



Chapter 8 Sawbridgeworth



Chapter 8 Sawbridgeworth

100

8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1** Sawbridgeworth is a small market town, located on the A1184 between the two larger settlements of Bishop's Stortford and Harlow. As such, the town acts predominantly as a dormitory settlement, with residents commuting to these neighbouring towns and also to London and Cambridge using the town's railway link. Congestion is therefore a significant problem in the town along with the air quality issues this congestion can bring.
- 8.1.2** Historically, the town has developed along the route linking London with both Cambridge and East Anglia; however, this historic market town character is both an advantage and a disadvantage. The medieval core of the town is an attractive location which supports local independent retailers, but it also acts as a constraint to larger retailers. The town has only one small supermarket, meaning that a lot of larger shopping trips are conducted outside the town. Sawbridgeworth is therefore regarded as a Minor Town Centre.
- 8.1.3** Being one of the smaller towns in the District, with a predominance of residential development, there is not much potential for brownfield redevelopment within Sawbridgeworth. Therefore, any large scale residential development would of necessity involve Green Belt release. To meet the need for additional housing in Sawbridgeworth, an urban extension is proposed to the west of the town.
- 8.1.4** The main components of the development strategy for Sawbridgeworth are as follows:
- 8.1.5** **Housing:** additional homes will be provided which will consist of a mix of dwelling types and sizes to ensure that Sawbridgeworth's population is able to access a balanced housing market catering for all life stages. The number of homes provided will contribute to the need identified for the Housing Market Area. The provision of affordable housing as part of any larger development scheme/s will allow emerging households to remain living in Sawbridgeworth in accommodation suited to their needs.
- 8.1.6** **Education:** the educational needs of the town will be met at primary level via the expansion of Mandeville School to 2 forms of entry. Secondary educational provision will be enhanced via the expansion of one or more of the existing schools, and by the potential construction of a new school, in the Bishop's Stortford School Planning Area within which Sawbridgeworth falls.
- 8.1.7** **Transport:** bus services will be maintained and, where possible, improved, with a particular focus on providing enhanced services to the town's railway station. New development to the west of the town will support improved sustainable travel and aid delivery of initiatives contained in Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan and



daughter documents. New development will be well integrated with existing development and the town centre through the provision of new pedestrian and cycling links.

8.1.8 Economic Development: Sawbridgeworth’s limited employment offer will be maintained to support local scale employment opportunities. As a Minor Town Centre, Sawbridgeworth’s retail offer in the central core will be maintained and strengthened if suitable opportunities arise to serve both the town’s residents and its local rural hinterland.

8.1.9 Character: Sawbridgeworth’s market town character and the heritage qualities of the town’s historic core will be maintained. New development to the west of the town will respect both the local and wider landscape character and will enhance Sawbridgeworth’s green infrastructure, through the provision of a significant amount of public open space.

8.2 Development in Sawbridgeworth

8.2.1 The main features of the policy approach to development in Sawbridgeworth are shown on Figure 8.1 below:

Figure 8.1 Key Diagram for Sawbridgeworth





- 8.2.2** Reflecting the District Plan Strategy, the following policies will apply to applications for new development in Sawbridgeworth:

SAWB1 Development in Sawbridgeworth

In accordance with Policy DPS3 (Housing Supply 2011-2031), Sawbridgeworth will accommodate at least 405 new homes, which will include:

- (a) identified SLAA sites amounting to at least 5 homes;
- (b) 100 homes to the west of the town on land to the north of West Road, as set out in Policy SAWB2 (Land to the North of West Road);
- (c) 300 homes to the west of the town on land to the south of West Road, as set out in Policy SAWB3 (Land to the South of West Road); and
- (d) a proportion of the overall windfall allowance for the District.

Development Sites in Sawbridgeworth's Urban Area

- 8.2.3** Within Sawbridgeworth's urban area 5 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 Sawbridgeworth. These sites will be determined on an individual basis, taking into account the policies of the Plan.
- 8.2.4** For the allocated sites, the following policies will apply in addition to general policies in the Plan:



Land North of West Road

- 8.2.5** In order to meet the District's short term housing requirement and to provide for the housing needs of Sawbridgeworth, development of approximately 100 homes is proposed on land to the north of West Road.
- 8.2.6** The proximity of this location to both primary and secondary education, sustainable transport opportunities and local retail and community facilities would enable new development to relate well to existing infrastructure. However, constraints in relation to educational capacity in the town limit the scale of development in this location as any development will be required to ensure that the future expansion needs of Mandeville School are secured.

