



Chapter 5 Bishop's Stortford



Chapter 5 Bishop's Stortford

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1** Bishop's Stortford is a medium-sized town with an important sub-regional role related to its retail, leisure and employment offer, enhanced by good transport links including the M11 and the railway. It is designated as a Principal Town Centre. The town retains a very attractive historic core with a regular market, a reputation for good schools, lots of green space in the Stort corridor and other 'Green Wedges' which penetrate the town. The town is unusual in East Herts in having several remaining brownfield redevelopment opportunities, although the scale of housing needs in the local area also requires well-designed urban extensions on Greenfield land adjoining the town.
- 5.1.2** The main components of the development strategy for Bishop's Stortford are as follows:
- 5.1.3** **Housing:** the majority of the projected housing need for the town will be met through development in the town or at urban extensions to the north, south, and east. The provision of a substantial increase in family homes will allow emerging households to remain living in Bishop's Stortford and support employment and retail opportunities in the town.
- 5.1.4** **Education:** the educational needs of the town will be achieved at primary level via the expansion of existing facilities, together with the provision of new schools in the urban extensions to the north and south. Options for three potential secondary school sites at allocations to the north and south of Bishop's Stortford, and at Hadham Road will provide the flexibility required to enable a viable solution to provision of additional capacity within the town.
- 5.1.5** **Transport:** the provision of frequent new bus services from urban extensions to the north and south of the town will link with an improved transport hub at the railway station. Walking and cycling will be promoted through better signposting and a network of trails into and around the town centre. Congestion will be eased through the construction of the Little Hadham Bypass and improvements to the town bypass. The Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth Urban Transport Plan will develop initiatives to tackle traffic congestion in and around the town, and address the issue of air quality at the Hockerill Air Quality Management Area.
- 5.1.6** **Other infrastructure:** there is capacity at the sewage treatment works for development in Bishop's Stortford and Essex.
- 5.1.7** **Employment and Retail:** the proximity of Bishop's Stortford to the M11 and Stansted Airport makes it an attractive place for a new employment allocation within urban extensions at Bishop's Stortford North and South. Residents of the town are well placed for access to a range of employment opportunities within the wider travel-to-work area. The town centre has a stronger retail offer than other centres in the District, and is the only town centre with good prospects for expansion at the



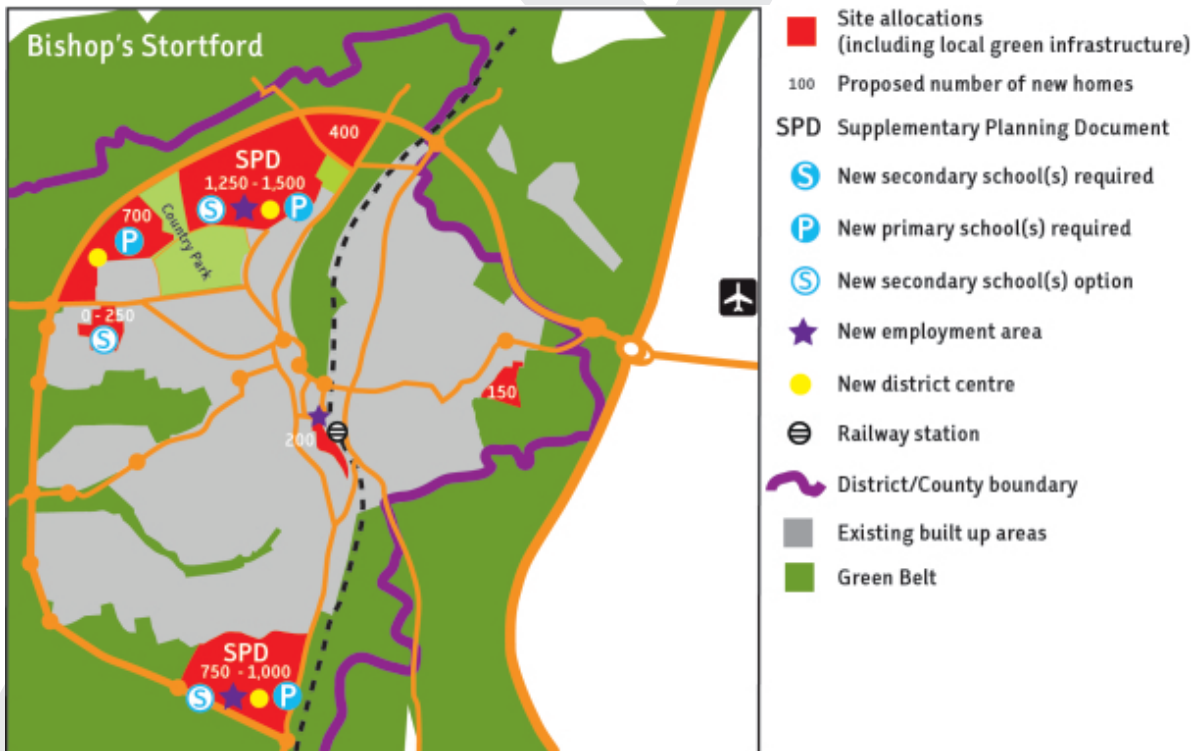
Causeway/Old River Lane, across the river to the railway station to encompass the Goods Yard and in the long-term possibly also the Mill Site. For these reasons it is designated as the District's Principal Town Centre. An attractive pedestrian circuit from the station through the town centre will enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre as a retail and leisure destination.

5.1.8 Character: The provision of a new Country Park at Hoggate's Wood and Ash Grove will extend the pattern of Green Wedges which frame the urban area. The A120 and A1184 will continue to provide a boundary limit to development and retain the town's compact character. Long views to historic features including church spires will be preserved through the layout of new streets. Development of the Goods Yard (and in the long term, the Mill Site) will preserve the attractive green corridor of the Stort. An urban extension to the south will provide an attractive new gateway to the town, and masterplans and design codes produced in collaboration with the local community as part of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will promote high quality design appropriate to the location.

5.2 Development in Bishop's Stortford

5.2.1 The main features of the policy approach to development in Bishop's Stortford are shown on Figure 5.1 below:

Figure 5.1 Key Diagram for Bishop's Stortford



5.2.2 Reflecting the District Plan Strategy, the following policies will apply to applications for new development in Bishop's Stortford:



BISH1 Development in Bishop's Stortford

I. In accordance with Policy DPS3 (Housing Supply 2011-2031), Bishop's Stortford will accommodate at least 597 homes at the following sites:

- (a) 247 homes focused on identified SLAA sites;
- (b) 200 homes at the Goods Yard as set out in Policy BISH3;
- (c) 150 homes East of Manor Links, in accordance with Policy BISH6;
- (d) A proportion of the overall windfall allowance for the District.

II. In addition, depending on the location of new secondary school capacity within the town, residential development will also be accommodated at the following sites:

- (a) Either 0 or 250 homes at the Hadham Road Reserve Secondary School site, as set out in Policy BISH5;
- (b) Either 750 or 1,000 homes at a mixed-use development South of Bishop's Stortford, in accordance with Policy BISH7;
- (c) Either 2,350 or 2,600 homes at a mixed-use development North of Bishop's Stortford, as set out in Policy BISH8.

5.2.3 Within Bishop's Stortford's urban area 247 homes are identified for development through the SLAA process. In addition, it is expected that a proportion of the overall windfall allowance for the District will be accommodated in Bishop's Stortford. These sites will be determined on an individual basis, taking into account the policies of the Plan.

