



Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for All Saints, Central, South and part of Thorley

2016–2032

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2 Introduction

2.1 WHAT IS A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

2.1.1.1 A Neighbourhood Plan is a part of the overall planning system, i.e. the system used to regulate and control building and development. The right to create one was introduced by the Localism Act 2011. A Neighbourhood Plan is created at a local level, in our case by Bishop's Stortford Town Council. Once a Neighbourhood Plan is formally adopted (made¹) it sits alongside other planning policy documents and forms part of the statutory Development Plan for use by East Herts District Council as Local Planning Authority in determining planning applications. The Development Plan currently consists of the 2007 Local Plan and the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 2007. The Neighbourhood Plan has been developed with regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and the East Herts 2007 Local Plan.

2.1.1.2 This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared at a time when a new District Plan is in the course of preparation². Once adopted this will supersede the current Local Plan. Accordingly, and in order to give a degree of 'future proofing', this Neighbourhood Plan has been written having regard to policies in the emerging District Plan available at the time of preparation.

¹ Technically the process of bringing a Neighbourhood Plan into force is called making the plan and the plan is then said to be 'made'.

² The most recent information is available at www.eastherts.gov.uk/article/29006/Draft-District-Plan-Consultation

2.1.1.3 In particular this plan includes policies in relation to areas of land to the east of Manor Links and at Land South of Bishop's Stortford, which are allocated for development in the emerging District Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan does not specifically advocate development on these sites, however it does include policies which will apply (and therefore influence the development) should the allocations in the emerging District Plan be confirmed by East Herts District Council. This Neighbourhood Plan also contains policies in respect of the major development site at the Goods Yard, which appears as a development site both in the 2007 Local Plan and the emerging District Plan.

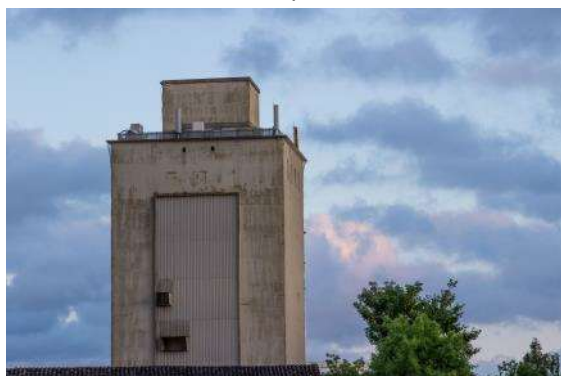
2.1.1.4 The Neighbourhood Plan can only deal directly with any land use matters which would be the subject of a planning application. These could include, for example, design standards, community facilities, transport and access, the protection of important buildings and historic assets such as archaeological remains, green spaces and many more areas. The Neighbourhood Plan can comment on matters which are not strictly planning matters, but any influence over these matters will be indirect only.

2.1.1.5 There are some legal limitations to Neighbourhood Planning. A Neighbourhood Plan must be 'in general conformity' with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan. It cannot block development that is part of the Local Plan or amend the boundaries of Green Belt. It must not conflict with the NPPF or EU legislation. It cannot deal with major infrastructure or national projects for which central government has a separate system. Finally, because it is part of the planning system, it can only directly influence matters which would be dealt with as part of a planning application and cannot force any particular development to take place.

2.1.1.6 Before a Neighbourhood Plan is made³ it must be subjected to a formal consultation process and appropriate amendments made based on the consultation feedback. Formal consultation took place between 3rd March and 19th April 2016. It must then be considered by an independent examiner who will check that it meets the legal requirements outlined above. The Plan will then go to referendum and must achieve a simple majority. Electors in the Neighbourhood Area will be entitled to vote and the examiner may decide that the referendum area should be larger than the Neighbourhood Area.

2.2 WHY ARE WE PREPARING THIS PLAN?

2.2.1.1 A Neighbourhood Plan allows the local community to have a direct say about the development within the Neighbourhood Area. This Plan covers three of the five electoral wards in Bishop's Stortford. A



Neighbourhood Plan has already been prepared and made for the two wards in the northern part of the town: Silverleys and Meads. The new plan will complete the process for the rest of the town and also part of Thorley Parish which includes an area of

³ 'made' is the technical term used for the process by which the plan formally comes into force

Green Belt, earmarked for development by East Herts Council in their draft District Plan.

2.3 VERSION NOTES

2.3.1.1 The Examination Copy of the Neighbourhood Plan was issued on 26th July 2016 following approval by the Town Council, as qualifying body, on 25th July 2016.

2.3.1.2 This version includes changes and modifications suggested by an Independent Examiner to ensure that the plan complies with the Basic Conditions.

2.4 THE PLAN IN CONTEXT

2.4.1 Bishop's Stortford as a whole

2.4.1.1 Bishop's Stortford is a prosperous market town with a distinctive character, situated on the River Stort. With approximately 38,000 residents, it is the largest town in East Hertfordshire and the population has grown quickly over the last thirty years owing to its strategic location: close to Stansted Airport and the M11. It is well served by rail to London and Cambridge and by road in most directions. It has excellent schools, a thriving community and good employment opportunities both in the town and through commuting. The main employment in the town itself is a flourmill, distribution services, light industry, office-based and leisure services and retail.

2.4.1.2 Bishop's Stortford is widely viewed as a desirable location for young families and this has created a problem balancing demand for housing and services with the need to protect the heritage of a medieval town, which is a large part of what makes it desirable.

2.4.1.3 Thorley parish, a part of which is included in the Neighbourhood Area, is a

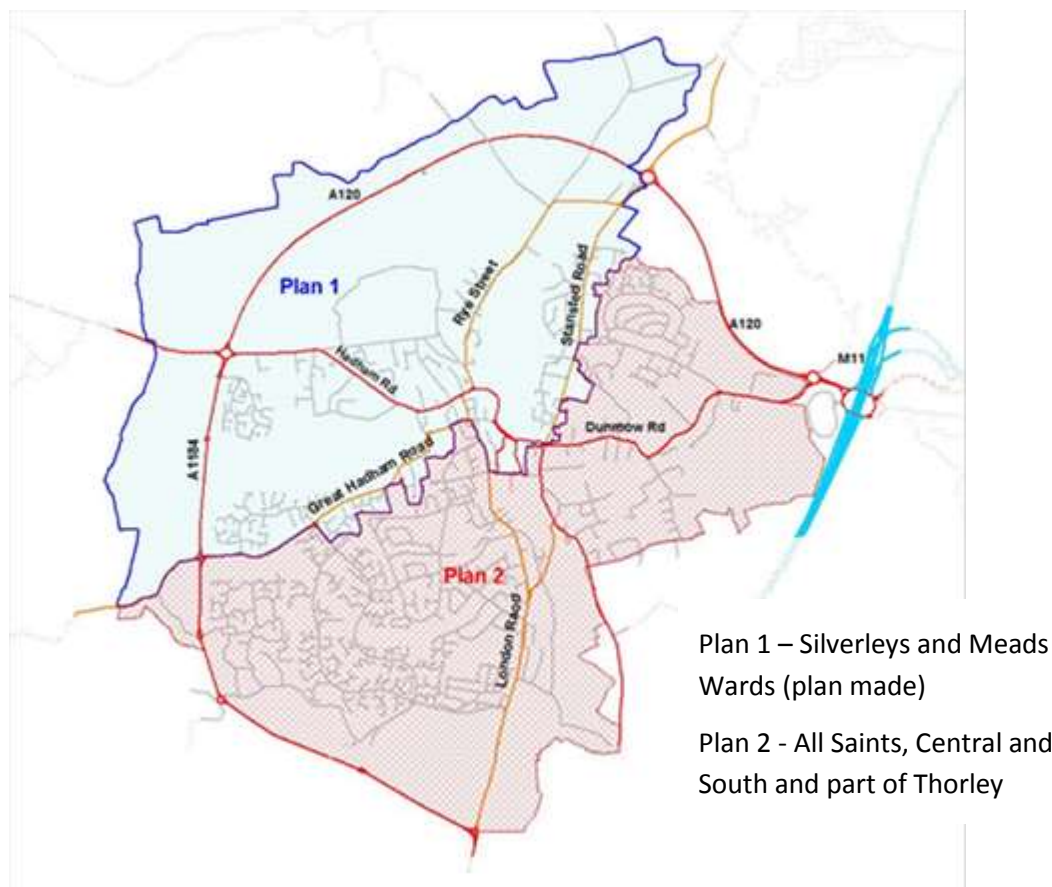


Figure 1 – Neighbourhood Areas

the South of Bishop's Stortford.

2.4.2 The Neighbourhood Area

2.4.2.1 This Neighbourhood Plan includes the wards of All Saints, Central, South and part of Thorley Parish. The Neighbourhood Area comprises a mix of residential, green spaces and part of the town centre, some of which is in a conservation area but with other parts in vital need of regeneration. The River Stort runs through the town from north to south and supports a wide variety of wildlife. Residents of the area have excellent access to a number of rural areas around the town and to the riverside, and there are well-maintained rights of way to facilitate this, including the Hertfordshire Way which runs

spaces within the area, including Thorley Wedge and Northern Country Park, and Southern Country Park.

2.4.2.2 Like the rest of Bishop's Stortford, the Neighbourhood Area has an ageing population and as the average life expectancy grows there will be increased needs for care of the elderly. There is also a clear need for affordable housing for young families and individuals, including low cost market housing for private purchase, and more shared ownership properties. Retail is focussed on the town centre and, whilst there is some turnover, the occupancy rate of town centre retail space remains favourable relative to comparable locations.

2.4.2.3 The emerging District Plan envisages three major developments within the Neighbourhood Area:

- A development of 750 homes and supporting infrastructure including a primary and secondary school on the land between Whittington Way and the bypass, predominantly in Thorley Parish
- A mixed commercial/residential development on the former Goods Yard site
- A development of 50 homes on land east of Manor Links.

In order for the developments at Land South of Bishop's Stortford and at Manor Links to come forward, they would need to be removed from Green Belt through the District Plan process. The emerging District Plan envisages that this will occur.

2.4.2.4 The removal of land from Green Belt is a very controversial part of the emerging District Plan and likely to face severe opposition. The Neighbourhood Plan cannot influence this decision; it can only deal with the consequences by way of policies if the development takes place.

2.4.2.5 As there is a state of uncertainty in regards to the outcome of the emerging District Plan, we are providing for the two possible outcomes namely either that the land in question is removed from the Green Belt, or it is not. Certain policies in this plan apply only in the former case.

2.5 HOW WAS THE PLAN DEVELOPED?

2.5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Team

2.5.1.1 The development of the Neighbourhood Plan was led by a

Neighbourhood Plan Team (NPT), under the general guidance of Bishop's Stortford Town Council. The NPT has comprised representatives of local residents' associations, the Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation, the Bishop's Stortford Chamber of Commerce, three Town Councillors (two of whom are also East Herts Councillors and one County Councillor), a Thorley Parish Councillor, a representative of Bishop's Stortford Schools Consortium, and two developer/landowners. Volunteers were sought through newspaper advertisements and three un-affiliated volunteers joined the NPT. The NPT has been supported by planning officers from East Herts Council and officers from Bishop's Stortford Town Council.

2.5.1.2 All team members were briefed to consult with other residents and interested parties during all phases of plan preparation to supplement the formal consultation stages which are described in detail in the accompanying Consultation Statement. In addition a series of consultation events were held throughout the period during which the plan was being developed.

2.5.2 The Town Plan and 2020 Vision

2.5.2.1 Although becoming dated, the NPT also had at its disposal a survey of residents of the town (The 'Town Plan Survey') that had been conducted in October 2008. Around 4,000 completed questionnaires were received and this led to the creation of a Town Plan setting out numerous actions, many of which have been implemented. The plan was updated in 2011 and several of the longer term actions continue.

2.5.2.2 Around the same time as the Town Plan Survey (and based on the same data), a vision for Bishop's Stortford, the '2020 Vision', was created by a group led by East Herts

Council and which included representatives from many organisations connected with the town. This Vision document, although also dated, has provided some further high level input to the Neighbourhood Plan.

2.5.3 Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards

2.5.3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards formed a further important input to the current plan. The areas are adjacent and, whilst there are differences, there are also commonalities. As a consequence many of the objectives and policy themes, and many of the policies in the Silverleys and Meads Ward plan, reappear in this plan. Some policies have wording which is identical (or very similar) to that in the Silverleys and Meads plan, while others have been modified to reflect local differences or evolution in thinking. Policy numbering has been carried over. Policies in this plan will always have the same number as the corresponding policy in the Silverleys and Meads Ward plan where they are identical, similar or cover the same topic area. Policies in this plan which are wholly distinct from those in the Silverleys and Meads Ward plan have policy numbers which do not appear in the latter. In some cases this results in deliberate gaps in policy numbering.

2.5.4 The Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire

2.5.4.1 A survey of all residents and businesses in Bishop's Stortford and Thorley Parish was carried out in late 2014. Around 1,700 completed questionnaires were received and the results were analysed and used to identify the main issues and objectives. The various options were considered and groups formed around the topic areas.

2.5.4.2 The engagement of the wider public began in October 2014. During this stage a Questionnaire was created online and printed copies were delivered to all households and businesses in Bishop's Stortford. Posters were created and displayed advertising both the questionnaire and open days to be held regarding the questionnaire. On 23rd October and 8th November consultation days were held in Jackson Square to promote the questionnaire. The public was engaged in various forms, including Facebook and Twitter, an e-newsletter, the production of postcards and the advertisement of consultation days online. In November leafleting of commuters at Bishop's Stortford Railway Station also took place. In total the questionnaire received 1,744 responses.

2.5.5 Focus Groups

2.5.5.1 In November 2014 to February 2015 Focus Groups were held regarding Green Infrastructure, Housing & Design, the Goods Yard, Sports, Leisure, Education, Health, Land South of Bishop's Stortford and East of Manor Links, Transport and Business and Employment each lasted approximately two hours. These focus groups helped in the preparation of a first draft of the plan.

2.5.6 Further Public Engagement

2.5.6.1 During the following months, there was a further campaign to promote the plan and engage specific sections of the public.

2.5.6.2 A consultation Day was held at Rhodes Arts Complex with regular presentations throughout the day on 27th June 2015. This was followed up with a repeat of the consultation day on 17th and 19th September 2015 at Jackson Square.

2.5.7 Focus Groups Phase 2

2.5.7.1 New Focus Groups were held on the autumn of 2015 regarding the pre-consultation draft of the Neighbourhood Plan. Focus Groups for Business & Employment, Education, The Goods Yard, East of Manor Links, Land South of Bishop's Stortford and Transport were held.

2.5.7.2 Additionally, a Focus Group for Housing & Design was held to initiate the Heritage Character Assessment, hosted by AECOM Infrastructure & Environment UK Ltd (AECOM).

2.5.8 Formal Consultation and Examination Copy

2.5.8.1 The formal ('Regulation 14') consultation period for the plan commenced on 3rd March 2016 and ended on the 19th April 2016.

2.5.8.2 Following consultation the comments made were individually logged and assessed. Where appropriate, changes were made to the policies and supporting text. The team also engaged further with selected consultees in order that their comments could be better understood. Further details can be found in the Consultation Statement Summary.

2.5.8.3 The amended text was approved by Bishop's Stortford Town Council on 25th July 2016.

2.5.8.4 All information was then submitted for independent examination by East Herts District Council.

2.5.8.5 The Neighbourhood Plan was examined by an Independent Examiner in May 2017. Recommendations set out in the Examiner's Report have been incorporated in this final referendum version.

3 Vision and Objectives

3.1 OVERALL VISION

3.1.1.1 The overall vision for the Neighbourhood Plan is that the Neighbourhood Area should be a great place to live, work and play, embracing development and relating to Bishop's Stortford as a whole in a way that retains the unique market town characteristics and medieval charm, but at the same time provides the additional infrastructure and housing needed to support growth. There are some principles to the vision:

- Development must be suitable, sustainable and demonstrate excellent design so that people's quality of life both now and in the future is enhanced by well thought out housing, infrastructure, and other facilities creating a sense of local community;
- Development should complement and support the existing character and cultural heritage of the market town and its river and create an attractive mix of well-maintained residential and green spaces within a safe environment;
- Major development on the edge of the current built up area should be designed with Garden City principles, specifically incorporating its own green infrastructure (gardens, parks and landscaping) so as to create a smooth transition between the historic centre and the rural hinterland beyond;
- The River Stort is widely recognised as an under-used asset for the town; it should be developed as a focus for the town, in terms of leisure use, pedestrian and cycle usage, and wildlife diversity;
- Development within the town centre should seek to enhance and complement

existing provision through sensitive regeneration, renovation and conservation;

- The transport infrastructure with its improved links should evolve in a way which facilitates economic and social activity without undermining the features that makes the town desirable;
- Schooling and health infrastructure should meet the needs of the population and be accessible;
- The town centre should remain the primary location for retail and service provision and be attractive, prosperous and vibrant. It should remain the heart of the town with appropriate connections to it;
- Businesses should be attracted to Bishop's Stortford due its highly skilled local workforce and high quality premises.

