

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'C'

Chapter 9 Ware

9.1 Introduction

- 9.1.1 Ware is an ancient historic market town, which has developed in a valley setting around a crossing point of the River Lea. Much of the town's historic town centre originates from medieval times, with the Grade I listed buildings St Mary's Church (13th Century) and Ware Priory (also a Scheduled Monument) being located at the western end of the High Street, and many other listed buildings in the central core. Past coaching and malting industry ties particularly influenced the evolution of the town's urban form and led to the emergence of its burgage plots and famous 18th Century gazebos along the river.
- 9.1.2 In the past, the river has underpinned the town's economic function, but is now more widely used as a leisure resource. Ware also benefits from other excellent sporting and leisure facilities including, but not limited to: Wodson Park sports centre; Fanshawe Pool and Gym; Ware Lido; Place House; and Fletcher's Lea at The Priory. The Lee Valley Regional Park, which bounds the south of the town, along with other woodland and countryside access opportunities are also available to Ware's residents and visitors.
- 9.1.3 Within the town centre, while the town's historic pattern of development coupled with traffic congestion and servicing constraints on the High Street limit future town centre development opportunities (in particular for retail), it does provide a unique, picturesque, environment which offers enjoyment for both residents and visitors alike and is an attractive setting for its businesses. Ware benefits from the presence of two superstores (Tesco and, since 2015, Asda) and, in addition, also has several smaller convenience stores and a range of comparison high street names and local independent retailers. The central core also reflects its historical past by the presence of a significant amount of

dwellings, which are accommodated both above retail premises and in yards behind.

- 9.1.4 Ware benefits from good transport connections to both local and wider destinations, with road links to the closely located A10, A414 and A602, and a station providing services to London Liverpool Street and Stratford. While these links enable a significant amount of out-commuting for workers, Ware also has a good employment base; most notably, with the district's largest single employer, GSK, being located in the town and through other employment sites of varying age and quality which offer a range of accommodation to businesses. It is considered important that the town's existing employment sites are retained in order to provide local jobs in sustainable locations for residents of Ware and its surrounding areas.
- 9.1.5 In respect of housing, outside of the immediate historic central area, the majority of the town's residential areas were largely erected during or after the Victorian period, with much development occurring towards the latter half of the 20th Century. In latter decades, the construction of new homes on greenfield sites has been balanced by the conversion of former maltings and other redundant industrial premises. While this has been a particularly successful approach, it means that brownfield opportunities have largely been exhausted. Therefore, Green Belt release for any large scale residential development is necessitated.
- 9.1.6 In order to meet the need for additional housing in Ware and to provide a range of employment, retail, educational, community and other infrastructure, one site is therefore proposed to the north and east of the town. This development will ensure that Ware's infrastructure will be able to satisfactorily absorb the additional population and its requirements, whilst ensuring that the town's unique historic character and sense of place is maintained.
- 9.1.7 The main components of the development strategy for Ware are as follows:

- 9.1.8 **Housing:** additional homes will be provided, the majority to the North and East of Ware, 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 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. The site will also provide for the accommodation needs of Travelling Showpeople and make provision for self-build and/or custom-build opportunities.
- 9.1.9 **Design:** a collaboratively prepared Masterplan for the development of the North and East of Ware will form an important part of the delivery of the site allocation. This Masterplan, incorporating Garden City design principles, will provide a strong framework for the development, which will also embody the use of design codes. This will ensure the highest quality design and layout of the area and provide a comprehensive and unified approach to the whole development, whilst reflecting different character areas across the site.
- 9.1.10 **Education:** the educational needs of the town will be achieved at primary level via the provision of one or more new schools commensurate with the level of development delivered to the North and East of Ware, and, potentially, by the expansion of existing facilities. 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 via the construction of a new school (which could potentially be an all-through facility) of at least six forms of entry to the North and East of the town. Hertford Regional College will continue to provide further educational opportunities for students from both Ware and wider locales.
- 9.1.11 **Community Facilities:** in addition to the continuation of existing facilities, new homes to the North and East of Ware will

be supported by a range of community facilities which will be located around a neighbourhood centre.