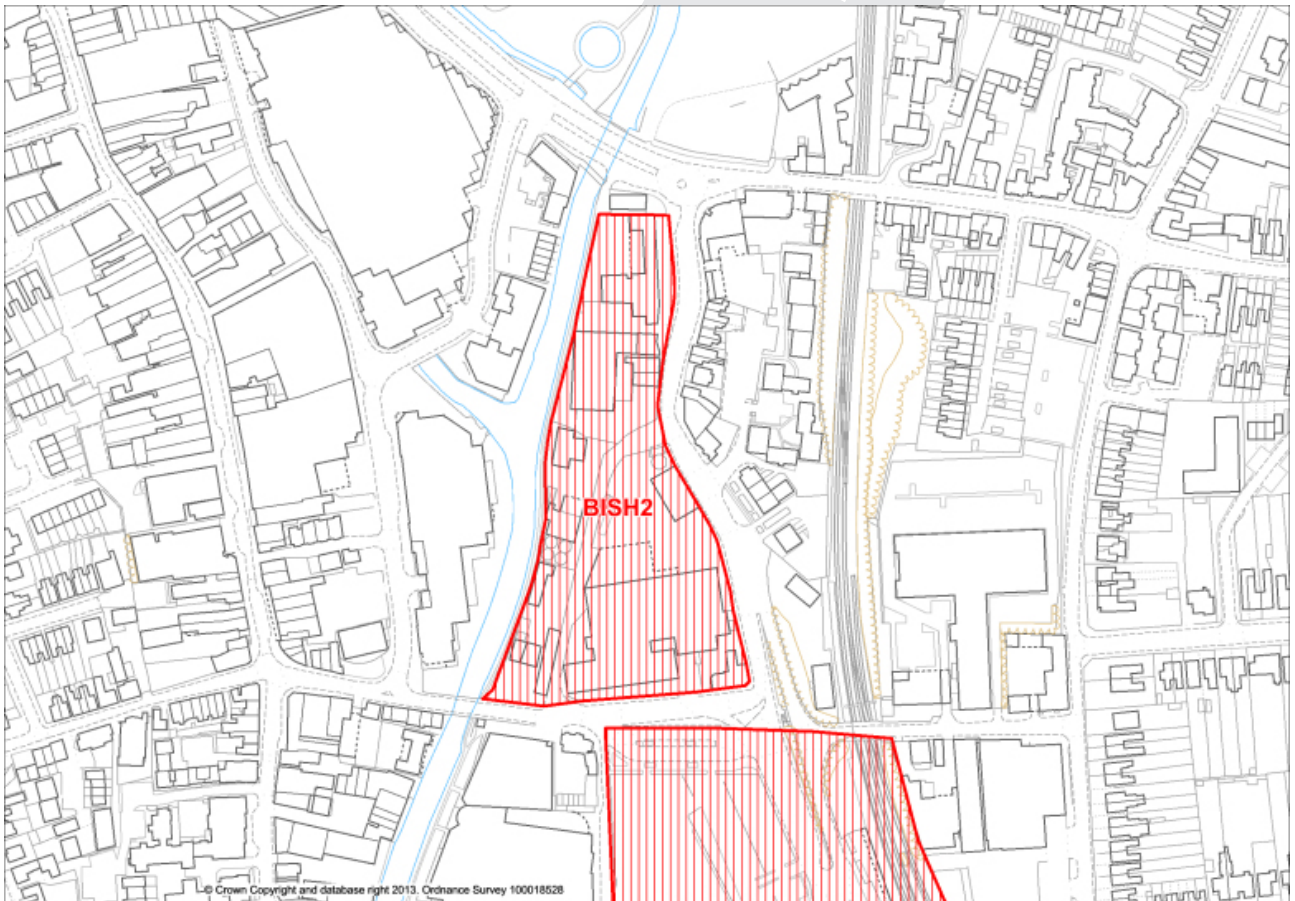
5.2.4 For the allocated sites, the following policies will apply in addition to general policies in the Plan:



The Mill Site

5.2.5 The Mill Site occupies a strategic location between the railway station and the town centre and fronting the River Stort. In the long term, the opportunities for sensitive mixed-used development are significant, as set out in the Mill Site Development Brief (2011). However, at present there is no indication that the Mill owners are seeking to relocate to alternative premises. Policy BISH2 (The Mill Site) will apply should the present occupants wish to relocate at some point during the plan period, and/or the remaining non-mill land within the site comes forward for development. Proposals for development on this and the adjoining landholding should reflect a comprehensive approach to the whole site.

Figure 5.2 Site Location: Land at the Mill Site



BISH2 The Mill Site

I. Mixed-use development at the Mill Site shall include the provision of:

- (a) limited residential apartments on the upper floors of commercial employment uses;
- (b) active ground floor frontages;



- (c) a canal basin with additional moorings and associated equipment and facilities;
- (d) commercial frontages to the canal basin;
- (e) views and vistas towards the railway station and the river;
- (f) improved access to the waterway from the town centre to create a focus of activity for residents and visitors;
- (g) retention and renovation of the most significant historic buildings, including improving the setting of the Registry Office and adjacent listed building;
- (h) a new bridge to facilitate the pedestrian circuit in accordance with Policy BISH9 (Essential Off-Site Infrastructure);
- (i) a decentralised or District Heating system, or other low carbon heating system for residential and commercial use throughout the development, using locally sourced fuel and with appropriate long-term management arrangements;
- (j) high quality public spaces, including pocket parks within the site area and in particular along the river;
- (k) landscaping and tree planting to reduce urban heat island effects;
- (l) necessary new utilities infrastructure;
- (m) retention of a suitable buffer strip adjacent to Station Road Bridge to enable bridge widening to provide safe and attractive access between the station and the town centre for pedestrians and cyclists;
- (n) planning obligations including on and off-site developer contributions; and
- (o) other policy provisions of the District Plan and relevant matters, as appropriate.

II. The site will be developed in accordance with a conceptual masterplan which shall be submitted with a planning application. This will enshrine the principles set out in the Development Brief (2011) within an overall design code that sets out parameters for design and layout.

