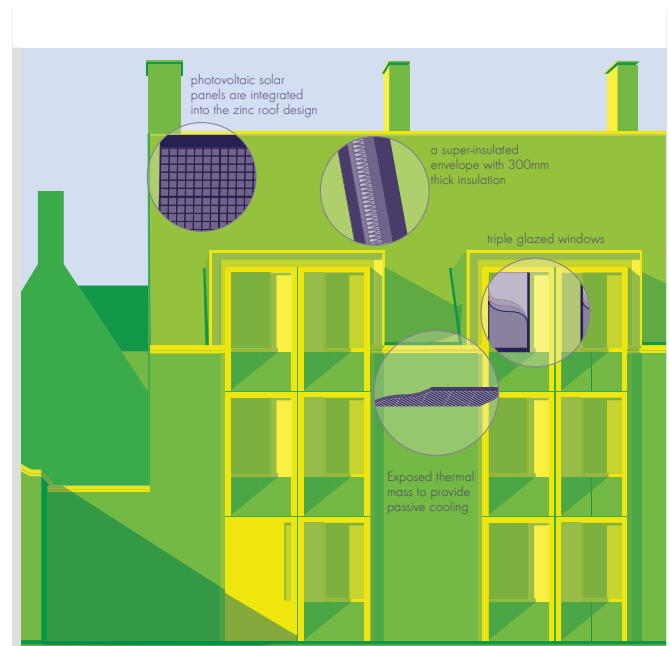
Sustainable principles should be embedded throughout the design and build process to deliver high quality and considered buildings for Birchall Garden Suburb.

### Key characteristics and guidance

1. Development should be designed to target ultra-low energy performance standards, such as Passivhaus.
2. Development must incorporate Passivhaus Design Principles.
3. Development must be 100% fossil-fuel free, prioritising heat pump and other highly efficient heating/cooling delivery systems.
4. All new development should maximise on-site renewable generation, where the energy use intensity exceeds 35 or 55 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/yr for domestic and non-domestic buildings respectively.
5. All development should include details of how quality of construction is being upheld.
6. All development regardless of scale should take steps to reduce its embodied carbon.
7. All development should achieve LETI Band C for its whole life carbon.
8. Where possible, development should consider reclaimed materials for new build.
9. New Development must conduct post-occupancy evaluations on all buildings to validate predicted energy consumption.



Passivhaus Design Principles



Examples of efficiency through building elements



Circular economy principles © AECOM

## Supporting sustainable lifestyles

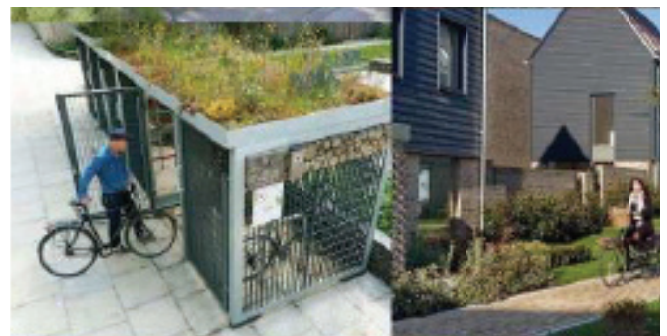
Enabling all residents and users of Birchall Garden Suburb to maintain a sustainable lifestyle is key to creating a happy, healthy and resilient community.

### Key characteristics and guidance

1. Providing homes with sufficient recycling storage and clear signage on what may be recycled and how to do so correctly.
2. Active travel routes, such as segregated cycle lanes, must be available. Where not possible, evidence must be given.
3. Provide accessible, covered cycle storage space either within buildings or secure exterior areas.
4. Amenities should be available to all residential development within a adequate distance that active modes are the preferred travel option.
5. Provide access to open and green spaces, including ecologically diverse streets and parks.
6. Provide adequate area to serve allotments and community orchards. These could be either self-governed or maintained centrally.
7. Create community spaces which can serve multiple groups and purposes.



Communal food growing + sharing areas such as orchards and allotments



Outdoor Cycle storage and active travel means



Access to green amenity space

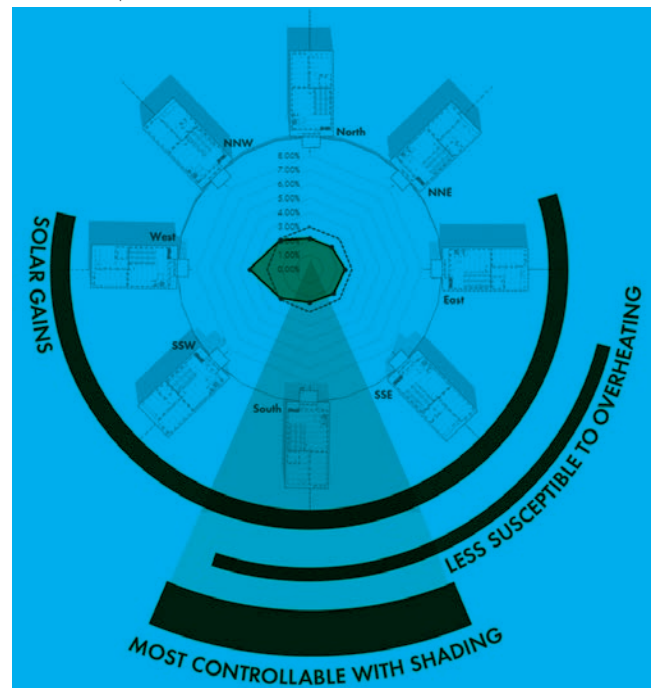
## Future-proofed and resilient neighbourhoods

Birchall Garden Suburb should include resilient places that allow for changing demographics, future growth, and the impacts of climate change including flood risk and water availability, with durable landscape and building design planned for generations to come. This should include anticipation of the opportunities presented by technological change and energy use.

### Key characteristics and guidance

1. All development should use the Good Homes Alliance Early Stage Overheating Risk Tool and follow all recommendations from the tool's scoring results.
2. Compliance with future weather scenarios, such as DSY2 and DSY3, should be carried out as part of each dynamic overheating assessment completed.
3. Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SuDs) should be designed in conjunction with Birchall Garden Suburb's blue infrastructure strategic framework.
4. Designs should endeavour to make all buildings highly water-efficient including rainwater harvesting and recycling of grey-water.
5. No new domestic development should exceed 110 L/person/day. Non-domestic development should not exceed 10 L/person/day.
6. All development should be designed with flexibility / adaptation of space in mind. I.e. future extensions or re-purposing.
7. Exploration of micro-grids should be done as part of reducing power draw from the National Grid.

8. Co-location of heating and cooling demands should be assessed to encourage the sharing of rejected heat / coolth.
9. New Development must conduct post-occupancy evaluations on all buildings to validate predicted energy consumption.



Oriental-dependent overheating risk control



Flexible and adaptable commercial workspaces







## 4.9 THE NEIGHBOURHOODS

### Birchall Gardens (EH)

- Large contemporary garden suburb including secondary and primary schools as well as a local centre that would serve surrounding neighbourhoods
- Two points of access from Cole Green Lane form a primary loop road connecting the non-residential uses towards the south and east of the site
- A secondary loop road connects the wider residential areas to the primary loop
- The neighbourhood is structured around long, continuous and gently curved streets (reminiscent of central Welwyn Garden City)
- These produce regular, well-proportioned and flexible development parcels that can achieve a range of housing types and densities
- The prevailing grain of development is oriented north-south to maximise daylight to gardens and streets, making the streetscape character of Birchall Gardens more formal
- A network of small green open spaces form set pieces and provide residents with nearby amenity and play areas
- Existing footpaths and desire lines between the Panshanger neighbourhood and Birchall Wood have been strengthened via new formal landscape corridors (reminiscent of Parkway)
- Mature trees at the heart of the site have been retained within a new, enhanced park setting



- New homes front onto Birchall Wood and Money-hole Lane Park with restricted vehicular access along the periphery of the neighbourhood
- New inner residential streets will be tree-lined and two-sided with continuous building frontages

## Holwell Park (EH)

- Small neighbourhood nestled within new and existing woodland
- A single point of access from Cole Green Lane forming a primary loop road that services every street
- New pedestrian and cycle crossings over Cole Green Lane would ensure that residents of Howell Park would rely on Birchall Gardens as its local centre
- Organised around a new local park (Howell Park) with streets that emanate from it in a radial and/or concentric manner
- More compact and informal development parcels that are better suited to detached and semi-detached housing at modest densities
- The informality, absence of repetition and lack of a prevailing grain makes the streetscape character more differentiated and distinctive
- Smaller green open spaces form set pieces and provide residents with nearby amenity and play areas
- Mature trees at the heart of the site have been retained within a new, enhanced park setting (Howell Park) which is the focus of the neighbourhood
- New homes front onto Greater Captain's Wood and Howell Park Wood with restricted vehicular access along the periphery of the neighbourhood
- New inner residential streets will be tree-lined and two-sided with staggered building frontages relating to the curvature of streets






## Hatfield Downs (WH)

- More central WH neighbourhood, incorporating primary school and community centre
- Framed by new parkland, Hatfield Hyde Brook and buffer to south
- A single point of access from Holwell Hyde Lane
- New multi-modal crossings over Hatfield Hyde Brook
- Neighbourhood structure informed by the site's geometry and edge conditions (woodland, parkland and buffer)
- Streets emanate from spine road in regular development parcels, suited to semi-detached, terraces and maisonette at mid-densities
- Stacked maisonettes likely to be needed as part of Burnside buffer
- The neighbourhood benefits from good access to nearby green open spaces smaller amenity/play areas will be provided for residents
- New homes will face Hatfield Hyde Brook
- The setting of Hatfield Hyde Brook will be enhanced
- New inner residential streets will be tree-lined and two-sided with continuous building frontages
- Continuous pedestrian and cycle link between larger blocks included



## Holwell Green (WH)

- Small residential neighbourhood encircled by significant natural infrastructure (Commons Nature Reserve, Holwell Hyde, Hatfield Hyde Brook, Green Corridor)
  - A single point of access from Holwell Hyde Lane, to the north of the Green Corridor, forming a primary loop road that services every street in the neighbourhood
  - New pedestrian and cycle crossings (and potential restricted vehicular access) through the Green Corridor via Commonswood would ensure that residents of Holwell Green can rely on Hatfield Downs for their local school and community needs
  - New pedestrian linkages to the nearby Hall Grove local centre along the edge of the Commons Nature Reserve will better integrate the neighbourhood with its surroundings
  - The structure of the neighbourhood is informed by the site's complex geometry and its various edge conditions (allotments, woodland, parkland and waterway)
  - This results in more irregular development parcels that are suited to detached, semi-detached and custom build housing at more modest densities
  - The irregularity and lack of a prevailing grain makes the streetscape character of Holwell Green more informal and distinctive
  - The neighbourhood benefits from good access to nearby green open spaces and smaller amenity/play areas will be provided for residents
- 
- New homes will back onto Holwell Hyde Farm, These could be custom build at lower densities
  - Elsewhere, new homes will front onto Hatfield Hyde Brook and the new Green Corridor with restricted vehicular access along the periphery of the neighbourhood
  - The setting of Hatfield Hyde Brook will be enhanced via a wider landscape corridor, which is maintained to avoid existing issues such as littering and fly-tipping, to ensure that it becomes an attractive natural feature.
  - New inner residential streets will be tree-lined and two-sided with staggered building frontages relating to the geometry of the street network

## Commonswood

- Small residential neighbourhood encircled by significant green and blue infrastructure (The Commons Wood, Commons Nature Reserve, Hatfield Hyde Brook and the new Green Corridor)
- A single point of access from the extension of Holwell Hyde Lane (that traverses Hatfield Downs) forms a primary loop road that services every street in the neighbourhood
- New multi-modal crossings over Hatfield Hyde Brook would ensure that residents of Commonswood can rely on Hatfield Downs as their local centre
- New pedestrian and cycle crossings (and potential restricted vehicular access) through the Green Corridor could better integrate Commonswood with the Holwell Green and Hall Grove neighbourhoods
- The structure of the neighbourhood is informed by the loop road, the site's geometry and its different edge conditions (woodland, parkland and waterway)
- Streets emanate from the loop road in a radial and/or concentric manner resulting in compact, rounded and regular development parcels that are suited to detached and semi-detached housing at more modest densities
- The repeated curvature and lack of a prevailing grain makes the streetscape character of Commonswood both familiar and informal



- The neighbourhood benefits from good access to nearby green open spaces and smaller amenity/play areas will be provided for residents
- New homes will be outward facing towards the Commons Nature Reserve, Hatfield Hyde Brook and the new Green Corridor with restricted vehicular access along the periphery of the neighbourhood
- The setting of Hatfield Hyde Brook will be enhanced via a wider landscape corridor, which is maintained to avoid existing issues such as littering and fly-tipping, to ensure that it becomes an attractive natural feature, with new pedestrian and cycle crossings
- New inner residential streets will be tree-lined and two-sided with continuous building frontages emphasising the street network







## 4.10 SUMMARY

The summary masterplan diagram pulls together the various strands for the masterplan strategies covering movement, landscape, and uses and activities and placemaking. This enables the various elements to be read together and highlights particular relationships, such as between uses and activities and open spaces.

The diagram is designed with the same graphic language as the Local Planning Authority strategic policy diagrams, to clearly identify where refinement and adjustment has been made to those diagrams.

- - - Borough/District Boundary	■ ■ ■ Emergency service access and bus route	■ Site for secondary school
— Policy Area Boundary	○ Proposed upgrade to highway junction	■ Community playing fields / pitches
■ Existing Road/Access Route	○ Proposed upgrade to underpass	■ Pocket park
■ Main Vehicular Access Route	○ Bus stops	■ Allotment Site
■ Secondary Vehicular Access Route	■ Potential HERT bus stop	■ Green Corridor
■ Tertiary Vehicular Access Route	■ Area for residential development	■ Green Belt Boundary
■ Existing Public Right of Way	■ Area of higher apartments near Burnside employment area	■ Green Buffer
⋯ Existing footpath	★ Potential location for Gypsy and Traveller site	■ Existing Wildlife/Landscape feature
- - - Existing byway	★ Preferred location for Gypsy and Traveller site	■ The Commons Local Nature Reserve
- - - Non-Motorised Access Route (footpath/cycle path/bridleway)	★ Area for self-build plots	■ Community orchards
🚲 Cycle parking	■ Local centre	■ Existing water body/course
🚗 Vehicular Access Point	■ Amenities	/// Parkland
🚘 Non Vehicular Access Point	■ Site for primary school	/// Heritage Asset Buffer Zone
🚑 Emergency Vehicular Access point		● Protect Setting of Listed Building
		✳ Existing Waste Management Facility
		■ Area for Employment Development





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## **Appendix 1 - Summary of responses from the Duty to Co-operate Bodies**

### **Statutory/Public Bodies:**

#### **Environment Agency (EA):**

The discussion focussed on water resources. It was recognised that East Herts is in an area of water stress. The EA are working with the water companies on updated evidence to inform their position on the efficient use of water resources. They should be able to share further information in the next six-months. The EA welcomes the current District Plan requirement to meet a target of 110 litres or less per head per day.

An updated Water Cycle Study will be required. East Herts should liaise with Hertfordshire County Council on this.

The Council's existing policies on water quality and the water environment are generally fit for purpose. The EA require an undeveloped strip at least 8m wide alongside all main rivers.

The importance of Hertfordshire's chalk rivers were discussed. The Council has requested a further meeting with the EA's Chalk Catchment Co-Ordinator.

New development should be located in areas with the lowest probability of flooding – the sequential test should be used. An updated Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) will be required.

Other areas to consider are Source Protection Zones, Waste and Contaminated Land.

#### **Historic England:**

Historic England welcomes the proactive approach that the Council is taking.

The discussion focused on ensuring that the historic environment plays a positive role in allocating sites for development. Heritage considerations need to be fully integrated in any site selection methodology. Historic England can offer advice on evidence gathering; site selection; and site allocation policies.

Historic England has been raising awareness of the impact of climate change on heritage and the historic environment. An advice note on climate change is currently being prepared.

Design codes were discussed, including the role of the historic environment and historic expertise within design coding.