3.1.1.2 This Vision is supported by a set of objectives under individual policy themes as set out below.

3.2 HOUSING AND DESIGN

3.2.1.1 Housing, and the design of the urban environment, has a direct impact on quality of life and excellent design is critical to creating desirable and sustainable neighbourhoods with a sense of community and place. This Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate housing land; this is the responsibility of the current Local Plan and emerging District Plan being prepared by East Herts Council. Instead this Neighbourhood Plan seeks to influence development to ensure that it complements the town, is of a high quality, and is supported by appropriate infrastructure. The Neighbourhood Plan includes policies which will apply to new developments within the

Neighbourhood Area including those on land allocated in the emerging District Plan.



3.2.2 Objectives

- Promote an attractive and harmonious living environment recognising the town's heritage
- Promote high functionality and quality within the living environment
- Provide housing for all and create community cohesion
- Protect and enhance newly discovered archaeological sites

3.3 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

3.3.1.1 The residents of Bishop's Stortford are fortunate to live in a town surrounded by a mix of attractive rural areas which provide a great variety of opportunities for healthy and enjoyable activities. The River Stort provides valuable leisure activities and biodiversity. New development should protect existing green spaces, other than those specifically identified as development sites, improve biodiversity and should take the opportunity to create and exploit new green infrastructure and leisure facilities whilst minimising environmental risks.

3.3.2 Objectives

- Enhance and protect green spaces; utilise appropriately for leisure
- Protect and enhance wildlife and biodiversity, including the River Stort
- Improve access and connections to green spaces and the surrounding countryside
- Provide essential community facilities
- Maintain and enhance the flood mitigation function of green spaces

3.4 TRANSPORT

3.4.1.1 High levels of car ownership and an underdeveloped sustainable travel network have contributed to a reliance on car transport in the area and resulting congestion at peak periods. In addition to concerns over traffic volumes, community feedback has also highlighted key concerns about pedestrian and cyclist safety, parking and public transport provision. Whilst this plan contains policies to improve sustainable travel, the overall aspiration is to improve movement by all transport modes including walking, cycling, public transport and car.

3.4.2 Objectives

- Support solutions to congestion
- Create and promote sustainable travel networks
- Provide adequate car parking
- Manage traffic speeds and promote road safety
- Improve town centre access, connectivity, amenity and vitality



3.5 EDUCATION

3.5.1.1 Schools in Bishop's Stortford are generally recognised to have very good standards and attract pupils from a wide catchment area. There is a demand for both primary and secondary places which exceeds the places available and this gap is forecast to widen as the population of the town grows. The unbalanced geographical distribution of secondary schools contributes to traffic congestion in the town. There is poor provision of adult education and vocational training.

3.5.2 Objectives

- Support the creation of sufficient new school places to accommodate population growth.
- Maintain or improve current high standards of education in the Neighbourhood Area.
- Enable the provision of vocational training, adult education and wide community use.



3.6 HEALTH

3.6.1.1 Primary health care in the town is already stretched and many residents complain about difficulties with getting timely appointments with GPs, about a lack of mental health services, A&E facilities and care for the elderly. The expansion of the town and the ageing population will put additional strain on these facilities.

3.6.2 Objective

- Provide reasonable access to health services for residents of all ages

3.7 SPORT, LEISURE & COMMUNITY

3.7.1.1 Whilst the Neighbourhood Area and the town as a whole benefit from a number of sports facilities there is a high demand for additional or enhanced space, both indoor and outdoor, and a relatively low public satisfaction rating for current sports facilities within the town. The competing demands for land use create real challenges in meeting the need.

3.7.2 Objectives

- Provide standards-compliant community facilities to meet the needs of the residents
- Encourage appropriate use of Green Belt for sensitively designed outdoor sport, leisure and community facilities

3.8 BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

3.8.1.1 Bishop's Stortford has excellent transport links to London, the M25, Cambridge and, due to its proximity to Stansted Airport, many international destinations. It is well positioned in relation

to the UK's most dynamic economies. There is an inadequate supply of modern business space to accommodate the potential for employment growth but relatively low unemployment. There is some tension between those who wish to see local employment opportunities expand, and those who are concerned that expansion does not damage the attributes which make the town attractive.

3.8.1.2 The town centre still has the character of a historic market town. Whilst it has suffered, like many others, from a movement towards online and out of town shopping, the occupancy rates remain high. The Neighbourhood Plan contains policies which seek to ensure that the centre remains a vibrant and attractive focus for both retail and other activities.

3.8.2 Objectives

- Create new employment opportunities for local residents while protecting amenities for residents
- Create a welcoming, prosperous and dynamic town centre through attractive development and integrated refurbishment
- Support development in the town and commercial areas to ensure sustainable employment diversity

3.9 THE GOODS YARD

3.9.1.1 Sensitive re-development of the Goods Yard presents a huge opportunity to provide a welcoming gateway to Bishop's Stortford and to greatly improve the accessibility of the town centre from the southern side of the town. Coupled with improvements to surrounding areas there is the chance to transform the site from a barren vista of cars into a vibrant contributor to the life and soul of the town.

3.9.2 Objectives

- Create a welcoming and pleasant public realm, enhancing the river environment and acknowledging the longstanding links of the area with travel and transport
- Provide a transport interchange to promote better connections between all means of transport
- Improve vehicle access routes to the site and connections with the rest of the town
- Provide sufficient car and cycle parking for users throughout the period covered by the Neighbourhood Plan
- Provide easy and safe pedestrian and cycle links to and from the site

3.10 LAND SOUTH OF BISHOP'S STORTFORD

3.10.1.1 According to the 2007 Local Plan, the area between Whittington Way and the bypass is designated Metropolitan Green Belt. Within the emerging District Plan it is proposed that the Green Belt boundaries are amended and the site allocated for development. It is referred to in the emerging District Plan as 'Land South of Bishop's Stortford' although colloquially it is also known as 'Bishop's Stortford South'

3.10.1.2 The emerging District Plan proposes 750 dwellings, a secondary school and a primary school. Supporting infrastructure, access and a business park are also proposed.

3.10.1.3 A decision by the District Council to amend the Green Belt boundaries would be controversial. This site is additionally controversial because of its prominent location, the effects of congestion and the fact that the take-off flightpath from Stansted Airport passes immediately adjacent to the site and aircraft which have departed from the

Noise Preferential Routes from time to time fly over at low altitude. However the Neighbourhood Plan has no influence over the decision to amend the Green Belt boundaries; it can deal only with the consequences should it occur.

3.10.1.4 As there is a state of uncertainty in regards to the outcome of the emerging District Plan, this Neighbourhood Plan provides for the two possible outcomes namely either that the land in question is removed from the Green Belt, or it is not. Certain policies in this plan apply only if the land is removed from development as part of the emerging District Plan process and in this case the Neighbourhood Plan focuses on shaping development to ensure that growth complements and enhances the surrounding area and does not undermine the integrity of the Green Belt that surrounds it.

3.10.2 Objectives

- Ensure that any development is in keeping with surrounding areas, presents a graduated edge to the surrounding Green Belt areas, includes inclusive community facilities and has adequate traffic planning
- Ensure any development does not have a negative impact on the local features of the natural landscape and neighbouring green spaces

3.11 THE BISHOP'S STORTFORD HIGH SCHOOL SITE

3.11.1.1 The governors of the Bishop's Stortford High School have expressed an interest in moving to the Land South of Bishop's Stortford site, should this site be approved for development (see above). This proposal received formal support from

Hertfordshire County Council on 11th July 2016.

3.11.1.2 As there is a state of uncertainty in regards to the outcome of the emerging District Plan, we are providing for the two possible outcomes namely either that the land at Land South of Bishop's Stortford is removed from the Green Belt, or it is not. The policies specific to the Bishop's Stortford High School site apply only in the former case.

3.11.1.3 If this occurs, then 200–250 houses could be built on the current site of the Bishop's Stortford High School, which is bounded by existing housing estates on three sides and the main London Road on the other.

3.11.2 Objectives

- Ensure any new housing is in keeping with the surrounding area
- Ensure the inclusion of sustainable leisure, recreational and other public facilities on site

3.12 EAST OF MANOR LINKS

3.12.1.1 Manor Links is an area of large low-rise mature bungalows on large plots with open aspects.

3.12.1.2 Within the emerging District Plan, it is proposed that the Green Belt boundaries are amended and two adjacent areas currently within the Green Belt areas are allocated for development. The area in question backs directly on to the gardens of bungalows in Manor Links and two storey properties in Cecil Close and Shortcroft.

3.12.1.3 A decision by the District Council to amend the Green Belt boundaries would be controversial; however the Neighbourhood Plan has no influence over this decision. It can deal only with the consequences should it occur.

3.12.1.4 As there is a state of uncertainty in regards to the outcome of the emerging District Plan, we are providing for the two possible outcomes namely either that the land in question is removed from the Green Belt, or it is not. The policies specific to the East of Manor Links site apply only in the former case.

3.12.2 Objectives

- Ensure development sits comfortably, presents favourable vistas, provides community facilities which include open spaces and play areas and has adequate traffic planning.

4 Policies

4.1 HOUSING AND DESIGN

4.1.1 Introduction

4.1.1.1 The Neighbourhood Area comprises All Saints, Central and South wards of Bishop's Stortford and a part of Thorley Parish including a section lying within the bypass. Although part of Central ward lies within the town centre, the remainder of the Neighbourhood Area within Bishop's Stortford is characterised by a number of housing estates built in different periods and styles over the last 150 years. Central ward has a network of small streets and mostly terraced cottages built from Victorian times up to the First World War. All Saints and South wards both have a wide range of housing largely built from the First World War up to the post Second World War era, whilst South Ward alone has major estates, such as Thorley and St Michael's Mead, built after 1980.

4.1.1.2 Although each housing estate retains a character typical of the period in which it was built, subsequent infill and modernisation have resulted in an enormous variety of styles and appearances.

4.1.1.3 The part of Thorley Parish within the Neighbourhood Area is largely undeveloped at present, though is allocated to take up to 1000 new homes in the emerging District Plan.

4.1.1.4 The District Plan (currently emerging) will establish the amount of development required to meet needs in Bishop's Stortford and across the district. The exact scale of development will need to be established through the District Planning process and is not something that can be meaningfully influenced by this Neighbourhood Plan.

4.1.1.5 The Neighbourhood Plan focuses on shaping how development is brought forward to ensure that growth which complements and enhances the unique character of the town can take place in a way which does not undermine the main purpose of the Green Belt in preventing uncontrolled urban sprawl.

4.1.2 Objectives

4.1.2.1 The objectives underlying the policies in this chapter are grouped under the headings below:

- Promote an attractive and harmonious living environment recognising the town's heritage
- Promote high functionality and quality within the living environment
- Provide housing for all and create community cohesion
- Protect and enhance newly discovered archaeological sites



Objective: Promote an attractive and harmonious living environment recognising the town's heritage



Figure 2 – Development Areas Identified in the emerging District Plan

4.1.2.2 Bishop's Stortford has a blend of character liked by its residents and well represented within the Neighbourhood Area. On the edge of the built up area, open spaces along the Stort valley and towards Thorley village, as well as the Southern Country Park, allow the town to blend gradually into its rural hinterland. In these areas it is expected that any developments will enhance this transition through the use of Garden City principles. The ongoing presence of a Green Belt transition together with the town bypass creating its own boundary will help to keep the scale and

character of Bishop's Stortford as a historic market town and to prevent an urban sprawl towards Thorley Village, Spellbrook and the Hallingburys.

4.1.2.3 Hertfordshire is the home of the Garden City and, although the character of the Neighbourhood Area was never intended as such, the predominance of green open spaces towards the edge accord with those of a mature Garden suburb. The Garden City approach to planning balances lower density of development often around the edge of towns with relatively higher density towards

the centres. It also incorporates its own green infrastructure (e.g. gardens, parks, landscaping) so as to create a smooth transition between that and the rural hinterland beyond, with gardens of a size commensurate with the scale and type of dwelling.

4.1.2.4 It should be noted that, when asked to comment about the character of new development in the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire (question #14), many respondents stated a preference for lower density developments and over 97% thought that landscaping and trees to create an attractive environment was important or very important.

4.1.2.5 There are two schemes within the emerging District Plan each of which yields over 150 homes (see figure 2, areas 4, 5) within the area of the Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, 50 homes are proposed at land east of Manor Links (figure 2, area 3). Policies that deal with each scheme specifically are listed separately so that, should planning applications be made, suitable guidance is available to make sure that development is appropriate and compatible with its surroundings.

4.1.2.6 From the Neighbourhood Plan survey of Dec 2014, the Land South of Bishop's Stortford site is the least popular of the three greenfield sites for development with town residents and will have the greatest infrastructure requirements to be acceptable. In particular, car parking capacity and access to it, avoiding the one-way system in the town centre, may be improved by development of the Goods Yard site (see policies GY4 and GY5).

4.1.2.7 East Hertfordshire District Council has a Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) process to identify and appraise sites that come forward through a consultation

process with landowners and other stakeholders.

4.1.2.8 It contains a number of commercial and other areas with premises that are no longer fit for purpose, or that are poorly sited for good connectivity to the transport network. Priority should be given to using such 'brownfield' sites for housing, provided suitable alternative premises arise elsewhere in the Town and that opportunities for increasing the extent and quality of local employment are forthcoming.

4.1.2.9 All development must comply with Regulation 10(1)(b) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended⁴ which requires that in local plans and supplementary planning documents, regard be had for the objectives of preventing major accidents and limiting the consequences of such accidents for human health and the environment. Within the Neighbourhood Plan area there is the potential for land allocation to encroach on the consultation zones around a National Grid Gas PLC pipeline detailed in Appendix 6.

HDP1 – Residential development and redevelopment

a) New residential development will be supported as long as it is found to be meeting the findings of the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment and subject to Local and Neighbourhood Plan policies in force. It is envisaged such housing will come forward through utilising opportunities for infill and brownfield development wherever possible and through significant developments⁵ on the outer edge of the built up area.

⁴ Amended by r.33 - Schedule 5 of The Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 2015

⁵ See glossary for definition

b) Residential Development Proposals beyond the existing edge of the built up area should be designed to incorporate the principles of Garden Cities (as defined in the glossary in Appendix 4 and as applicable to the size of development).

c) Brownfield development and the redevelopment of existing residential properties to create higher density shall be supported subject to the achievement of high quality design that meets the requirements of other policies and does not compromise to an unacceptable level the amenity value in either neighbouring properties or for the future occupiers of the proposed development.

4.1.2.10 Bishop's Stortford should only receive the very best, attractive and sustainable development. Building for Life 12, a Government-backed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods, is an effective way of achieving high quality through compliance with policy. The standard sets out twelve criteria to assess the quality of a development scheme. The emerging District Plan acknowledges the value of using Building for Life principles, but currently stops short of mandating their use through policy. Proposals coming forward in Bishop's Stortford should aim to be exemplary, ideally scoring twelve out of twelve greens when assessed against these criteria. In this context a 'green' against a specific criterion means that all relevant recommendations for that criterion are met. It is expected that East Herts District Council design review process is used to monitor the performance of developers against the criteria.

4.1.2.11 Appendix 5 contains a summary of the AECOM Heritage and Character Assessment for the Neighbourhood Area divided up to describe the land and townscape features of each sub-area. As developments arise in any sub-area, it is expected that the

Key Character Management Principles applicable for that sub-area will guide developers in designing suitable buildings, streets and spaces for their location and to identify areas without a positive style where a more innovative approach can be used.

4.1.2.12 The National Planning Policy Framework places considerable importance to the setting of heritage assets, not just the assets themselves, and this is particularly so in the centre of Bishop's Stortford close to the Market Square and St. Michael's Church (Grade 1 listed) particularly, where a large number of listed buildings create a unique historic character that extends beyond the boundary of the Conservation Area.

