



Chapter 9 Ware



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9.1 Introduction

- 9.1.1** Ware is an historic market town which has developed in a valley setting around a crossing point of the River Lea. Past coaching and malting industry ties influenced the evolution of the town's urban form and this historic pattern of development now constrains future town centre development opportunities. This is especially so for the town's retail offer where, due to traffic congestion and servicing constraints on the High Street, coupled with surrounding residential development, there is considered to be little opportunity for further retail expansion within the town centre. Ware is therefore regarded as a Minor Town Centre.
- 9.1.2** Good use has been made of brownfield opportunities in the town; however, it is considered that there is only limited potential for further areas of redevelopment, given the need to maintain Ware's existing employment base, which provides jobs to residents of the town and surrounding areas. Therefore, any large scale residential development would of necessity involve Green Belt release. The impacts of district-wide need have to be balanced against the ability of Ware's infrastructure to satisfactorily absorb the likely additional population and its requirements whilst retaining the town's unique historic character and sense of place.
- 9.1.3** The main components of the development strategy for Ware are as follows:
- 9.1.4** **Housing:** additional homes will be provided which will consist of a mix of dwelling types and sizes that will have been constructed in appropriate locations to ensure that Ware'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 new residential or mixed use development scheme/s will allow emerging households to be able to remain living in Ware in accommodation suited to their needs.
- 9.1.5** **Education:** the educational needs of the town will be achieved at primary level via the expansion of existing facilities, which may be supplemented by the construction of additional schools, depending on the level of development in the town. Secondary educational provision will be enhanced via the expansion of one or more of the existing schools in the Hertford and Ware Schools Planning Area and by the potential construction of a new school if strategic scale development to the North and East of the town should progress. Hertford Regional College will continue to provide further educational opportunities for students from both Ware and wider locales.
- 9.1.6** **Transport:** bus services will be maintained and, where possible, improved so that they continue to support travel between residential areas and the town centre and its railway station. New development will support improved sustainable travel and aid delivery of initiatives contained in Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan and daughter documents, particularly appropriate schemes detailed in the Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan. If strategic scale development to the North and East of the town occurs, a new link road between the A10/A1170 junction and the Widbury



Hill area will be constructed to help relieve the town centre of extraneous traffic and assist in alleviating congestion. Where possible, pedestrian and cycle links, routes and facilities will be improved.

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- 9.1.7 Other Infrastructure:** if strategic scale development to the North and East of the town progresses, a new sewer will be constructed to serve this area of the town and link into the existing network to the east of Ware.
- 9.1.8 Employment and Retail:** as a Minor Town Centre, Ware'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 hinterland settlements. If strategic scale development to the North and East of the town progresses, the town centre's retail offer could be supplemented by additional retail facilities as part of comprehensive development in that location. Existing employment sites will be retained and, where appropriate, modernised.
- 9.1.9 Character:** Ware's unique market town character and the heritage qualities of the town's historic core will be maintained. In new developments a sense of place will be respected and allow for successful integration with existing assets of character in the area. Ware's green infrastructure, including its open spaces and river corridors, will be maintained and will continue to contribute to the town's unique character. Where development involves river frontages, this will ensure the provision of an enhanced setting and, where possible, improve public access. The Lee Valley Regional Park will continue to provide a valuable resource to enhance the area.



9.2 Development in Ware

9.2.1 The main features of the policy approach to development in Ware are shown on Figure 9.1 below:

Figure 9.1 Key Diagram for Ware



9.2.2 Reflecting the District Plan Strategy, the following policies will apply to applications for new development in Ware:

WARE1 Development in Ware

I. In accordance with Policy DPS3 (Housing Supply 2011-2031), Ware will accommodate at least 32 homes, which will include:

- (a) identified SLAA sites amounting to at least 18 homes;
- (b) 14 homes as part of mixed use development at the former Co-op Depot, Star Street, in accordance with Policy WARE2; and
- (c) a proportion of the overall windfall allowance for the District.

II. In addition, between 200 and 3,000 homes will be provided to the North and East of Ware, in accordance with Policy WARE3.