Historic England will review the policies in the current District Plan and will provide comments.

### **Natural England:**

Meeting due to take place on 26 September 2023.

### **Local Enterprise Partnership:**

The focus of the LEP over the last two years has been on business growth and opportunities. Hertfordshire overall has seen a net loss of employment land over the last five years. There was a recognition that the nature of employment is changing with an increase in the number of people working from home, although post-covid work patterns are still evolving.

Bishop's Stortford continues to offer an excellent location for commercial activity due to its transport links and location in relation to Stansted Airport.

The proposed Hertfordshire Essex Rapid Transit (HERT) proposals for a new sustainable transport network could offer significant economic opportunities which should be considered the Council.



Entrepreneurial businesses related to the environmental sector should be supported.

The Council's economic evidence will need updating and the LEP would welcome ongoing involvement in this work.

### **NHS – Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board:**

Meeting date to be confirmed.

### **Sport England:**

The discussion focused on updating the evidence base for community sport and the increasing policy focus on creating 'active environments' through development. Sport England would like to see 'active design' embedded into strategic policies.

### **Energy Undertakers:**

Meeting date to be confirmed.

### **Thames Water:**

The discussion focussed on Thames Water's Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan, draft Water Resource Management Plan and their current business plan. Generally, the policies in the District Plan remain fit for purpose.

Water efficiency was discussed, and Thames Water considers that there are benefits to requiring the calculations to be based on the 'fittings approach'.

It was noted that Rye Meads Sewerage Treatment works was upgraded in 2020 and currently has capacity until 2036, with space for future upgrades.

### **Affinity Water:**

Meeting date to be confirmed.

### **Hertfordshire County Council:**

#### **Growth and Infrastructure Unit:**

The discussion focussed on HCC's 'Local & Joint Strategic Plans Engagement Document'. The document stresses the importance of sharing potential sites and growth scenario(s) with the county council at the earliest opportunity.

The main focus of the discussion was on education provision (including early years, mainstream schools and special schools) with specific attention drawn to the county council's new tiered approach to new development sites (1:400, 1:500, 1:1000). The planning ratio expresses the number of new dwellings in each category for which the county council would plan to be able to provide an additional form of entry. Depending on the growth strategy proposed there may be a requirement to identify reserve school sites.

The Growth and Infrastructure Unit will also coordinate responses from Adult Care Services, Community Protection, Library Services, Public Health, and Services for Young People.

### **Minerals and Waste:**

Meeting date to be confirmed.

### **Highway Authority:**

HCC's Local Transport Plan (LTP4 2018-2031) was adopted in 2018 and is currently being reviewed. The District Plan will need to need to take account of any update to the Local Transport Plan (LTP5), in particular how emerging technology might affect the way that transport needs to be provided in the longer term.

The proposed Hertfordshire Essex Rapid Transit (HERT) proposals for a new sustainable transport network should be considered.

Updated parking standards should be considered taking account of LTP5.

The provision of a Hertford bypass to address identified constraints on the A414 needs reviewing.

It will be important to take account of development in Uttlesford and any impacts on Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth

A new transport model (which will replace COMET) will be available in due course.

### **Landscape Ecology Archaeology Design (LEADs) Team:**

Meeting date to be confirmed.

### **Lead Local Flood Authority:**

Meeting date to be confirmed.

### **Essex County Council:**

#### **Highway Authority:**

The discussion focussed on the A120 and A414 corridors. The timing of the second Stort crossing was raised. Updates were provided on key schemes, including the HGGT/Gilston Area sustainable transport corridor (due to be completed by March 2026), M11 Junction 7a (now open and fully operational), and M11 Junction 8 (under construction and due to be completed in Autumn 2023).

A multi-modal transport model is now available, which covers the district across to the A10.



## **Neighbouring Local Planning Authorities (Hertfordshire):**

### **Broxbourne Borough Council:**

Meeting date to be confirmed.

### **North Herts District Council:**

Meeting date to be confirmed.

### **Stevenage Borough Council:**

SBC confirmed that they will likely be undertaking a partial review of their local plan, with a full review to follow in 2025. Unlike East Herts the standard method does not result in a significant change in their housing need figure, and they are currently able to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply.

Opportunities to work collaboratively on evidence base updates were discussed.

### **Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council:**

Meeting date to be confirmed.

## **Neighbouring Local Planning Authorities (Essex):**

### **Epping Forest District Council:**

The Epping Forest Local Plan 2011-2033 was adopted on 6 March 2023. It is anticipated that a review will be undertaken by March 2025. The discussion focussed on implementation of the Epping Forest Local Plan, including masterplanning work. The Plan identifies a number of strategic sites which will continue to deliver after 2033.

The potential strategic implications of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) were discussed.

No other Duty to Co-operate matters were raised.

**Harlow Council:**

Meeting date to be confirmed.

**Uttlesford District Council:**

Meeting date to be confirmed.

## Appendix 2 – compliance of District Plan 2018 policies with the NPPF (2021) and NPPG

District Plan Policy	Purpose	Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)	Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)	Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)
1. Introduction				
INT1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	Model policy which supports the delivery of growth.	Accords with national guidance.	No	-
2. Vision and Strategic Objectives				
Vision and Strategic Objectives will need updating.				
3. Development Strategy				
DSP1 Housing, Employment and Retail Growth	Sets out the level of need for housing, employment and retail growth.	Will need updating to reflect the standard method, new use classes and up-to-date evidence.	Yes	National Policy Change
DPS2 The Development Strategy 2011-2033	<p>Sets out where development should be located within the district.</p> <p>Sets out what the 5-year housing land supply will comprise.</p>	<p>The approach is to deliver sustainable development in accordance with a hierarchy. This is broadly in accordance with national policy i.e., brownfield first.</p> <p>Policy will however need updating to reflect updated local housing need.</p> <p>Part I will need to be updated to include a new bullet point that covers development outlined in Policy GBR2.</p>	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change



<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
		Part I should say 'Limited development in the villages <i>in accordance with Policies VILL1, VILL2 and VILL3.</i> '		
DPS3 Housing Supply 2011-2033	Sets out minimum housing supply to meet projected need to 2033.	Will need updating to take account of delivery of strategic sites, and updated commitments, completions and windfall.	Yes	Local Change
DPS4 Infrastructure Requirements	Sets out infrastructure required to support development.	Will need updating to take account of delivery and the latest infrastructure requirements.	Yes	Local Change
DPS5 Neighbourhood Planning	Supports in principle development brought forward through Neighbourhood Planning.	Accords with national guidance and the Localism Act 2011.	No	-
<b>4. Green Belt and Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt</b>				
GBR1 Green Belt	(I) Sets out that planning applications in the Green Belt will be considered in line provisions of the NPPF.  (II) References villages where changes to Green Belt boundaries may be required to accommodate growth identified in Neighbourhood Plans.	(I) Accords with national guidance.  (II) Paragraph 140 of the NPPF now allows Neighbourhood Plans to change to Green Belt boundaries where the need has been established through strategic policies.	Yes	National Policy Change

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
GBR2 Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt	Sets out the types of development that will be permitted in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt.	The policy generally accords with national policy and has been mostly effective but would benefit from an update in order to provide clarity to decision-makers on other forms of development such as residential outbuildings and change of use.	Yes	Local Change
<b>5. Bishop's Stortford</b>				
BISH1 Development in Bishop's Stortford	Sets out the housing, employment and retail growth that Bishop's Stortford will accommodate over the plan-period.	Will need updating to take account of delivery of strategic sites, and updated commitments, completions and windfall.  Policy may also require updating to reflect updated local housing need and floorspace requirements.	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change
BISH2 Bishop's Stortford Town Centre Planning Framework	Sets out that proposals in Bishop's Stortford should take account of the Town Centre Planning Framework.	Whilst the Town Centre Framework was agreed in 2016 and may need reviewing, the policy remains fit for purpose.	No	-
BISH3 Bishop's Stortford North	Strategic site allocation policy.	The site benefits from planning permission and development has commenced. The policy should be retained until the site has been completed. The policy will need to be updated to reflect latest position on the site.	Yes	Local Change
BISH4 Land South of Hadham Road	Strategic site allocation policy.	The site benefits from planning permission and development has commenced. The policy should be retained until the site has been	Yes	Local Change

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
		completed. The policy will need to be updated to reflect latest position on the site.		
BISH5 Bishop's Stortford South	Strategic site allocation policy.	The site benefits from planning permission and development has commenced. The policy should be retained until the site has been completed. The policy will need to be updated to reflect latest position on the site.	Yes	Local Change
BISH6 Bishop's Stortford High School Site, London Road	Strategic site allocation policy.	The site has a resolution to grant permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement. The policy should be retained until the site has been completed. The policy will need to be updated to reflect latest position on the site.	Yes	Local Change
BISH7 The Goods Yard	Strategic site allocation policy.	The site benefits from planning permission and development has commenced. The policy should be retained until the site has been completed. The policy will need to be updated to reflect latest position on the site.	Yes	Local Change
BISH8 Old River Lane	Strategic site allocation policy.	The site does not currently have planning permission. An outline planning application has been submitted for up to 225 dwellings. The policy should be retained until the site has been completed.	No	-
BISH9 East of Manor Links	Strategic Site allocation policy.	The site benefits from planning permission and development is almost completed. The policy should be retained until the site has been completed. The policy will need to be updated to reflect latest position on the site.	Yes	Local Change



<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
BISH10 The Mill Site	Strategic site allocation policy.	The site does not currently have planning permission. The policy should be retained until the site has been completed.	No	-
BISH11 Employment in Bishop's Stortford	Identifies existing designated Employment Areas, and new proposed Employment Areas and other opportunities.	Policy generally reflects local position but will require updating to reflect the status of the new employment areas at BISH3 and BISH5. Likewise, the policy may need to be updated to reflect the latest position at BISH7, BISH8 and BISH10 along with any relevant employment opportunities coming forward on these sites.	Yes	Local Change
BISH12 Retail, Leisure and Recreation in Bishop's Stortford	Identifies retail, leisure and recreation requirements.	Reference to Rhodes Centre in (II) needs updating to South Mill Arts Centre.	Yes	Local Change
<b>6. Buntingford</b>				
BUNT1 Development in Buntingford	Sets out the housing growth that Buntingford will accommodate over the plan-period.	Will need updating to take account of delivery of strategic sites, and updated commitments, completions and windfall.  Policy may also require updating to reflect updated local housing need and floorspace requirements.	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change
BUNT2 First School Site Allocation	Allocates a site for a 2-form of entry First School.	Development complete.	Delete	Local Change
BUNT3 Employment in Buntingford	Identifies existing designated Employment Areas, and new proposed Employment Areas.	Policy reflects local position.	No	-

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
<b>7. Hertford</b>				
HERT1 Development in Hertford	Sets out the housing, employment and retail growth that Hertford will accommodate over the plan-period.	Will need updating to take account of delivery of strategic sites, and updated commitments, completions and windfall.  Policy may also require updating to reflect updated local housing need and floorspace requirements.	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change
HERT2 Mead Lane Area	Strategic site allocation policy.	The site benefits from planning permission and development has commenced. The policy should be retained until the site has been completed. The policy will need to be updated to reflect latest position on the site.	Yes	Local Change
HERT3 West of Hertford	Strategic site allocation policy.	The Thieves Lane element of the allocation is nearing completion and so part III of the policy can be deleted. The Archers Spring element of the allocation does not have full planning permission and so this part of the policy should be retained.	Yes	Local Change
HERT4 North of Hertford	Strategic site allocation policy.	The former nursery element of the allocation has been completed and so references to that part of the site can be deleted. An application has recently been submitted on the remainder of the site for 118 dwellings (Land West of Wadesmill Road, Bengo). The policy will need to be updated to reflect latest position on the site.	Yes	Local Change

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
HERT5 South of Hertford	Strategic site allocation policy	The site benefits from planning permission and development has commenced. The policy should be retained until the site has been completed. The policy will need to be updated to reflect latest position on the site.	Yes	Local Change
HERT6 Employment in Hertford	Identifies existing designated Employment Areas.	Policy reflects local position.	No	-
HERT7 Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy	Sets out that proposals in Hertford should take account of the Town Centre Urban Design Strategy.	The policy remains fit for purpose.	No	-
<b>8. Sawbridgeworth</b>				
SAWB1 Development in Sawbridgeworth	Sets out the housing, employment and retail growth that Sawbridgeworth will accommodate over the plan-period.	Will need updating to take account of delivery of strategic sites, and updated commitments, completions and windfall.  Policy may also require updating to reflect updated local housing need and floorspace requirements.	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change
SAWB2 Land to the North of West Road	Strategic site allocation policy.	The site benefits from planning permission and development has commenced. The policy should be retained until the site has been completed. The policy will need to be updated to reflect latest position on the site.	Yes	Local Change
SAWB3 Land to the South of West Road	Strategic site allocation policy.	The site benefits from planning permission and development has commenced. The policy should be retained until the site has been	Yes	Local Change



<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
		completed. The policy will need to be updated to reflect latest position on the site.		
SAWB4 Land to the North of Sawbridgeworth	Strategic site allocation policy.	Part of this site has a resolution to grant permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement. The policy should be retained until the whole site has been completed. The policy will need to be updated to reflect latest position on the site.	Yes	Local Change
<b>9. Ware</b>				
WARE1 Development in Ware	Sets out the housing, employment and retail growth that Ware will accommodate over the plan-period.	Will need updating to take account of delivery of strategic sites, and updated commitments, completions and windfall.  Policy may also require updating to reflect updated local housing need and floorspace requirements.	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change
WARE2 Land North and East of Ware	Strategic site allocation policy.	The site does not currently have planning permission. A hybrid/outline planning application has been submitted for up to 1,800 dwellings. The policy should be retained until the site has been completed.  Some minor amendments required to accord with the approved Masterplanning Framework.	Yes	Local Change
WARE3 Employment in Ware	Identifies existing designated Employment Areas, and a new proposed Employment Area to the North and East of Ware.	Policy reflects local position.	No	-

District Plan Policy	Purpose	Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)	Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)	Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)
10. Villages				
VILL1 Group 1 Villages	Identifies Group 1 Villages and sets out a requirement to accommodate at least 500 new homes between 2017-2033. Encourages the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans to allocate land for development.	<p>Policy may need updating to take account of any changes to the services and facilities in each village, and the level of public transport available etc.</p> <p>The policy should be updated to reflect the quantum of homes delivered across the villages.</p> <p>Paragraph 140 of the NPPF now allows Neighbourhood Plans to change to Green Belt boundaries where the need has been established through to strategic policies.</p> <p>Part V. should be reviewed in discussion with those Parish Councils that have not met the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 deadline.</p> <p>Further clarity required on village development boundaries.</p>	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change
VILL2 Group 2 Villages	Identifies Group 2 Villages and sets out that limited infill development will be permitted within the village development boundary.	<p>Policy may need updating to take account of any changes to the services and facilities in each village, and the level of public transport available etc.</p> <p>Further clarity required on village development boundaries.</p>	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
VILL3 Group 3 Villages	Sets out that only infill development identified in an adopted Neighbourhood Plan will be permitted.	<p>When Policy VILL3 was written, it took account of the wording in the 2012 NPPF (para. 89) which set out that an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt was: "limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan;"</p> <p>The NPPF 2021, no longer links limited infilling to local plan policies. Instead, it simply states that "limited infilling in villages" is considered an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt (paragraph 149 (e)).</p> <p>The policy therefore needs updating to reflect this latest position.</p>	Yes	National Policy Change
VILL4 Village Employment Areas	Identifies existing designated Employment Areas.	Policy reflects local position.	No	-
<b>11. The Gilston Area</b>				
GA1 The Gilston Area	Strategic site allocation policy.	The site has a resolution to grant permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement. The policy should be retained until the site has been completed. The policy may need to be updated to reflect latest position on the site.	Yes	Local Change
GA2 The River Stort Crossings	Seeks to facilitate the delivery of transport improvements to crossings over the River Stort.	Planning permission has been granted for the Central and Eastern Stort Crossings. Policy	No	-