4.1.2.13 For sites near to or in the Conservation Area, it is expected that planning decisions will reflect the advice given in Historic England's publication 'The Historic Environment in Local Plans' or whatever advice supersedes it, in conjunction with the Bishop's Stortford Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA). The CAA is expected to guide developers in designing new buildings as appropriate for their historic settings. It also identifies many unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the character of the area and which do not enjoy the same protection as listed buildings. Such buildings need to be properly maintained and preserved to keep the essential character of the area.

4.1.2.14 The Twyford Lock area deserves special protection as a place where its rural character has remained largely intact without intrusive development. The setting of the Twyford Mill and the Grade II* Queen Anne style Twyford House should continue to be protected from development that detracts from their architectural and historic value in a rural setting.

HDP2 – Setting and character of buildings, streets and spaces

a) For all development proposals in and adjacent to the Conservation Areas, schemes must follow the relevant styles and materials set out in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal. Such schemes will require special sensitivity in recognising the significance of their historic settings to be supported.

Development proposals close to Twyford House and Mill which adversely affect their essentially rural setting will not be supported unless the harm is clearly outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal. Schemes involving the demolition of unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area, as denoted in section 7 - Management Proposals in the Conservation Area Appraisal, will not be supported except where the contribution from replacement buildings is comparable or better, or where the public benefit of the replacement scheme in terms of its appearance and design or the viable use of the site outweighs the harm.

b) Developments which can generally demonstrate high quality and empathy with their setting within the Neighbourhood Area will be encouraged. This means schemes will be supported if:

- They follow the Character Management principles described in Appendix 5, depending on the Townscape Character Area (TCA) of the site.
- They are accompanied by a Building for Life 12 Assessment and that score green or amber against all applicable criteria. An amber score will only be acceptable where it is accompanied by a clear justification in terms of local circumstances or viability explaining why a green score cannot be achieved.
- Buildings, streets and spaces can be shown to relate well to their location and

surroundings, particularly in prominent areas, such as when approaching Thorley Street from the south.

- Where possible, they keep the routes of existing roads and lanes to provide continuity with the history and morphology of the local area, for example Thorley Lane and Pig Lane.

c) Innovative designs of a high quality can be used, where it can be demonstrated that they also contribute positively to the immediate surroundings.

4.1.3 Objective: Promote high functionality and quality within the living environment

4.1.3.1 The achievement of high quality through good design, whether on the detailed scale within homes or on the wider scale for, say crime prevention, is encouraged by looking to meet or exceed current standards as they evolve. Best practice design principles shall be followed to ensure current and future functional and service needs are anticipated, thereby avoiding subsequent disruptive changes and contributing to the sustainability of the neighbourhood in the long term.

4.1.3.2 Sport England with Public Health England have produced Active Design guidance detailing how good urban design practice can deliver built environments that are enjoyable to live in and encourage healthy lifestyles. Bishop's Stortford is not well served by its existing sport facilities, poorly connected neighbourhoods and community infrastructure, as indicated in other relevant sections of this Plan, so it is particularly important that new developments seek to redress this imbalance by following such good practice.

4.1.3.3 The aim is for new development to deliver homes that are fit for purpose. This can relate to simply having enough space, for

example for visitors and guests to promote social interaction, for bikes and push chairs to encourage sustainable transport and to store sorted waste awaiting collection under the multiple wheelie bin local policy. Consultation has revealed that homes need more space and, in the absence of space standards in both the existing and emerging District Plans, it is recommended that the Nationally Described Space Standard in the optional DCLG Technical Housing Standards is used.

4.1.3.4 Recent changes in local lighting times have resulted in concerns about night time safety and security within Bishop's Stortford. It is important that the quality of lighting in new developments is able to allay those fears.

4.1.3.5 In order to mitigate the impacts of new development on climate change, development proposals should demonstrate how they will ensure that new dwellings and business premises include energy-saving and carbon dioxide reducing measures that at least match, and ideally exceed, proposed regulations.

4.1.3.6 Some residents of the town have complained that unadopted roads in recent new developments have needed costly arrangements for road maintenance that could be avoided if built to a proper standard.

4.1.3.7 The Environment Agency in their comments have said the Neighbourhood Area is part of a wider area under 'severe water stress' and recommend the DCLG Optional Technical Standard for Water Efficiency should be applied through NP policy. Although the existing Local Plan in force and the emerging District Plan cover water conservation generally, the local nature of the issue argues for its specific inclusion in the Plan.

4.1.3.8 Following the May 2016 House of Commons rejection of the Lord's amendment on SUDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems), where they suggested removing the automatic right of developers to connect to public sewers for surface water and encourage SUDS on every development, the Lords accepted an amendment. This now means the Secretary of State must carry out a review of the planning legislation, government planning policy (introduced in April 2015) and arising local planning policies concerning sustainable drainage.

4.1.3.9 The Stort river runs through the Neighbourhood Plan area and has a history of flooding in the town centre and of water run-off towards its flood plain in lower Thorley Street. Both locations have the potential developments of the Goods Yard and Land South of Bishop's Stortford close to them, so it is vital that SUDS water management principles are followed to minimise any adverse impact, following the uncertainty caused by the Government review, the timing of which is unknown. A hierarchy of Sustainable Urban Drainage appears in the Emerging District Plan in policy WAT3.

HDP3 – Design standards

a) In addition to other applicable criteria for design assessment, development will be required to meet all of the following criteria unless they include a clear justification for not meeting the standard:

- For all significant developments⁶, developers must demonstrate how the first nine principles of active design as detailed within Sport England's, Active Design Guidance (2015) have been addressed by using the Active Design checklist.

⁶ See Appendix 4 - Glossary

- Street lighting should achieve the standard as described in the Secured by Design publication 'Lighting Against Crime' or subsequent documents which explicitly supersede this.

b) On sites that have a favourable south-east to south-west aspect such as the land South of Bishop's Stortford, proposed in the emerging District Plan developers will be encouraged to incorporate the use of solar energy generation. On all sites the use of solar energy or other sources of renewable energy will be supported, where it does not conflict with other development plan policies.

c) All roads on new developments will be expected to meet the criteria for adoption set out by the Highways Authority.

d) All schemes are expected to follow the principles described below:-

- Development must utilise the most sustainable forms of drainage systems in accordance with the SUDS hierarchy, unless there are practical engineering reasons for not doing so.
- Development should aim to achieve greenfield run-off rates and ensure that surface water run-off is managed as close to its source as possible.
- Drainage should be designed and implemented in ways that deliver other policy objectives of this Plan, including water use efficiency and quality, biodiversity, amenity and recreation. The provision of balancing ponds as part of an area of public open space for recreation or wildlife should be designed to ensure the safety of other users of the space. Where SUDS are provided as part of a development, applicants should detail how it will be maintained in the long term.

- Where practicable, SUDS should be designed to ensure the sustainable drainage networks have the additional capacity required to cope with infrequent adverse weather conditions and therefore reduce flood risk.

4.1.4 Objective: Provide housing for all and create community cohesion

4.1.4.1 The future housing mix policy within the emerging District Plan is identified through the West Essex and East Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment Sept 2015 (SHMA), which sets out the Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAHN) over the Plan period, forecasting requirements to 2033. The recent nature of its evidence base argues for it to be used alongside the existing 2007 Plan which is technically in force at the moment.

4.1.4.2 The District Council also uses other sources of information to forecast housing demand within the District, including its own Housing Needs survey of residents carried out in Q4 of 2014 to identify current and future demand within the District and sub-areas. The key finding from that survey for Bishop's Stortford (based on 180 respondents) is that it has a strong demand for affordable housing, particularly amongst 'concealed households' (those not living independently but who wish to do so), indicating a lack of affordable homes within the area.

4.1.4.3 The Neighbourhood Plan survey carried out in Q4 2014 asked, in questions 12 and 13, for residents' views on the nature of housing that is most needed. The replies from the 1700 respondents highlighted the following:

- Strong preference for 2-3 bedroom homes (70% thought more such homes were needed)

- Positive demand for bungalows (54% thought more such homes were needed)
- Less preference for 4/5 bedroom homes (only 15% thought more such homes were needed)
- Positive demand for shared ownership (57% thought more such homes were needed)



4.1.4.4 The fact that the Neighbourhood Area is only 15 minutes travel time to the major employment centre of Stansted Airport and less than 45 minutes to London and Cambridge along the M11 corridor means that housing demand is likely to exceed the District average. Feedback from consultation and the Neighbourhood Plan Survey shows that for local people, particularly young people starting families, difficulty in obtaining a place to live is a major concern.

4.1.4.5 The 2011 Census figures also show that the Neighbourhood Area has about 5% more families with one or two dependent children and about 3% less two to three bedroom homes, compared to the East Hertfordshire District average. This, coupled with the results of the Neighbourhood Plan survey, argues for housing mix to be weighted away from four or five bedroom homes towards those with two or three bedrooms. Paragraph d) of policy HDP4 indicates how supply for smaller family houses could be increased by building small bungalows as part

of the housing mix.

4.1.4.6 The high demand for housing coupled with the large difference between affordable home provision policy and the current provision clearly supports the need for a pragmatic and sensitive approach to dwelling mix policy implementation. This needs to take account of the local conditions driving demand and the nature of the area itself to avoid damaging both its character and social fabric.

4.1.4.7 The policy for Dwelling Mix Strategy requires an assessment to be carried out by developers of how the mix they propose meets with local needs, within the whole of Bishop's Stortford, for schemes above a certain size. The assessment should be part of the Design and Access statement and will be reviewed as part of the East Herts Council's formal decision making process for planning applications, taking into account local factors such as affordability and availability of market homes and the trend of affordable housing waiting lists. To avoid the 'leakage' of affordable properties back into the open market, only schemes that allow the retention of affordable homes through buyback by providers, or other appropriate measures will be supported.

4.1.4.8 The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 obliges Planning Authorities to keep a register of those seeking to acquire land to build a home. It is expected that the register for East Hertfordshire will be used as a guide to the demand for such land when assessing the proportion of market housing allocated for this type of building in new developments as they come forward.

HDP4 – Dwelling mix strategy

a) On schemes where there is a net gain of five or more homes, developers are required to submit a Dwellings Mix Strategy as part of

the Design and Access Statement with any planning application. The strategy must clearly demonstrate how the proposed development addresses the objectively identified needs within Bishop's Stortford. This must cover all needs including those for all forms of market and 'affordable' housing.

b) On all such schemes, affordable housing will, other than in exceptional circumstances, be provided on-site as part of the residential development. Exceptional circumstances will principally relate to those where on-site provision will clearly compromise the deliverability of the scheme, in which case developer contributions would be sought towards off-site provision of affordable housing.

c) Schemes of any size must consider the unfulfilled demand for bungalows, particularly for sites close to similar dwellings, for example the East of Manor Links site. Developers must justify on firm evidence, for reasons other than just viability, why a site is not suitable for bungalows.

d) All schemes shall consider alternative types of purchase funding such as self-build for market housing. The Self-build Register should be used to assess the level of demand in an area to determine the proportion of land given over to such type of building, along with other relevant factors such as the size, position, accessibility and terrain of the site.

4.1.4.9 As a commuter town primarily for London, but also for Cambridge, Bishop's Stortford sometimes suffers from a lack of "community". Provision of 'Lifetime Homes' above the 15% specified by the Local Plan is a way to encourage stability and social cohesion by making it easier to avoid unnecessary uprooting of households to 'upsize' or 'downsize'. Wheelchair adaptable housing standards, applied through building regulations M(2), have superseded the

Lifetime Homes definition, and the Preferred Options draft District Plan advocates a flexible approach to the proportion of homes built to this standard. However, the case for building a significant proportion of wheelchair adaptable homes remains. continue.



4.1.4.10 Although there is no evidence that the proportion of disabled households in the Neighbourhood Area differs significantly from that of the East Herts Council average, there is evidence from engagement with disabled groups within the town that it is difficult to find suitable accommodation for those with specialist needs.⁷ It is therefore important that opportunities arising from developments make a contribution to this provision through S106 or CIL contributions.

4.1.4.11 Integration of such accommodation into residential areas is encouraged to promote security, diversity, inclusion and community cohesion, as recommended during consultation with housing providers.

HDP5 – Building for the community

a) Housing for Older and Vulnerable People will be expected to be:-

- In a suitable location where access to a choice of sustainable travel options is available;
- Within walking distance, on a safe and level route or within easy reach by

⁷ Information received Consultation February 2014.

passenger transport, to town centre shops and services;

- Well integrated with existing communities through the sharing of space and public access to services;
- Of a non-institutional, safe and stimulating design, which meets not only the needs of its future residents, but also the staff who work there and the visitors who may use it as a community resource.

b) Where new community facilities are being constructed in association with residential development the timing of their commissioning should ensure they are available for the new and existing community from the start of occupation or, where it can be clearly demonstrated that this is not viable or practicable, in accordance with an agreed phasing policy which will deliver facilities at the earliest stage at which it would be viable

HDP6, HDP7, HDP8 – There are no policies with these numbers

4.1.4.12 In order to maintain policy numbering consistent with that for the Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards, these policy numbers have been omitted from the current plan.

4.1.5 Objective: Protect and enhance newly discovered archaeological sites

4.1.5.1 Bishop's Stortford has numerous archaeological sites dating from the early prehistoric through to the Later Iron Age, Roman and Medieval periods. Existing Local and emerging District Plans have the policies to ensure that new development sites with archaeological potential can be investigated to determine if important archaeological remains ('heritage assets') are present. These policies are considered sufficient to enable

appropriate mitigation measures (further surveys, excavations, etc.) to be put in place.

4.1.5.2 Bishop's Stortford Museum should take priority on exhibiting any remains found, unless the find is of such scale and importance that it needs its own premises to conserve and display the finds.

HDP9 – Archaeology

a) Should new archaeological finds occur, that are worthy of reclamation or display, an appropriate contribution will be sought from the developers towards the costs of whatever methods are deemed by Hertfordshire County Council to be most appropriate to curate the finds, where it meets the legal requirements for section 106 contributions

4.2 CONTRIBUTIONS TO COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

4.2.1.1 Bishop's Stortford has a range of infrastructure needs and on-going requirements. In order to make sure there is a consistent approach to community infrastructure and to ensure that the objectives within the Neighbourhood Plan are supported with any future development proposals, financial contributions should be made accordingly.

CI – Contributions to Infrastructure and Community Facilities

a) Where policies in this plan require contributions to provide new or improved community infrastructure or community facilities, they will be made through planning obligations in accordance with Policy IMP1 of the East Herts Local Plan 2007 Second Review 2007 or a successor policy in the emerging East Herts District Plan where they comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy

Regulations 2010 and any subsequent amendments to them.

4.2.1.2

4.3 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

4.3.1 Introduction

4.3.1.1 The Neighbourhood Area includes a wide variety of rich green space resources and this is appreciated by the residents; in the 2014 Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire, residents considered that parks and green spaces were the third most popular aspect of the town with 57% rating them as excellent or good. There was also very strong support for the future use and protection of green spaces in and around the town.

4.3.1.2 New development should protect existing green spaces, other than those specifically identified as development sites, improve biodiversity and should take the opportunity to create and enhance new green infrastructure and leisure facilities whilst minimising environmental risks. The Southern Country Park is an example of 'best practice' for the creation and management of a 'new' green space, especially in the way the local residents are involved. The River Stort is an important chalk stream habitat for wildlife but is also an under-used asset for the residents of the town.



4.3.1.3 Bishop's Stortford is subject to a number of environmental risks. The river presents a flood risk for parts of the town centre and recent major housing and retail developments have decreased the natural absorption of rainwater. These, along with further proposed development, are likely to increase the risk of flooding.

4.3.1.4 The rapid expansion has also put the environment of the town under pressure. The town is not self-sufficient in water which must be pumped in from outside sources. Sewerage facilities are stretched. Any major new development must therefore take these factors into account, manage the environmental risks and improve the area's resilience to climate change.

4.3.2 Objectives

4.3.2.1 The objectives underlying the policies in this chapter are organised under the headings below.

- Enhance and protect green spaces; utilise appropriately for leisure
- Protect and enhance wildlife and biodiversity, including the River Stort
- Improve access and connections to green spaces and the surrounding countryside
- Provide essential community facilities
- Maintain and enhance the flood mitigation function of green spaces

4.3.3 Objective: Enhance and protect green spaces; utilise appropriately for leisure

4.3.3.1 There are five major tracts of land in the Neighbourhood Area which act as green lungs. These are vital in maintaining the balance of green space and development that has been so important to Bishop's Stortford evolution. These five areas should be protected.

4.3.3.2 Major housing development, if not carefully planned, could cause the loss of important green spaces, suffocation of the southern and eastern sides of the town,



reduce connectivity and permeability of the landscape for wildlife and people, and would restrict access to green space by existing and new residents.