Figure 8.2 Site Location: Land North of West Road



SAWB2 Land North of West Road (West of Sawbridgeworth)

- I. Land to the north of West Road is allocated as a residential development site, to accommodate approximately 100 homes by 2021.
- II. The development is expected to address the following provisions and issues:



- (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) sustainable transport measures including the encouragement of walking and cycling, and enhanced passenger transport services;
- (d) an enhanced public footpath and cycleway from West Road to enable direct pedestrian and cycle access to Mandeville School and Leventhorpe School;
- (e) the setting aside of 1.2ha of land (to the west of the existing school buildings) to facilitate the expansion of Mandeville School to 2 forms of entry, including the provision of a new access route;
- (f) enhanced landscaping along the western boundary of the site to provide a soft edge to the development and define the new Green Belt boundary;
- (g) planning obligations including on and off-site developer contributions; and
- (h) other policy provisions of the District Plan and relevant matters, as appropriate.

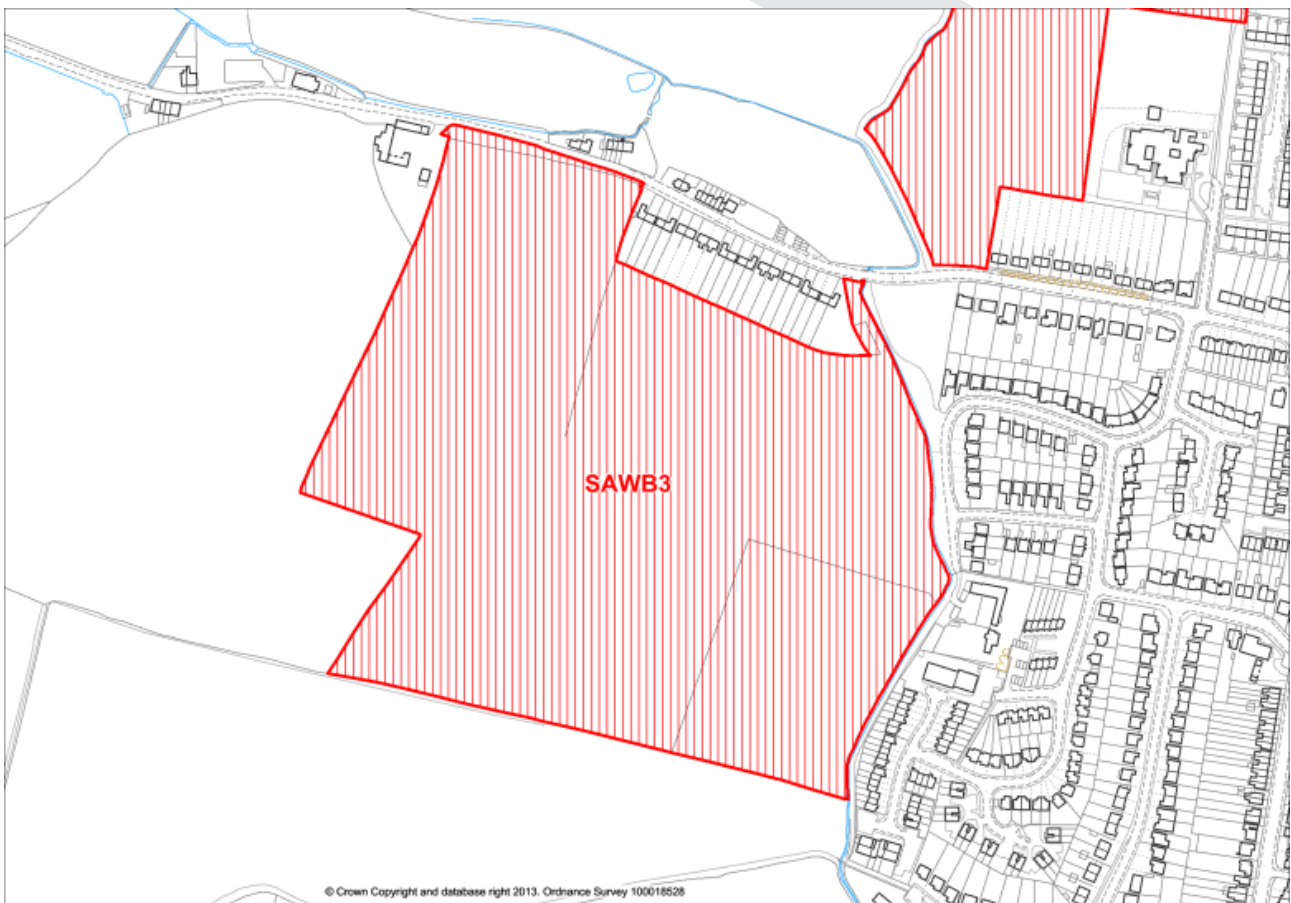
DRAFT



Land South of West Road

- 8.2.7** In order to meet the District's short term housing requirement and to provide for the housing needs of Sawbridgeworth, development of approximately 300 homes is proposed on land to the south of West Road.
- 8.2.8** The proximity of this location to both primary and secondary education, sustainable transport opportunities and local retail and community facilities would enable new development to relate well to existing infrastructure. However, constraints in relation to highways infrastructure limit the scale of development in this location. Initial transport modelling work has proposed that signalisation of the A1184/West Road and Station Road junction should occur, so development will be required to provide financial contributions to address this local highways mitigation measure.

Figure 8.3 Land South of West Road



SAWB3 Land to the south of West Road (West of Sawbridgeworth)

I. Land to the south of West Road is allocated as a residential development site, to accommodate approximately 300 homes by 2021.



II. The development of the site is expected to be subject to a development brief or masterplan prepared by, or approved by, the District Council. The development is expected to address the following provisions and issues:

- (a) the key design and layout principles of development, which should include a visual transition from urban to rural;
- (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) quality local green infrastructure through the site including opportunities for preserving and enhancing on-site assets (such as Sawbridgeworth Brook), maximising opportunities to link into existing assets and enhance biodiversity;
- (e) necessary new utilities infrastructure, such as upgrades to the localised sewerage network;
- (f) sustainable urban drainage and provision for flood mitigation;
- (g) access arrangements and local highways mitigation measures, including junction improvements at the West Road/A1184 junction;
- (h) sustainable transport measures including the encouragement of walking and cycling, in particular to the town centre and railway station, and enhanced passenger transport services;