<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
		should be retained until the proposals have been delivered.		
<b>12. East of Stevenage</b>				
EOS1 Land East of Stevenage	Strategic site allocation policy.	The site benefits from planning permission and development has commenced. The policy should be retained until the site has been completed, including the Travelling Showpeople's site. The policy will need to be updated to reflect latest position on the site.	Yes	Local Change
<b>13. East of Welwyn Garden City</b>				
EWEL1 Land East of Welwyn Garden City	Strategic site allocation policy.	The site does not currently have planning permission. An outline planning application has been submitted for up to 2,650 dwellings. The policy should be retained until the site has been completed. The policy will need to be updated to reflect the latest position in Welwyn Hatfield.	Yes	Local Change
<b>14. Housing</b>				
HOU1 Type and Mix of Housing	Sets out the type and mix of housing required appropriate to local character, taking account of the latest evidence.	Policy generally signposts readers to other relevant policies but also provides a link to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) which sets out the appropriate type and mix of housing. Given the NPPF 2021 requirement to establish housing needs through the standard method, there is likely to be a need to update the SHMA to take into account the revised housing requirement. Likewise, the policy refers to a number of strategies, data sources	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
		and design considerations; these will need to be updated to reflect the most-relevant and up-to-date information.		
HOU2 Housing Density	Requires the efficient use of land, informed by the character of the local area.	<p>Paragraph 125 of the NPPF 2021 sets out that plans should set minimum density standards in town centres that are well served by public transport, and that minimum density standards should also be considered for other parts of the plan area. It also states that it might be appropriate to set a range of densities that reflect the different levels of accessibility and potential of different areas.</p> <p>The current policy does not set out a minimum density standard, nor does it refer to a range of densities in different locations and as such the policy will need to be updated to reflect this requirement</p>	Yes	National Policy Change
HOU3 Affordable Housing	Sets out when Affordable Housing required, the amount (%) and tenure.	<p>Policy needs updating to reflect paragraph 64 of the NPPF 2021 which sets out that 'affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments'.</p> <p>Policy will also need to reflect the latest affordable housing definition in the NPPF 2021, including consideration of First Homes.</p>	Yes	National Policy Change

District Plan Policy	Purpose	Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)	Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)	Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)
		<p>Paragraph 65 of the NPPF 2021 requires planning policies to expect at least 10% of the total number of homes on major sites to be for affordable home ownership unless specific exceptions apply. Policy HOU3 does not refer to the requirements of paragraph 65 of the NPPF.</p> <p>Policy may need updating to reflect the latest evidence, including consideration of delivery since the start of the plan-period; the PPG requirement to consider aspirational need; and viability.</p>		
HOU4 Rural Exception Affordable Housing Sites	Sets out when rural exception housing schemes will be permitted.	The PPG sets out that local authorities are encouraged to produce policies that specify in further detail the proportions of market housing that would be considered acceptable, and under what circumstances in regard to Rural Exception policies. The PPG also sets out that plan-makers are encouraged to set policies that detail the circumstances in which alternative approaches to viability would be considered. The current policy does not define or detail either of these criteria and as such may require updating.	Yes	National Policy Change
HOU5 Dwellings for Rural Workers	Sets out when dwellings for rural workers will be permitted.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-



<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
HOU6 Specialist Housing for Older and Vulnerable People	Encourages the provision of specialist housing for older and vulnerable people. Sets a target of at least 530 bed-spaces to meet these specialist needs.	<p>Additional guidance in the PPG was published on Housing for Older and Disabled People. This includes setting out categories of the different types of specialist housing for older people and also identifying the need to provide housing for older people as critical.</p> <p>Policy HOU6 should be updated to reflect the additional guidance and also to reflect the latest needs, and the delivery of specialist/older housing provision since the adoption of the plan.</p>	Yes	National Policy Change
HOU7 Accessible and Adaptable Homes	Ensures the delivery of accessible and adaptable homes to meet the changing needs of occupants.	<p>The PPG and NPPF allows plan-making authorities to set out the proportion of new housing that will be delivered to technical housing standards – Policy HOU7 currently does this.</p> <p>However, the proportion will need to be reassessed in light of any up-to-date evidence and viability considerations. As such the Policy will likely need to be updated.</p>	Yes	Local change
HOU8 Self-Build and Custom Build Housing	On sites of more than 200 homes, the policy requires at least 1% of dwellings for sale to self-builders.	Policy should be reviewed to increase effectiveness.	Yes	Local Change

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
HOU9 Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	Ensures the delivery of traveller pitches and plots to meet locally identified need and sets out criteria for assessing proposals on allocated or windfall sites	<p>Policy should be reviewed to:</p> <p>Update Part I in light of 2022 GTANA and implications for pitch/plot delivery on allocated sites;</p> <p>Update Part II to add link to locally identified need through GTANA in criteria;</p> <p>Update Part II (a) to make clearer that ‘a sustainable location’ applies not only to services but also to reflect that travel is an important consideration in this respect and should link to meeting the aims of Policy TRA1;</p> <p>Update Part II (g) to change ‘undue’ to ‘adverse’ for clarity and to avoid potential issues around interpretation.</p>	Yes	Local Change
HOU10 New Park Home Sites for Non-Nomadic Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	Seeks the delivery of traveller pitches and plots to meet locally identified need for travellers who have permanently ceased to travel and sets out criteria for windfall sites	<p>Policy should be reviewed to:</p> <p>Assess any potential implications of the Lisa Smith judgement in policy revision;</p> <p>Update preamble in light of 2022 GTANA and implications for pitch/plot delivery;</p> <p>Update to add link to locally identified need through GTANA in criteria;</p>	Yes	Local Change

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
		<p>Introduce mechanisms for meeting locally identified need through site allocations (which may, or may not, be linked to site allocations to be delivered through Policy HOU9); Update criterion (a) to make clearer that ‘a sustainable location’ applies not only to services but also to reflect that travel is an important consideration in this respect and should link to meeting the aims of Policy TRA1;</p> <p>Update criterion (g) to change ‘undue’ to ‘adverse’ for clarity and to avoid potential issues around interpretation.</p>		
HOU11 Extensions and Alterations to Dwellings, Residential Outbuildings and Works Within Residential Curtilages	Sets out the criteria against which proposals for extensions and alterations to dwellings, residential outbuildings, and work within residential curtilages, will be considered.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
HOU12 Change of Use of Land to Residential Garden and Enclosure of Amenity Land	Sets out when a change of use of land to residential garden will be permitted.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
HOU13 Residential Annexes	Sets out when residential annexes will be permitted.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-



<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
<b>15. Economic Development</b>				
ED1 Employment	Refers to designated Employment Areas.  Supports in principle the provision of new employment uses in suitable locations. Sets out that development which would cause the loss of an employment site will only be permitted where various criteria are met.	The Use Classes Order was amended in September 2020 and use classes previously under Class B1 are now under Class E – Commercial, business and service.	Yes	National Policy Change
ED2 Rural Economy	Supports sustainable economic growth in the rural areas and seeks to prevent the loss of rural employment. Proposals for diversification will be supported in principle subject to criteria.	Paragraph 84 of the NPPF 2021 strengthens the support planning policies should offer the rural economy. In particular with reference to the expansion and growth of businesses. Policy will also need to be updated to reflect the addition of paragraph 85 of the NPPF.	Yes	National Policy Change
ED3 Communications Infrastructure	Supports the provision and expansion of communications networks where appropriate.	Paragraphs 114 and 115 of the NPPF 2021 have expanded and updated the support for ‘next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections’ and as such the policy should be updated to reflect this.	Yes	National Policy Change
ED4 Flexible Working Practices	Policy supports proposals for live/work units in sustainable locations.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	Yes	Local Change

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
		Policy refers to the Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development SPD, which under the proposed new plan-making system will potentially cease to have effect.		
ED5 Tourism	Supports tourism facilities in appropriate locations.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
ED6 Lifelong Learning	Supports in principle the provision of new educational establishments in line with policy CFLR10 (Education)	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
<b>16. Retail and Town Centres</b>				
RTC1 Retail Development	Supports town centre uses as defined by the NPPF within town centre boundaries. Requires proposals to be assessed in line with the sequential approach.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.  Updated evidence might be required such as a Retail and Town Centres Study to determine whether the thresholds currently applied are still appropriate.	No	-
RTC2 Primary Shopping Area	Identifies Primary Shopping Areas for Bishop's Stortford, Hertford and Ware.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
RTC3 Primary Shopping Frontages	Identifies Primary Shopping Frontages in Bishop's Stortford, Hertford and Ware.	The Use Classes Order was amended in September 2020. This abolished the A Class definition for uses of land and buildings across England. Classes A1, A2 and A3 joined business Class B1 along with health and assembly uses D1 and D2 in a newly created Class E - Commercial, Business and Service.	Yes	National Policy Change

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
RTC4 Secondary Shopping Frontages	Identifies Secondary Shopping Frontages in Bishop's Stortford, Buntingford, Hertford, Sawbridgeworth and Ware.	Policy generally accords with national guidance and local issues.	No	-
RTC5 District Centres, Neighbourhood Centres, Local Parades and Individual Shops	Sets out that when proposals will be supported in District Centres, Neighbourhood Centres and Local Parades. Proposals that result in the loss of shops will be resisted.	Reference to A1 Use needs updating following the amendment to the Use Classes Order in September 2020.	Yes	National Policy Change
<b>17. Design and Landscape</b>				
DES1 Masterplanning	Requires all 'significant' development proposals to collaboratively prepare a masterplan.	Policy could be strengthened to reflect the lessons learnt from the masterplanning process.	Yes	Local Change
DES2 Landscape Character	Requires development proposals to demonstrate how they conserve, enhance or strengthen the character and distinctive features of the district's landscape.	Refers to the Landscape Character Assessment SPD, which under the proposed new plan-making system will potentially cease to have effect.	Yes	National Policy Change
DES3 Landscaping	Requires development proposals to demonstrate how they will retain, protect and enhance existing landscape features.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.  The NPPF 2021 introduced a requirement for planning policies and decisions to encourage tree-lined streets and incorporate trees in new development.	Yes	National Policy Change



<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
DES4 Design of Development	Requires all development proposals to be of high standard of design and layout to reflect and promote local distinctiveness.	<p>Policy needs to be updated to better incorporate sustainability measures and ensure that it captures all key principles for good urban design.</p> <p>Revised national policies state that local authorities must draw up design codes and guidance as part of their local plans or as a standalone policy document. Paragraph 129 of the NPPF 2021 states that, to "carry weight in decision-making", design guides and codes "should be produced either as part of a [development] plan or as supplementary planning documents".</p>	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change
DES5 Crime and Security	Requires developments to be designed to reduce the opportunity for crime.	Accords with national guidance. The NPPF 2021 requires developments to be safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion.	No	-
DES6 Advertisements and Signs	To ensure that the display of advertisements and signs is appropriate.	Policy should cross reference Policy HA5 (Shopfronts in Conservation Areas) and Policy HA6 (Advertisements in Conservation Areas).	Yes	Local Change
<b>18. Transport</b>				
TRA1 Sustainable Transport	To achieve accessibility improvements and promotion of sustainable transport in the district.	To reflect national and local changes, the policy requires updating to maximise sustainable transport potential through development. In particular HCC is currently in the process of updating both policy and guidance in this	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
		respect. Policy should also be strengthened to reflect the active travel agenda.		
TRA2 Safe and Suitable Highway Access Arrangements and Mitigation	To ensure safe and suitable access can be achieved.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
TRA3 Vehicle Parking Provision	To secure appropriate vehicle parking provision through development proposals.	Policy refers to the Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development SPD, which under the proposed new plan-making system will potentially cease to have effect. Parking standards will therefore need to be included within the District Plan.	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change
<b>19. Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation</b>				
CFLR1 Open Space, Sport and Recreation	Requires new development to incorporate open space, sport and recreation provision on-site or where appropriate through financial contributions for off-site provision.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
CFLR2 Local Green Space	Sets out that development will only be permitted if it is consistent with the function, character and use of the Local Green Space to which it relates.	Could include designated Local Green Spaces identified in the District Plan i.e., the 'green fingers' in Hertford and Bishop's Stortford.  Appropriate LGS policy is subject to the guidance of the Court of Appeal in R (Lochailort) v (Mendip DC), which states LGS policy should be consistent with the NPPF unless exceptional circumstances are given. Para 103 of the NPPF	Yes	National Change/ Local Change

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
		2021 requires development in LGS should be consistent with those for Green Belt.		
CFLR3 Public Rights of Way	Requires development proposals to take full account of the need to protect and enhance Public Rights of Way.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
CFLR4 Water Based Recreation	Supports in principle water based recreation.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
CFLR5 The Lee Valley Regional Park	Supports proposals for leisure related development within the Lee Valley Regional Park.	Supporting text may need updating.	No	-
CFLR6 Equine Development	Sets out that proposals for equine development will be permitted subject to criteria.	Clarity around equine needs assessments required to assist with effective decision-making.	Yes	Local Change
CFLR7 Community Facilities	Requires the provision of adequate and appropriately located community facilities in conjunction with new development.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
CFLR8 Loss of Community Facilities	To protect existing community facilities.	Clarity required on how to demonstrate that a facility is no longer needed.	Yes	Local Change
CFLR9 Health and Wellbeing	Seeks to promote healthy communities and reduce health inequalities.	Policy generally accords with national guidance. May need to be updated to address local issues such as air quality.	Yes	Local Change
CFLR10 Education	To ensure that appropriate education facilities are	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-



<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
	provided in conjunction with new development.			
<b>20. Natural Environment</b>				
NE1 International, National and Locally Designated Nature Conservation Sites	To protect and enhance designated nature conservation sites.	The Environment Act 2021 introduced the requirement for mandatory biodiversity net gain and local nature recovery strategies. Policy will need to be updated to reflect these changes.	Yes	National Policy Change
NE2 Sites or Features of Nature Conservation Interest (Non-Designated)	To ensure new proposals achieve a net gain in biodiversity.	The Environment Act 2021 requires new development to deliver a mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain. Policy will need to be updated to reflect the new requirements.	Yes	National Policy Change
NE3 Species and Habitats	To ensure proposals enhance biodiversity and create opportunities for wildlife.	The Environment Act 2021 requires new development to deliver a mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain. Policy will need to be updated to reflect the new requirements.  Criteria VIII could be updated to make reference to specific species, e.g., swifts and hedgehogs.	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change
NE4 Green Infrastructure	To ensure the delivery, protection and enhancement of multi-functional green infrastructure across the district.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.  Policy could be strengthened to reflect the lessons learnt from the delivery of strategic sites, such as stewardship arrangements.  Opportunity to update to include reference to most up to date local strategies.	Yes	Local Change

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
<b>21. Heritage Assets</b>				
HA1 Designated Heritage Assets	Sets out that development proposals should preserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment. Proposals that lead to substantial harm to a heritage asset will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that public benefits outweigh the harm or loss.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.  Could be expanded to make clear that great weight should be given to less than substantial harm.	Yes	Local Change
HA2 Non-Designated Heritage Assets	Sets out that the Council will engage with key stakeholders and local communities to identify non-designated heritage assets.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.  Could be expanded to refer to a future local list, which would be appended to the District Plan.	Yes	Local Change
HA3 Archaeology	Sets the requirement to submit a desk-based assessment and a field evaluation where sites have the potential include heritage assets with archaeological interest.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
HA4 Conservation Areas	Sets out criteria for dealing with development proposals in/outside Conservation Areas.	Policy requires updating to ensure that sustainability is given sufficient weight.	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change
HA5 Shopfronts in Conservation Areas	Ensures that a high-quality environment is maintained in	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
	the district's Conservation Areas. Proposals must be sensitive to the character and appearance of the area.			
HA6 Advertisements in Conservation Areas	To ensure signage is sensitive in Conservation Areas and does not increase levels of illumination along the street.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.  Could refer to avoiding full window vinyl adverts.	Yes	Local Change
HA7 Listed Buildings	Sets out criteria for dealing with proposals involving the alteration, extension, or change of use of a Listed Building. Proposals that affect the setting of a Listed Building will only be permitted where the setting of the building is preserved.	Policy requires updating to ensure that sustainability is given sufficient weight.	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change
HA8 Historic Parks and Gardens	Requires development proposals to protect the special historic character, appearance or setting of sites listed on the Historic England 'Register of Historic Parks and Gardens'. The same level of protection will be afforded to other locally important sites.	Section refers to the Historic Parks and Gardens SPD, which under the proposed new plan-making system will potentially cease to have effect. Locally important sites may need to be referred to in policy and appended to the District Plan.	Yes	National Policy Change
HA9 Enabling Development	Requires proposals to be assessed having regard to	Accords with the latest Historic England's guidance.	No	-