4.3.3.4 The park is extremely diverse in what it offers to park users. The Eastern side contains the Thorley Lane car park, children's play area and a large open area of grass that is used for keep fit classes, ballgames, flying kites and model aircraft and exercising dogs. On the western side there is a dog-free picnic area, fishing lake, spring-fed pond and Spellbrook. There is also a large wildflower area on a chalk bank. Across the whole park there are a wide variety of wildlife habitats.

4.3.3.5 Thorley Wedge is a long narrow area of public space, which incorporates three children's play areas and an allotment site, together with community football club pitches. It extends across approximately two



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4.3.3.3 The first of the five lungs is Southern Country Park which lies to the south of Bishops Stortford and is approximately 23 ha in size. A volunteer group called 'Friends of Southern Country Park' works closely with East Herts Council and the Countryside Management Service to maintain and improve the park. This partnership has led to the park's Green Flag status which makes it welcoming, safe and well maintained, with strong community involvement and good management of wildlife assets.

kilometres from east to west in southern Bishop's Stortford, from Thorley Hill road to St James Way, where it is called 'Northern Park'.

4.3.3.6 From its western end, which abuts farmland (across St James Way) Thorley Wedge provides the following functions:

- Wildlife corridor
- Green lung
- Linkage route for pedestrians and cyclists
- Dog walking zone

- Childrens play area, both formally and informally
- Formal sports area – community football club
- Informal sports area
- Leisure space
- Storm water containment
- Utility provision

4.3.3.7 Birchanger Wood lies partly within the Neighbourhood Area and consists of 28 hectares of ancient coppiced woodland. The wood is maintained entirely by volunteers in accordance with a management plan drawn up by professional ecologists and the Forestry Commission for the benefit of the local community. Recently created are 5.3km of all-weather and wheelchair-friendly paths.

4.3.3.8 The Spinney is a narrow area of heavily wooded public space, which borders the western end of the Bishop's Stortford High School site. The Spinney provides:

- A wildlife corridor
- A green lung
- An un-paved surface, linkage route for pedestrians and cyclists
- A dog walking zone
- Children's informal play area

There is potential for:

- Development of a paved green route for pedestrians and cyclists from the land south of Whittington Way, via Thornbera Gardens into Thorley Wedge and for pedestrians via Thorley Park Road and Marlborough Close, twenty metres of paved public footpath and Mulberry Court to South Road.
- Blending any open space provision from development on the Bishop's Stortford

High School site into the eastern side of The Spinney to increase its width and wildlife amenity value.

4.3.3.9 The Firs, an avenue of Lime & Pink Chestnut trees, remains an important wildlife corridor, enjoyed and appreciated by a large number of people using it as a pedestrian route, including school children. Supported by EHDC there is a community Friends group who actively work to enhance & maintain this important wildlife habitat. The Firs is an integral part of The Five Parks Walk linking Southern Country Park, Northern Park, College Fields & Thorley Wedge.

4.3.3.10 There are a number of other smaller green spaces which should be retained as they are and are listed under policy GIP1. Should offsite ecological compensation be required from development, the areas identified below could provide opportunities to site required ecological measures. In addition, there are very many verges which must be well maintained and could be planted with wild flowers for improved biodiversity.

GIP1 – Local Green Spaces and other green areas

a) The following five areas within the Neighbourhood Area will be designated 'Local Green Spaces'. Development that is incompatible with the importance of these spaces as attractive publicly accessible informal recreation areas will not be allowed unless there are very special circumstances where the benefit of the development clearly outweighs any harm. Development which adjoins these areas must preserve and enhance wildlife corridors to a width to allow sufficient bio-diversity and habitat conservation having regard to best practice and advice from Natural England and/or other appropriate expert organisations.

- Birchanger Wood

- The Firs
- The Spinney
- Thorley Wedge – from Thorley Hill to St James Way (Northern Park)
- Southern Country Park

b) There are a number of other green spaces in the area. In recognition of their value as green space, any development of these spaces in accordance with their final allocations in the District Plan must have regard to their intrinsic value as a green space and to their purpose.

- Apton Road pond
- Cox's Garden on Havers estate
- The Green: a square bounded by Audrey Gardens, Mary Park Gardens and Bishops Avenue
- Thorley Lane Verge which runs from Bishops Avenue up Thorley Lane to Pynchbek and to the roundabout and then alongside the oak wooded copse (still bordering old Thorley Lane which is now renamed Obrey Way) up to the turn into Thorley Lane East. It is used regularly as a horse riding route.
- Green leisure space south of New Path, adjacent to Holy Trinity Church
- Nettleswell Gardens at Rhodes Centre
- Old Cemetery and New Cemetery
- Parsonage Field
- Area adjacent to Rushleigh Green and the Ridings
- Thorley Cricket Ground
- Established mature woodland between Thorley Lane East and Broadleaf Avenue
- The green area adjacent to Ward Crescent
- The green area adjacent to Waytemore Road



4.3.3.11 Thorley Wedge and the riverside are the main areas for leisure activities for residents.

4.3.3.12 The proposed development on the Goods Yard site provides an opportunity to improve the riverside south of the town centre. The river is a great asset for the town but under-used as a central feature and for leisure use; this issue has been raised consistently in all consultation events. The document: 'A Vision for the Future': Bishop's Stortford Waterspace & Landscape Strategy, sets out excellent proposals for people to 'live, work and enjoy the River Stort Navigation' and is supported. In addition, it is proposed that occasional 'laybys' be introduced along the towpath to allow for extra green planting of native species to improve biodiversity. Residents are also asking for cycle paths along the river.



4.3.3.13 There are important fishing lakes adjacent to the river in the Neighbourhood

All Saints, Central, South & part of Thorley

Area which are well used by fishing clubs and must be preserved and well maintained.

4.3.3.14 The green space south of the proposed development on the Goods Yard site and bordering London Road should be taken into responsible management and opened up for public use to be funded by the developers of the Goods Yard site.

GIP2 – Improve areas for leisure

a) Proposals that seek to improve the use of existing and new open spaces will be supported. This would include:

- Provision of seating, preferably from natural products
- Improved signage
- Weather-protected information boards
- Facilities to support guided visits for schools, e.g. mooring points, hides and study centres

b) Initiatives by the Canal & River Trust and the Environment Agency to improve leisure usage of the River Stort Navigation will be supported, subject to other applicable policies, though wildlife needs to be protected from over-use. Proposals to improve the towpath south of the town centre with an appropriate surface (or artificial if a cycle track is provided) will be supported, together with better access, improved signage plus management and biodiversity enhancement initiatives.

GIP3 – Green space management and zoning

a) Developers will be expected to cooperate with the establishment of appropriate long-term arrangements for the management of open spaces which form part of any development scheme of over 10 dwellings. The developer will be required to provide financial contributions to support initial costs

and/or transfer land to an appropriate body, by agreement with the planning authority.

4.3.4 Objective: Protect and enhance wildlife and biodiversity, including the River Stort

4.3.4.1 The protection of wildlife was a key concern expressed at the Focus Group on Green Spaces held in November 2014 and at the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Day held on 27th June 2015. Biodiversity, as a measure of the variety of organisms present in an ecosystem, must be maintained and improved. Ancient hedgerows such as that running alongside the Hertfordshire Way on the Whittington Way site connecting Obrey Way and Thorley Street, providing attractive views back to Thorley Wood and Spellbrook, need to be protected as they provide critical wildlife corridors. There is a longer-term aspiration to create a wildlife corridor running from Southern Country Park to the river Stort.

4.3.4.2 Wildlife sites such as the Southern Country Park reed bed must be protected and well maintained. It contains some very unusual bird species for the area, such as Snipe, Water Rail, Bearded Tit, Reed Bunting, Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler, Willow Warbler and Common Tern.



GIP4 – Protect wildlife and increase biodiversity

a) In any new development, mature trees and hedgerows shall be retained as far as practical. New planting and other initiatives

shall be incorporated as an integral part of the scheme to promote biodiversity. New hedgerow planting should contain a variety of species appropriate to the area. Woodland planting must accord with the appropriate National Vegetation Classification (NVC). Existing mature trees should continue to be part of any development proposal unless it is demonstrated that it is necessary for them to be felled or an arboricultural survey clearly demonstrates that they are not worthy of retention. Replacement tree planting should be undertaken on a minimum of a one-for-one basis. Native species must always be given preference as plants of local origin tend to establish and survive better and support more wildlife. Monocultures should be avoided.

b) Watercourses are a vital asset and therefore must be retained as part of any development affecting them, and enhanced for biodiversity. Proposals must show how the watercourse is to be incorporated as a vital asset within a development but must also ensure that wherever possible an appropriate buffer zone is incorporated between the built form and the watercourse unless circumstances dictate otherwise. Only native species may be planted in the buffer zone. Where possible, the re-naturalisation of modified watercourses will be expected. A new development that may result in deterioration of an existing watercourse will not be supported.

c) Where significant new development restricts natural habitats, corridors for wildlife movement will be protected or created in order to benefit local biodiversity. The design of wildlife corridors will have regard to current best practice and advice from Natural England and/or other appropriate expert organisations.

d) In order to protect and enhance wildlife in the area and to increase biodiversity, opportunities to incorporate new wildlife habitats (for example bat and bird boxes) into significant new developments must be sought. Features for bats and birds must be integrated into the fabric of buildings of new development to ensure permanent gains. All building bordering green space will be expected to incorporate integrated features for wildlife. Guidance should be sought from Natural England where habitats of wildlife and protected species (e.g. badgers) are affected.

g)

4.3.5 Objective: Improve access and connections to green spaces and surrounding countryside

4.3.5.1 The Neighbourhood Area provides many opportunities for walking, riding and cycling but the existing green spaces are not as well known, or used as much as they could be. The Focus Group on Green Spaces held in November 2014 identified a need for improvement of existing footpaths and cycle paths, a requirement to improve the linkages or connections between them across the town and into the countryside, and also a need for improved signage and promotion. These connections utilise existing Public Rights of Way (PROW), plus potential new or other paths or routes. Opportunities should be sought to develop new connections between developed areas, green spaces and the surrounding countryside. New initiatives should complement the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) prepared by Herts County Council Rights of Way Service.



4.3.5.2 An example of good practice can be found in 'Southern Country Park & Beyond – Management Plan 2013 – 2018', which establishes and promotes linking routes on foot between five East Herts Council owned parks in Bishop's Stortford, namely Southern Country Park, Northern Parkland, Thorley Wedge, Bishop's Park and The Firs. This principle should be adopted for all the Green Spaces identified in this Neighbourhood Plan.

GIP5 – Enhancement of footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths

a) Working with local and national associations such as the Bishop's Stortford & District Footpaths Association, East Herts Ramblers, East Herts Footpaths Society and the British Horse Society, proposals to ensure that existing footpaths and bridleways are well maintained and signposted and that new footpaths are created and officially designated will be supported.

b) The character of existing public rights of way (PROWs) must be protected in terms of



safety, directness, attractiveness and convenience. No new obstructions to PROWs should be introduced and any amendments should follow the guidelines in the relevant Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) circular.

c) Bridleways for horse riders should be protected and proposals should seek, where possible, to create new cycle paths so as to provide safe and effective routes across the Neighbourhood Area. New and existing cycle tracks should be linked with the National Cycle Network where possible.

d) Footpaths across the Neighbourhood Area should provide an accessible and safe way for all residents and visitors to enjoy the rural hinterland of Bishop's Stortford. Footpaths should use surfaces appropriate to the habitat: tarmac in well-used routes (e.g. main path through Northern Park); well-drained and overlaid with bark for more rural settings (e.g. Southern Country Park) and none for casual paths across grassy spaces.

e) As part of any major development proposal, financial contributions or direct provision of new infrastructure will be sought to secure improvements to PROW and other links within the area surrounding a site that would be used by future occupiers.

f) Proposals for the improvement of access to public green spaces will be supported (including access for those in wheelchairs and scooters, those who are frail and unable to walk in a robust manner and those with babies in buggies). Measures to regrade paths through the green spaces for this purpose will be supported.

4.3.6 Objective: Provide essential community facilities

4.3.6.1 Allotments in Bishop's Stortford are currently managed by Bishop's Stortford Town Council. Residents must wait up to eighteen

months for a plot on the more popular sites in the Neighbourhood Area, despite efforts over recent years to manage demand by reducing plot size and evicting tenants who do not tend plots adequately.

4.3.6.2 New development will cause the demand to increase which must be matched by increased supply. Allotment holders and considerations of sustainability favour allotments close to the communities they serve.

4.3.6.3 Town Council policy BSP010 sets out the rationale and standards for developer contributions and the justification for the rate of contribution. This rate caters for the demand expected from the new build only (based on the rate of demand actually experienced elsewhere in the Town) and does not attempt to deal with the existing deficiency.



GIP6 – Improving/expanding allotments

a) To support the population increase arising from new developments, developers of 10 residential units or more will be required to either:

- Provide space with appropriate facilities for new allotments or
- Contribute towards the expansion and/or improvement of existing allotments.

b) For developments in excess of 500 dwellings (or groups of adjacent developments which together amount to more than 500 dwellings) it will be expected

that land either on or immediately adjacent to the development site is provided and is prepared by the developers (including facilities, fencing, land preparation, soil improvement if required) and transferred to the allotment authority (currently the Town Council) at no cost. The provision of space for new allotments will be at the rate of 0.24ha per 1,000 population. Vehicular access will be required and the site must be chosen accordingly.

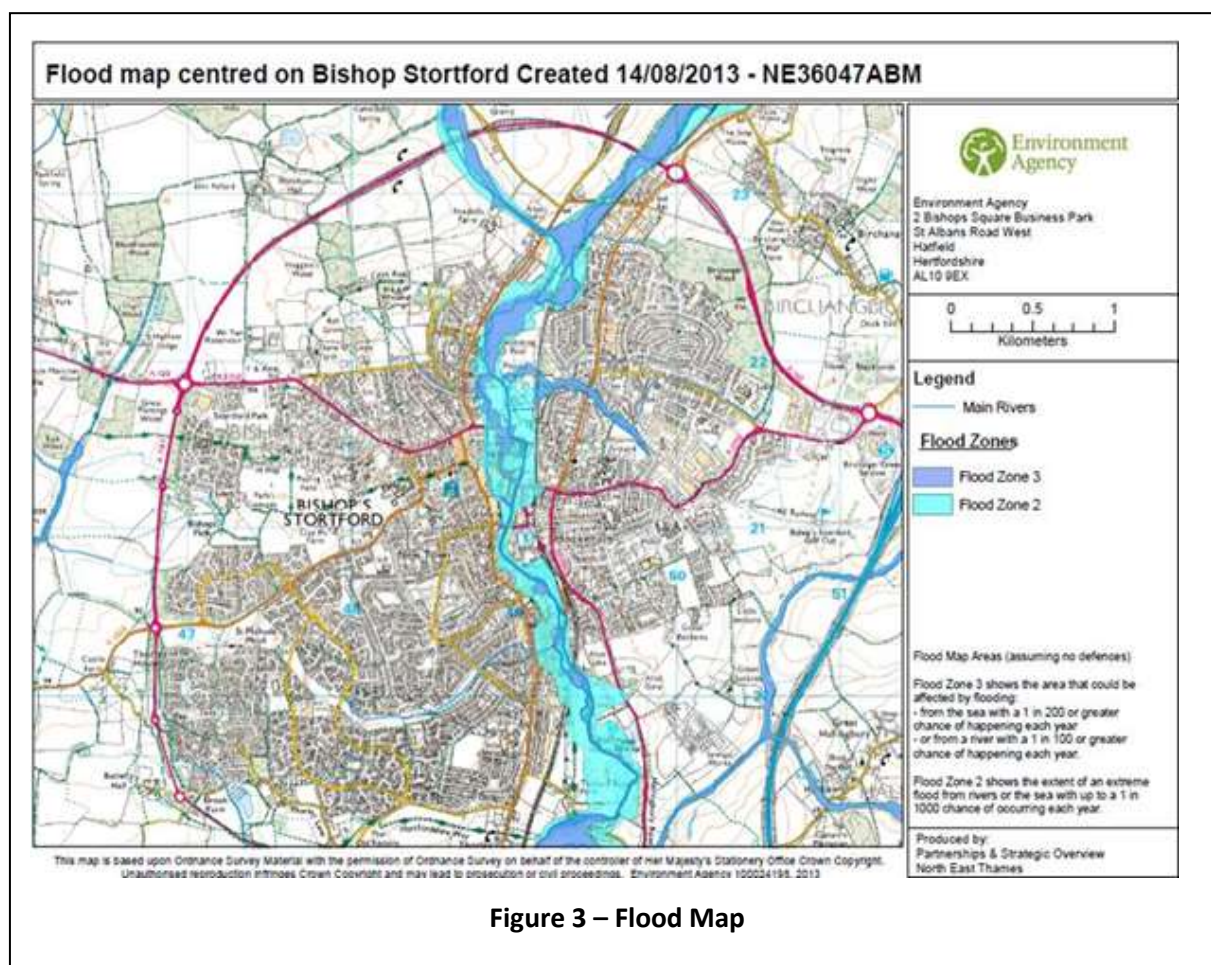
c) For smaller developments it will normally be expected that contributions will be made towards existing allotments. Where there is available land – particularly where it is part of the proposed development area – this could include the expansion of the existing allotments. Financial contributions will be calculated based on the cost of acquiring and facilitating space at the same rate as for on-site provision.