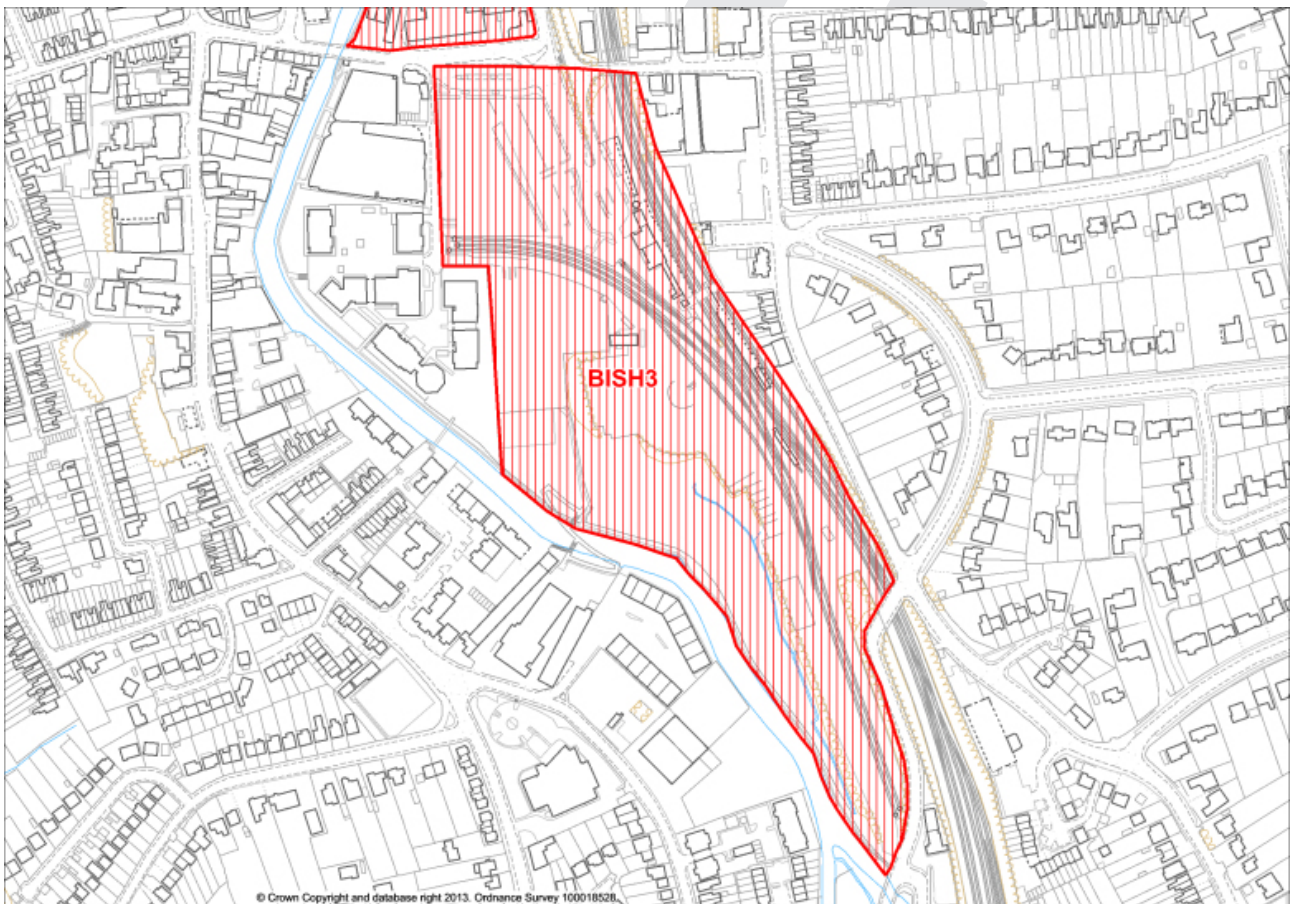
III. Buildings fronting the river shall not exceed 3 or 4 storeys in height and should be sufficiently set back to avoid a 'canyon' effect.



The Goods Yard

- 5.2.6** Like the Mill Site, the Goods Yard occupies a strategic location between the railway station and the town centre and fronting the River Stort, as set out in the Goods Yard Development Brief (2011). The northern part of the site lies within the town centre boundary and is appropriate for a mix of retail and commercial development. An approach is sought which brings forward a financially viable development whilst at the same time maximises the opportunities for high quality design and mixed use development provided by the location and context.

Figure 5.3 Site Location: Land at the Goods Yard



BISH3 The Goods Yard

I. The Goods Yard will provide for 200 homes between 2021 and 2026, as part of a mixed use development including a significant amount of B1a office floorspace and small-scale retail provision. Development of the site shall include:

- (a) Residential apartments on the upper floors of commercial employment uses and 3-4 bed family homes to the southern end of the site;
- (b) a range of dwelling type and mix, in accordance with the provisions of Policy HOU1 (Type and Mix of Housing);



- (c) Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy HOU3 (Affordable Housing);
- (d) active ground floor frontages;
- (e) views and vistas towards the railway station and the river;
- (f) improved access to the waterway from the town centre to create a focus of activity for residents and visitors;
- (g) high quality public spaces, including pocket parks within the site area and in particular along the river;
- (h) a direct route from the station to the Goods Yard pedestrian and cycle bridge;
- (i) a decentralised or District Heating system, or other low carbon heating system for residential and commercial use throughout the development, using locally sourced fuel and with appropriate long-term management arrangements;
- (j) landscaping and tree planting to reduce urban heat island effects, including retention and enhancement of the area of woodland to the south of the site;
- (k) necessary new utilities infrastructure;
- (l) planning obligations including on and off-site developer contributions; and
- (m) other policy provisions of the District Plan and relevant matters, as appropriate.

II. The site will be developed in accordance with a conceptual masterplan which shall be submitted with a planning application. This will enshrine the principles set out in the Development Brief (2011) within an overall design code that sets out parameters for design and layout.

III. Buildings fronting the river shall not exceed 3 or 4 storeys in height and should be sufficiently set back to avoid a 'canyon' effect.

IV. On-site car parking will be minimised, to avoid worsening of town centre traffic congestion and the impact on the Hockerill Air Quality Management Area.

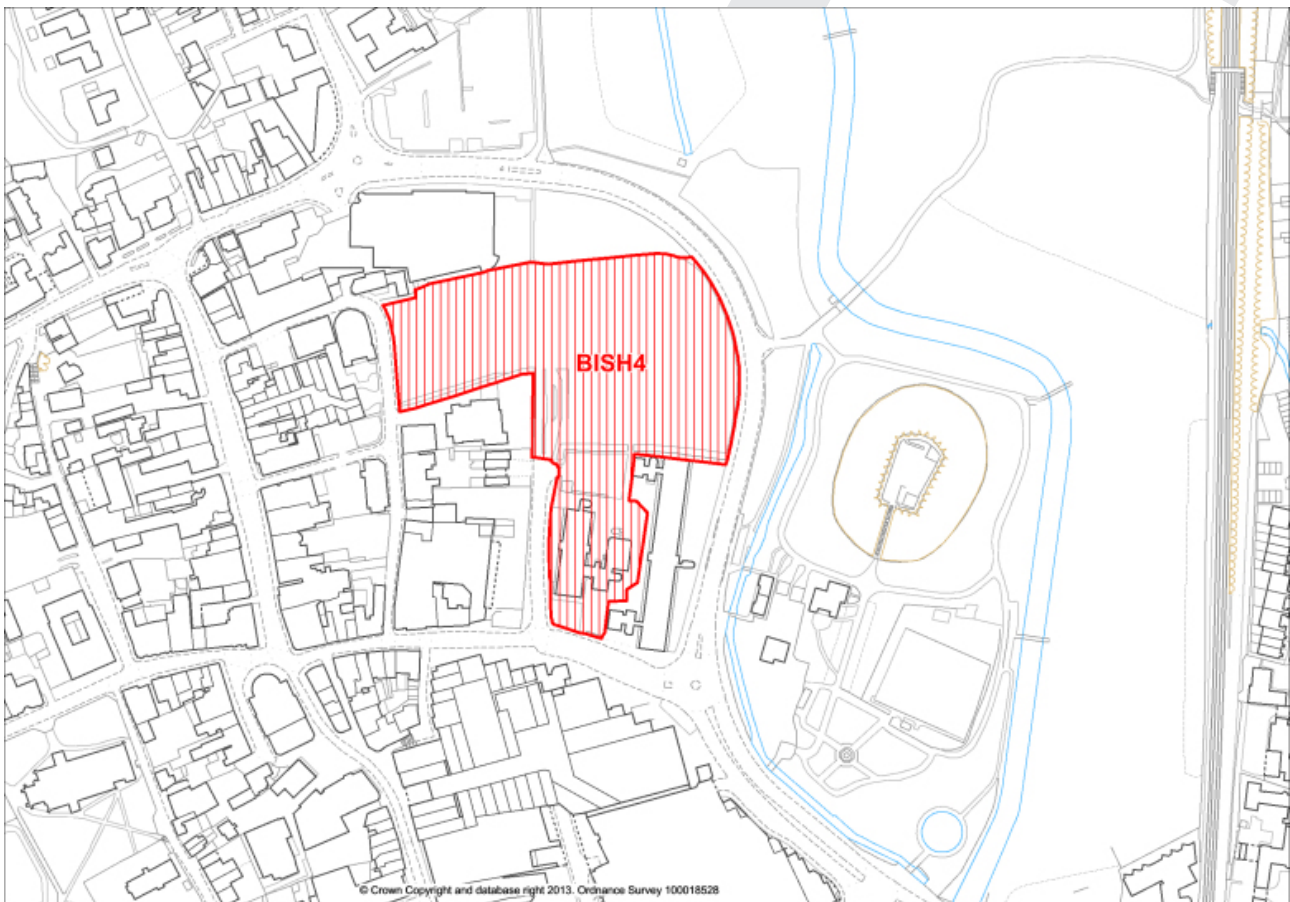
V. Site promoters must work with Hertfordshire County Council as the Highways and Transport Authority to undertake transport modelling to assess the need for a link road through the site, and to assess and provide suitable mitigation measures against vehicular congestion in the town centre.