<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
	Historic England's latest guidance.			
<b>22. Climate Change</b>				
CC1 Climate Change Adaptation	Requires new development to adapt to the impacts of climate change.	Policy needs to be strengthened to reflect latest national and local position on climate change.  The NPPF 2021 states that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change.	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change
CC2 Climate Change Mitigation	To ensure that new development proposals demonstrate how they will mitigate against climate change, such as reducing on-site emissions.	Policy needs to be strengthened to reflect latest national and local position on climate change. In July 2023 the Council declared a climate change emergency in East Herts.  The NPPF 2021 states that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change.	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change
CC3 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy	Identifies criteria to inform the appropriate location of sources of renewable energy generation.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.  Part II should explicitly refer to setting of designated heritage assets.	Yes	Local Change
<b>23. Water</b>				
WAT1 Flood Risk Management	To ensure new development does not increase flood risk.	Paragraph 160 of the NPPF 2021 has been amended to clarify the sequential test should take into account "all sources of flood risk", and new Annex 3 now sets out the Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification which was	Yes	National Policy Change

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
		<p>previously included in national planning guidance.</p> <p>The flood risk and coastal change section of the Planning Practice Guidance was updated in 2022 to strengthen guidance on the how to apply the sequential test, surface water flood risks and sustainable drainage.</p>		
WAT2 Source Protection Zones	To protect Source Protection Zones, by requiring proposals for certain types of development to assess potential impact.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
WAT3 Water Quality and the Water Environment	Requires proposals to preserve and enhance water quality.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
WAT4 Efficient Use of Water Resources	Requires proposals to minimise the use of mains water by improving water efficiency.	Policy needs to be strengthened to reflect latest national and local position on climate change adaptation.	Yes	National Policy Change / Local Change
WAT5 Sustainable Drainage	To ensure new development utilises effective sustainable drainage.	The flood risk and coastal change section of the Planning Practice Guidance was updated in 2022 to strengthen guidance on surface water flood risk, the role and multi-functional use of sustainable drainage (SuDS) and to encourage the use of local policies to steer the type of SuDs preferred in different locations.	Yes	National Policy Change/ Local Change

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
		Since the adoption of the District Plan, Herts County Council as the Lead Local Flood Risk Authority (LLFRA) have published a new strategy and guidance.		
WAT6 Wastewater Infrastructure	To ensure there is an adequate wastewater network to support any new development.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
<b>24. Environmental Quality</b>				
EQ1 Contaminated Land and Land Instability	Requires new development to demonstrate that unacceptable risks from contamination and land instability can be addressed.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
EQ2 Noise Pollution	Requires development to be designed and operated in a way that minimises the impact of noise on the surrounding environment and to ensure the impact of existing noise generating sources are taken into account when assessing new development.	Policy generally accords with national guidance.	No	-
EQ3 Light Pollution	To reduce light pollution by ensuring external lighting schemes address a number of criteria.	Policy should be strengthened to address impact of light pollution on wildlife.	Yes	Local Change



<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
EQ4 Air Quality	To ensure new development includes measures to minimise the impact on air quality.	Policy needs to be strengthened to reflect latest national and local position on improving air quality.	Yes	National Policy Change/ Local Change
<b>25. Delivery and Monitoring</b>				
DEL1 Infrastructure and Service Delivery	Requires the timely provision of infrastructure to support sustainable development.	Accords with national guidance.	No	-
DEL2 Planning Obligations	Sets out that planning obligations will be sought under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act.	The Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill seeks to replace the current system of developer contributions with a mandatory, more streamlined, and locally determined Infrastructure Levy.	Yes	National Policy Change
DEL3 Monitoring Framework	Requires monitoring of housing delivery.	Policy superseded by the Housing Delivery Test which is an annual measurement of housing delivery in a local planning authority area.	Yes	National Policy Change
DEL4 Monitoring of the Gilston Area	Requires an action plan setting out key milestones for the delivery of the site, which will be monitored on an annual basis.	Policy should be retained.	No	-
<b>Appendix A</b>				
Key Diagram	Illustrates the main components of the development strategy.	Consequential changes following any update to strategic site allocations.	Yes	Local Change

<b>District Plan Policy</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Comments (e.g., compliance with NPPF/ NPPG and other legislation, monitoring, delivery etc)</b>	<b>Does the policy need reviewing? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Reason (National Policy Change / Local Change)</b>
Appendix B				
Strategy Worksheet	Sets out anticipated trajectory for delivery of strategic site allocations.	Consequential changes following any update to strategic site allocations.	Yes	Local Change
Appendix C				
Glossary	Provides definition of key terms used in the District Plan.	Based on the 2012 NPPF and requires updating to reflect the 2021 NPPF (or any further updates).	Yes	National Policy Change

### Appendix 3 – PAS Local Plan Route Mapper Toolkit: Local Plan Review Assessment

	Matters to consider	Agree / Disagree	Extent to which the local plan meets this requirement
<b>A</b>	<b>PLAN REVIEW FACTORS</b>		
<b>A1.</b>	<b>The plan policies still reflect current national planning policy requirements.</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	Appendix 2 demonstrates that whilst a number of the policies in the District Plan 2018 generally accord with national policy and guidance, many do not and will require updating to reflect either a national policy change or a local change in circumstance.
<b>A2.</b>	<b>There has not been a <u>significant</u> change in local housing need numbers from that specified in your plan (accepting there will be some degree of flux).</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<p>Appendix 4 considers changes to local housing need.</p> <p>Paragraph 62 of the NPPG states that local housing need will be considered to have changed significantly where a plan has been adopted prior to the standard method being implemented, on the basis of a number that is significantly below the number generated using the standard method.</p> <p>The District Plan requirement is for 839 dwellings per annum. The current local housing need set by the standard method is for 1,112 dwellings per annum. This represents a 33% increase and is deemed to be a significant change to local housing need.</p>

A3.	<b>You have a 5-year supply of housing land</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<p>Following a hearing session in December 2022, an Inspector concluded that the Council is unable to demonstrate a five year housing land supply (5YHLS) of deliverable sites. In particular, the Inspector questioned the deliverability of the Council's anticipated supply of housing, setting out specific concerns about the following four sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GA1: The Gilston Area</li> <li>- HERT3: West of Hertford (Archers Spring)</li> <li>- EWEL1: East of Welwyn</li> <li>- WARE2: North and East of Ware</li> </ul> <p>The Inspector concluded that no development from these sites should be included in the five year supply, thereby reducing the overall supply by 1,800 dwellings, leading to a 760 dwelling shortfall. This results in the Council only having 4.41 years of supply.</p> <p>The Council's Planning Policy Team will be considering the latest housing completions data and will use this, alongside other evidence, to review the land supply position. This offers the best opportunity for the Council to comprehensively address the appeal Inspector's concerns.</p>
A4.	<b>You are meeting housing delivery targets</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<p>The Council has continued its trend of annual improvements on the Housing Delivery Test. The last Housing Delivery Test result showed that the Council was able to demonstrate a 130% delivery rate.</p>



A5.

Your plan policies are on track to deliver other plan objectives including any (i) affordable housing targets including requirements for First Homes; and (ii) commercial floorspace/jobs targets over the remaining plan period.

Disagree

**i) affordable housing targets including requirements for First Homes**

The East Herts District Plan sets out the affordable housing need and targets in Table 14.1 (page 182) over the period 2011-2033, of 217 dwellings per annum.

Work commissioned in 2021 and completed in 2022 concluded that the annual need for affordable housing in East Herts had risen since the District Plan was adopted. The work concluded that there was a total need of 3,784 affordable dwellings over the period 2021-2033, or 315 per annum. It should be noted that this increase in growth is largely due to the shorter period to address the backlog of need alongside the introduction of those aspiring to own being considered as potentially being in affordable housing need.

When looking at the annual delivery rates of affordable housing, it is clear that since the adoption of the District Plan in 2018, a significant increase in affordable completions has followed which is demonstrated in the table below. However, the table also demonstrates that the net affordable completions have fallen short of the average affordable dwellings target since the start of the plan period.

Year	Net Affordable Completions
11/12	124
12/13	196
13/14	68
14/15	125

			<table border="1" data-bbox="1182 129 2065 475"> <tr><td>15/16</td><td>121</td></tr> <tr><td>16/17</td><td>158</td></tr> <tr><td>17/18</td><td>60</td></tr> <tr><td>18/19</td><td>199</td></tr> <tr><td>19/20</td><td>310</td></tr> <tr><td>20/21</td><td>267</td></tr> <tr><td>21/22</td><td>196</td></tr> <tr><td>22/23</td><td>242</td></tr> </table> <p>The District Plan 2018 does not include a policy on First Homes.</p> <p><b>(ii) commercial floorspace/jobs targets over the remaining plan period.</b></p> <p>Whilst further work will need to be undertaken to establish the exact delivery of jobs/employment land targets, it is clear that employment floorspace has continued its trend of a net decrease since the District Plan has been adopted.</p>	15/16	121	16/17	158	17/18	60	18/19	199	19/20	310	20/21	267	21/22	196	22/23	242
15/16	121																		
16/17	158																		
17/18	60																		
18/19	199																		
19/20	310																		
20/21	267																		
21/22	196																		
22/23	242																		
A6.	<p><b>There have been no significant changes in economic conditions which could challenge the delivery of the Plan, including the policy requirements within it.</b></p>	Disagree	<p>There have been some significant changes in economic conditions that will need to be taken into account. These include the impact of the pandemic and changes to the use classes order that allows for commercial premises (business and retail) to change to housing without the need for planning permission.</p> <p>Historic evidence suggests that there has been a steady decline of employment space in East Herts, and existing employment areas continue to come under pressure to redevelop to other uses.</p>																

			Updated economic evidence will be required to assess jobs growth and projections, and other opportunities for business growth across the district.
<b>A7.</b>	<b>There have been no significant changes affecting viability of planned development.</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<p>It is acknowledged that there are currently macro-events and trends that could affect the viability of delivering developments such as the increasing cost of materials and labour shortages.</p> <p>Whilst the direct impact of the above on the viability of planned development is difficult to determine, there are local examples of site allocations demonstrating viability issues. For example, the Gilston Area allocation for 10,000 homes is unlikely to reach policy-compliant levels of affordable housing due to viability reasons. Likewise, the submitted application at HERT3 has experienced delays in determination directly linked to viability issues.</p> <p>Delays to brownfield developments could be viability linked; HERT2 was granted permission in 2020 but aside from a material start on site there have been no completions and work has largely stalled for over a year.</p>
<b>A8.</b>	<b>Key site allocations are delivering, or on course to deliver, in accordance the local plan policies meaning that the delivery of the spatial strategy is not at risk.</b>	<b>Agree/ Disagree</b>	<p>Twelve of the allocated sites in the District Plan have been granted planning permission and development is in progress. In terms of the remaining sites, an update on each one is provided below:</p> <p>BISH6 - Bishop's Stortford High School, has a resolution to grant permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement, which is in final draft and will be issued shortly. This is an outline planning application for up to 223 dwellings including the demolition of existing buildings.</p>

<p>BISH8 - Land at Old River Lane, does not currently have planning permission. An outline planning application has been submitted for up to 225 dwellings and will be determined by the Development Management committee in due course (committee date to be agreed).</p> <p>HERT3 - West of Hertford (Archers Spring), does not currently have planning permission. An outline application has been submitted for 342 dwellings and will be determined by the Development Management Committee in due course (committee date to be agreed).</p> <p>HERT4 - North of Hertford (West of Wadesmill Road), does not currently have planning permission. A planning application for 118 dwellings has been submitted and will be determined by the Development Management Committee in due course (committee date to be agreed).</p> <p>SAWB4 - Land North of Sawbridgeworth, has a resolution to grant permission subject to the signing of a Section 106 Agreement. This is hybrid planning application for full permission for 85 dwellings and outline permission for 99 dwellings.</p> <p>WARE2 - Land North and East of Ware, does not currently have planning permission. A hybrid planning application has been submitted including outline permission for 1,800 dwellings and will be determined by the Development Management Committee in due course (committee date to be agreed).</p> <p>GA1 - The Gilston Area, has a resolution to grant outline planning permission subject to the signing of Section 106 Agreements. This</p>
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			<p>relates to two separate permissions, one for 8,500 dwellings (Villages 1-6), and the second for 1,500 dwellings (Village 7).</p> <p>EWEL1 - East of Welwyn Garden City, does not currently have planning permission. An outline planning application for 1,350 homes in East Herts District and 1,300 homes in Welwyn Hatfield Borough has been submitted and will be determined by each Council's Development Management Committee in due course (committee date/s to be agreed).</p> <p>This means that the District Plan housing trajectory is being delivered broadly in line with what was anticipated in 2018; however, as the Council cannot currently demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, there may be a need to identify additional sites to ensure an adequate supply of housing (see A3. above).</p>
A9.	<p><b>There have been no significant changes to the local environmental or heritage context which have implications for the local plan approach or policies.</b></p>	<p><b>Disagree</b></p>	<p><u>Climate Change</u> - The importance of tackling climate change has risen in the national agenda since the adoption of the District Plan in 2018. In 2019 the Government amended the Climate Change Act to commit the UK to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Subsequently, changes to the building regulations came into force in June 2022, which require new homes to reduce carbon emissions by 30% and non-domestic buildings to reduce emissions by 27%.</p> <p>The Council has recently made a declaration of climate emergency (Council, 26th July 2023) and it has become clear that action to mitigate against climate change and adapt to its impacts must be embedded and integrated into all aspects of policy preparation, including through a review of the District Plan.</p>

Flood Risk - Any change to strategic policies and proposals, including to site allocations, will need a revised Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and application of the sequential approach.

Improvements to the Environment - The update to the NPPF in 2021 emphasised the importance of trees for enhancing the quality and character of the urban area and addressing climate change. Paragraph 131 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that streets are tree lined and that opportunities are taken to ensure trees are incorporated elsewhere in developments.

Biodiversity - The Environment Act in 2021 introduced a mandatory requirement for biodiversity net gain. Development proposals will need to deliver a minimum 10% net gain using a biodiversity metric and approval of a biodiversity net gain plan. This will start to come into force for some planning applications from November 2023.

Sustainability Appraisal - The SA will need to be reviewed against any new District Plan objectives. The SA will also require updating if housing numbers and distribution needs change. New sites will also need to be assessed.