- 9.1.12 **Transport:** as part of development to the North and East of Ware bus services will be improved so that they support travel between residential areas and the town centre and its railway station. Pedestrian and cycle links, routes and facilities will be improved and extended. In addition to supporting improved sustainable travel, a new link road between the A10/A1170 junction and the Widbury Hill area will be constructed to minimise local trips, help relieve the town centre of extraneous traffic, and assist in alleviating congestion.
- 9.1.13 **Waste Water and other Infrastructure:** as part of development to the North and East of Ware, waste water will drain to Rye Meads Waste Water Treatment Works, and new waste water services will be created as part of the development to ensure that the efficiency of the network is maintained and there are no adverse effects on surrounding watercourses. A new sewer will also be required to serve this area of the town and link into the existing network to the east of Ware.
- 9.1.14 **Retail and Employment:** as a Minor Town Centre, Ware's retail offer in the central core will be maintained and strengthened, as suitable opportunities arise, to serve both the town's residents and its hinterland settlements. As part of development to the North and East of the town, the town centre's retail offer will be enhanced by the provision of additional retail facilities within a new neighbourhood centre as part of comprehensive development in that location. Such provision should be appropriate to support the local development without prejudicing the existing retail offer in the town centre.
- 9.1.15 Existing employment sites in Ware will be retained and, where appropriate, modernised. These will be supplemented via the creation of a new employment site of around 3ha as part of development to the North and East of Ware, which should be located close to the new neighbourhood centre.

- 9.1.16 **Leisure:** Ware's leisure facilities will be supplemented by the provision of additional indoor and outdoor sports facilities (which may be shared use) and other informal leisure provision as part of the development of the area to the North and East of Ware. Green corridors will feature as part of this provision, which will also act to mitigate the environmental impact of development in this location.
- 9.1.17 **Open Spaces:** open spaces will be provided as part of the development to the North and East of Ware which provide multi-functional drainage solutions in addition to space for recreation, creating connections to green infrastructure corridors, including the Ash and Lea Valleys. Formal open spaces will form part of the development and provision for playing pitches and play spaces. Areas of ecological importance will be protected and enhanced through appropriate buffer planting and an appropriate land management strategy.
- 9.1.18 **Heritage:** important heritage assets, both within the existing town and in the vicinity of the allocation to the North and East of Ware will continue to be protected. Furthermore, such heritage assets will be respected as part of development proposals and, where appropriate, adequate mitigation employed, which will also include maintaining open or landscaped areas where necessary. Land uses should contribute towards maintaining or enhancing existing buffers, and providing new green infrastructure, as appropriate.
- 9.1.19 **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. Further green space provision will be made as part of development to the North and East of the town. Where development involves river frontages, this will ensure the provision of an enhanced setting and, where possible, improve public access. The Lee Valley

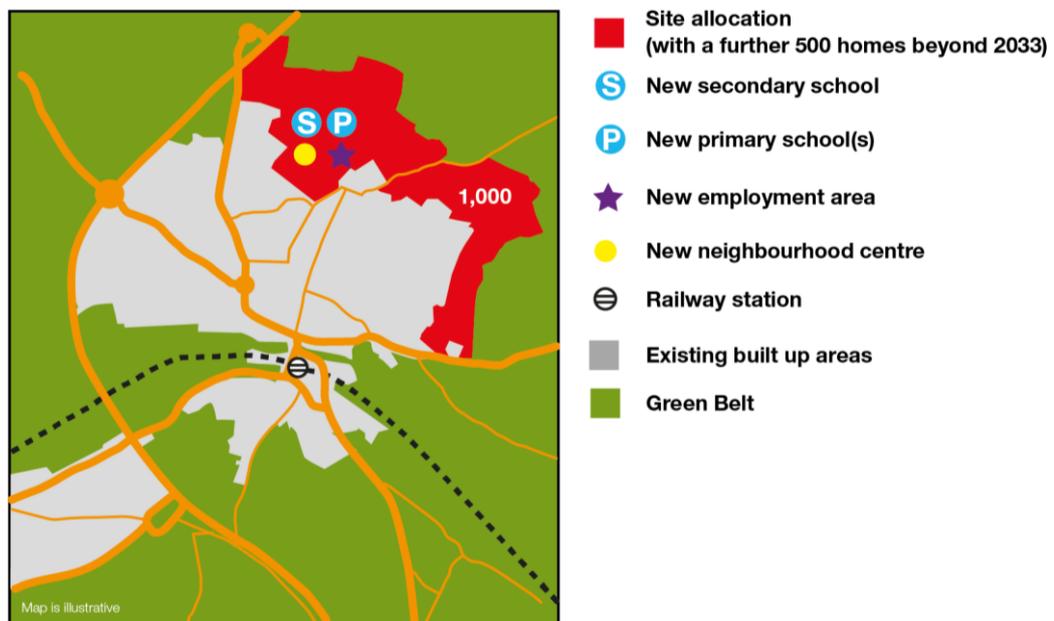
Regional Park will continue to provide a valuable resource to enhance the area.