4.3.7 Objective: Maintain and enhance the flood mitigation function of green spaces

4.3.7.1 While the River Stort provides a wide variety of opportunities for leisure activities and is a key feature of the town, it also creates a flood hazard which must be well managed especially at a time of climate change.

GIP7 – Flood mitigation

d) Building a development will only be permitted in Flood Zones 2 or 3 (illustrated on the Environment Agency map reproduced in Figure 3) where it has been demonstrated that it meets the requirements of the NPPF in relation to the Sequential Test and the Exception Test and a site specific flood risk assessment, or other tests specified in the Local Plan have demonstrated that the risk of flooding has been minimised and reduced where possible and that any residual flood risk can be safely managed.



4.4 TRANSPORT

4.4.1 Introduction

4.4.1.1 Transport has a vital role to play in facilitating the future sustainable development of Bishop's Stortford. With significant housing and population growth forecast for the Plan period it is essential that this Neighbourhood Plan, along with the District Plan and Hertfordshire County Council Transport Plans collectively address the challenges that this will bring.

4.4.1.2 The construction of the fourth (South-East) quadrant of the Bishop's Stortford by-pass has been extensively proposed and supported by the public and is viewed as essential infrastructure to address congestion and air quality issues as the town and surrounding areas grow to meet housing and development targets. This Plan acknowledges that such major infrastructure will require substantial funding through sources beyond developer contributions, however the realisation of this scheme remains a key aspiration for the town.

4.4.1.3 High levels of car ownership and an underdeveloped sustainable travel network have contributed to a reliance on car transport in the area and resulting congestion at peak periods. In addition to concerns over traffic volumes, community feedback has also highlighted key concerns about pedestrian and cyclist safety, parking and public transport provision. Whilst this plan contains policies to improve sustainable travel, the overall aspiration is to improve movement by all transport modes including walking, cycling, public transport and private car.

4.4.2 Objectives

4.4.2.1 The objectives underlying the policies in this chapter are to:

- Support solutions to congestion
- Create and promote sustainable travel networks
- Provide adequate car parking
- Manage traffic speeds and promote road safety
- Improve town centre access, connectivity, amenity and vitality

4.4.3 Objective: Support solutions to congestion

4.4.3.1 The use and congestion of roads in and around Bishop's Stortford is determined by the growth in both local and neighbouring populations. Historical and physical development of the town has led to a constrained road network with a number of routes and hotspots that experience high levels of congestion at peak times.

4.4.3.2 Major developments within the Neighbourhood Area, elsewhere in the town, and in the adjacent District of Uttlesford, the southernmost settlements of which look to Bishop's Stortford as the local shopping, leisure, transport and education hub, will significantly increase the demand on the road network

4.4.3.3 As an historic market town, Bishop's Stortford has a road network not designed for such volumes of vehicular movement. County policy includes a goal of *improving* average morning peak hour journey times within 'defined towns' including Bishop Stortford and achieving this or something close, is necessary to realise the vision for the Neighbourhood Area.

	2008/09*	2015/16	2020/21	2025/26	2030/31
Minutes per mile	2.87	2.80	2.75	2.70	2.65
MPH	20.9	21.4	21.8	22.2	22.6

* Actual, Hertfordshire

Figure 4 – Herts County Council targets for average peak-hour journey times

4.4.3.4 Herts County Council has established targets for average peak-hour journey times within specified urban areas including Bishop's Stortford⁸ (excluding weekends and school holidays) set out in Figure 4.

4.4.3.5 The current average morning peak hour journey speed within Bishop's Stortford or the Neighbourhood Area is not known, but the average speed on several key routes within the Neighbourhood Area is 19 mph⁹, i.e. worse even than the 2008/09 County figure and substantially worse than the target.

4.4.3.6 Aside from inconvenience, congestion compromises the vitality of the town centre. Residents, particularly those on the periphery of the town, will choose to travel to surrounding shopping centres or shop online if they cannot conveniently access the facilities in the town.

4.4.3.7 Taking the above into account it is vital that the design of new development and the associated mitigations are strongly challenged to ensure that the best viable

design is created and unnecessary impacts avoided. Particular attention must be paid to the congested routes and innovative solutions (including infrastructure, modal shift and the location of key facilities) fully explored. If this does not take place the future expansion of the town will be frustrated by inadequate design of earlier developments in the plan period and the vitality of the town centre compromised by poor access.

4.4.3.8 Congestion in Bishop's Stortford town centre routes is worsened by 'transit' traffic that does not originate or terminate in the town centre area, but is passing through. Through- traffic also uses routes along South Street, Potter Street and North Street which are the main retail areas in the town centre. Opportunities to intercept and redirect traffic away from the town centre, especially at peak time should be explored.

4.4.3.9 Local residents can play a vital role in identifying and suggesting specific measures to enhance sustainable travel opportunities in the area where they live. The planning process should therefore encourage developers to tap into this local knowledge to help inform Travel Plan packages submitted with their planning applications.

4.4.3.10 The objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure that the best possible design, within the bounds of viability, is achieved in

⁸ LTP3 Volume 1 Page 46, Indicator N167/
<http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/ltplive/strategy/challenges?page=2>, Herts County Council

⁹ Source – Planning Application 3/13/0075/OP
Transport Analysis Routes 7-16

respect of congestion management and that all design options are thoroughly explored.

4.4.3.11 The threshold for applying the following policies (particularly TP1 and TP2), which concerns development affecting congested routes and Hockerill Junction which is a designated Air Quality Management Area has been the object of careful consideration for both the adopted Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards and this Plan.

Whilst transport modelling and assessment is used to predict the traffic impacts of development, some tolerance should be made for modelling uncertainty. Verbal advice from the Highways Agency (now highways England) during the development of the Silverleys and Meads Wards Plan indicated that a threshold of 5% increase in delay or journey time has frequently been applied to broadly similar circumstances in the past. At this time Hertfordshire Highways suggested that the threshold should be set at 'a notable increase' however several consultees questioned the use of undefined terms of this nature. The Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards was ultimately adopted with a 5% threshold. Consultation with Hertfordshire Highways during the development of this plan has secured their verbal agreement to the application of this threshold although it is acknowledged that the Highways Authority has the flexibility to vary this threshold where it is deemed necessary.

4.4.3.12 The intention of the Neighbourhood Plan is not to be prescriptive in respect of how mitigation is to be achieved, rather it is to be clear as the circumstances in which mitigations must be considered and included within proposals.



TP1 – Tackling traffic congestion

a) All significant¹⁰ proposed developments will be supported by a Transport Assessment which must demonstrate predicted levels of generated traffic and the impacts of this on key roads and junctions within the town. This will include, in particular, the routes within the bypass set out in paragraph f) and other routes designated by the Highways Authority.

b) In the event that the Transport Assessment shows a predicted increase in congestion or average journey times on any of these routes which exceeds 5%, or such other figure designated by the highways authority, mitigating works shall be identified and implemented to bring predicted journey times back to pre-development levels unless it can be demonstrated that this is not viable through a thorough assessment of the options and viability or other means.

c) Travel plans will be required for major developments in accordance with adopted Local Plan and Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan.

d) Any transport modelling work undertaken as part of the Transport Assessment process

¹⁰ Defined as developments for which Transport Assessments in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council's Roads in Hertfordshire – Design Guide, 2011 (or as subsequently superseded by the local highway authority).

will take due account of actual local conditions and patterns of traffic movement and will include identification of key assessment periods for combined development and background traffic levels (which may on occasion fall outside of the traditional morning and evening peak hours).

e) The restrictions and traffic carrying capacity of present highways into/out of town (Rye Street, Hadham Road, Stansted Road, Great Hadham Road/Windhill, London Road, Thorley Street, Haymeads Lane, Dunmow Road, Hallingbury Road) and on the Causeway and Hockerill Street must be recognised and appropriately modelled under a range of normal and adverse conditions. Models will need to be tested. If it can be demonstrated that the impact on individual routes in this list is negligible, the modelling of that route may be omitted.

f) Where appropriate, due to the location or impact of a development, the following routes must also be considered as though they were specified in paragraph f): Beldams Lane, Linkside Road, Pig Lane, South Street, Station Road, Dane Street, other roads in the vicinity of the development.

g) In the event that the condition as described in b) is met, the approval of the application will be conditional upon the establishment of monitoring and review mechanisms contained within appropriate planning conditions. Prior to the first occupation of the development, the developer will be required to submit a Monitoring Report for approval to Herts County Council in consultation with East Herts District Council. The monitoring Report should be based on the Transport Assessment submitted with the application. A schedule of traffic surveys to be conducted at incremental levels of the development's occupancy will also be agreed. Where the traffic survey reveals that the number of motor vehicle

movements arising from the development exceeds the forecasts identified in the Monitoring Report by more than 10%, the developer will be expected to pay a pre-agreed sum of money from a mitigation contingency fund (also pre-agreed). The provisions in this policy are subject to agreement with the Highway Authority.

4.4.3.13 Air Pollution is a public health issue. Hockerill junction has been designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) since 2007. Nitrogen Dioxide levels are almost twice the prescribed limit in the European Union Air Quality Directive and is therefore in breach of obligations to comply with this standard. This Air Quality Management Area encompasses commercial and residential properties around the junction of Dunmow Road, Hockerill Street, London Road and Stansted Road. The area is also a key movement corridor for pedestrians and cyclists accessing the town centre, railway station and local schools. Consequently, impact on air quality is a material consideration and should be given significant weight in determining whether:

- a) Proposed mitigation is capable of achieving no further deterioration in air quality at Hockerill junction.
- b) Planning permission should be refused.

4.4.3.14 New technology such as hybrid and electric vehicles are a key contributor to improving air quality.

TP2 – Improving air quality

a) In the event that the Transport Assessment associated with a new development predicts increases in congestion at the Hockerill junction exceeding 5% an assessment of the predicted impacts on the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) will be carried out and mitigating actions (which may be at the junction or elsewhere) identified to bring

levels of predicted pollutants back to pre-development levels. The scope and content of the assessment will be agreed between the planning authority and the applicant having regard to national guidance and the East Herts Air Quality Planning Guidance Document.

b) The above will also apply to any other AQMA designated during the Plan period.

c) If significant adverse impacts on air quality at Hockerill are incapable of being overcome by Conditions or Planning Obligations then development will not be permitted.

d) The measurement criterion for the above is:

- Levels of recorded and predicted pollutants at receptors related to the Hockerill junction (and future designated AQMAs).

e) Mitigation measures will also be expected where the impacts of a proposed development are likely to raise concentrations of pollutants in any location within the Neighbourhood Area to levels that would breach air quality objectives.

f) The responsible planting of trees which reduce or absorb air pollution from traffic will be supported throughout the Neighbourhood Area.

g) New developments should not contravene East Herts Council's Air Quality Action Plan or render any of the measures unworkable.

h) New developments should make provision for electric vehicle charging infrastructure, to stimulate the use of hybrid and electric vehicles.

4.4.4 Objective: Create and promote sustainable travel networks

4.4.4.1 Access to a wide range of community facilities will continue to be critical for Bishop's Stortford residents as the town grows. The proximity of facilities and travel

options available to access them will significantly influence whether people use their cars or choose to travel more sustainably.

4.4.4.2 Whilst it is not always possible to ensure that every new resident is an acceptable distance from the full range of facilities, a sustainable development will ensure that the majority of residents are close to the majority of facilities. This supports Paragraph 38 of the NPPF.

4.4.4.3 For entirely new neighbourhoods, where the facilities are an integral part of the development, this may be largely a matter of layout and masterplanning. For lesser developments which use facilities already present, care must be taken to ensure that pedestrians can follow the shortest possible path rather than necessarily following vehicular paths which are frequently circuitous. This may involve the creation or retention of pedestrian 'cut throughs' for example.

TP3 – Create walking and cycle friendly neighbourhoods

a) Development proposals should where possible increase the attractiveness of walking and cycling and all significant developments should:

- Include walking and cycle routes as part of the layout and design;
- Provide direct routes between housing and community facilities;
- Connect with adjacent routes and key destinations;
- Ensure routes are accessible for people using wheelchairs or mobility scooters.

b) To ensure new communities are walkable, development proposals, where possible, should apply the following Department for Transport (DfT) guidelines for reasonable

walking distances¹¹ between housing and new and/or existing community facilities:

- Bus Stops – 400m
- Food Store – 800m
- Primary School – 800m
- Doctors – 800m
- Local Play Areas – 800m
- Secondary School – 1000m

c) Developers will be expected to outline any deviation from these guidelines and justify such deviation and the impact of the design on sustainability.



4.4.4.4 Despite the relatively compact nature of the town, cycling and walking are underused modes. This is due to poor cycling infrastructure, narrow streets and pavements, high traffic flows resulting in perceived safety issues, the topography of the town and high levels of car ownership.

4.4.4.5 The results of The Neighbourhood Plan survey 2014 suggest that there is a desire on the part of local residents to travel sustainably but only if conditions are right. For

example, of the 1578 respondents, 36% said that they would leave the car at home if there were new/improved cycle paths and walkways. A further 38% of respondents said that they might not drive if new/improved cycle paths and walkways existed. This left only 26% who stated that they would still drive.

4.4.4.6 Community feedback during focus groups and consultation days highlighted safety concerns as a principal barrier to cycling in the town and so in order to give people real choice about travelling sustainably, cycle routes will need to feel safe throughout an entire journey. Whilst promotion of cycling and walking through Smarter Choices Campaigns is important we also need to build a safe and convenient cycling and walking infrastructure throughout the town.

4.4.4.7 The provision of routes and paths that connect people with key destinations throughout the town will make a significant contribution to mitigating traffic and congestion challenges as the town's population grows as well as bringing health and environmental benefits. Therefore, an ambition for the Town is that all key destinations are connected by a direct, legible and integrated network of walking and cycling routes. The policies that follow seek to maximise opportunities to achieve this.



¹¹ WebTag (January 2014) Unit A4.2 paragraph 6.4.5, Department for Transport. "These walking catchments should be based on, where possible, established walking routes used by the community and not 'crow-fly' distances."

TP4 – Develop a connected town for pedestrians and cyclists

a) Any major development must deliver pedestrian and cycle improvements, appropriate to the size, scale and location of the scheme, that enable people to travel from the development to key destinations around the town such as the town centre, railway station, main employment areas and schools.

b) Where barriers such as busy roads, the river or railway tracks hinder significant movement by foot or cycle, applications that include measures to navigate these barriers through solutions such as underpasses, tunnels, bridges and other crossing facilities will be encouraged.

c) There will be a strong presumption against development which results in the loss of any existing cycle or pedestrian crossing over a road, railway or river unless a suitable alternative is provided or the benefits of development in terms of sustainable development clearly outweigh the loss.

d) Where possible cycle routes should be traffic free or segregated physically or by line markings. Routes should aim to keep road crossings and changes in level to a minimum and cycle routes should avoid unnecessary gradients. Routes should normally be suitable for those with wheelchairs, frames, buggies or other mobility aids.

e) Cycle routes should be built to high quality design standards such as the NCN (National Cycle Network) Standards or London Cycle Design Standards and to the extent that is consistent with the viability of the development, include the following features:

- All season use.
- Sealed surface.
- Width in keeping with recommended guidelines and standards as mentioned above.

- Suitable for leisure and utility use.

- Lighting.

- Suitable for wheelchair and mobility scooter users

- Clear signage and communication of routes.

- Integrated with public transport nodes.

f) Major development schemes should allow for the early implementation of sustainable travel infrastructure or initiatives that influence behaviour to enable green travel patterns to become established from the outset of occupation.

g) Development that seeks to support or contribute to the following proposals will be encouraged:

- Safe and connected routes from the Thorley area to the town centre and station (potential to include use of The Firs and Thorley Wedge routes).