			<p><u>Flood Risk</u> - Any change to strategic policies and proposals, including to site allocations, will need a revised Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and application of the sequential approach.</p> <p><u>Improvements to the Environment</u> - The update to the NPPF in 2021 emphasised the importance of trees for enhancing the quality and character of the urban area and addressing climate change. Paragraph 131 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that streets are tree lined and that opportunities are taken to ensure trees are incorporated elsewhere in developments.</p> <p><u>Biodiversity</u> - The Environment Act in 2021 introduced a mandatory requirement for biodiversity net gain. Development proposals will need to deliver a minimum 10% net gain using a biodiversity metric and approval of a biodiversity net gain plan. This will start to come into force for some planning applications from November 2023.</p> <p><u>Sustainability Appraisal</u> - The SA will need to be reviewed against any new District Plan objectives. The SA will also require updating if housing numbers and distribution needs change. New sites will also need to be assessed.</p>
A10.	<p><b>No new sites have become available since the finalisation of the adopted local plan which require the spatial strategy to be re-evaluated.</b></p>	<p><b>Agree</b></p>	<p>Delivery of the development strategy set out in the District Plan has ensured that planning in East Herts has been genuinely 'plan led' over the last five years, which will have significantly reduced the number of speculative developments coming forward.</p>

			It will be important that the District Plan continues to provide a clear framework for addressing the district's housing needs and other economic, social, and environmental priorities.														
A11.	<p><b>Key planned infrastructure projects critical to plan delivery are on track and have not stalled / failed and there are no new major infrastructure programmes with implications for the growth / spatial strategy set out in the plan.</b></p>	<p><b>Agree</b></p>	<p>Policy DPS4 Infrastructure Requirements sets out the key planned infrastructure requirements to support the levels of growth required – the table below assesses their progress and current status:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1182 491 2056 1026"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="1182 491 1621 536">Project</th> <th data-bbox="1621 491 2056 536">Progress</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="1182 536 1621 576">a) New Junction 7a on M11</td> <td data-bbox="1621 536 2056 576">Completed</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1182 576 1621 699">b) Upgrades to Junction 7 and 8 of M11</td> <td data-bbox="1621 576 2056 699">Junction 8 under construction due to be complete autumn 2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1182 699 1621 863">c) Widening of existing River Stort crossing, provision of a second</td> <td data-bbox="1621 699 2056 863">Permission granted for both the widening of the existing crossing, and the provision of the new crossing</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1182 863 1621 943">d) Provision of Hertford bypass</td> <td data-bbox="1621 863 2056 943">Solution not identified</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1182 943 1621 983">e) Little Hadham bypass</td> <td data-bbox="1621 943 2056 983">Completed</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1182 983 1621 1026">f) Upgrades to A602</td> <td data-bbox="1621 983 2056 1026">Completed</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Other infrastructure required to support development has also been delivered or will be delivered, including:</p> <ul data-bbox="1182 1193 1921 1385" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- upgrades to rail network</li> <li>- measures to facilitate sustainable transport</li> <li>- new schools and the expansion of existing schools</li> <li>- healthcare facilities</li> <li>- broadband telecoms</li> </ul>	Project	Progress	a) New Junction 7a on M11	Completed	b) Upgrades to Junction 7 and 8 of M11	Junction 8 under construction due to be complete autumn 2023	c) Widening of existing River Stort crossing, provision of a second	Permission granted for both the widening of the existing crossing, and the provision of the new crossing	d) Provision of Hertford bypass	Solution not identified	e) Little Hadham bypass	Completed	f) Upgrades to A602	Completed
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f) Upgrades to A602	Completed																

			<p>- upgrades to wastewater and water supply</p> <p>In 2022/23 alone nearly £3-million of S.106 money was allocated to individual projects or uses across the district.</p> <p>Further information on infrastructure delivery is available in the Council's Annual Infrastructure Delivery Statements - <a href="https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/about-east-herts-0/east-herts-annual-infrastructure-funding-statements">https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/about-east-herts-0/east-herts-annual-infrastructure-funding-statements</a>.</p>
<p><b>A12.</b></p>	<p><b>All policies in the plan are achievable and effective including for the purpose of decision-making.</b></p>	<p><b>Disagree</b></p>	<p>Appendix 2 considers the individual policies in the Plan and identifies where updates are required based on either local changes and/or national policy changes.</p> <p>In some cases, the need to update is due to the effectiveness of the policy since its adoption. This mainly relates to the Development Management policies, where a number of them would benefit from an update following lessons learnt across a number of years of decision-making.</p> <p>Similarly, where a national policy change has occurred some policies have become outdated or are now in conflict with the NPPF; again, an update would benefit the effectiveness of these policies.</p> <p>Where issues have been identified and Development Management colleagues have reported them, this information has been included in the commentary within Appendix 2 accompanying the relevant policy.</p>



A13.	<b>There are no recent or forthcoming changes to another authority's development plan or planning context which would have a material impact on your plan / planning context for the area covered by your local plan.</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<p>Appendix 1 summarises the Duty to Co-operate discussions that have been held to date with key stakeholders.</p> <p>There are currently no identified matters that would have a material impact on the planning context for the district. This will be kept under review.</p>
A14.	<b>There are no local political changes or a revised / new corporate strategy which would require a change to the approach set out in the current plan.</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<p>The political make-up of East Herts Council changed substantially in May 2023. The new-Joint Administration may have a different approach or objectives and likewise may wish to incorporate their manifesto commitments into any update.</p> <p>A Corporate Plan was agreed in 2020 and whilst the District Plan doesn't necessarily conflict with the objectives of this Plan, it does not contain reference to it or directly support its objectives. Furthermore, it is anticipated that a new Corporate Plan will be prepared by the Joint Administration.</p> <p>Key partners and departments have also adopted or agreed a number of strategies and plans in the intervening years since the District Plan was adopted. For example, the East Herts Housing Strategy 2022-27 and the Homelessness Review and Strategy 2019-2024 were both agreed following the District Plan adoption.</p>

	<b>ASSESSING WHETHER OR NOT TO UPDATE YOUR PLAN POLICIES</b>	<b>YES/NO (please indicate below)</b>	
<b>A15.</b>	<b>You AGREE with <u>all</u> of the statements above</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>If no go to question A16.</b>
<b>A16.</b>	<b>You DISAGREE with one or more of the statements above and the issue can be addressed by an update of local plan policies</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>If yes, based on the above provide a summary of the key reasons <u>why</u> an update to plan policies is necessary in section A17 below and complete Section B below.</b>
<b>A17.</b>	<p><b><u>Decision:</u> Update plan policies</b></p> <p><b>Reasons for decision on whether or not to update plan policies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The significant change in local housing need arising from the standard method (see Appendix 4 for more information).</li> <li>• The potential requirement to identify new sites for development to ensure that the Council can demonstrate a five year housing land supply.</li> <li>• The ongoing requirement to address affordable housing targets which have increased since the District Plan was adopted in 2018.</li> <li>• The need to maximise opportunities for jobs growth and to take account of changing economic circumstances.</li> <li>• Changes in the environmental context including the Council's declaration of climate emergency and the requirement for biodiversity net gain.</li> <li>• A number of the development management policies will also need clarification and updating to reflect changes in national policy/local changes, including the requirement to draw up design codes and guidance.</li> </ul>		

	<b>B. POLICY UPDATE FACTORS</b>	<b>YES/NO (please indicate below)</b>	<b>Provide details explaining your answer in the context of your plan / local authority area</b>
<b>B1.</b>	<b>Your policies update is likely to lead to a material change in the housing requirement which in turn has implications for other plan requirements / the overall evidence base.</b>	<b>YES</b>	The housing need for East Herts has changed from the currently adopted District Plan-figure of 839, to the standard method derived figure of 1,112. This represents a 33% increase and is deemed to be significant change to local housing need.
<b>B2.</b>	<b>The growth strategy and / or spatial distribution of growth set out in the current plan is not fit for purpose and your policies update is likely to involve a change to this.</b>	<b>YES/NO</b>	<p>A change to the housing requirement does not necessarily mean that there is a need for a change to the spatial strategy. However, this cannot be concluded until a full assessment of the implications of the increase on the longevity of the development strategy have been considered, alongside the consequences of an extended plan-period.</p> <p>Likewise, the ability of the Council to be able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply and perform well in the housing delivery test are also key metrics as to the effectiveness of the spatial strategy. The continued delivery of the site allocations and their ability to contribute to the overall spatial strategy is also a further consideration.</p>
<b>B3.</b>	<b>Your policies update is likely to affect more than a single strategic site or one or more strategic policies that will have consequential impacts on other policies of the plan.</b>	<b>YES</b>	The increased local housing need figure, alongside the extended plan-period, will have consequential impacts on other policies in the plan.

	<p><b>You have answered yes to one or more questions above.</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b></p>	<p><b>You are likely to need to undertake a full update of your spatial strategy and strategic policies (and potentially non-strategic policies). Use your responses above to complete Section B4.</b></p>
	<p><b>You have said no to <u>all</u> questions (B1 to B3) above</b></p>		<p><b>If you are confident that the update can be undertaken without impacting on your spatial strategy and other elements of the Plan, you are likely to only need to undertake a partial update of policies. Complete Section B4 to indicate the specific parts / policies of the plan that are likely to require updating based on the answers you have given above.</b></p>
<p><b>B4.</b></p>	<p><b><u>Decision:</u> Full Update of Plan Policies</b></p> <p><b>Reasons for scope of review:</b></p> <p>It is likely that be a full, rather than partial, review of the Plan will be required. This is largely because of the need to consider potential changes to housing requirements and the implications for other aspects of the Plan, along with the need to ensure that all policies are consistent with the latest NPPF and legislation. A full update will also allow the Council to give greater emphasis to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to design quality.</p> <p>It is recommended that decisions on the final scope of the review and its associated timetable should be made when the implications of the proposed changes to the NPPF are better understood, the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill has received Royal Assent, and the statutory framework required to implement the reforms has been approved.</p>		



## **Appendix 4 – Changes to Local Housing Need**

### **1. Introduction: Housing Need**

- 1.1 The NPPF requires that strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area which can be met over the plan period
- 1.2 The NPPF sets out that if the local housing need figure for an authority has changed significantly then strategic policies will need updating.
- 1.3 This appendix sets out the current housing requirement and explores the future approach to housing need, before going on to consider the significance of the resulting variation and the next steps in the context of a District Plan review.

### **2. Current Housing Need:**

- 2.1 Previously, when the East Herts District Plan was progressing through the plan-making process, Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMA) were prepared to identify the Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAHN) for an area.
- 2.2 East Herts worked with its SHMA partners Uttlesford, Harlow and Epping Forest to produce a SHMA that concluded that the total housing need across the four authorities between 2011 – 2033 was 51,878 dwellings. East Herts, along with the other partners, committed to meeting their own needs and entered the District Plan Examination in 2017 with a housing need figure of 18,396 which equates to 836 dwellings per year across the plan period.

2.3 Through the examination process, the Inspector took the view that there should be an amendment to the figure derived by the SHMA and it was concluded that the overall housing figure for East Herts over the plan period was 18,458 dwellings, or **839** dwellings per year. This change from 836 to 839 was the result of a change to the market signals uplift from 13.6% to 14%<sup>1</sup>.

### **3. Future Housing Need:**

3.1 The NPPF, through paragraph 61, states that:

*To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.*

3.2 The standard method for calculating housing need was introduced by the government in 2018 and is a different method to that used previously to inform the formulation of the East Herts District Plan, which underwent Examination from 2017. The standard method, which is the approach recommended by NPPF, uses a specific formula to identify the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for, in a way which addresses projected household growth and historic under-supply. It should be noted that the standard method

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<sup>1</sup> [Microsoft Word - Inspector's post hearing note East Herts District Plan.docx \(onwebcurl.com\)](#)

only identifies a minimum annual housing need figure, it does not go further to produce a housing requirement figure.

- 3.3 The standard method formula uses 4 steps to determine the annual figure:

Step 1 - Setting the baseline

Step 2 - An adjustment to take account of affordability

Step 3 - Capping the level of any increase

Step 4 - Cities and urban centres uplift

- 3.4 For East Herts, Step 4 doesn't affect the standard method figure as this is only applied to the largest 20 cities and urban centres in England. Likewise, currently the East Herts figure does not find itself being capped under Step 3, due to the increase being under a 40% of the current housing requirement figure.

- 3.5 Utilising the standard method, the annual housing need figure for East Herts is calculated using the following components:

Step 1: is set using the 2014-based household projections (the approach required by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)), calculating any increase across a 10-year period, 2013-2023. The increase in East Herts over this period is 732.3 and this forms the baseline figure.

Step 2: makes an adjustment for affordability using the median workplace-based affordability ratio. The ratio for East Herts, which is assigned to the council by the government, is 12.29 which, applying the methodology, translates to an adjustment factor of 1.518.

Annual need figure: Multiplying the baseline and the adjustment factor produces the annual housing need figure which for East Herts is **1,112** dwellings per year.

#### **4. Change to Housing Need**

4.1 Paragraph 33 of the NPPF states that:

*“Relevant strategic policies will need updating at least once every five years if their applicable local housing need figure has changed significantly; ...”*

4.2 As detailed above, and summarised in the table below, the housing need for East Herts has changed from the adopted District Plan-figure of 839, to the standard method derived figure of 1,112. This represents a 33% increase and is deemed to be a significant change to local housing need.

<b>2018 Adopted Housing Need</b>	<b>Local Housing Need 2023</b>
839	1,112

#### **5. Next Steps and Further Considerations**

5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework expects strategic policy-making authorities to follow the standard method for assessing local housing need. Understanding the housing need figure at the start of the plan-making process is essential. This number should also be kept under review and revised where appropriate, and in some cases the housing need figure could change as the inputs are variable. It should also be noted that the standard method figure set out above only identifies the



minimum annual housing need figure, it does not produce a housing requirement figure.

- 5.2 After identifying the increase in housing need from 839 to 1,112, it is important that officers assess the impact of this increase on the ability of the current housing strategy to meet the long-term housing needs of the district.

# DRAFT East Herts Community Grants Policy

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## Contents

Contents .....	1
1. Introduction .....	2
2. Eligibility .....	2
Requirements of the body applying .....	2
Requirements of the project for which a grant is being sought .....	3
Eligible costs which can be applied for .....	3
Ineligible applicants, projects or items .....	4
3. Priorities for Community Grants 2023/24 .....	5
Table 1 – East Herts Council Community Grant Priorities 2023/24 .....	5
Table 2 – East Herts Council Community Grant Additional Weighting Factors 2023/24 .....	6
4. Assessment of applications.....	6
Part One assessment – validation and eligibility.....	6
Part Two assessment – project assessment .....	6/7
5. Award of grants.....	9
Grant conditions .....	10
6. Additional information.....	10
Advice and information.....	10
East Herts Community Benefit Lottery.....	11
Member involvement.....	11
Submitting an application.....	11
Documents to be attached to the application .....	11
7. Wards and areas in East Herts that experience health inequalities .....	12
East Herts wards and connected areas with pockets of relative inequalities ...	13

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## 1. Introduction

East Herts Council (EHC) issues grants to voluntary and community groups, not-for-profit organisations, faith groups and town and parish councils for activities that build stronger, more connected, self-reliant communities, leading to improved health and wellbeing outcomes for residents in East Herts.

Grant giving supports the council's wider corporate priority of Enabling Communities as well as the health and wellbeing outcomes described in the [East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-23](#).

In 2023/24, individual community grants of between £300 and £3,000 will be made.

## 2. Eligibility

For a community grant application to be considered for funding, the eligibility criteria in this section must be fulfilled. The different eligibility criteria are listed in below.

### Requirements of the body applying

To be eligible for consideration for a grant, the body applying must:

- be proposing a project that will operate within East Hertfordshire, for the benefit of residents of the district
- be (a) a constituted voluntary organisation, (b) a not-for-profit organisation, (c) an individual or informal group (with no legal status) with an agreed East Herts Council councillor acting as a mentor or (d) a town or parish council
- be financially viable with its own bank account that requires two unrelated people to authorise payments and make withdrawals. The account must be in the name of the organisation applying. In the case of individuals or informal groups (with no legal status), the council and East Herts Council councillor mentor must be satisfied of the probity of the individual's or informal group's financial arrangements
- have good governance in place including a committee or board of directors that includes at least three unrelated individuals. In the case of individuals or informal groups (with no legal status), the council and East Herts Council councillor mentor must be satisfied of the proposed governance of the management of the grant and the grant-funded project itself

- if applicable, own the freehold, or lease that cannot be ended within five years of completion of works, of the land or building subject to the proposed works/equipment and, if applicable, demonstrate that the relevant permissions are in place, including planning if applicable, to complete the works.

### **Requirements of the project for which a grant is being sought**

To be eligible for consideration for a grant, the project for which the grant is being sought must:

- be in keeping with the council's commitment to celebrating equality and diversity and the council's Equalities Duty under the Equality Act 2010
- have the written endorsement of an East Herts Council councillor representing the area from which most of the residents who would benefit from the activity come. In cases where an East Herts Council councillor is a member of the applying organisation and there is no other ward member, then the East Herts Council Executive Member for Communities may endorse the application. Note: the Executive Member for Communities cannot endorse an application from an organisation which they are a member of; another councillor from the same ward may endorse the application in these circumstances or, if there isn't another ward member, a councillor for a nearby ward may endorse the application
- be capable of being completed within a year of the grant being awarded
- commit to ensuring a legacy beyond the lifetime of the council's funding so that the benefits to the community can continue. This legacy could, for example, take the form of:
  - continuation of the activity without council support
  - a community social media group or newsletter being set up
  - a fundraising element which helps a group to give back to the community
  - an environmental activity that continues after the initial project outreach.