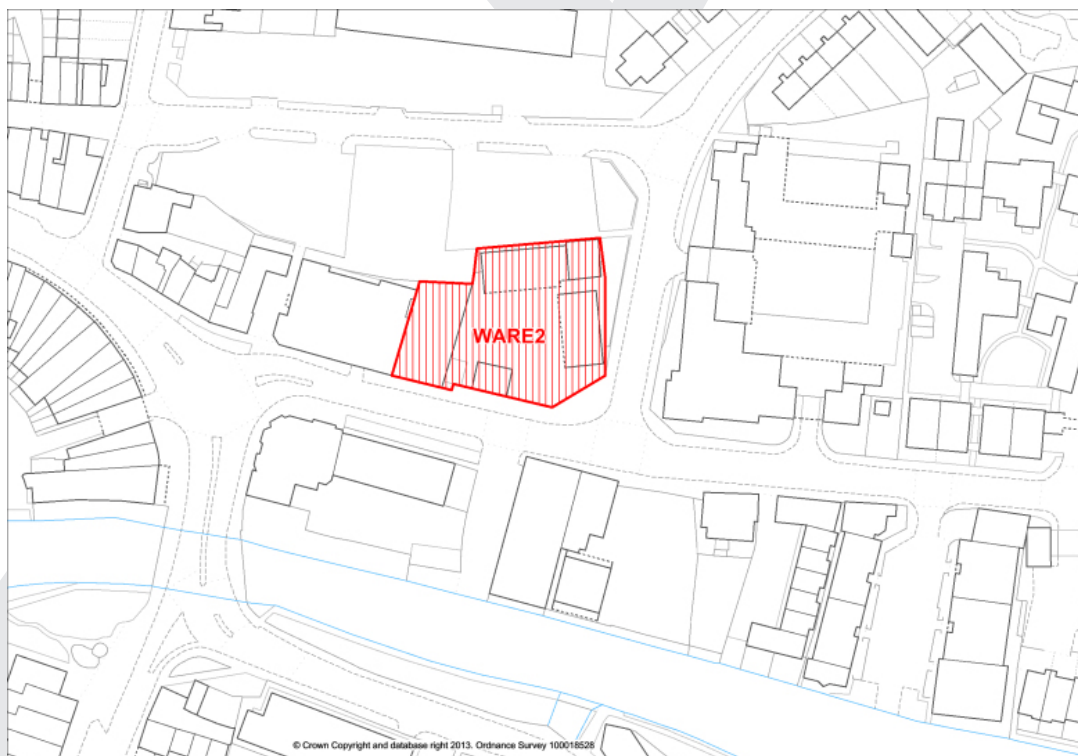


- 9.2.3** Within Ware's urban area 18 homes are identified for development through the SLAA process. In addition, it is expected that a proportion of the overall windfall allowance for the District will be accommodated in Ware. These sites will be determined on an individual basis, taking into account the policies of the Plan.
- 9.2.4** For the allocated sites, the following policies will apply in addition to general policies in the Plan:

Former Co-op Depot, Star Street

- 9.2.5** This vacant site is currently occupied by redundant buildings which were previously used by the Enfield Highway Cooperative Bakery for dairy storage and distribution.
- 9.2.6** Permission was granted (subject to S.106 agreement) in 2013 for the demolition of the majority of the existing buildings and for a mixed use development of the site to provide residential, 1 retail unit with offices above and 3 units for A1, A2 or B1 use. Should this permission, which also retains the existing brick built façade which displays the Enfield Highway Cooperative Bakery sign, not be implemented, the redevelopment of the site would be expected to accord with Policy WARE2 (Former Co-op Depot, Star Street) below. Mixed-use proposals including a range of uses for housing, retail, leisure, or other commercial uses should also be compatible with the site's town centre location and Conservation Area status.

Figure 9.2 Former Co-Op Depot, Star Street



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WARE2 Former Co-op Depot, Star Street

- I. The Former Co-op Depot, Star Street is allocated for mixed-use development to include 14 homes together with retail, leisure, or other commercial uses by 2021;
- II. Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy HOU3 (Affordable Housing); and
- III. Development proposals should retain the existing brick built façade which displays the Enfield Highway Cooperative Bakery sign and be compatible with the site's town centre location and Conservation Area status.