The Causeway/Old River Lane

- 5.2.7** This is an important town centre site located within the town centre boundary. To maximise the opportunities at this site, a high-quality mixed-use development scheme will be required, including appropriate levels of parking provision. Subsequent to the delivery of this site, the Primary Shopping Frontage will be extended to encompass this site, as illustrated on the Policies Map.

Figure 5.4 Site Location: Land at Old River Lane



BISH4 The Causeway/Old River Lane

I. The Causeway/Old River Lane site will provide for a mixed use development including retail, leisure and residential dwellings between 2016 and 2021. Development of the site shall include:

- (a) a range of dwelling type and mix, in accordance with the provisions of Policy HOU1 (Type and Mix of Housing);
- (b) Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy HOU3 (Affordable Housing);
- (c) pedestrian and cycle access routes into and within the site and in connection to the town centre;



(d) a design and layout which respects the significance and relationship of the site with designated and un-designated heritage assets;

(e) car parking and vehicular access provision appropriate to the town centre location;

(f) new utilities infrastructure where necessary;

(g) planning obligations including on and off-site developer contributions where necessary and reasonably related to the development; and

(h) other policy provisions of the District Plan and relevant matters, as appropriate.

II. Subsequent to the delivery of this site, the Primary Shopping Frontage will be extended to encompass the site, as illustrated on the Policies Map.

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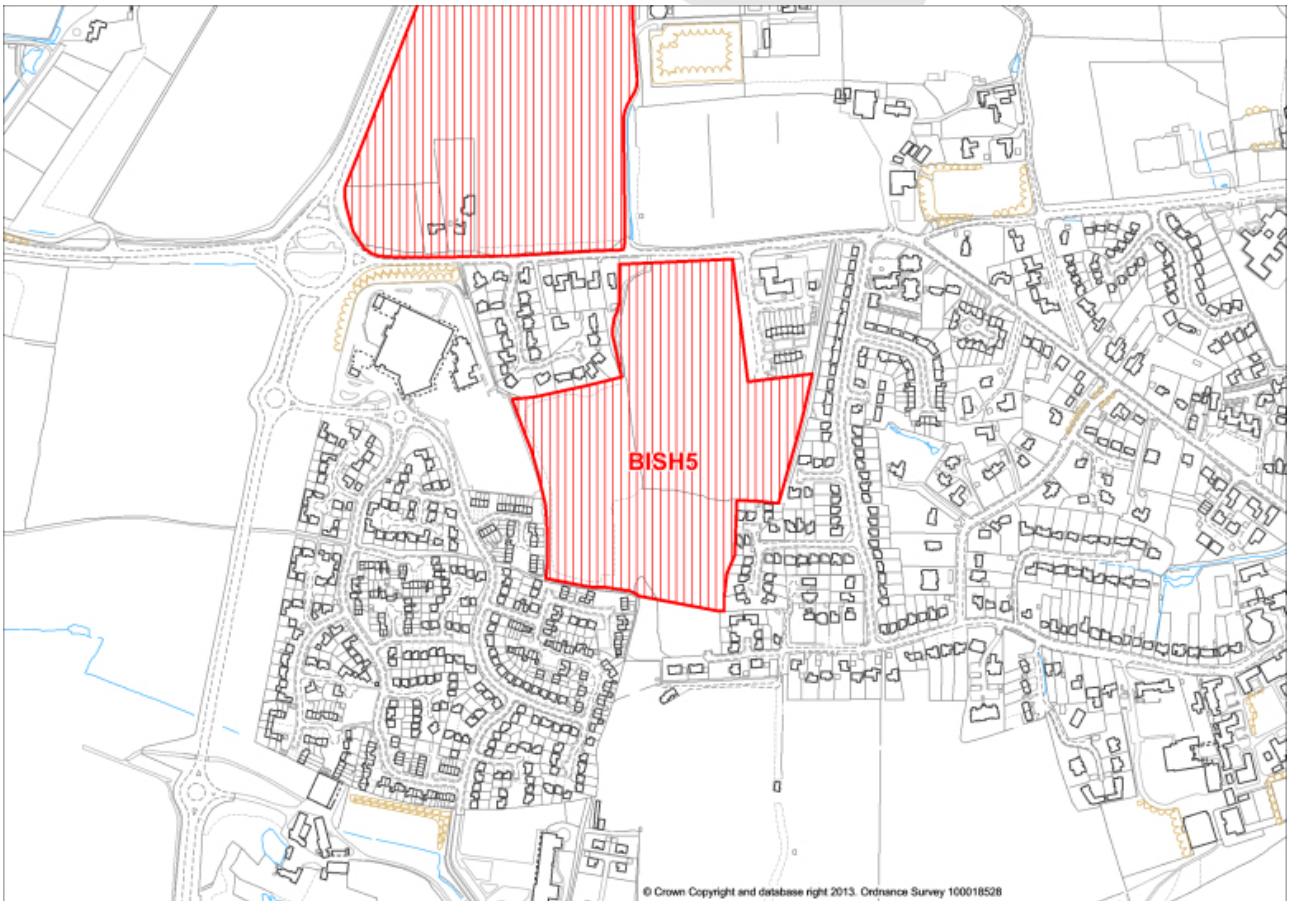


Reserve Secondary School Site, Hadham Road

5.2.8 One of the main challenges facing development in Bishop’s Stortford is the funding and provision of additional secondary school capacity. In order to enable flexibility and avoid closing down opportunities for successful resolution of the school sites issues, three locations for potential alternative school sites have been identified. These include the reserve secondary school site on Hadham Road.