### **Eligible costs which can be applied for**

The following items will be eligible for grant funding:

- hire costs, publicity materials, travel and small items of equipment



- building works and improvements to community assets that result in high quality, accessible sports or community facilities or accessible outdoor spaces
- large items of equipment, including digital assistive technologies
- delivery costs of an activity/service including staff costs. If the grant sought is for an existing service, the applicant must show how the grant would develop and extend the provision and enhance what is being offered
- volunteer training
- fees to bring in additional expertise.

### **Ineligible applicants, projects or items**

East Herts Council will not provide grants for:

- organisations with the primary purpose of and/or beliefs that are challenging of East Herts Council's decisions or are contradictory to the council's core values\*
- organisations whose sole aim is to promote a political belief\*
- projects that have the sole aim of promoting a particular religion
- general fundraising campaigns
- a service that the state is obligated to provide
- works to land or buildings where ownership (freehold or eligible lease) is not held by the applicant
- building projects that have already started, though we may fund a later stage of a building project that is not dependent on an earlier stage
- maintenance or minor repair work on buildings or spaces
- purchase of items on behalf of another
- hardship where an organisation is in a crisis which requires a rapid response
- commercial ventures
- purchase of specialist medical equipment
- VAT that can be recovered.

\* If the applicant proposes to work with another organisation to deliver the project and the council believes the other organisation would be ineligible on these grounds, the application will be ineligible.

### **3. Priorities for Community Grants 2023/24**

The council's annual priorities for grant giving are listed in Table 1. Applications meet the eligibility criteria will then be assessed on how well they address the council's priorities.

#### **Table 1 – East Herts Council Community Grant Priorities 2023/24**

Applications should address one or more of the following priorities:

- widen access to arts and culture through using health and wellbeing especially among those who haven't participated in the past
- involve residents in delivering community health and wellbeing projects including food banks and similar projects which benefit those most in need
- encourage communities to identify a local physical and/or mental health and wellbeing issue and address it together
- promote environmental sustainability activities which encourage individual and community changes of attitude and behaviour
- help community buildings and venues to become more environmentally sustainable
- bring different generations together
- enable young people and families to take care of their mental health, achieve a healthy weight and stay active
- support residents experiencing loneliness, isolation, domestic abuse, cost-of-living or employability challenges, or those who find it difficult to interact with the community
- support those that the council doesn't typically engage with very well or those who prefer face-to-face contact
- use outdoor spaces and community buildings more effectively, maximising their potential
- provide activities to support Dementia Friendly East Herts
- create safer and resilient neighbourhoods which promote community belonging.

Applications will receive additional weighting through the assessment process if they address one or more of the additional factors in Table 2.

## **Table 2 – East Herts Council Community Grant Additional Weighting Factors 2023/24**

Additional weighting will be awarded to applications which:

- include evidence that the application has been developed with the involvement of the community / anticipated beneficiaries
- focus on reaching residents in the pockets of relative health inequalities across East Herts. Please see Section 8 **Wards and areas in East Herts that experience health inequalities** below
- are from organisations that have not received a grant from the council in the last two years.

### **4. Assessment of applications**

#### **Part One assessment – validation and eligibility**

**Application validation** – This determines whether the application has been fully completed, with all the necessary supporting documents attached.

**Application eligibility** – The application is assessed to make sure it meets the eligibility criteria listed in this policy. This includes a financial assessment in two parts:

- a) a check of whether the applicant organisation is financially sound and its finances are subject to the necessary governance as listed in the eligible requirements in this policy
- b) a check on whether the level of grant being sought is realistic given the project's aims and activities.

Only those applications passing the Part One assessment will proceed to the Part Two assessment.

#### **Part Two assessment – project assessment**

All valid and eligible applications will be assessed on the basis of how well the project meets the council's priorities and additional weighting factors.

Points will be awarded using the following scoring scheme.

### A) Type of applicant organisation

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
the applicant is not eligible for 1, 2 or 3 points	the applicant is a town/parish council in East Herts or another group/ organisation not based in East Herts	the applicant is a charity/ social enterprise based in East Herts	the applicant is a constituted community group in East Herts, primarily run by volunteers

### B) Size of organisation

0 points	1 point	2 points
the applicant reports an annual income of £200,000 or more	the applicant reports an annual income of between £50,000 and £199,000	the applicant reports an annual income of less than £50,000

### C) Anticipated beneficiaries

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
fewer than 50% of anticipated beneficiaries live within East Herts	main anticipated beneficiaries will be the general public of East Herts	main anticipated beneficiaries will be residents of East Herts considered to be vulnerable and/or have protected characteristics	main anticipated beneficiaries will be residents living in one of more of the top eight pockets of relative health inequalities areas in East Herts

### D) Previous support from the council

0 points	1 point	2 points
the applicant has received a grant from East Herts Council in the previous 2 years for the same/very similar project in terms of meeting priorities, location and target group	the applicant has received a grant from the council within the last two years for a different project	the applicant has not received a grant from the council in the last two years



## E) Impact and benefits to participants

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
does not clearly demonstrate how the project will contribute to the council's priorities	demonstrates that the project will contribute in a limited way to the council's priorities	demonstrates that the project will meet one or more of the council's grant priorities	demonstrates that the project will meet one or more of the council's grant priorities and includes evidence that the application has been developed with the involvement of the community / anticipated beneficiaries

## F) Match funding

### Match funding scoring for all applications *EXCEPT those made by a town or parish council*

0 points	1 point	2 points	3 points
the applicant has not secured funding from another source nor is it contributing cash or in-kind support itself	the applicant is providing in-kind support OR has applied to another grant fund and is awaiting a decision	the applicant has secured matched funding from East Herts Council	the applicant is providing its OWN cash for the project or has secured funding from a source other than East Herts Council

### Match funding scoring for all application *made by a town or parish council*

0 points	1 point
the town or parish council has <i>not</i> provided matched funding in cash (not in-kind support) of at least the same amount being applied for from the council	the town or parish council has provided match funding of an amount greater than that being applied for from the council

## 5. Award of grants

The applications will be ranked as follows.

- a) **first tier** – all applications that scored at least one point on each assessment criterion *and* have scored at least 50% of the total available score of 16 points will be ranked according to their total score
- b) **second tier** – all applications that scored at least one point on each assessment criterion *and* have scored below 50% of the total available score of 16 points will be ranked according to their total score
- c) **third tier** – all applications that score zero points on at least one assessment criterion will be ranked according to their total score.

The council will fund applications in the first tier from the highest scoring applications downwards until all monies have been allocated.

In the event of unallocated funding remaining once all the first tier applications have received a grant, applications in the second tier bids will be considered, starting with the highest scoring application in that tier. The council may fund an application as submitted or, given that the application did not merit placement in the first tier, may decide to negotiate with the applicant to amend their application to improve the way in which it can meet the council's grant priorities. Potential amendments could include, among other things, that the applicant agrees to:

- deliver activities to support the council's Healthy Hub East Herts
- expand their activities to an area that is known to be disadvantaged
- ensure that the project will reach a minimum number of vulnerable residents or additional residents who were not listed in the application as likely to benefit.

The applicant shall be under no obligation to agree to these amendments in which case no grant will be made.

Should there still be funds available following allocation to the first and second tier applications, the council will consider the third tier applications, starting with the highest scoring one. The council may fund an application as submitted or, given that the application scored zero points on at least one assessment criterion, may decide to negotiate with the applicant to amend their application

to improve the way in which it can meet the council's grant priorities, focusing on the criterion or criteria on which the application was awarded zero points.

It may be the case that there are two or more applications with the same assessed score within the same tier described above but there are insufficient monies available to fund them all. In such an instance, the council will:

- count up the number of priorities (in Table 1 above) and additional weighting factors (in Table 2 above) that it is satisfied each application would address
- rank the applications accordingly – highest number of priorities and additional weighting factors first
- award grants from the top of ranked list downwards until all the available funding has been allocated.

The council will have the discretion to award a particular application, regardless of how well it scored, less than the amount bid for if the total fund is oversubscribed. The applicant shall be under no obligation to accept the reduced funding in which case no grant will be made to that organisation.

### **Grant conditions**

The council reserves the right to attach any reasonable conditions to an offer of grant. The applicant will be required to agree to the grant conditions to receive the grant. It is anticipated that as a minimum, each grant recipient will be required to:

- provide evidence of suitable safeguarding and/or health and safety policies and arrangements depending on the nature of the project
- provide suitable monitoring statistics to the council
- clearly display and make known that the project is proceeding due to the financial support of the council
- allow the council to make any periodic checks or audits to ensure its grant is being / has been appropriate used in line with the application.

## **6. Additional information**

### **Advice and information**

Organisations are strongly urged to discuss their proposed project with the council officer overseeing the administration of the grants prior to submitting an

application. It is expected that organisations will have investigated other funding sources, see [other grant making trusts](#). Individuals and organisations with no legal status can obtain advice and guidance on governance issues from [Broxbourne and East Herts Community Alliance](#) or [Community Development Action Hertfordshire](#).

East Herts Council also reserves the right to sample a selection of East Herts Community Grant supported projects to carry out simple financial, auditing, process and evaluation checks to ensure public funding is spent accountably and outcomes can be reasonably demonstrated. The officer of the council overseeing the administration of grants may use phone, email or other means to speak with grant recipients and request information items as needed.

### **East Herts Community Benefit Lottery**

All charities and other local good causes are encouraged to raise funds via the [East Herts Lottery](#). Monies raised for the East Herts Community Fund will be ring fenced for the council's community grants budget.

### **Member involvement**

Councillors that have agreed to mentor an individual or informal group (with no legal status) that have applied for a small grant will be expected to complete a **Mentor Statement Form** and take an active role in the delivery of the proposed project, support the individual or group and monitor outcomes. It is anticipated that this support, and the support of a "banker" will enable the groups to write a Statement of Aims and become more fundable and self-reliant in the future. Applications from constituted groups require a written endorsement from the Councillor representing the area from where most of the beneficiaries will come.

### **Submitting an application**

All requests for funding must be submitted on the council's application forms and contain all the required documentation. The preferred method of application is via email to [Grants.Admin@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:Grants.Admin@eastherts.gov.uk). Decisions will be provided eight to 10 weeks after the application deadline. All grants will be paid up front subject to grant conditions.

### **Documents to be attached to the application**



- the group or organisation's constitution, set of rules or charity commission number
- name and contact details of main contacts, (including chair, treasurer and secretary if applicable), in your organisation or informal group
- if applicant is a constituted group, then written endorsement or an email will be needed from an East Herts Councillor representing the area from which most of the beneficiaries will come
- if applicant is an informal group with no legal status or individual, a Mentor Statement Form must be provided from an East Herts Councillor representing the area from which most of the beneficiaries will come
- bank statement showing current balance
- evidence that the owner of building or space has approved the building work
- evidence that applicant has checked that planning permission from the council is not required (if a building improvement project)
- two quotes for building projects or large items of equipment that cost £1,000 or more.

## **7. Wards and areas in East Herts that experience health inequalities**

Whilst East Hertfordshire as a whole ranks above the national average on the scale of Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), there are still certain wards and areas which indicate there are pockets of relative inequality within East Herts.

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019 provide a set of relative measures of deprivation for small areas across England, based on seven domains of deprivation. The domains were combined using the following weights to produce the overall Index of Multiple Deprivation:

- Income Deprivation (22.5%)
- Employment Deprivation (22.5%)
- Education, Skills and Training Deprivation (13.5%)
- Health Deprivation and Disability (13.5%)
- Crime (9.3%)
- Barriers to Housing and Services (9.3%)
- Living Environment Deprivation (9.3%)

Please note the wards have been updated as result of some electoral boundary changes made during 2023. Nationally, new work is being undertaken to develop an improved IMD due for release in 2025.

### **East Herts wards and connected areas with pockets of relative inequalities**

- Bishop's Stortford Central
- Buntingford – Throcking, Cottered and Westmill
- Great Amwell and Stansteads
- Hertford Rural – Hertford Hornsmill
- Hertford Sele
- Hunsdon
- Sawbridgeworth
- Ware Rural – Wadesmill, High Cross and Thundridge
- Ware Trinity

*Note: Much Hadham is officially listed as having an area within it as the highest IMD however research has shown that this data reflects the residents of St Margaret's and St Elizabeth's Centre for those with learning disabilities as opposed to the wider residential population.*

# Agenda Item 12

## East Herts Council Report

### Council

**Date of meeting:** Wednesday 18 October 2023

**Report by:** James Ellis, Head of Legal and Democratic Services

**Report title:** Independent Remuneration Panel 2023 - Review of Members' Allowances

**Ward(s) affected:** (All Wards);

**Summary** - The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel has made recommendations for adoption of a scheme of allowances to be paid to Members. The report below has been compiled by the Panel and is presented by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services on the Panel's behalf.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COUNCIL:

- a) **To approve the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel as follows:**
- i) **To increase the Basic Allowance by £250 from £5,428.79 to £5,678.79 for 2023/24;**
  - ii) **To increase the Dependants' Carers Allowance from £25.00 per hour to up to £30.00 per hour;**
  - iii) **To increase the Childcare Allowance from £12.50 per hour to up to £15.00 per hour;**
  - iv) **To increase the electric car mileage from 4p per mile to 45p per mile in line with HMRC guidance; and**
  - v) **To make no changes to the Members' current Allowance Scheme other than those listed in**

**the recommendations above.**

## **1.0 Proposal(s)**

1.1 The Panel has concluded that it is appropriate to recommend changes to allowances for the reasons set out below.

## **2.0 Background**

2.1 At its meeting on 1 March 2023, Council agreed to extend the 2022/23 Members' Allowance Scheme until the meeting on 18 October 2023 to allow the District elections to take place and any new administration to settle into their roles.

2.2 The Independent Remuneration Panel for East Herts Council's review of Member Allowances in 2023 comprised Nicholas Moss (Chairman for 2023 review), Peter Raynsford and Glenn Sexton and were supported by the Democratic Services Manager and Democratic Services Officer.

2.3 The Panel has conducted a review of Members' allowances pursuant to the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. The Panel met three times: on 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023. It has considered the current allowances and whether or not it should recommend to Council a reduction, recommend no change, or recommend an increase for the 2023/24 Civic Year.

2.4 During its deliberations the Panel took evidence from:

- Deputy Leader, Councillor Mione Goldspink (Lib Dems),
- Labour group member, Councillor Carolyn Redfern,
- Conservative group member, Councillor Peter Boylan, and



- Executive Member, Councillor Carl Brittain (Green Party)

2.5 The Panel would like to express its appreciation to each of them for the time they gave to answer its questions so thoroughly.

2.6 Their contributions were helpful in enabling the Panel to confirm its understanding of the work of all Members of the authority – backbench councillors as well as those holding positions of special responsibility. In addition, the Panel reviewed material provided by Officers setting out payments made to Members of other authorities in Hertfordshire. The Panel also conducted an online survey which all Members were encouraged to complete. Thirty-five Members did so, representing 70% of the Council. The Panel felt this enabled a suitably broad assessment of the allowances for Members of East Herts Council. The results of the survey are attached at Appendix C.

2.7 Based on the Regulations the Panel has set out below its recommendations and its rationale for them. In doing so, it would like to express its appreciation to the Democratic Services Manager, Katie Mogan, and Democratic Services Officer, Michele Aves for their advice and help.

## **Recommendations**

2.8 Pursuant to Regulation 21(1)(b) - the Basic Allowance - the Panel took into account a number of factors. It acknowledged the date of the last increase of 1%, in May 2022. The Panel noted also that the 2022 staff pay award had been agreed of £1,950 increase to each spinal point and that there had been an offer of the same sum for the 2023/24 pay round.