- 9.1.20 **Minerals:** for development to the North and East of Ware, and to conform with the requirements of national policy and the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan which aim to prevent the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral resources, where underlying mineral deposits of sufficient depth and quality are identified, prior extraction will be required in advance of the commencement of development and, where possible, should be used locally in the construction phase. Detailed phasing and the approach to land remediation and subsequent development will be set out in the masterplan.

9.2 Development in Ware

- 9.2.1 The main features of the policy approach to development in Ware are shown in 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:

Policy WARE1 Development in Ware

I. In accordance with Policy DPS3 (Housing Supply 2011-2033), Ware will accommodate at least 1,000 homes, which will include:

- (a) 1,000 homes to the North and East of Ware; and
- (b) a proportion of the overall windfall allowance for the District.

Development Sites in Ware's Urban Area

9.2.3 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 site, the following policies will apply in addition to general policies in the Plan:

North and East of Ware

9.2.5 In order to contribute towards the District's medium to long-term housing requirement, and to provide for the housing needs of Ware, a development of 1,000 homes is identified to the North and East of Ware to be delivered by 2033, with the intention to provide for a further 500 dwellings beyond this plan period, should satisfactory mitigation to identified highway constraints in both the local, and wider strategic, road networks prove achievable and deliverable.

9.2.6 Development at this 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 hard and soft measures, to both mitigate traffic generation and help alleviate town centre congestion issues. The necessary strategic infrastructure would be determined through the evolution of a deliverable site wide Masterplan.

III. Prior to the submission of any planning application/s a Masterplan setting out the quantum and distribution of land uses; access; sustainable high quality design and layout principles; necessary infrastructure; the relationship between the site and other nearby settlements; landscape and heritage assets; and other relevant matters, will be collaboratively prepared involving site promoters, landowners, East Herts Council, town and parish councils and key stakeholders. This document will further be informed by public participation in the process.

IV. The site will incorporate Garden City principles and be planned comprehensively to create a new sustainable community which connects well with and complements the existing town and its existing historic centre.

V. 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) Self Build Housing in accordance with Policy HOU8 (Self Build Housing);

(d) a care home/flexi-care or sheltered properties in accordance with the provisions of Policy HOU6 (Homes for Older and Vulnerable People);

(e) provision of a site for Travelling Showpeople, in accordance with Policy HOU9 (Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) which should deliver 4 serviced plots within the plan period (each of sufficient size to allow for the provision of accommodation and equipment plus storage/maintenance), to be provided within a larger area that should be safeguarded to allow for future expansion to a total of 8 plots, as evidence of need dictates;

(f) demonstration of the extent of the mineral that may be present and the likelihood of prior extraction in an environmentally acceptable way has been fully considered. As a minimum, an assessment of the depth

and quality of mineral, together with an appraisal of the consequential viability for prior extraction without prejudicing the delivery of housing within the plan period should be provided;

(g) quality local green infrastructure throughout the site including opportunities for preserving and enhancing on-site assets, maximising opportunities to link into existing assets and enhancing biodiversity (including, *inter alia*, the protection of wildlife sites 46/004 and 60/001 and the Historic Parks and Gardens at Fanhams Hall and Poles Park, Hanbury Manor);

(h) necessary new utilities, including, *inter alia*: integrated communications infrastructure to facilitate home working, and a new foul sewer to link the development from the north of Ware to existing infrastructure to the east of the town and any necessary pumping station/s;