5.2.9 Policy BISH1 (Development in Bishop’s Stortford) specifies either no homes at this site if a new secondary school is required at Hadham Road, or 250 homes if a new secondary school site is not required but is instead provided at one of the proposed mixed-use urban extensions, either north or south of Bishop’s Stortford.

Figure 5.5 Site Location: Reserve Secondary School Site, Hadham Road



BISH5 Reserve Secondary School Site, Hadham Road

I. The Reserve Secondary School Site, Hadham Road will only be released for residential development if sufficient additional secondary school capacity is provided elsewhere in the town.

II. In the event that the site comes forward for non-educational development, 250 homes will be provided between 2021 and 2026, including:



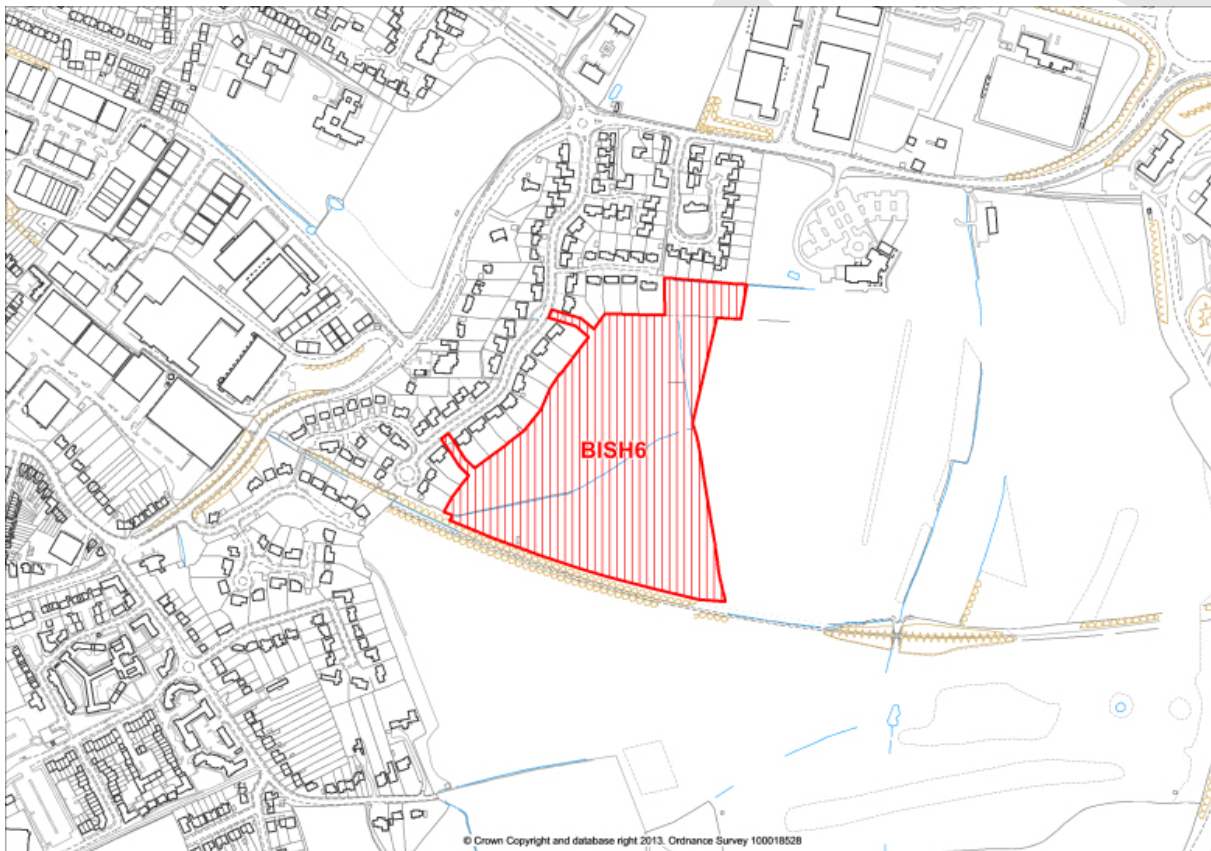
- (a) a range of dwelling type and mix, in accordance with the provisions of Policy HOU1 (Type and Mix of Housing);
- (b) Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy HOU3 (Affordable Housing);
- (c) quality local green infrastructure through the site including opportunities for preserving and enhancing on-site assets, maximising opportunities to link into existing assets and enhance biodiversity;
- (d) necessary new utilities infrastructure;
- (e) sustainable urban drainage and provision for flood mitigation;
- (f) access arrangements and wider strategic and local highways mitigation measures;
- (g) sustainable transport measures including the encouragement of walking and cycling, and enhanced passenger transport services;
- (h) social infrastructure including health services and facilities; community facilities; public amenity green space and play areas;
- (i) landscaping;
- (j) financial viability and the delivery of all necessary infrastructure;
- (k) planning obligations including on and off-site developer contributions; and
- (l) other policy provisions of the District Plan and relevant matters, as appropriate.



East of Manor Links

- 5.2.10** This site is located between the Golf Course and the existing urban area. A predominantly residential development in this location will contribute towards meeting the short-term housing requirement and meet needs within the Housing Market Area.

Figure 5.6 Site Location: East of Manor Links



BISH6 East of Manor Links

Development of 150 homes will be provided between 2016 and 2021, which shall include provision of:

- (a) a range of dwelling type and mix, in accordance with the provisions of Policy HOU1 (Type and Mix of Housing);
- (b) Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy HOU3 (Affordable Housing);
- (c) necessary new utilities infrastructure;
- (d) tree planting and other appropriate landscaping to mitigate loss of amenity to existing residential properties in Manor Links;