- (i) the extension of the existing footpath running along the southern side of West Road to serve the new development;
- (j) social infrastructure including: community facilities; public amenity green space and play areas;
- (k) small scale retail (A1-A5) provision in the form of neighbourhood shops;
- (l) provision of an appropriate structural landscape belt and public open space along the western and southern boundaries of the site to provide a soft edge to the development and define the new Green Belt boundary;
- (m) planning obligations including on and off-site developer contributions; and
- (n) other policy provisions of the District Plan and relevant matters, as appropriate.



8.3 Employment in Sawbridgeworth

- 8.3.1** Sawbridgeworth is unique in that it is the only town in the District that doesn't have any designated Employment Areas. This reflects its position between two higher order settlements which are considered to be more attractive employment locations.
- 8.3.2** In order to continue to support the town's local commercial, retailing and service businesses, the strategy will seek to maintain Sawbridgeworth's limited employment offer.

8.4 Retail in Sawbridgeworth

- 8.4.1** Sawbridgeworth has a small town centre, consisting predominantly of small independent units and a modest supermarket. Despite its size, the town centre provides a vital role for the residents of the town and its immediate rural hinterland.
- 8.4.2** Recognising its size and relatively limited retail offer, the High Street is designated as a Minor Town Centre with only a secondary frontage. Within this frontage, it is necessary to retain a suitable mix of retail units and appropriate town centre uses in order to ensure the longer term vitality and viability of Sawbridgeworth's town centre. As such, retail development in Sawbridgeworth will be considered in accordance with Policies RTC1 (Retail and Town Centres) and RTC4 (Secondary Shopping Frontages).

8.5 Leisure and Community Facilities in Sawbridgeworth

- 8.5.1** The Local Plan 2007 allocated a site to the north of Leventhorpe School for new sports pitch provision recognising an identified shortfall in pitch provision within the town. Given that this shortfall has not been addressed, the strategy will be to reallocate the same site for the provision of sports pitches. Development proposals will be considered in accordance with Policies CFLR1 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation) and CFLR2 (Open Space Standards).
- 8.5.2** New development to the west of Sawbridgeworth will increase demand for local services and community facilities including healthcare and education. It is important that developments in Sawbridgeworth enhance existing, and provide new community facilities in order to ensure existing and new communities can access vital services without the need to travel to neighbouring settlements. In this respect, development proposals will be considered in accordance with Policies CFLR7 (Community Facilities), CFLR8 (Health and Wellbeing) and CFLR9 (Education).

SAWB4 Sports Pitch Provision

A site of 14 hectares has been allocated to the north of Leventhorpe School as shown on the Policies Map for sports pitch provision.



DRAFT