(i) satisfactory water supply, including acceptable water pressure for occupants;

(j) sustainable drainage and provision for flood mitigation;

(k) access arrangements and local highways and wider strategic mitigation measures which, *inter alia*, should include a link road between the Widbury Hill area and the A10/A1170 to both serve the development and mitigate congestion elsewhere in the town, and further should contribute to addressing impacts on the A10 between Ware and Hertford and the A414 in Hertford;

(l) encouragement of sustainable transport measures, both through improvements to the existing walking, cycling and bridleway networks in the locality and through new provision, which should also provide links with the adjoining area and the town centre (which should also include 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), together with enhanced passenger transport services (particularly in respect of bus provision and access to the town centre and railway station);

(m) primary school/s (including early years provision) commensurate with the level of development to serve both the development and appropriate surrounding catchment area/s;

(n) secondary school provision commensurate with the level of development within a site suitable for the provision of at least six forms of entry to serve the development and the wider Hertford and Ware Schools Planning Area;

(o) a neighbourhood centre in an accessible location, providing local retail and community uses, including healthcare facilities to meet the day-to-day retail and health needs of new residents;

(p) employment area/s (of around 3ha), within visible and accessible location/s close to the neighbourhood centre, which provides appropriate opportunities to promote self-containment and sustainability;

(q) indoor and outdoor sports facilities (which may be shared use) to include, *inter alia*, junior football and mini soccer pitches;

(r) a variety of public open spaces across the site, including the provision of play areas and opportunities for outdoor health and fitness activities, as well as space for wildlife;

(s) consideration of need for cemetery provision;

(t) landscaping and planting, both within the site and peripheral, which responds to the existing landscape and complements development, as appropriate;

(u) the delivery of all other necessary on-site and appropriate off-site infrastructure;

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

VI. In order to ensure that the site is planned and delivered comprehensively, any application for development on part of the site will be assessed against its contribution to the Masterplan, and will ensure that such development would not prejudice the implementation of the site allocation as a whole.

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.

Policy WARE3 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.

II. Development to the North and East of Ware will further deliver a new employment site of around 3ha in conjunction with provision of residential and other uses. The precise location of the new Employment Area will be brought forward through the masterplanning process, as detailed in Policy WARE2.

*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. While it has a low

preponderance of national multiple A1 retailers (Tesco, Boots and Peacocks) and therefore lacks the draw that these stores bring (ASDA lies outside of the town centre boundary), Ware is supported by the high 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 other than via the provision of local shopping facilities within the proposed development to the North and East of Ware allocation. It is vital that such facilities should be of a local nature with enough provision to ensure a sustainable community, without diverting trade from the town centre, where the retail offer will continue to be safeguarded.

9.5 Leisure and Community Facilities in Ware

9.5.1 Whilst Ware is located within a rural setting, public access to the countryside resource that surrounds the settlement, including the Ash, Lee and Rib Rivers, could be improved, as well as provision of space for children and young people. The provision of additional space for children and young people should be created to support both existing and new communities in the town. Proposals for the development of the WARE2 policy area should assist to some degree in this respect, through increased public access to the countryside and green space provision in the locality.

9.5.2 The improvement of river corridors in terms of both habitat and physical links connecting settlements, especially between Hertford and Ware and the wider countryside will be supported.

9.5.3 In respect of formal indoor and outdoor sport provision, any under provision of junior football and mini-soccer pitches

identified in the Hertford and Ware area should also be addressed. Development proposals will therefore be considered in accordance with Policy CFLR1 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation) and contributions will be sought towards on-site or off-site provision, as appropriate. For development to the North and East of Ware, provision will be considered through the Masterplanning process and could involve shared-use facilities.

9.5.4 The Lee Valley Regional Park penetrates the town providing a valuable leisure resource and any proposals within its boundaries should accord with Policy CFLR5 (The Lee Valley Regional Park).

9.5.5 As any new residential development in Ware will result in an increased demand for local services and community facilities, including, for instance, healthcare and education, development proposals should therefore contribute to the enhancement of existing provision. This will 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 (Loss of Community Facilities), CFLR9 (Health and Wellbeing) and CFLR10 (Education).