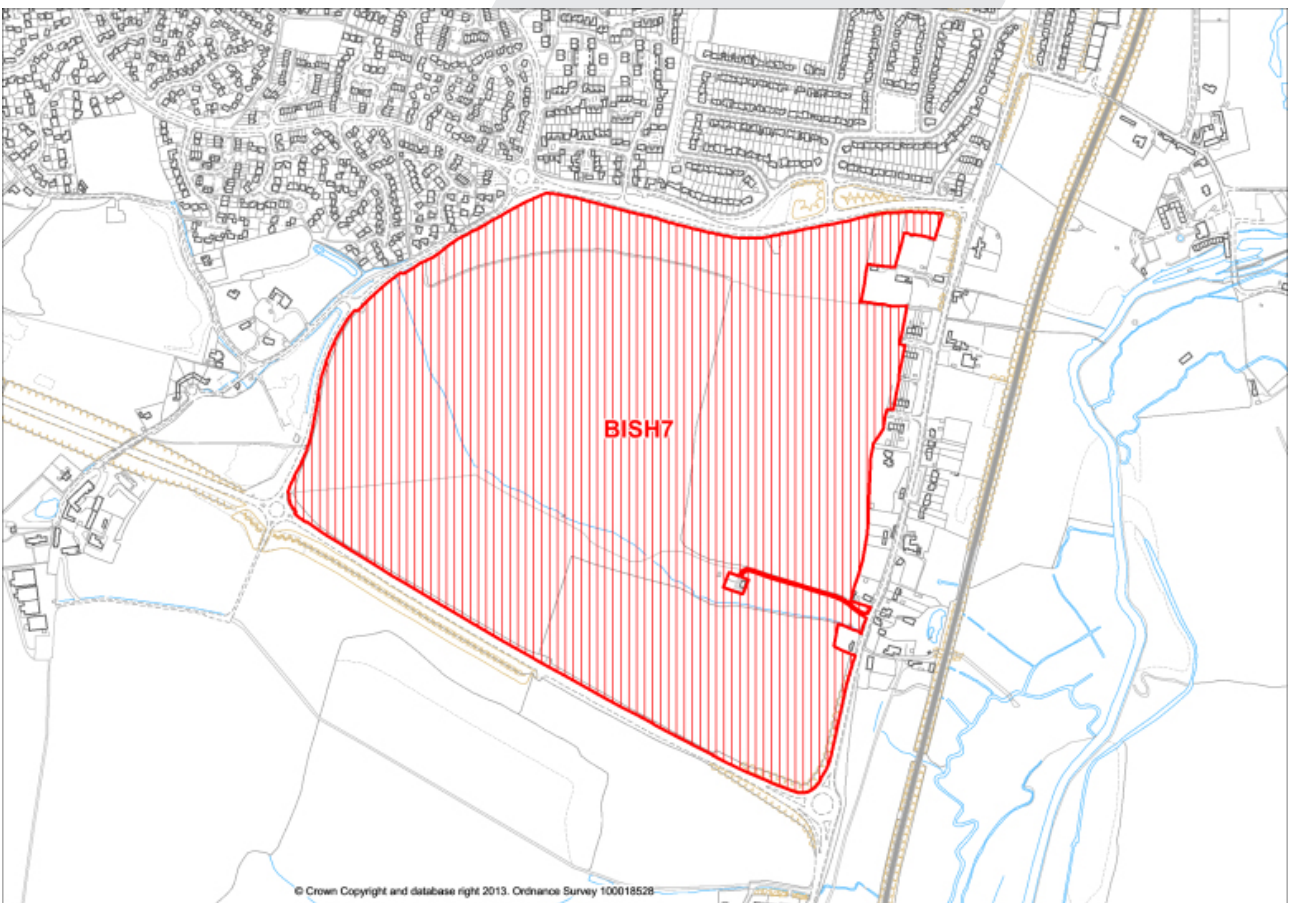
- (e) access arrangements including primary access to Dunmow Road and secondary access to Manor Links, and appropriate local highways mitigation measures;
- (f) sustainable transport measures including the encouragement of walking and cycling, and enhanced passenger transport services;
- (g) public amenity green space and play areas;
- (h) quality local green infrastructure through the site including opportunities for preserving and enhancing on-site assets, maximising opportunities to link into existing assets and enhance biodiversity;
- (i) protection of all public rights of way (including, inter alia, the protection of the restricted byway) and other public access routes running through or on the boundaries of the site;
- (j) planning obligations including on and off-site developer contributions; and
- (k) other policy provisions of the District Plan and relevant matters, as appropriate.



South of Bishop's Stortford

- 5.2.11** Development of a mixed-use urban extension is needed in this area in order to meet housing requirements for the Housing Market Area and potentially also to provide a secondary school site to serve the catchment area. Policy BISH1 (Development in Bishop's Stortford) specifies a lower number of 750 homes if a new secondary school site is required, or 1,000 homes if a new secondary school site is not required but is provided at either Hadham Road or North of Bishop's Stortford. To encourage self-containment and improve sustainability the provision of a neighbourhood centre including local shops and a new employment area will be required.
- 5.2.12** Masterplanning as part of the planning application and production of a Supplementary Planning Document is considered to be essential to the assessment of the proposals for development in this area, including the appropriate level of homes and other uses. Technical work to support the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) shall be expected to be part-funded by the landowners/promoters for and with direct involvement of East Herts Council as the Local Planning Authority, Bishop's Stortford Town Council, Thorley Parish Council, and other stakeholders as necessary.

Figure 5.7 Site Location: Land South of Bishop's Stortford





BISH7 South of Bishop's Stortford

I. As part of the mixed-use development of this area, between 750 and 1,000 homes will be provided between 2016 and 2026 in accordance with Policy BISH1 (Development in Bishop's Stortford), depending on whether a secondary school is needed on the site. Development in this location should provide:

- (a) a range of dwelling type and mix, in accordance with the full provisions of Policy HOU1 (Type and Mix of Housing);
- (b) Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy HOU3 (Affordable Housing);
- (c) quality local green infrastructure and landscaping through the site including opportunities for preserving and enhancing on-site assets, maximising opportunities to link into existing assets and enhance biodiversity;
- (d) necessary new utilities infrastructure;
- (e) sustainable urban drainage and provision for flood mitigation;
- (f) access arrangements and wider strategic and local highways mitigation measures, including improvements along London Road;
- (g) sustainable transport measures including the encouragement of walking and cycling, and enhanced passenger transport services;
- (h) social infrastructure including: primary school/s to serve the development and appropriate surrounding catchment area/s; a potential secondary school; health services and facilities; community facilities; public amenity green space and play areas;
- (i) protection and sensitive treatment of all public rights of way and other public access routes running through or on the boundaries of the site;
- (j) views and vistas, in particular those relating to Thorley Church;
- (k) appropriate levels of local retail to promote self containment and sustainability;
- (l) a new employment allocation to provide 4-5 hectares of modern business premises in a modern business park attractive to B1 employment uses;
- (m) financial viability and the delivery of all necessary infrastructure;
- (n) planning obligations including on and off-site developer contributions; and
- (o) other policy provisions of the District Plan and relevant matters, as appropriate.



II. Working with the site promoters, Bishop's Stortford Town Council, Thorley Parish Council, and other stakeholders as appropriate, a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will be prepared to address detailed matters of design and layout, including potential school(s), the movement network, design coding, views, treatment of the Hertfordshire Way, car parking, drainage, density, landscaping, and local green infrastructure.