- 2.9 The Panel took into account also the long-established principle across local government that a significant part of Councillors' work should be voluntary. Further, it drew on evidence from its four interviewees, noting their observation that the amount of the Basic Allowance had had no bearing on their decision to stand for election. Further, the Panel had regard to the results of the survey, which indicated that 62% of the Members who participated felt that the Basic Allowance was 'enough'.
- 2.10 Nevertheless, the panel was of the view that to recommend no increase to the Basic Allowance particularly at a time of high living costs would penalise those who put themselves forward to carry out an important civic duty.
- 2.11 Seeking to balance these diverse considerations, the Panel reached the view that to propose a rise to the Basic Allowance in line with inflation - around 7.9% at the time the Panel met - would be unrealistic. Instead, the Panel felt that a modest increase of £250 a year in the Basic Allowance would be appropriate to recognise that Members, like their constituents, were facing a very significant increase in their living costs; and that it would also maintain parity with the other rural authorities in Hertfordshire. For information, Appendix A shows the 2023/24 Basic Allowance payable to Members of the nine other District/Borough Councils in Hertfordshire.
- 2.12 Pursuant to Regulation 21(1)(a)(i) - eligibility for the Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) - the Panel recommended that the roles currently attracting such payments should continue to do so. The Panel noted that there was a range of roles within this category: Leader, Deputy Leader, Executive Member and

Committee Chairman, Committee Vice Chairman and Leader of a minority political group. Consistent with the regulations, in making its recommendation to maintain the principle of the payment of SRAs the Panel had taken account of the additional responsibility or duties carried out by Members occupying these roles.

2.13 Pursuant to Regulation 21(1)(b), the amounts of SRAs – the Panel felt that there were no grounds for recommending any changes to the amounts of any of the SRAs listed in the Allowance Scheme. The Panel noted that there was a new administration following the District Council elections in May 2023 with a high number of new Councillors joining the Council. For that reason, the Panel decided that it would not be appropriate to recommend any change to the current amounts payable to Members receiving SRAs. New post holders were settling into their roles and it was not possible to assess the nature of their responsibilities. The Panel noted that it would revisit these allowances at their next review.

2.14 The Panel notes that the Civic Allowances for Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council were outside the regulations. However, the Panel was invited to consider these allowances also and reached the same view that it reached in respect of the SRAs: that there should be no increase for the Civic Year 2023/24.

2.15 In the Panel's review in 2022, it recommended an allowance for Members of the Development Management Committee of £50 per meeting attended to reflect the level of work and

preparation required. The suggestion was raised again during the current review, but the Panel has recommended no change to the current arrangements. It has done so for two reasons. Firstly, because the Council rejected the recommendation last year, suggesting that it would not be favoured on this occasion, and secondly because Officers advising the Panel observed that within committees the business fluctuated significantly across the year. As a result, there were variations between committees that an attendance payment to only one committee's members might create an unfairness to another committee's members, which also had a heavy workload.

- 2.16 Pursuant to Regulation 21(1)(a)(ii) - Travel and Subsistence Allowance - the Panel recommended that the current schedule is updated for electric vehicles to be consistent with the HMRC rate of 45p per mile. The Panel recommended that all other arrangements related to travel allowances should remain unchanged. In respect of subsistence, the Panel recommended that this continued to be available to Members at the same level as that paid to staff.
- 2.17 Pursuant to Regulation 21(1)(c) - Dependents' Carers' Allowance - the Panel recommended that payments to Members to defray the costs of dependents' carers - adults and children - should continue to be available and that they should be increased to take into account increased costs.
- 2.18 The Panel recommends an increase in this allowance to take account of the concerns expressed by its witnesses



and survey responses that too low a sum could discourage potential candidates and might inhibit serving Members from undertaking additional responsibilities. In respect of the childcare allowance, the Panel took account also of survey respondents and felt that an increase was justified for the same reasons. In the light of this information, the Panel recommends an increase in the adult carer allowance of up to £30.00 per hour and up to £15.00 per hour for the childcare allowance.

2.19 Pursuant to Regulation 21(1)(e) - indexing allowances - the Panel decided that it would not be appropriate to recommend that the Member's Allowance Scheme is index linked for the following four years. It came to that view on two grounds. Firstly, it felt there was merit in ensuring that allowances were subject to independent review more frequently than indexing would allow. Second, it considered that the volatility of current economic conditions would be likely to result in an indexed increase to allowances substantially outside the payments that would be warranted by the duties and responsibilities of a councillor.

2.20 On a separate but related point during its interviews with its witnesses, the Panel was surprised to learn that it is not general practice by political parties to advise potential candidates that allowances are payable to elected Members. The Panel considers that if local authorities are to be representative of the communities they serve, it is important that the availability of allowances is made known to those who may be interested in seeking election.

2.21 One of the Panel's interviewees drew attention to the lack of mileage allowance for Members travelling on ward business. The Panel considered the point but noted the current list of approved duties for which mileage claims can be made. It felt that the list was drawn sufficiently widely to ensure that mileage allowances were payable appropriately. However, it noted that as drafted, the list contained sufficient flexibility to enable further widening if agreed by the Executive.

### **3.0 Reason(s)**

3.1 In addition to the grounds for its recommendations as set out above, the Panel offers these further reasons.

3.2 On the basic allowance to which an increase of £250 a year is proposed, the Panel considered that this small variation would maintain the Basic Allowance within an equitable band; and that it would continue to be broadly on a par with the average for rural districts in Hertfordshire.

3.3 On the proposed increase to Dependent Carers' Allowance, the Panel felt it was important to take into account prevailing market costs. The Panel felt that to maintain allowances in this category at their current levels risks causing claimants to be out of pocket; and risks, also, discouraging residents with caring responsibilities from standing for election.

### **4.0 Options**

4.1 To make no change to the allowances. This option is not recommended. For the reasons set out, the Panel considered it would be inequitable to make no change and that Members' allowances should take account, in a limited way, of the increases to the cost of living as indicated in the Consumer Price Index current at the time of the Panel's deliberations.

## **5.0 Risks**

5.1 It is in the public interest that elected representatives to a district council are not debarred from carrying out their duties through financial disadvantage (taking into account a public service discount applied when allowances are calculated). It is also in the public interest that members of the public should not be deterred from standing as councillors due to potential financial disadvantage. If an inadequate scheme of allowances were to be adopted, there would be a risk that Members or the public would not be willing or able to serve as elected representatives or to be potential candidates for local elections.

## **6.0 Implications/Consultations**

### **Community Safety**

No

### **Data Protection**

No

### **Equalities**

Yes, the recommendations include provision for ensuring reimbursement of reasonable expenses for dependants' carers, to avoid deterring individuals from standing for office, where they have caring commitments might otherwise prevent them from carrying

out their duties as Members.

### **Environmental Sustainability**

No

### **Financial**

Yes - in 2022/23, a total of £412,915.50 was paid out for Members' allowances comprising: Basic Allowance £271,047.84, Special Responsibilities Allowances (SRA) £131,564.81, Civic Allowance £7,950.00 and £2,352.85 for travel and subsistence claims.

If approved, the cost to the Council in 2023/24 of an increase of £250 a year to the Basic Allowance for each Member, would be £12,500.

Cost implementations would also exist should the recommendations relating to the increase in the hourly rate of the Childcare Allowance (CA) be approved. These costs cannot be quantified as CA are only claimed by those Members with such caring responsibilities when required.

### **Health and Safety**

No

### **Human Resources**

No

### **Human Rights**

No

### **Legal**

Yes, the scheme of allowances must comply with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. The regulations



require the Council to have a scheme of allowances, and to have regard to the recommendations of an independent remuneration panel.

### **Specific Wards**

No

## **7.0 Background papers, appendices, and other relevant material**

7.1 Appendix A – Basic Allowances paid in Hertfordshire

7.2 Appendix B - Illustration of Section 20 of the Constitution should the Panel's recommendations be implemented.

7.3 Appendix C – Responses to the Members' Allowance Survey

### **Contact Member**

Leader of the Council

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### **Contact Officer**

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**Appendix A - Basic Allowances paid to Members in other Hertfordshire Authorities**

<b><u>Authority</u></b>	<b><u>Basic Allowance</u></b>
Dacorum	£5,055
North Herts	£5,406
Three Rivers	£5,460
East Herts	£5,428.79
Broxbourne	£5,885
Welwyn Hatfield	£6,112.90
St Albans	£6,236
Hertsmere	£6,825
Watford	£8,071
Stevenage	£8,490

**Section 20 – Members’ Allowances**  
**Scheme**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING ACT 1989**

**AND**

**LOCAL AUTHORITIES (MEMBERS’ ALLOWANCES)**  
**REGULATIONS 2003 (AS AMENDED)**

**MEMBERS’ ALLOWANCES SCHEME**  
**(including Special Responsibility Allowances)**

| (Revised ~~October~~~~May~~ 202~~32~~)

## **20.1 Introduction**

20.1.1 This scheme is made by East Hertfordshire Council (“the Council”) pursuant to the Local Authorities (Members’ Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. It was approved by the Council on ~~11 May 2022~~18 October 2023 after consideration of the recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel.

20.1.2 The Scheme will apply for the civic year from the next day after the meeting of the Council to the date of the next annual meeting of the Council, unless the Council decides otherwise.

## **20.2 Basic Allowance**

20.2.1 Subject to paragraphs 20.9 and 20.10 below, for each year a basic allowance shall be paid to each Member as set out in Schedule 1 to the scheme.

20.2.2 The basic allowance includes incidental costs such as stationery, printing telephone and broadband.

20.2.3 The basic allowance is to be paid in equal instalments on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of each month.

## **20.3 Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA)**

20.3.1 Subject to paragraphs 20.9 and 20.10 below, for each year a SRA shall be paid to those Members who hold the special responsibilities that are set out in Schedule 1 to the scheme.



20.3.2 Members will be restricted to receiving only one SRA (that of the higher value) if they occupy two or more posts which attract SRAs.

20.3.3 The SRA is to be paid in equal instalments on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of each month.

## **20.4 Indexation**

20.4.1 Neither the basic allowance nor the SRAs are index linked.

## **20.5 Travel and Subsistence Allowance**

20.5.1 Members may claim travel allowance in respect of their travel to and from the following approved duties:

- (a) meetings covered by the list of duties referred to in Schedule 2;
- (b) meetings of outside bodies and organisations to which they have been appointed by the Council as set out in Schedule 3, provided that no other arrangements for payment exist in respect of such bodies to which the Authority makes appointments or nominations; and
- (c) meetings with the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and/or Heads of Service/Service Managers, subject to such meetings having been pre-arranged and not relating specifically to a Member's ward work or activities.

- 20.5.2 Travel allowances in connection with attendance at approved duties may be claimed, subject to the following:
- (a) the claim must be for actual mileage incurred/actual public transport used; and
  - (b) the base for starting and finishing all journeys will normally be regarded as the member's home address, provided that the home address is within the District or an adjacent District/Borough.
- 20.5.3 Subsistence allowances in connection with attendance at approved duties may be claimed, subject to the following. Members are able to claim subsistence allowances where they are prevented by official duties from taking a meal at home or other place where normally taken. Claims will not be permitted where refreshment has been provided by the meeting organiser.
- 20.5.4 VAT receipts for the purchase of fuel must be provided with all claims for travel expenses. Receipts must be provided for all subsistence/hotel accommodation/public transport claims and for any expenditure incurred on parking fees when using a vehicle on an approved duty.
- 20.5.5 Details of the rates of travel and subsistence allowances are set out in Schedule 1. The rates are index linked to the rates payable to officers.
- 20.6 Child Care and Dependant Carers' Allowance**

20.6.1 Contribution towards costs incurred for the provision of care may be claimed, at the rates set out in Schedule 1, in respect of care costs incurred due to attendance at approved duties. Claims are subject to the following.

20.6.2 The principle of providing the allowance is to allow members who are carers to undertake their duties and to allow others who might otherwise be deterred from Council membership by virtue of caring responsibilities to consider standing for election. Contributions in 20.6.1 above will be paid towards care in respect of:

- (a) children aged 14 or under;
- (b) a dependant, that is, someone who relies on the member for care (the member's spouse, partner, child, parent, dependant relative or someone who lives in the same household as the member but who is not his or her employee, tenant, lodger or boarder);

In each case, the dependant must normally live with the Member as part of the family and be unable to be left unsupervised. The carer can be any responsible mature person who does not normally live with the claimant as part of the family. The allowance should not be payable in respect of members of the member's immediate and close family.

20.6.3 Receipts must be provided for all carer claims.

## **20.7 Broadband Allowance**

20.7.1 Contribution toward the cost incurred in providing broadband connection is included within the basic allowance.

## **20.8 Pensions**

20.8.1 No Members be admitted to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

## **20.9 Renunciation**

20.9.1 A Member may by notice in writing given to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services elect to forego any part of their entitlement to an allowance under this scheme.

## **20.10 Part Year Entitlements**

20.10.1 Where a Member's term of office begins or ends, or the holding of a special responsibility begins or ends, part way in the year, then the entitlement to any allowances due to a Member will be in the same proportion as the number of days served in the year.

20.10.2 When an amendment to this scheme changes the amount to which a Member is entitled, then the existing rates are payable ending with the day before the amendment takes effect.

20.10.3 The s151 Officer be authorised to determine allowance entitlements in circumstances where:

- (a) the scheme of allowances is amended at any time throughout the year;



- (b) an individual ceases to be a Member, or an individual is elected to the office of Councillor of East Hertfordshire Council;
- (c) in the event that a new chairmanship of a Committee or Panel is created the s151 Officer be authorised to determine the allowance entitlement by reference to the lowest relevant comparable allowance until review by the Panel.

## **20.11 Claims**

- 20.11.1 Claims should be made using method prescribed by the Council, on a monthly basis. Claims submitted by the fifth day of the month will be processed for payment on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of that month. Claims received after the 5<sup>th</sup> day will be processed for payment in the following month.
- 20.11.2 Receipts as described in paragraphs 20.5.4 and 20.6.3 above, must accompany each claim.
- 20.11.3 In accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, claims for duties performed more than three months ago are not permitted.

## **20.12 Record of Allowances**

- 20.12.1 The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development shall keep a record of all payments made to all Members in accordance with the scheme and the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. Such records shall be available for public inspection free of charge at all reasonable times during usual office hours.

20.12.2 The Head of Legal and Democratic Services will issue the required notice under the Regulations providing summary information on the payments made under the scheme each year.

SCHEDULE 1

	£
<u>Basic Allowance :</u>	<u>5,678.795,428.79</u>
<u>Civic Allowances:</u>	
Chairman	6,500
Vice Chairman	1,450
<u>Special Responsibility Allowances:</u>	
Leader of the Council	19,767
Deputy Leader	12,225.96
Executive Member	9,780.96
Committee Chairman (Development Management)	7,336
Committee Chairman (Licensing)	6,051
Committee Chairman (Human Resources)	4,842
Committee Chairman (Overview and Scrutiny)	6,464.04
Committee Chairman (Audit and Governance)	6,646.04
Committee Chairman (Standards)	2,421

Committee Vice Chairman (Development Management)	2,200
Leader of a minority political group	A factor of 0.1 of the Basic Allowance multiplied by the number of members
<u>Mileage allowance:</u>	
Motor vehicles ( <i>incl. motor cycles</i> )	£0.45 per mile for the first 10,000 miles of a (return) journey
Electric vehicle	£0. <del>45</del> <sup>04</sup> per mile <u>per mile for the first 10,000 miles of a (return) journey</u>
Bicycles	£0.20 per mile
<u>Public Transport:</u> (including the use of taxis for short journeys where public transport is not convenient)	Reimbursement of actual cost or ordinary standard fare, whichever is the lesser, upon production of a receipt
<u>Carer's Allowance – Dependent care:</u>	<del>Maximum of</del> <u>£25 Up to £30</u>



	per hour
<u>Childcare Allowance</u>	<del>Maximum of</del> <del>£12.50</del> Up to £15 per hour
<u>Subsistence Allowance</u> in the case of an absence from the member's normal base, not involving an absence overnight from the usual place of residence:	
of more than 4 hours before 11 am Breakfast*	£7.21
of more than 4 hours, including the period between noon and 2.30 pm Lunch*	£9.95
of more than 4 hours ending after 7 pm Evening Meal*	£15.20
* Not claimable where refreshments have been provided at the meeting/event attended.	
<u>Subsistence Allowance</u> in the case of an absence involving an absence overnight from the usual place of residence:	
The actual cost of the most cost effective overnight accommodation and where meals are not included, subsistence allowance as detailed above.	