North and East of Ware

- 9.2.7** In order to meet the District's long-term housing requirement, and specific local needs within the Housing Market Area, a broad location for development of between 200 and 3,000 homes is identified to the North and East of Ware. Development at a strategic scale would require new access and highways infrastructure including the provision of a link road between the A10/A1170 junction and the Widbury Hill area, along with other measures, to both mitigate traffic generation and help alleviate town centre congestion issues. Such strategic infrastructure would need to be determined through the evolution of a deliverable site wide masterplan. However, until further testing has been undertaken around the ability of the local and strategic transport networks in and around Ware to accommodate such strategic scale development, it is unclear whether mitigating measures would be sufficient to address the residual traffic impact on both the town itself and wider locales.
- 9.2.8** Moreover, the assessment of educational provision at secondary level has yet to conclude in terms of expansion potential of existing schools in the Hertford and Ware Schools Planning Area. Development of the location to the North and East of Ware at a strategic scale would itself generate a requirement for the provision of a new secondary school. It would therefore be appropriate to explore the possibility for any latent demand identified during the assessment of the wider Hertford and Ware Schools Planning Area to potentially be accommodated in the area in combination with school places generated by the development itself.
- 9.2.9** Given that these matters require further work, land to the North and East of Ware is identified as a Broad Location for Development and delivery after 2021 of between 200 and 3,000 dwellings, subject to further testing through masterplanning, assessing viability and infrastructure planning.
- 9.2.10** Consequently, a Development Plan Document will be prepared by East Herts Council working with Hertfordshire County Council (particularly in respect of its roles as Highway Authority and Local Authority with Responsibility for Education), Ware Town Council, Wareside Parish Council and other public and regulatory bodies to test the feasibility of, and set the parameters for, development to the North and East of Ware.



- 9.2.11** It is anticipated that development could commence on site towards the beginning of the 2021-26 period which, depending on the level of development finally determined through the Development Plan Document, could continue through the remaining plan period and beyond. If at the upper end of the development range, this could result in a significant proportion of the dwellings being provided post-Plan. Conversely, should development at the lower or lowest end of the range be agreed, then it is likely that these dwellings would be constructed within the 2021-26 period, or potentially before that.
- 9.2.12** Technical work to support the Development Plan Document will be overseen by the Local Planning Authority and will involve the above parties in its preparation. It is expected that some elements of work underpinning the document will be either wholly or part funded and/or carried out by site promoters/landowners/developers under the supervision of stakeholder bodies, primarily East Herts Council, as the Local Planning Authority.

WARE3 Land North and East of Ware

I. To meet long-term housing needs, land to the North and East of Ware is identified as a Broad Location for Development. East Herts Council will work with site promoters, Ware Town Council, Wareside Parish Council, Hertfordshire County Council, and other appropriate public and regulatory bodies to prepare a Development Plan Document to shape and refine opportunities for strategic scale development of between 200 and 3,000 homes and supporting uses and infrastructure in accordance with Policy DPS4 (Broad Locations for Development). Development shall not proceed until the adoption of the DPD.

II. Depending on the scale and form of development opportunities that are identified, in addition to the requirements of Policy DPS4 (Broad Locations for Development), the Development Plan Document and site wide masterplan is expected to address the following provisions and issues:

- (a) the quantum and distribution of development within this location;
- (b) key design and layout principles to guide subsequent design codes in order to ensure high quality design;
- (c) a range of dwelling type and mix, in accordance with the full provisions of Policy HOU1 (Type and Mix of Housing);
- (d) Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy HOU3 (Affordable Housing);
- (e) 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;
- (f) necessary new utilities infrastructure, such as a new sewer to link from the development at the north of Ware to existing infrastructure to the east of the town;