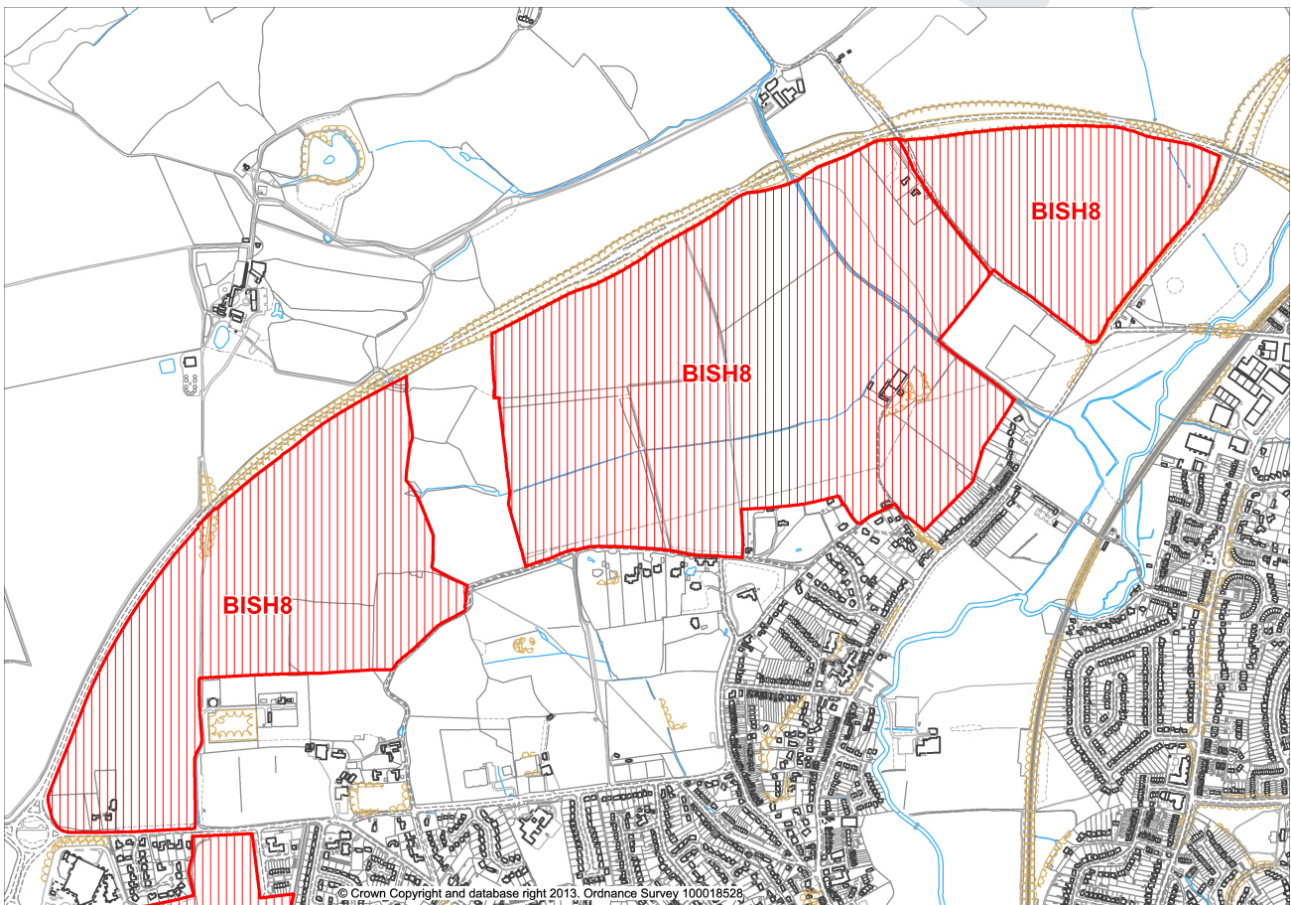
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North of Bishop's Stortford

- 5.2.13** To the north of the town, land inset from the Green Belt and safeguarded for future development in previous Local Plans will be allocated for mixed-use development. This area is currently the subject of a planning application (2013). The District Plan is based on the merits and requirements of this location rather than specific proposals put forward.
- 5.2.14** Development of a mixed-use urban extension is needed in this area in order to meet housing requirements for the Housing Market Area and potentially also to provide a secondary school site to serve the catchment area. Policy BISH1 (Development in Bishop's Stortford) specifies a lower number of 2,350 homes if a new secondary school site is required, or 2,600 homes if a new secondary school site is not required but is provided at Hadham Road or South of Bishop's Stortford. To encourage self-containment and improve sustainability the provision of a neighbourhood centre including local shops and a new employment area will be required.

Figure 5.8 Site Location: Land North of Bishop's Stortford





BISH8 North of Bishop's Stortford

As part of the mixed-use development of this area between 2,350 and 2,600 homes will be provided in accordance with Policy BISH1 (Development in Bishop's Stortford), depending on whether a secondary school is needed on the site. Development in this location should provide:

I. West of Hoggate's Wood, around 700 homes between 2016 and 2026, which shall include the provision of:

- (a) a primary school;
- (b) a neighbourhood centre providing a range of local shops and services; and
- (c) a new roundabout on Hadham Road to provide vehicular access to the area.

II. Between Hoggate's Wood and Farnham Road between 1,250 and 1,500 homes shall be provided between 2016 and 2031, depending on whether a secondary school is needed on the site. Development in this location shall include the provision of:

- (a) a primary school;
- (b) vehicular access by a new roundabout on the A120 and also by a new junction on Rye Street;
- (c) a neighbourhood centre comprising a mix of local shops and facilities, business incubator units, health facilities, and a play area/open space;
- (d) a new employment allocation to provide 4-5 hectares of modern business premises in a modern business park attractive to B1 employment uses; and
- (e) Foxdells Farm shall be preserved and enhanced as a focus for a public space and appropriate community or leisure facilities.

III. East of Farnham Road, around 400 homes shall be provided between 2016 and 2026.

IV. Across the whole development site, the following requirements and provisions will apply:

- (a) a range of dwelling type and mix, in accordance with the full provisions of Policy HOU1 (Type and Mix of Housing);
- (b) Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy HOU3 (Affordable Housing);
- (c) quality local green infrastructure through the site including opportunities for preserving and enhancing on-site assets, maximising opportunities to link into existing assets and enhance biodiversity;



- (d) landscaping to take account of key features of the site, including the undulating topography, mature trees and hedgerows;
- (e) necessary new utilities infrastructure;
- (f) sustainable urban drainage and provision for flood mitigation;
- (g) a new Country Park shall be provided to include the Green Belt land north and south of Dane O' Coy's Road, including Hoggate's Wood and Ash Grove, including long-term arrangements for management and maintenance;
- (h) the rural character of Dane O' Coys Road shall be preserved, and access along the road shall be reserved for pedestrians, cyclists and bus services only;
- (i) a network of well-signposted pedestrian and cycle routes between the development and the town centre;
- (j) a circular bus route connecting with the bus/rail interchange in the town centre;
- (k) strategic long views of St. Michael's Church and All Saints, Hockerill, and views of mature trees, should be preserved;
- (l) easy access to the village of Farnham must be maintained along Farnham Road, including during the construction period;
- (m) financial viability and the delivery of all necessary infrastructure;
- (n) planning obligations including on and off-site developer contributions; and
- (o) other policy provisions of the District Plan and Bishop's Stortford Town Council's Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards, as appropriate.

V. Working with the site promoters, Bishop's Stortford Town Council and other stakeholders as appropriate, a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will be prepared to address detailed matters of design and layout, including potential school(s), the movement network, design coding, views, car parking, drainage, density, landscaping, and local green infrastructure.



5.3 Off Site Infrastructure

- 5.3.1** The cumulative impact of development at different locations will require financial contributions from a range of developers towards funding of essential off-site infrastructure. This development is likely to include contributions not only from development in Bishop's Stortford, but also for example in relation to upgrades to Junction 8 of the M11 and associated highway works, from development in Essex.

BISH9 Essential Off-Site Infrastructure

Development proposals in Bishop's Stortford will be permitted subject to the other policies in this Plan and the provision of financial contributions towards the following infrastructure schemes:

- (a) a new secondary school and/or sixth form college at one or more of the three identified potential locations (Bishop's Stortford North, Bishop's Stortford South, Hadham Road Reserve Secondary School Site);
- (b) the widening of Station Road bridge;
- (c) improvements to traffic control and air quality at Hockerill lights;
- (d) improvements to the A1184/A120 bypass around the town;
- (e) Junction 8 of the M11 and the Birchanger Roundabout;
- (f) an enhanced passenger transport hub at the railway station.