APPROVED DUTIES

1. The following shall be recognised as approved duties:
  - attendance at meetings of the Council, the Executive, a Committee, Sub-Committee, Panel, Working Party or Task and Finish Group of the Authority;
  - attendance at any other meeting which has both been authorised by the Authority (Executive, Scrutiny or Regulatory Committee) and to which representatives of more than one political group have been invited;
  - the attendance at a meeting of a Local Authority Association of which the Council is a Member;
  - carrying out any other duty connected with the Authority's functions approved by the Council (Executive);
  - the following conferences, approved for the purposes of Section 175 of the Local Government Act 1972:
    - i. Local Government Association
    - ii. Chartered Institute of Housing - Housing Conference
    - iii. Royal Town Planning Institute - Summer School
  - any other conference not mentioned above, or a training course or seminar shall be considered as an approved duty provided that such attendance

has been authorised in advance by either the Executive or the Chief Executive.

- attendance relating to site visits in respect of Development Management Committee business for members and substitutes of the Development Management Committee.
2. A member attending any conference, training course or seminar shall be entitled to receive the relevant allowance for travelling and subsistence.
  3. The Chief Executive may, upon application to him/her by any Member of the Council, subject to consultation with the Leader of the Council for the time being, designate the attendance of that Member at any other meeting, training session, seminar or conference or other attendance not hereinbefore specifically referred to as an approved duty for the purpose of this scheme.

### SCHEDULE 3 – OUTSIDE BODIES

1. Attendance at any meeting of an outside body on which the Member is appointed to represent the Council.
2. Attendance at any conferences, seminars or training events, the attendance at which is approved by the Council, or the Executive or a Committee of either, or the Chief Executive.
3. Attendance at any meetings of a Local Government Association or any Joint or Liaison Committee for Members of Local Authorities.

# Members' Allowance Scheme 2023/24

## 1. Page 1

1. Members may know that the allowances to which they are entitled for carrying out their council responsibilities are based on recommendations from a statutory Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). Each Local Authority is required to convene one periodically and the IRP for East Herts Council has just begun its review of allowances for members from 1st April 2023. The IRP was delayed this year because of the District Council elections and to allow new Members to settle into their roles. Under the regulations for IRPs, there are several types of allowance. They include: Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowance, Travelling and Subsistence Allowance, Dependants' Carers' Allowance and Childcare Allowance. To help the panel to prepare its report and recommendations it would like to hear from members about these allowance through your answers to the questions below. The panel would be pleased to receive your completed questionnaire by the close of business on Tuesday 12 September 2023. The results of this questionnaire will be anonymised for submission to the IRP. The Panel would find it extremely valuable to hear the views of all Members, particularly those who were newly elected in May 2023. Thank you.



Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	7
1	06/09/2023 16:19 PM ID: 225805441	Recommend an 'expenses' budget for special 3rd party responsibilities such as Bishops Stortford Chamber of Commerce, where events regularly cost £20+ each per month		
2	07/09/2023 09:34 AM ID: 225846802	I started answering the questions below, but it's quite difficult to really do so, as I only know about my circumstances and my role. I currently work four days per week while the kids are at school, and fit my executive duties around my other available time. So, from an income point of view, it's a bit of a different situation from if, say, I had so much councillor responsibility that I had made the decision to reduce or give up additional employment to concentrate solely on the role. I know some executive positions are very time-consuming, for example, Executive member for growth. I also, because I've not needed to look into it, don't know how the dependents/childcare allowances work, and whether they cover from leaving home to getting back (e.g. the travel time requiring childcare), or just the meeting time itself - but hopefully the former. I feel that the answers really do depend on the amount of time each of the roles and the chair positions require (on average), which I imagine is quite hard to necessarily easily work out! So I don't really feel right taking a random stab at whether the other roles are sufficient, as I think it's hard to fully appreciate the time each takes.		
3	11/09/2023 12:50 PM ID: 226073446	I'm not sure on what basis the allowance is given. If it is meant to compensate for time lost from earning a living it is nowhere near enough based on the amount of time I'm spending on it. I can only afford to do it because I'm retired and have a pension. It feels pretty much like a full time job. If I did supply teaching for 2 to 3 days a month I would earn more than the allowance. To attract a more diverse range of candidates into being councillors I think a higher allowance should be paid as many would not be able to afford to do this I feel. I don't know enough about additional responsibilities to judge those as I don't know how much extra time they take.		
4	11/09/2023 12:50 PM ID: 226073468	I'm not sure on what basis the allowance is given. If it is meant to compensate for time lost from earning a living it is nowhere near enough based on the amount of time I'm spending on it. I can only afford to do it because I'm retired and have a pension. It feels pretty much like a full time job. If I did supply teaching for 2 to 3 days a month I would earn more than the allowance. To attract a more diverse range of candidates into being councillors I think a higher allowance should be paid as many would not be able to afford to do this I feel. I don't know enough about additional responsibilities to judge those as I don't know how much extra time they take.		



1. Members may know that the allowances to which they are entitled for carrying out their council responsibilities are based on recommendations from a statutory Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). Each Local Authority is required to convene one periodically and the IRP for East Herts Council has just begun its review of allowances for members from 1st April 2023. The IRP was delayed this year because of the District Council elections and to allow new Members to settle into their roles. Under the regulations for IRPs, there are several types of allowance. They include: Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowance, Travelling and Subsistence Allowance, Dependants' Carers' Allowance and Childcare Allowance. To help the panel to prepare its report and recommendations it would like to hear from members about these allowance through your answers to the questions below. The panel would be pleased to receive your completed questionnaire by the close of business on Tuesday 12 September 2023. The results of this questionnaire will be anonymised for submission to the IRP. The Panel would find it extremely valuable to hear the views of all Members, particularly those who were newly elected in May 2023. Thank you.

6	11/09/2023 17:57 PM ID: 226107578	I have already been a councillor for four years and from my point of view, the allowance is welcome but I am not dependent on it so I feel that it is about adequate.	
7	12/09/2023 16:04 PM ID: 226183785	I did not know Councillors received an allowance until after the election. I wonder if it were more widely known, whether more people would be prepared to stand?  Members of DMC committee spend a lot of time on council work. I wonder if that should be recognised. I think the Leader, deputy, some exec roles and DMC chair all should have more allowance as I know some people have changed jobs or reduced their hours of work. Some of the other chair allowances could be reduced.	
		answered	7
		skipped	28

2. Basic Allowance Thinking about the average number of hours each week that you spend on your duties as a Councillor, do you regard the current basic allowance of £5,428.79 payable to all councillors, as: (in answering this question, please do not take into account any additional duties you may have and for which you are entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA). There is a separate question about this.)

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Too Little		37.14% 13
2	Enough		62.86% 22
3	Too Much		0.00% 0
		answered	35
		skipped	0



3. Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) Member who hold any of the posts shown below are entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) in addition to the Basic Allowance. Please use the boxes next to each post to say whether you think the allowance is Too Little, Enough or Too Much. (Please answer these questions if you receive an SRA and, to the best of your knowledge of what the posts involve, if you do not.)

Answer Choices	Too Little	Enough	Too Much	Response Total
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**3. Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) Member who hold any of the posts shown below are entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) in addition to the Basic Allowance. Please use the boxes next to each post to say whether you think the allowance is Too Little, Enough or Too Much. (Please answer these questions if you receive an SRA and, to the best of your knowledge of what the posts involve, if you do not.)**

Leader of the Council - £19,767	20.00% 5	64.00% 16	16.00% 4	25
Deputy Leader - £12,225.96	16.00% 4	60.00% 15	24.00% 6	25
Leader of Minority Political Group - 0.1% of basic allowance x number of members (2 positions)	20.00% 5	76.00% 19	4.00% 1	25
Executive Member (7 positions) - £9,780.96	21.43% 6	67.86% 19	10.71% 3	28
Committee Chairman - Development Management - £7,336	15.38% 4	69.23% 18	15.38% 4	26
Committee Chairman – Licencing - £6,051	16.00% 4	68.00% 17	16.00% 4	25
Committee Chairman – Human Resources - £4,842	12.00% 3	72.00% 18	16.00% 4	25
Committee Chairman - Overview & Scrutiny - £6,464.04	12.00% 3	76.00% 19	12.00% 3	25
Committee Chairman – Audit & Governance - £6,646.04	8.00% 2	80.00% 20	12.00% 3	25
Committee Chairman - Standards - £2,421	16.00% 4	76.00% 19	8.00% 2	25
Vice Chairman – Development Management - £2,200	16.00% 4	72.00% 18	12.00% 3	25
			answered	30
			skipped	5

**4. Dependents Allowances Do you consider that the current allowance for Dependent Carers Allowance (maximum of £25.00 per hour) is:**

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Too Little		27.27%	9
2	Enough		72.73%	24
3	Too Much		0.00%	0
			answered	33
			skipped	2

**5. Childcare Allowances** Do you consider that the current allowance for Childcare (maximum of £12.50 per hour) is:

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Too Little	52.94%	18
2	Enough	47.06%	16
3	Too Much	0.00%	0
		answered	34
		skipped	1

**6. In carrying out your duties as a Councillor, do you incur any significant costs which you believe are not covered by your present allowance or claimable expenses? If so, please specify what they are**

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question	100.00%	18
1	06/09/2023 12:35 PM ID: 225785621	NO	
2	06/09/2023 13:09 PM ID: 225788498	Buying Land Title documents	
3	06/09/2023 13:13 PM ID: 225788836	Travelling expenses when attending to ward business	
4	06/09/2023 13:24 PM ID: 225789684	Claiming Expenses is a nightmare. Systems are inadequate for Councillors purposes.	
5	06/09/2023 13:29 PM ID: 225790139	no	
6	06/09/2023 15:06 PM ID: 225798821	No	
7	06/09/2023 16:19 PM ID: 225805441	To engage effectively with the Bishops Stortford Chamber of Commerce requires heavier paid involvement, and as most events have some cost associated (e.g. 'breakfast briefing' - £24), I'd recommend that a £500 budget for EXPENSED costs are allowed, so the council representative is actively encouraged to attend sessions	
8	06/09/2023 18:32 PM ID: 225815310	The allowance for electric vehicles is so low that I don't claim. It should be bought into line with fossil fuel powered vehicles.	
9	09/09/2023 16:59 PM ID: 226008793	No I think my costs are covered.	
10	10/09/2023 21:39 PM ID: 226038542	no	

**6. In carrying out your duties as a Councillor, do you incur any significant costs which you believe are not covered by your present allowance or claimable expenses? If so, please specify what they are**

11	11/09/2023 08:30 AM ID: 226048399	No	
12	11/09/2023 12:04 PM ID: 226068821	Yes, I end up paying for childcare for my daughter which I don't claim back. There have been a number of times where I have had to put my daughter in childcare so I can make up hours in my main job that I have lost due to Council meetings which have taken place in the day. I don't believe I can claim these hours.	
13	11/09/2023 13:25 PM ID: 226076943	No, only opportunity costs for alternative occupation.	
14	11/09/2023 14:15 PM ID: 226081877	No	
15	11/09/2023 17:09 PM ID: 226103340	Yes travelling to meet residents and looking at faults, meetings with officers. Repeat visits to sites to see if work carried out to the required level. Numerous emails to be responded to. Attitude of the public is changing and more hostile to members especially on social media,	
16	11/09/2023 17:57 PM ID: 226107578	No	
17	12/09/2023 08:17 AM ID: 226136384	As Councillors it is a privilege to serve the residents on behalf of EHDC and money in a cost of living crises is not important.	
18	12/09/2023 16:04 PM ID: 226183785	No	
		answered	18
		skipped	17



# Agenda Item 13a

## Motion on Notice for Non-Key Decision – Reduced Parking Charges for town centre workers in Bishops Stortford

In July the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability published a Non-Key Decision regarding reduced parking charges for town centre workers in Bishop's Stortford. This proposed reduction was supported by the Bishop's Stortford BID and many retail workers and could save town centre workers; many of whom are on minimum wage, around £400 a year.

Extraordinarily, the Executive member then withdrew his own Decision.

This Council requires that the Executive Member enacts the already announced policy without further delay.

Proposed by Councillor John Wyllie  
Seconded by Councillor Ian Devonshire

## **Raw Sewage in Rivers**

East Herts District Council notes that, despite repeated calls to put a stop to the dumping of raw sewage into our precious rivers and chalk streams, the latest annual assessment (published this July) by the Environment Agency showed “totally unacceptable” performance on pollution for most of England’s water and sewage companies. Thames Water was given just 2 stars for performance for 2022, meaning that they require significant improvement.

The Environment Agency reported that in 2022 there were 169 discharges of raw sewage into our rivers in East Hertfordshire. East Herts is home to seven of only 210 rare chalk streams in the world. 169 discharges for a combined 1,799 hours equate to nearly 75 days of discharging.

The Council also notes that the Office for Environmental Protection has recently stated that the Government, the Environment Agency and Ofwat may be allowing raw sewage discharges more frequently than the law permits because there are differing interpretations of the law. It also notes that many of the annual audits of the operations of the Water Companies have not been carried out during the last 6-8 years.

The Council further notes that the Environment Agency has called on Thames Water and all the other Water Companies together to invest £56Billion to upgrade their sewage treatment plants and storm overflows, but it is allowing them 25 years in which to do this.

Therefore, East Herts District Council calls on the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for the Environment to strengthen the legislation on the discharging of raw sewage into our rivers and coastal waters by:

- 1) Tightening and clarifying the regulations and law on the circumstances in which discharge of sewage might be permitted
- 2) Requiring prompt prosecution and fining of all offending companies,
- 3) Requiring the Environment Agency to audit the Water and sewerage companies regularly, every year, to ensure that they are reporting their operations accurately.
- 4) The Council also requests the Government to bring forward the date by which Water Companies are required to reduce their discharges by 50% -to bring it forward from 2048 to 2030.
- 5) This Council authorises the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for the Environment to make these 4 requests.

Proposed by Councillor Joe Thomas

Seconded by Councillor Miriam Swainston

# Agenda Item 13c

## **Labour Motion on LGA Save Local Services Campaign**

Council notes the Save Local Services campaign by the Local Government Association (LGA) which calls on the Government to ensure councils have adequate resources to meet ongoing cost and demand pressures, protect local services from cutbacks and invest in improving the services our communities rely on.

LGA analysis<sup>1</sup> revealed that Councils in England face a funding gap of almost £3 billion over the next two years just to maintain services at current levels. Over the last decade, Councils have seen significant cuts in core funding from the government. More recently, inflation has increased costs on core services and pushed up interest rates on existing borrowing. Councils led by parties across the political spectrum have had to issue section 114 notices announcing that they are unable to meet spending commitments.

In East Herts these pressures mean that savings of over £6m are needed by the end of the 2026-27 financial year to balance revenue and expenditure<sup>2</sup>. Residents' finances are already under huge pressure due to the cost-of-living crisis and any decisions made to balance the budget must prioritise the needs of the most vulnerable people in East Herts.

Council believes that the LGA is right to warn that the financial sustainability of councils and local services are at risk. The impact of inflation in the economy, cuts to funding and increasing demand pressures cannot alone be met by further reducing costs, making efficiencies, or raising council tax. Reserves held by Councils can only be spent once and are not a solution to the long-term financial pressures faced. Local government needs adequate funding to provide the services our communities rely on.

Council therefore resolves to:

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<sup>1</sup> [LGA analysis - Councils face almost £3 billion funding gap over next two years | Local Government Association](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Budget 2023/24 and MTFP 2023-2028 \(eastherts.gov.uk\)](#)

1. Conduct its budget setting operation for 2024/25 with the above principles in mind, considering the need to protect core services and to prioritise the needs of the most vulnerable in East Herts;
2. Review all of its capital projects with the intention of identifying possible savings
3. Support the Save Local Services campaign and call on government to:
  - a. Put local government finances on a sustainable footing.
  - b. Provide adequate, long-term funding, in line with inflation and demand for services, giving Councils certainty to plan their budgets and minimise service disruption.
  - c. Provide powers that enable councils to extend the scope of charged for services.
4. Instruct the Leader of the Council to write to government, local MPs and the LGA to communicate council's views on this issue.

Proposed by Councillor Jacobs

Seconded by Councillor Clements