- Safe and connected routes from Manor Links to the town centre and station.

- Improved permeability through the Goods Yard and improved pedestrian routes between the railway station and local schools.

- Improved signage and route quality for pedestrians from the station to the town centre.

- Safety improvements to the pavements on the South side of the river bridge in Station Road, so that pedestrians can pass each other safely and without having to step into the road.

- Provide safe pedestrian and cyclist crossing facilities at or near to Hockerill junction.

- Improved connections to the River Stort.

- Improvements to the River Stort footpath/towpath including the enhancement of this route for both leisure and utility use.
- Town centre pedestrianisation schemes to improve pedestrian priority and amenity.
- Identify and maximise routes that improve access to employment areas such as the town centre, Twyford Road, Woodside, Raynham Road Industrial Estate, Stortford Hall Industrial park, Millside Industrial Estate and Southmill Trading Estate.
- Recommended routes and improvements identified through cycle and pedestrian route studies and research¹².

4.4.4.8 Community feedback¹³ has highlighted concerns with bus service provision in Bishop's Stortford. Problems relating to reliability, routing, cost, lack of real time information, congestion on roads causing bus delays and unconnected train and bus timetables impacts on the ability to offer bus travel as a meaningful alternative to the car and also impacts on those who do not have access to a car. Additionally a number of bus stops are poorly located, for example the bus stop on South Street is positioned close to a bend and traffic lights making it difficult for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians to navigate this area. It also contributes to increased congestion in this town centre location.

4.4.4.9 To increase bus use in Bishop's Stortford, the community has said that it is necessary to provide a regular, reliable service, close to where people live, with real-time information. For major developments,

¹² e.g. Bishop's Stortford Cycle and Walking Network Masterplan Study - 2016

¹³ Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire 2014 and transport focus groups

this is considered to be a fundamental requirement. These have the capacity to contribute significantly towards bridging transient funding gaps, particularly where existing services can be diverted.



4.4.4.10 It is important that Bishop's Stortford has an effective transport interchange between the train and other modes of transport. Developing the bus and train station into a vibrant transport hub equipped for passengers in all weathers would present a modern gateway to the town, attractive to residents and visitors alike.

TP5 – Better bus travel

a) Significant¹⁴ developments should normally be served by a regular bus service to the town centre. Where existing routes do not already serve the proposed development area, new development may be expected to fund an expanded service. Developers will provide, through a planning obligation or otherwise, such subsidy as is necessary to ensure that the service runs for a time period commencing and ending at points during the development to be agreed with the planning and highway authorities.

b) Bus stops, the location of which shall conform to policy TP3 above, shall be of an appropriate high standard of design and shall

¹⁴ See glossary

be 'all weather' and fitted for the display of Real Time Information.

c) Facilities provided under this policy shall have regard to the bus strategy published by Hertfordshire County Council.

d) For the purposes of paragraph b) 'high standard of design' includes but is not limited to:

- Having seating and shelter.
- Being accessible for people with disabilities.

e) Where the encouragement of public transport use is proposed as a mitigation measure for any development, the use of developer contributions to enhance the following important bus corridors, for example by the provision of bus lanes and other appropriate priority bus measures, will be supported:

- London Road including the section of the B1529 south of Whittington Way known as Thorley Street.
- Dunmow Road.
- Station Road.
- South Street.
- South Road.

4.4.4.11 2010 School Census data¹⁵ indicate that the main mode of travel to school among primary age children is walking. For secondary school children the main mode of transport is bus. Nevertheless 35% and 23% of journeys to primary school and secondary school respectively are made by car and it is noticeable that congestion levels around the town are higher during school term periods. Cycling mode share is low and only marginally

increases between primary (1.8%) and secondary school (2.8%).

4.4.4.12 Local Authorities have a duty to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport¹⁶. The vision for Hertfordshire County Council is to increase opportunities for children and young people to make journeys to schools and colleges by sustainable means.

4.4.4.13 Within the Neighbourhood Area there are a number of important school pedestrian travel routes that are perceived as having poor and unsafe crossing facilities and/or excessive traffic speed: Hockerill junction; London Road/Hallingbury Road and Crescent Road area; Dunmow Road and the Goods Yard area.

4.4.4.14 The developers of significant residential developments are expected to work with local schools to identify appropriate traffic mitigation measures and support school travel plans.

TP5a – Safer, sustainable school travel

a) For significant and larger major developments, developer contributions specified within appropriate Planning Obligations such as S106, will be sought to ensure that the residents of new developments can travel safely by sustainable modes to schools that serve their area. Proposals that include any or all of the designated elements below will be encouraged. There will be a strong presumption against development that does not include or does not provide funding for any or all of these designated elements where it is reasonable to expect (given the location and nature of the development) and viable to do so.

¹⁵ 2010 School Census data (Urban Transport Plan- Stage 1 report, Steer Davies Gleave)

¹⁶ Department for Education Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance, July 2014

- Street design measures in the vicinity of schools to improve safety of children traveling to school on foot and by bike.
- Safe school drop off and pick up zones.
- Funding or part funding of new or diverted school bus or school shuttle services especially if there is a lack of alternative sustainable travel choice.
- Improvements to enhance the safe passage of pedestrian and cycle traffic through:
 - Hockerill junction.
 - London Road/B1529/Hallingbury Road/Crescent Road.
 - London Road/Thorley Street.
 - Dunmow Road.
 - Goods Yard area.

TP6 – There is no policy with this number

4.4.4.15 In order to maintain policy numbering consistent with that for the Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards this policy number has been omitted from the current plan.

4.4.4.16 Many residents of Bishop's Stortford commented through the engagement process that, if they cycle to the town centre or to work, there is a lack of places for them securely to park their bicycle. It is therefore important, as part of a package of transport measures designed to maximise modal shift to non-car modes, that such secure parking is provided to accompany new developments and, where possible, in existing centres.

TP7 – Cycle parking

a) Sufficient, secure and waterproof cycle and, where appropriate, powered two-wheeler storage facilities shall be provided for users of developments for new residential,

educational, health, leisure, retail, employment and business purposes (to be determined on a site specific basis). These should be positioned in easily observed and accessible locations.

b) Significant developments are also expected to make financial contributions towards the provision of cycle parking at key destinations such as schools, the railway station, the town centre and leisure centres, where they substantially increase the demand for cycle parking.



4.4.5 Objective: Provide adequate car parking

4.4.5.1 Community feedback highlights that parking is a problem in the town. There are a range of issues:

- Lack of town centre parking, particularly for access from the south of the town.
- Increased demand for parking as the town grows.
- Sub-optimal use of parking spaces, for example allocated contract car parking spaces for commuters are often unused and unavailable to the public at weekends.
- Concentration of car parks and access to them in the north of the town centre which worsens congestion in key hotspots.
- Inefficient entry and exit arrangements that contribute to congestion problems, for

example Jackson Square exit on to Adderley Road.

- Insufficient off-road parking on developments leads to parking on roads impacting on traffic flow and pedestrian/cycle safety.
- Commuter and town centre workers parking in residential streets can cause problems. Residential Parking Zones and restricted parking schemes are being considered to address this. However workers still need to have sufficient long stay parking access.

4.4.5.2 The dimensions of garages are often too small to accommodate a car, together with bicycles and some storage space. Many planning and highways authorities recognise this and require specified minimum dimensions for a garage to be counted as a parking space.¹⁷

4.4.5.3 Parking courts have proved unpopular and, where poorly designed, lead to a poor visual appearance due to ambiguous responsibilities for maintenance, unattractive expanses of hard surfacing or cars, and a poor street scene. Residents have complained about the inconvenience created by a separation between parking and the corresponding property, particularly when heavy objects must be transported.

TP8 – Residential parking

a) Proposals for new developments will have adequate off-street car and cycle parking provision to meet current and reasonably assessed future needs. Developers will

¹⁷ For example Essex 7m x 3m

Basingstoke: 6m x 3m

Burgess Hill: 7m x 3m

normally be expected to provide parking equal to the level set out as a maximum in the Local Plan 2007. These are as follows:

Bedrooms	Zone 2	Elsewhere
1	0.75	1.25
2	1	1.5
3	1.5	2.25
4	2	3

b) Where the level of provision deviates materially from these numbers developers will be required to justify the level of parking provision in relation to:

- Local car ownership levels.
- The type, mix and use of the development.
- The accessibility of public transport to a range of destinations which users can reasonably be expected to visit.

c) Garages may be counted as parking spaces provided they have a minimum clear internal dimension of 3m*6m or larger as recommended in the current edition of Roads in Hertfordshire or subsequent design guides.

d) Off-street parking which is contiguous with, and part of, each numbered property is strongly preferred. Parking courts may be permitted provided that they:

- Are built to Secured by Design standards or equivalent and adequately lit.
- Serve a small number of properties, for example no more than five, except in the case of flats where a single block or two closely adjacent blocks may be served.
- Are overlooked by surrounding dwellings.
- Are clearly visible and easily accessible from the property served.
- Are aesthetically pleasing and complement the street scene both when full and partially empty.

- Have a sense of place and are designed to encourage ownership.
- Have regard to any design guide published in association with this plan.

e) The road layout at the approaches to parking courts must be designed so that residents will be encouraged to use them in preference to parking on the street. This will normally be achieved by ensuring that:

- The entrance to parking courts precedes the dwelling when approached from the distributor road or other access serving the development.
- The distance to be travelled from the distributor or access road to the parking space is comparable with or less than the distance to the 'on street' parking opportunity nearest to the property.
- Access to the parking court is easy to negotiate and that parking spaces are sufficiently wide that they are easy to use.
- The walking distance between the vehicle and the dwelling to which it belongs (or to the relevant entrance to the block in the case of flats) must normally be no more than 20m via a paved route.

f) A reasonable level of car parking must also be provided for visitors to residential developments. Developers will normally be expected to provide 0.5 visitor car spaces per dwelling in addition to the above unless they can show that the demand is likely to be materially different.

g) Applications for conversions of garages into living accommodation will be supported where it can be demonstrated that adequate off road parking is provided for the sole use of the property in accordance with the standards referred to in part a)..

h) Development that includes a reliance on parking on existing streets shall not be

permitted if this would result in a material adverse impact on the safety of road users including cyclists and pedestrians.



4.4.5.4 The NPPF places significant emphasis on measures to stimulate town centres and enhance their viability. The future increase in the town's population and housing growth within and beyond the East Hertfordshire boundary will inevitably put pressure on already stretched parking availability in the town centre for workers, commuters, shoppers and visitors. A balance is therefore required that results in adequate parking provision to maintain and enhance the vitality of the town centre whilst at the same time encouraging the use of sustainable travel modes.

4.4.5.5 The EHDC Local Plan 2007 second review recognises that, where town centre development would result in a loss of publicly available car parking spaces, this should be assessed against the town's existing and future parking needs. Where a shortfall would arise as a result of the development, developers will be required to provide for publicly-available car parking as part of their proposals. The following policy seeks to reinforce this intention.

TP9 – Parking in and around the town centre

a) Developments resulting in the net loss of public car parking spaces in the Neighbourhood Area which are designed to serve the town centre will be permitted only

where an appropriate level of mitigation measures are provided which encourage modal shift away from car use or otherwise result in a reduction in demand resulting from the development. Reductions in the number or significant changes in the location of car park spaces should be justified by past and forecast usage statistics provided by the car park owning authority or other owner.

b) Developments leading to the increase of public parking provision on existing parking sites within the Neighbourhood Area (for example by over- or under-ground multi-decking) will be supported provided:

- They are designed to be in keeping with the surrounding area or as a piece of quality architecture in their own right contributing positively to the aesthetics of the building stock in Bishop's Stortford and
- There is a demonstrated need, based principally on considerations of town centre vitality, which will not realistically be fulfilled by modal shift.

c) Developers may be required to contribute to accompanying measures to encourage modal shift, which will be agreed between the developer and the planning authority.

d) Short period free parking places, sponsored by or integral to retail developments, will be encouraged, where appropriate. Similarly, reserved places for disabled parking close to shops and other facilities should be an integral part of any development which includes parking spaces.

e) Where a proposal for a private car park in or near the town centre for non-domestic use is approved, it may be subject to a condition requiring public use, possibly at defined times, where this does not conflict with the needs of the use for which it is provided.

f) Proposals to provide parking space to commuters and town centre visitors which is situated and accessible from the south of the town centre without the need to travel on any of the roads within the town centre will be strongly supported subject to compliance with other policies in this plan.

4.4.6 Objective: Manage traffic speeds and promote road safety

4.4.6.1 Throughout the consultation process road safety has been raised as a concern by residents. Speeding traffic, narrow or non-existent pavements and a lack of suitable crossing points act as barriers to pedestrian and cycle movement and also add constraints for those with reduced mobility.

4.4.6.2 Given the high levels of car ownership and use in the area, creating safe neighbourhoods with safe traffic speeds and a safe road layout is fundamental and this is recognised in the Manual for Streets and the Roads in Hertfordshire Design Guide.

TP10 – Traffic speeds within new developments

a) New residential developments shall include a readily understandable street hierarchy with a design speed of not more than 20mph for roads outside main access routes, unless there are overriding reasons for accepting higher speeds. It must also enable their use by refuse, emergency and delivery vehicles. In order to achieve this, the use of alternative strategies is encouraged, including the use of shared spaces and speed-activated signage. Traffic calming and other measures should be designed to permit safe passage by cyclists.

4.4.6.3 The potential addition of significant new housing developments at Land South of Bishop's Stortford, the Goods Yard and Manor Links as identified in the emerging District Plan will require careful design to create a safe environment for all road users. In addition,

the increase in traffic volumes generated by these developments may potentially have a detrimental impact on road safety in key areas which form part of the wider travel network. This policy seeks to highlight and address danger spots identified by local residents.

TP11 – Promote road safety

a) Development proposals that are likely to have a significant detrimental effect on road safety must include, in their transport assessment or elsewhere, an analysis of the impact together with mitigating works to bring safety back to pre-development levels. Where appropriate due to the location and travel patterns the analysis should consider in particular the effect on safety hotspots identified in paragraph b.

b) The safety hotspots are as follows:

Location	Safety Risk
Pig Lane	Collision between different road users. This is a narrow lane bordered by tall hedgerows, often without pavements and with some housing that fronts directly on to the lane. At peak times of the day it is a busy cut-through route used by drivers to access the east of the town and the motorway. The lane is also used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders to access the countryside and the River Stort.
Whittington Way/ London Road junction	No pavement on the west side of London Road between Oxcroft and The Bishop's Stortford High School. No safe pedestrian crossing point to enable access to the pavement on the east side of London Road.
London Road and Thorley Street	Speeding traffic.

Northern section of Obrey Way	Unsafe pedestrian route as pavement is very narrow. Poor visibility around the roundabout where Obrey Way meets Whittington Way.
Station Road bridge	High pedestrian flow between the station and town centre at peak times – very narrow pavement. Pedestrians often have to step into the road to pass each other.
Hockerill junction	Busy vehicle and pedestrian route at peak times. No safe pedestrian crossing facility.
Goods Yard/ Railway Station/ London Road and Dane Street	Limited safe crossing facilities. The railway station and Goods Yard area is negotiated by high number of students walking to local schools, e.g. Hockerill Anglo-European College and Herts and Essex High School.
South Street	Unsafe bus stop location- just after the left hand turn from Station Road making it difficult for road users to navigate this area.
Beldams Lane/ Linkside Road/ Haymeads Lane	At peak times of the day this is a busy 'cut through' route that avoids Hockerill Junction. Residents are concerned about speeding traffic and impact on safety.

4.4.7 Objective: Improve town centre access, connectivity, amenity and vitality

4.4.7.1 It is important that the planning system contributes to the role of Bishop's Stortford town centre as an attractive place to live, work, play, visit and shop. This community space will need to thrive and adapt to meet the needs of a growing population.

4.4.7.2 Access to and movement around the town centre has a vital function in its economic health and vitality. Currently, traffic

has access to the heart of the town centre along the main shopping areas of North Street, Potter Street and South Street. The close proximity of vehicles, including HGV's can at times make the town centre experience uncomfortable and impact on amenity value.

4.4.7.3 There is support from the community to create a more pedestrian and cycle friendly town centre with an improved public realm and sense of place. In May 2016 East Herts District Council started working with Allies and Morrison, an urban design practice, to set a vision, strategy and framework for Bishop's Stortford town centre. The outputs from this study will also provide proposals to improve access to the town centre and pedestrian permeability.