5.4 Employment in Bishop's Stortford

- 5.4.1** The strategy is to protect and enhance the existing employment areas in the town, and supplement these with new Employment Areas at Bishop's Stortford North, Bishop's Stortford South and at the Goods Yard.
- 5.4.2** In addition, Millside Industrial Estate and Southmill Trading Estate have been formally designated as Employment Areas.

BISH10 Employment in Bishop's Stortford

I. In accordance with Policy ED1 (Employment), the following locations are designated as Employment Areas:

- (a) Raynham Road/Dunmow Road Industrial Estate (incorporating Stortford Hall Industrial Estate, The Links Business Centre, Rainham Road/Myson Way, Raynham Road West, and Raynham Road East between The Links Business Centre and Raynham Close);
- (b) Haslemere Estate;
- (c) Twyford Road;
- (d) Stansted Road (incorporating Goodliffe Park, Stort Valley Industrial Estate, and Birchanger Industrial Estate);
- (e) Woodside;
- (f) Millside Industrial Estate;
- (g) Southmill Trading Estate.

II. In addition, new Employment Areas will be identified in the following locations:

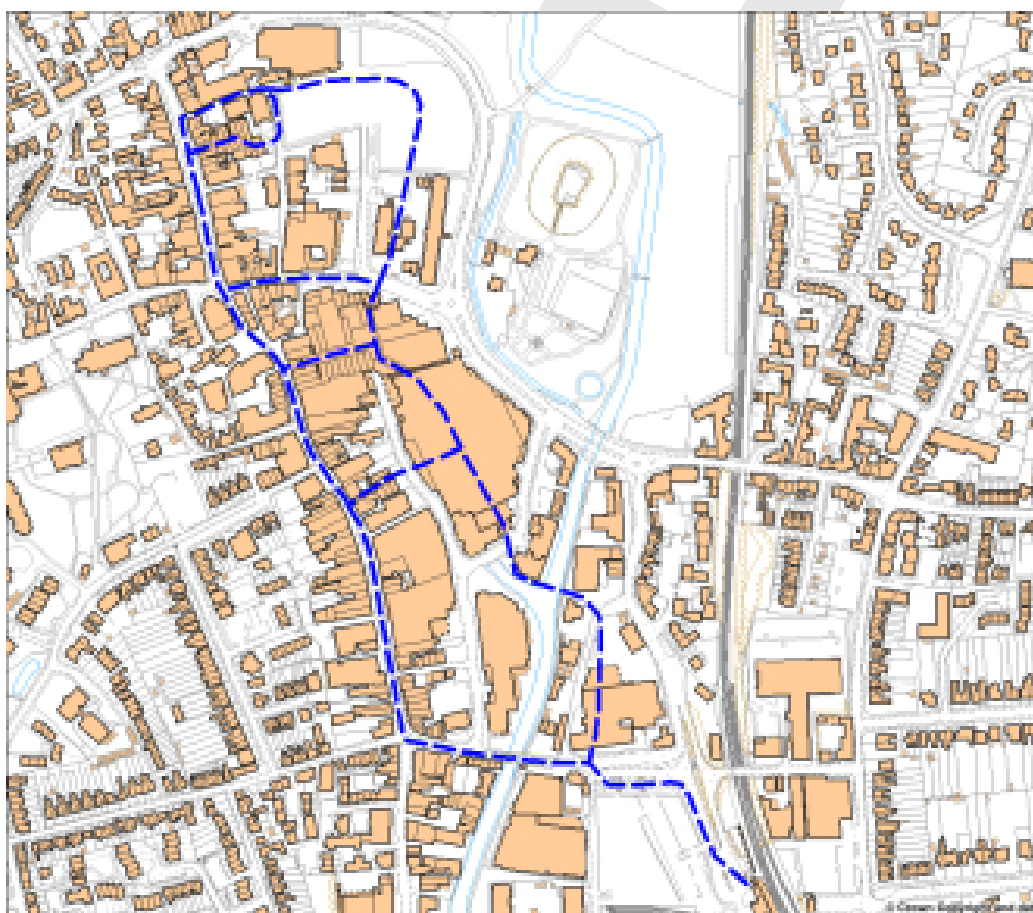
- (a) The Goods Yard, as set out in Policy BISH3;
- (b) Bishop's Stortford South, as set out in Policy BISH7; and
- (c) Bishop's Stortford North, as set out in Policy BISH8.



5.5 Retail in Bishop's Stortford

5.5.1 Bishop's Stortford has the largest shopping centre in the District and provides a range of convenience and comparison shopping opportunities. A strategy to secure the increased vitality and viability of the town centre rests on increasing the town centre offer through the provision of additional sites, and on integrating the town centre with the railway station across the river. The town centre boundary will restrict land uses in the town centre to those which may be appropriate to securing the long-term vitality and viability of the town in accordance with Policy RTC1. A pedestrian circuit is shown in Figure 5.9 below.

Figure 5.9 Pedestrian Circuit



5.5.2 Environmental enhancements will be sought to improve the attractiveness of the town centre as a retail and leisure destination, particularly along the route of the proposed movement circuit. These could include a range of public realm enhancements including paving, signage and street furniture. Supporting the town centre, local shopping needs will be addressed through the designation of three new Neighbourhood Centres.



BISH11 Retail in Bishop's Stortford

I. New retail and leisure facilities will be focused within the Town Centre of Bishop's Stortford at the Old River Lane site, in accordance with Policy BISH4.

II. New Neighbourhood Centres will be designated in the following locations:

(a) South of Bishop's Stortford, in accordance with Policy BISH7;

(b) North of Bishop's Stortford, west of Hoggate's Wood, in accordance with Policy BISH8 (I); and

(c) North of Bishop's Stortford, between Hoggate's Wood and Farnham Road, in accordance with Policy BISH8 (II).

III. Development proposals in Bishop's Stortford should seek to enhance the public realm and vitality of the pedestrian circuit between the station and the town centre, and should not compromise the potential for completion of the circuit.

5.6 Leisure and Community Facilities in Bishop's Stortford

5.6.1 All new development in Bishop's Stortford and the surrounding area will result in an increased demand for local services and community facilities including, for instance, healthcare and education. Development proposals should contribute to the enhancement of existing provision to ensure that both new and existing residents in the town are able to access community facilities and vital services within Bishop's Stortford, thereby reducing the need to travel to other settlements. Reflecting this, development proposals will be considered in accordance with Policies CFLR7 (Community Facilities), CFLR8 (Health and Wellbeing) and CFLR9 (Education).

5.6.2 Bishop's Stortford has been identified as having a good provision of open space within the town, but deficiencies in strategic Accessible Natural Greenspace (ANG) (green space of over 500 hectares) exist, and there is a lack of provision for people to travel off-road by cycle or foot between the town and countryside. The East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan (2011) indicates a need to provide and enhance links to the River Stort, Gilston Park, Harlow and the woodland sites to the south and east. There is also a need for a new strategic and local ANG site to serve existing and future communities.

5.6.3 For formal sport provision, the under provision of junior football, rugby and mini-soccer pitches should also be addressed. Development proposals will be considered in accordance with Policies CFLR1 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation) and CFLR2 (Open Space Standards).



- 5.6.4** Bishop's Stortford's Green Wedges ('green fingers'), which penetrate the town, are a recognised local amenity, wildlife and leisure asset and have been designated as Local Green Spaces under Policy CFLR3 (Local Green Space). This designation provides protection for these valuable resources and ensures that development will not be allowed in such locations, other than in very special circumstances.

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