- (g) satisfactory water supply, including acceptable water pressure for occupants;
- (h) 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;
- (i) sustainable urban drainage and provision for flood mitigation;
- (j) access arrangements and wider strategic and local highways mitigation measures including a potential a link road between the Widbury Hill area and the A10/A1170 to both serve the development and mitigate congestion elsewhere in the town;
- (k) sustainable transport measures including the encouragement of walking and cycling, and enhanced passenger transport services;
- (l) a direct public footpath and cycleway from the High Oak Road area to enable direct pedestrian and cycle access to Wodson Park and the A1170;
- (m) social infrastructure including: primary school/s to serve the development and appropriate surrounding catchment area/s; a secondary school to serve the development and the wider Hertford and Ware Schools Planning Area; health services and facilities; community facilities; public amenity green space and play areas;
- (n) encouraging successful and active communities, including innovative approaches to create the conditions for local resident participation, governance and stewardship of their new communities;
- (o) landscaping;
- (p) appropriate levels of local retail and employment opportunities to promote self containment and sustainability, including provision for home-working;
- (q) the relationship between the Broad Location and the settlements of Cold Christmas, Thundridge, Wadesmill and Wareside;
- (r) Green Belt boundaries;
- (s) financial viability and the delivery of all necessary infrastructure;
- (t) planning obligations including on and off-site developer contributions; and
- (u) other policy provisions of the District Plan and relevant matters, as appropriate.

III. Land to the North and East of Ware will remain within the Green Belt until such time as it may be brought forward for development through the adoption of the Development Plan Document by East Herts Council.



9.3 Employment in Ware

- 9.3.1** The location of Ware in relation to accessing the major road network means that it is an attractive place for businesses to locate. Ware is home to the District's largest private employer, GlaxoSmithKline, and other varying sized enterprises within its employment areas.
- 9.3.2** In order to continue to provide opportunities for businesses to serve the town and nearby settlements in the surrounding area, the strategy will be to protect and enhance the existing employment areas in Ware.

WARE4 Employment in Ware

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

- (a) Broadmeads;
- (b) Crane Mead;
- (c) Ermine Point/Gentlemen's Field*;
- (d) Marsh Lane;
- (e) Park Road/Harris's Lane;
- (f) Star Street/Widbury Hill.

II. In the event of strategic scale development within the Broad Location for Development to the North and East of Ware, appropriate scale employment provision will be expected to be provided in conjunction with residential provision. Any new allocation/s in this respect will be brought forward through masterplanning as part of a Development Plan Document to be prepared in relation to development of the area, as detailed in Policy WARE3.

*N.B. This site lies within the Green Belt outside the main settlement boundaries.

9.4 Retail in Ware

- 9.4.1** Classed as a Minor Town Centre, Ware caters for a mixture of shopping and other service needs, both for its own residents and those of surrounding settlements. However, it has a low preponderance of national multiple A1 retailers (Tesco, Boots and Peacocks) and therefore lacks the draw that these stores bring. It therefore relies to a large extent on the quality of its independent stores, weekly market, and also on its higher than average food and drink offer.



9.4.2 Ware also benefits from local parades and individual shops within some of its residential areas, which provide valuable facilities for local people and passing trade in addition to the retail offer in the town centre.

9.4.3 There is considered to be limited opportunity for expanding the retail offer in Ware beyond the outstanding permission for development of an ASDA store in Watton Road, which lies beyond the identified Town Centre boundary and Primary Shopping Area. Although recent uptake of vacant stores is encouraging, it is considered important that the retail offer continues to be safeguarded.

9.5 Leisure and Community Facilities in Ware

9.5.1 Although located within a rural setting, Ware has been identified as having poor provision of Accessible Natural Greenspace (ANG) as well as space for children and young people. It is therefore important that better public access to the countryside resource that surrounds the settlement, including the Lee and Rib Rivers, is created to support both existing and new communities in the town. The river corridors have been identified as areas for improvement of both habitat and physical links connecting settlements, especially between Hertford and Ware and the wider countryside. For formal sport provision, the under provision of junior football and mini-soccer pitches in the Hertford and Ware area should also be addressed. Development proposals will be considered in accordance with Policies CFLR1 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation) and CFLR2 (Open Space Standards).

9.5.2 The Lee Valley Regional Park penetrates the town and any proposals within its boundaries should accord with Policy CFLR5 (The Lee Valley Regional Park).

9.5.3 All new development in Ware 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 Ware, thereby reducing the need to travel to other settlements. In this respect, development proposals will be considered in accordance with Policies CFLR7 (Community Facilities), CFLR8 (Health and Wellbeing) and CFLR9 (Education).