4.4.7.4 Given that the cumulative impact from development will place additional demands on the town centre for improved access and ease of movement, the policy below seeks developer contributions to necessary infrastructure to achieve this.

TP12 – Contributions to improve town centre access and movement

a) Financial contributions that are appropriate to the size, scale and viability of a development will be sought for improvements to access and movement in and around the town centre for pedestrians and cyclists. Contributions may be sought for but are not limited to the following:

- Recommended improvements and schemes identified through studies carried out by Bishop's Stortford Town Council, Hertfordshire County Council or East Herts District Council included but not limited to:
- Bishop's Stortford town centre Framework study conducted by Allies and Morrison on behalf of East Herts District Council (2016).

- Bishop's Stortford Cycle and Walking Masterplan Study conducted by Sustrans (2016).
- Destination Stortford Study
 - Town centre cycle parking provision.
 - Pedestrian and cycle access to the town centre from the River Stort tow path.
 - Park and ride and/or park and stride schemes.
 - Pedestrianisation schemes.
 - Provision of electric bike and electric schemes.
 - Schemes to deliver the South- East quadrant of the by-pass.

4.5 EDUCATION

4.5.1 Introduction

4.5.1.1 Schooling in Bishop's Stortford is generally recognised to be high quality. Over 80% of respondents to the Neighbourhood Plan 2 questionnaire rated the quality of education as either good or excellent, the highest proportion of positive responses of all areas of the questionnaire. When respondents were asked to grade the quantity of provision by tier, 'secondary schools' were rated highest, with 'primary schools' second highest. Playgroups and day nurseries were ranked in the middle. Adult and vocational education and training received the lowest scores.

4.5.1.2 Recurring concerns about education in Bishop's Stortford were:

- There are not enough school places to feel confident that one's child can get into the nearest school (primary) or the preferred school (secondary).

- There is insufficient Adult education and Vocational training in the town.

4.5.1.3 The current provision in the Neighbourhood Area includes the following schools. There is also a small quantity of Adult education and Vocational training:

Primary schools:

- All Saints Church of England Primary School
- Manor Fields Primary School
- Richard Whittington Primary School
- Thorn Grove Primary School
- Thorley Hill Primary School
- St Michael's Church of England Primary School
- Summercroft Primary School
- Windhill

Secondary schools:

- Birchwood High School
- The Hertfordshire & Essex High School and Science College
- Hockerill Anglo-European College
- The Bishop's Stortford High School

Nursery schools and Pre-schools:

- All Saints Nursery
- Appletree Pre-school
- Busy Bees Nursery
- The Blues
- Bishop's Stortford Montessori Nursery
- Doodle Do Day Nursery
- Early Birds and Night Owls
- Little Acorns
- Nuffy Bear
- Sycamore House Day Nursery

- Thorley Pre-school
- Windhill Children's Centre

4.5.1.4 The location of primary and secondary schools in the town is shown in figure 5 overleaf.

4.5.1.5 Three of the four secondary schools are comprehensive schools which draw children primarily from the local community. Hockerill is partly a boarding school, taking day-boarders as well as full-boarders. Just over half its intake consists of day pupils.

4.5.1.6 The area is well served in relation to the number of secondary school places available. However, their high quality leads to high popularity and many families outside the town seek secondary school places in Bishop's Stortford. Hertfordshire County Council data indicates that 52% of the 2015 student intake to Bishop's Stortford schools (excluding Bishop's Stortford College, which is an independent fee-paying school), totalling 441 pupils, were residents of the town.

4.5.1.7 Currently, all primary and secondary schools are at, or near capacity in Bishop's Stortford and current forecasts suggest that demand is likely to increase in line with housebuilding. It is likely that one or more new primary and secondary schools will be built in Bishop's Stortford to accommodate the increased population which will arise.

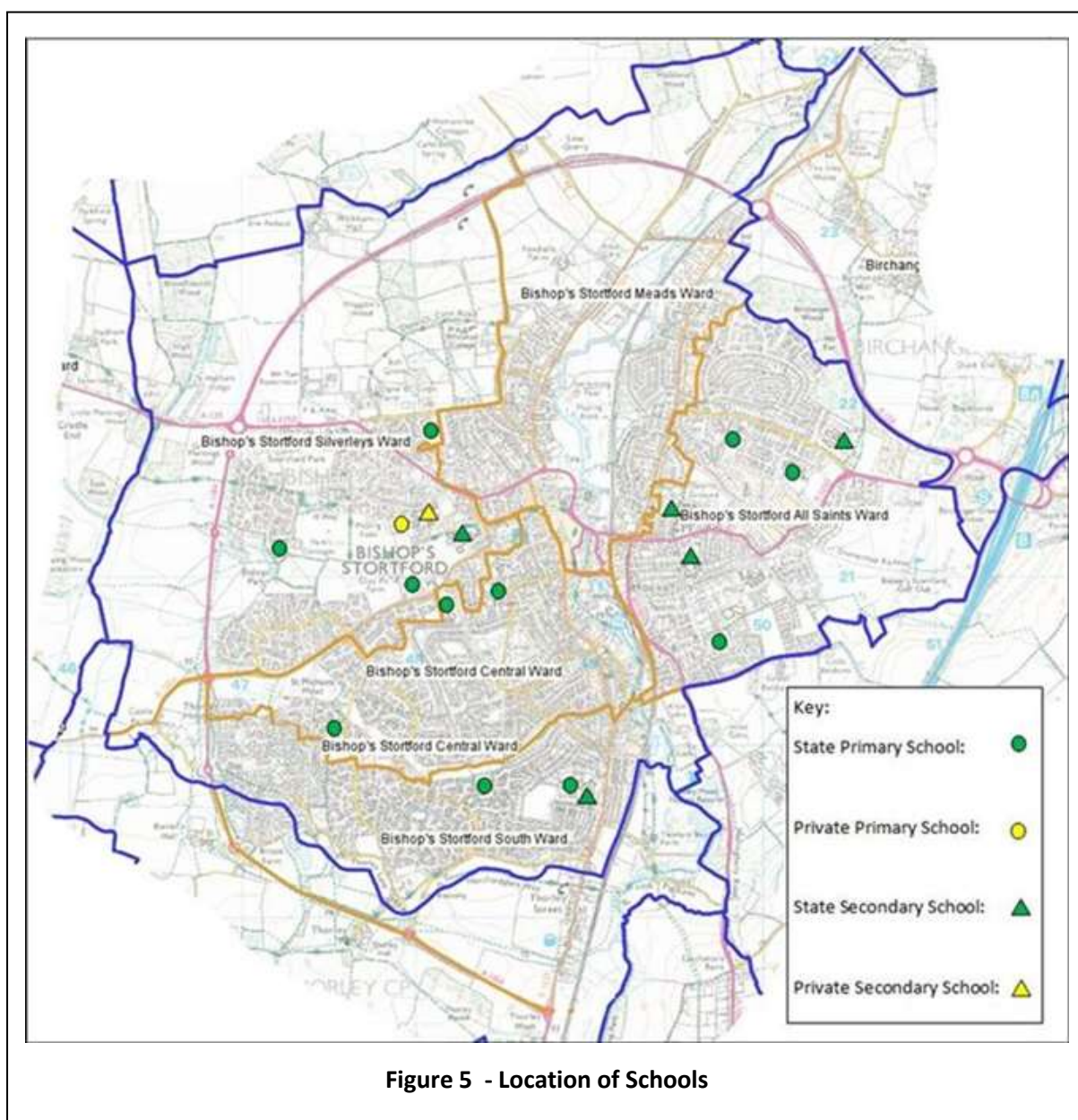


Figure 5 - Location of Schools

4.5.2 Objectives

4.5.2.1 The policies in this section seek to achieve the following objectives:

- Support the creation of sufficient new school places to accommodate population growth.
- Maintain or improve current high standards of education in the Neighbourhood Area.
- Enable the provision of vocational training, adult education and wide community use.

4.5.3 Objective: Support the creation of new school places to accommodate population growth

4.5.3.1 At present there is both a perceived and an actual shortage of primary and secondary school places in the area, although, the perceived shortage is greater than the actual shortage. Any new development must take the need for extra school places into account and these must be made available in a timely fashion.



4.5.3.2 The geographical locations of new primary and where possible secondary schools, and of other education provisions, must allow for close links to the community and must be accessible to all. Primary schools in particular must be made available in the locality of the new developments.

4.5.3.3 The location of new schools locations together with the access arrangements should minimise vehicular

congestion and traffic impact. New developments must be informed by travel plans which include measures to encourage the use of transport other than private cars.

4.5.3.4 Finally, new all-through schools and primary schools must incorporate pre-school settings.

EP1 – School availability

a) New developments will only be acceptable if primary school places are made available for all additional children within an appropriate distance of the development as set out in policy TP3 and secondary school places are made available in Bishop's Stortford in schools that are reasonably accessible from the proposed development location.

EP2 – New secondary school places

a) Proposals for developments which create new secondary school places to serve new developments, taking account of guidance from Hertfordshire County Council, and which are easily accessible, will be welcomed.

EP3 – New primary schools

a) Proposals for new primary schools to serve new developments, taking account of guidance from Hertfordshire County Council will be welcomed.

b) School places should be available ahead of residential occupancy and in any case no later than the academic year in which 25% occupancy is anticipated.

EP4 – Pre-school and early years

a) Proposals which provide pre-school and/or early years' places will be welcomed.

EP5 – Travel plans

a) The location and access arrangements of new schools should minimise vehicular congestion and traffic impact. Proposals which incorporate travel plans that include

measures to encourage the use of transport other than private cars will be supported.

4.5.4 Objective: Maintain or improve current high standards of education in the Neighbourhood Area

4.5.4.1 Planning should enable new schools and existing schools to maintain the high standards currently enjoyed by Bishop's Stortford. In part, this means that existing schools must be able to maintain high quality buildings.

4.5.4.2 The aesthetic design of any new school buildings should take into account other prominent buildings and geographical features. The design and appearance of new schools or improvements to existing schools should be in keeping with the innovative, creative and important work which occurs inside them.

EP6 – High quality design

a) Proposals for new or renovated educational buildings must complement local features and demonstrate a high quality aesthetic. They must be fully accessible to all and incorporate full consideration with respect to sustainability.

4.5.5 Objective: Enable the provision of vocational training, adult education and wide community use

4.5.5.1 Consultation feedback indicates dissatisfaction with the level of adult and vocational training available in the area and new development provides the opportunity to ensure that the appropriate facilities are available.

4.5.5.2 Space is precious. Therefore developments must include, within their

building design, opportunities for multiple- and flexible use.

EP7 – Adult, Vocational Education and Community use

a) a) Proposals for new school accommodation will be required to be designed to accommodate adult and vocational education and/or community use outside of school hours unless it can be demonstrated that this is either not practical or not viable. .

4.6 HEALTH

4.6.1 Introduction

4.6.1.1 Primary health care in the town is already stretched and while praising the quality of the medical care provided, many residents complain about difficulties with getting timely appointments with GPs. There are also concerns about a lack of mental health services, A&E facilities and care for the elderly. The expansion of the town and the ageing population will put additional strain on these facilities. These views were reinforced by the questionnaire survey carried out at the end of 2014: health came almost last in residents' assessment of provision of services in the town. 71% of residents rated the provision of healthcare average, poor or very poor. However, the Health Profile published in June 2015 by Public Health England showed that the health of people in East Herts is generally better than the England average.

4.6.1.2 The Focus Group on health held in March 2015 considered that in the three GP practices in the town, residents rate the quality of the doctors and nurses very highly. This is evidenced in the annual patient surveys carried out by the practices (e.g. Church Street). Patients were however unhappy with the numbers of GPs available, the state of the

All Saints, Central, South & part of Thorley

premises of Church Street and South Street, and with the appointments systems.

4.6.1.3 In terms of the location of GP practices, the questionnaire survey at the end of 2014 did not provide much evidence for the need for the main practice to be in the town centre. 58% of respondents stated that they would be happy for the practice to be elsewhere in the town or outside the town. The impending development of 2500 houses on the ASRs and the possible developments on Land South of Bishop's Stortford and the Goods Yard will also impact on the decision-making process regarding location.

4.6.1.4 Responsibility for the three practices in Bishop's Stortford lies with the Stort Valley and Villages Locality Group¹⁸ which is also responsible for two in neighbouring areas. Public health is the responsibility of Herts County Council and the East Herts Draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy may be viewed on the East Herts District Council web site.

4.6.2 Objectives

The policies in this section seek to achieve the following objective:

- Provide reasonable access to health services for residents of all ages

¹⁸ www.enhertscg.nhs.uk/localitygroups

4.6.3 Objective: Provide reasonable access to health services for residents of all ages

4.6.3.1 The 2014 report from Herts Healthwatch contained an analysis of the GP/Patient ratios for the five GP practices in the Locality Group. For the three practices in

problems in recruiting new GPs and it is clear that progress needs to be made on this issue for them to be able to offer an improved service.

4.6.3.2 The South Street practice, in 2012, made a proposal to move its main surgery to the Silverleys sports complex site but this was

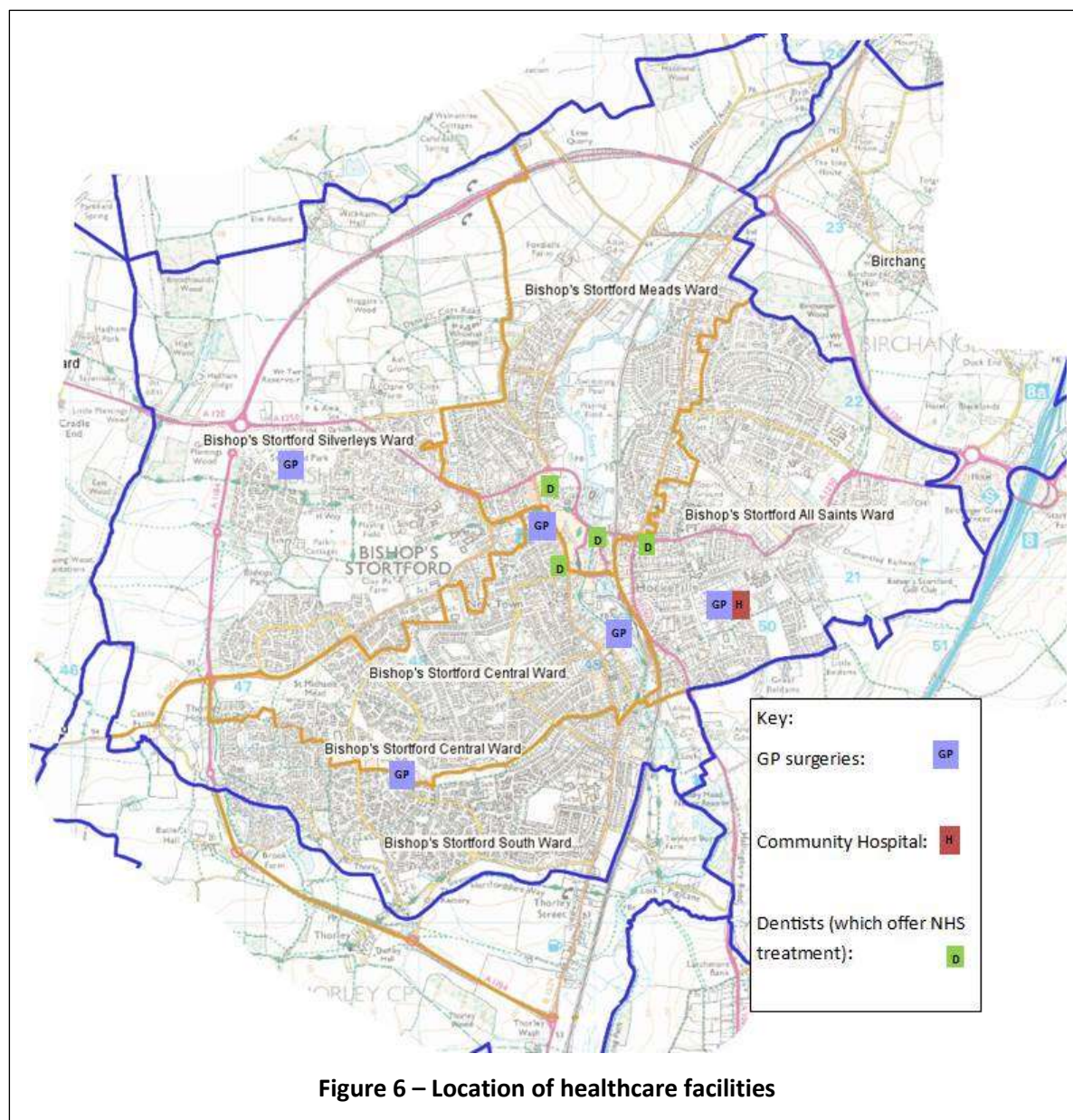


Figure 6 – Location of healthcare facilities

Bishop's Stortford, the average ratio was 1:2019, well above the national average of 1:1800. The practices have reported their

not approved, mainly due to issues of sustainability. An alternative proposal was made by a developer to move the main

All Saints, Central, South & part of Thorley

practice to Tanner's Wharf and this was approved by EHDC but was not a favoured option for the practice.

4.6.3.3 The local practices are in joint discussions to identify possible strategies for the future which will improve the service to patients and will cope with the increased demand arising from new development all around the town, while allowing for the reality of constrained NHS budgeting. Feedback from residents confirms the view that some of the present GP premises are not fit for purpose and that purpose-built premises will be required in the future, including for any major new development.

HP1 – Accessible GP practices

- a) Any new development of 10 residential units or more must, by means of financial contributions or otherwise, support the provision of facilities so that new residents have access to a GP practice within a reasonable distance, subject to agreement with the healthcare provider and unless the existing services are already capable of providing this service to the new residents.
- b) For developments of over 500 dwellings appropriate provision must be addressed as part of the development proposal. Applicants must engage with the relevant health authorities at the earliest possible stage.
- c) Contributions should take account of East Herts policies for community infrastructure contributions and the effect of contributions on the viability of development.
- d) Development of a new central location for South Street and Church Street practices, preferably on the Haymeads site, will be supported subject to other applicable policies.

4.6.3.4 In addition to GP services, there is a need for high quality specialised provision for care of the elderly, the mentally ill, and the

mentally and physically disabled. Most of the elderly residential services are provided by private care homes which where possible should be sited in residential areas and specifically built for purpose.

4.6.3.5 Residents have stated a need for an Urgent Care Centre at the Herts & Essex Hospital to alleviate some of the pressure on A&E at Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow and to provide an improved service to residents of Bishop's Stortford. NHS England is aiming to ensure that through working with health and social care colleagues they can provide integrated care and problem solving for individual patients, thereby keeping people out of acute hospitals and reducing the reliance on urgent care services.

HP2 – Services for the elderly, disabled and for mental health

- a) Proposals for development which improve specialist care for the elderly, the physically and learning disabled and mental health services will be encouraged.

4.7 SPORT, LEISURE & COMMUNITY

4.7.1 Introduction

4.7.1.1 Access to a variety of high quality sport, community and leisure facilities, both indoor and outdoor, enhances the integration and sustainability of communities, and is a vital ingredient in the development of good physical and mental health of residents.



4.7.1.2 Unfortunately, the current level of provision of sport, leisure and community facilities within the town are seen by many involved in the organisation of such activities, to be less than adequate. Organisations and clubs, however, prosper within the town, due in no small part to the enthusiasm of members and supporters and the high standard of coaching which is available in many sports.

4.7.1.3 Any expansion of the town needs to ensure that all facilities, both existing and new, are developed to be both accessible and adequate to meet the needs of the towns increasing numbers of residents. The Neighbourhood Area contains various indoor and outdoor facilities of varying degrees of accessibility and quality.

4.7.2 Sport

4.7.2.1 Although just over 40% of the respondents to the Neighbourhood Plan Survey indicated that they considered sports facilities in the town to be of a good standard, over 20% considered them poor, with the balance considering them 'average'. Only Healthcare, Arts Facilities, Shopping and Leisure facilities, scored a substantially higher disapproval rating.

4.7.2.2 Additionally over 60% of those surveyed considered that the provision for the main team sports of rugby, football and cricket to be 'just about right' and perhaps even 'too much', with similar responses in respect of gym facilities and studio fitness classes. High numbers of those surveyed specifically considered that the provision of facilities for cycling and swimming as well as other minor sports, were less than adequately catered for.

4.7.2.3 The Focus Group on Sport, attended by many of the towns' sports clubs, provided a view somewhat in contrast to the findings of

the surveys. Both the Rugby club and the Community football club complained about a lack of available pitches, a point seemingly already identified in a 'Playing Pitch Strategy and Outdoor Sports Audit' undertaken by Knight Kavanagh & Page on behalf of East Herts Council in July 2010.

4.7.2.4 Other sports clubs also mentioned a lack of facilities and having to adapt and improvise in sports halls which were not really fit for purpose with many indoor courts being smaller than those recommended by Sport England. The size of the pool and the viewing facilities at the Grange Paddock complex were specifically criticised by the Swimming Club.

4.7.2.5 The local topography and the nature and size of the town's future expansion suggest that if the community's needs are to be met then the surrounding Green Belt must be used to accommodate sports facilities, with suitable restrictions to ensure that the essential openness of the Green Belt is still preserved.

4.7.3 Leisure and community

4.7.3.1 Just over 30% of the respondents to our NP Survey indicated that they considered the town's leisure facilities to be good to excellent. The bulk of those surveyed (41%) considering them average. The remaining balance, just over 28%, considered such facilities 'poor' or worse. Although over 60% of respondents considered the town's 'Parks and Green Spaces' favourably, nearly 70% considered the town's 'Art Facilities' only average to poor.

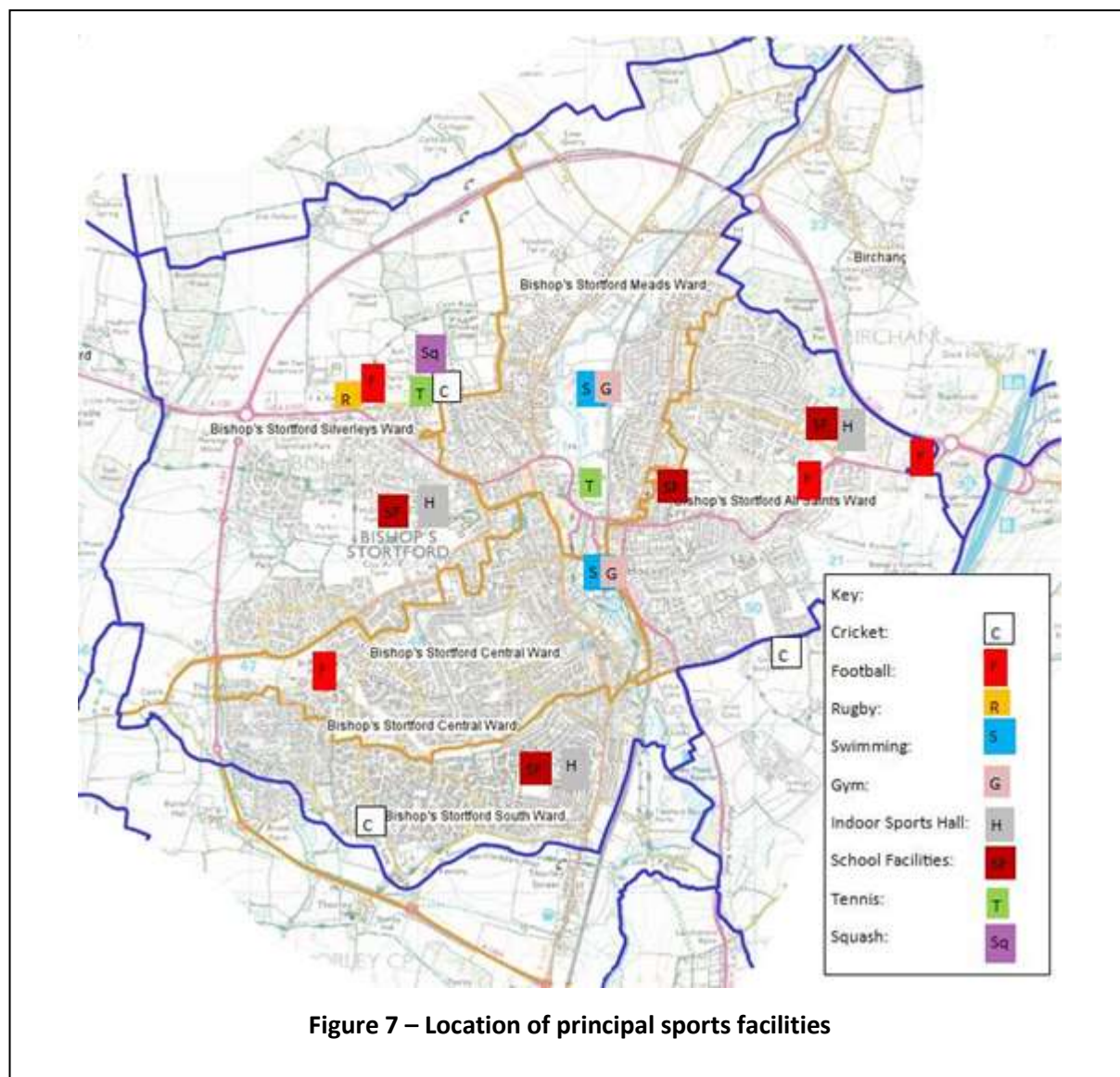
4.7.3.2 The Focus Group on Leisure and Community expressed concern over the size and scope of local facilities, given the town's pending expansion.

4.7.3.3 A partial solution to these concerns may materialise if local schools that are looking to develop or expand facilities to meet

their own needs, do so in a way which also allows community use. This may also have educational benefits arising from the

4.7.4 Objectives

4.7.4.1 The policies in this section seek to



participation of pupils in the management of such facilities.

4.7.3.4 Expansion of the town will involve the building of new local community centres and create a clear need for the town's arts facilities to be further developed by increasing the capacity of existing facilities (within the constraints of listed building consent) or building a new and larger capacity arts facility.

achieve the following objectives:

- Provide standards-compliant community facilities to meet the needs of the residents
- Encourage appropriate use of Green Belt for sensitively designed outdoor sport, leisure and community facilities

4.7.5 Objective: Provide standards-compliant community facilities to meet the needs of the residents

SLCP1 – Provision of outdoor sporting and leisure facilities

a) Contributions to new or enhanced outdoor and indoor sports, leisure and community facilities (including appropriate ancillary buildings) will be required as set out in policy of LRC3 of EHDC Local Plan or successor policy.

b) The provision of facilities under this policy will have regards to any Bishop's Stortford or neighbourhood strategy that is in place at the time and the balance between manageability, which favours centralised facilities, and locality, which favours distributed facilities.

c) The mix of facilities (in terms of sports provided for) will be determined in consultation with the local planning authority, Bishop's Stortford Town Council, Thorley Parish Council (if appropriate), local sports clubs and other stakeholders.

d) Any proposals for new or enhanced community sports facilities must be inclusive (i.e. suitable for residents with disabilities) and comply with Sport England design guidance, be accompanied by an adequately-sized car park having regard to the likely modes of transport to and from the venue as well as nearby parking availability. Sites which are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling will be more strongly supported.

SLCP2 – Development or expansion of multi-purpose facilities

a) Proposals for developments in sustainable locations that enhance existing facilities, whether indoor or outdoor, by way of increasing their utilisation or capacity for multiple use and/or level of public access, will

be strongly encouraged, where they do not conflict with other neighbourhood, local or national planning policies.

b) Provision for shared use must be considered in any such development, unless this has a material adverse effect on the viability.

c) New community halls should comply with design guidance set by both Sport England and the Charity Commission (Sport England: Village and Community Halls Design Guidance Note, reference 1038, January 2001 and Charity Commission: Village Halls and Community Centres, reference RS9, December 2004) or updated guidance that supersedes it unless a clear justification for departing from it is provided in terms of viability, the nature of the site, or user needs is provided.

d) Any proposals that result in the loss of buildings or land currently allocated for sports use will not be supported unless:

- an assessment has been undertaken which clearly shows that the facility is no longer needed in its current form; OR
- the resulting loss would be replaced by an enhanced facility in terms of both quality and location; OR
- the site is to be used for an alternative community facility, the need for which clearly outweighs the loss.

SLCP3 – Development and enhancement of specified facilities

a) The development of a new or improved swimming pool complex and the expansion or enhancement of additional facilities that are needed to serve the town's population, will be encouraged where they do not conflict with other neighbourhood, local or national planning policies.

b) Proposals by educational establishments to construct or expand sports and leisure

facilities with the specific intention of making such facilities available for use by all the community will be supported. The conversion or adaptation of facilities to increase their availability and alternative uses throughout the year will be encouraged.

SCLP4 – Community leisure and arts facilities

a) Proposals for a new and larger capacity arts facility at an accessible and preferably central location will be supported as should any proposals which enhance existing arts facilities within the constraints of listed building consent, subject to other applicable policies.

b) Any proposals that result in the loss of buildings or land currently allocated for community use will not be supported unless:

- an assessment has been undertaken which clearly shows that the facility is no longer needed in its current form; OR
- the resulting loss would be replaced by an enhanced facility in terms of both quality and location; OR
- the site is to be used for an alternative community facility, the need for which clearly outweighs the loss.

4.7.6 Objective: Encourage appropriate use of Green Belt for sensitively designed outdoor sport & leisure facilities



SLCP5 – Development of sports facilities in the Green Belt

a) Except in areas designated as 'Local green Spaces' the development of outdoor sports facilities in the Green Belt will be permitted provided:

- The demand for such facilities is clearly established.
- The design, massing and materials are such as to create a harmonious relationship with the surrounding landscape and environment.

4.8 BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

4.8.1 Introduction

4.8.1.1 Bishop's Stortford is a relatively small market town but is the largest town in East Hertfordshire, in close proximity to Stansted Airport and the M11. It is well served by rail to London and Cambridge and by road in most directions. It has excellent schools, a thriving community and good employment opportunities both in the town and through commuting. The main employment in the town itself is in distribution services, light industry, office-based, leisure services and retail. Bishop's Stortford is in the heart of the London-Stansted-Cambridge corridor. Research published by the LSCC Growth Commission in 2016 showed that the economic growth rate of the corridor was 20% higher than nationally 1997 - 2014. Two recent studies by Wessex Economics and DTZ have concluded that Bishop's Stortford has the greatest potential of all the settlements in the District in terms of employment growth particularly in terms of B1 office space and land.

4.8.1.2 The Bishop's Stortford Town Plan (2010) identified the need to improve professional and white collar job opportunities. 'Business Stortford' was established as an outcome of the Town Plan to attract companies from the UK, Europe and beyond to Bishop's Stortford in order to bring more of these types of jobs to the area. The initiative was set up by Bishop's Stortford Chamber of Commerce and includes a 'Welcome Programme' to fast-track a company's relocation or expansion to Bishop's Stortford.

4.8.1.3 Bishop's Stortford is due to change over the plan period therefore a degree of flexibility regarding use of land and buildings will be increasingly required. Reasonable proposals for change of use of existing facilities should be supported to ensure modernisation opportunities ensure an up to date and sustainable employment provision.

4.8.1.4 The location of industrial areas both new and existing needs to be carefully considered. Existing industrial areas such as Raynham Road, Southmill Road and Pig Lane were originally near the edge of town however with subsequent development and expansion of Bishop's Stortford these sites are now located more within the town and often bounded by residential areas.

4.8.1.5 Consideration should be given to development of new business areas on the edge of or outside the current boundaries of

the town and conversion of the existing sites to residential development. Support for a change of use proposal would be based on a suitable alternate location of employment facility being available prior to the change of use to match or exceed the existing location. Any proposed new industrial areas towards the East of the town may need to be developed in conjunction with input from both Uttlesford District Council and Essex County Council.

4.8.1.6 There is a clear demand for high-quality office and retail premises around the town however several existing properties have often remained empty for months or years in some instances. Retention of these properties as business is preferred as the economy improves. Approval of change of use would require full justification.

4.8.1.7 Retail activity throughout the nation is changing fast with an increasing use of on-line purchasing and preference for larger, high variety shopping centres. In addition, the town has seen a shift in emphasis from traditional independent type shops to service based retail such as hairdressers and cafes.



4.8.1.8 New retail facilities being planned at the Causeway and the Goods Yard locations in the town centre will result in increased competition for existing retailers. Where this competition has a detrimental effect, a possible change of use proposal for such properties should be supported where



appropriate. The NLP report referred to below suggests that the Goods Yard is considered to have the potential to accommodate further retail development within Bishop's Stortford, and could absorb any residual capacity.

4.8.1.9 Proposed development in the Neighbourhood Area should enhance business and employment diversity and aligned with the 'Bishop's Stortford' construction aesthetic provide both a contemporary place to work along with a building that suits the surroundings. A healthy and thriving retail environment in the town centre is paramount to the town's success as a living community and any mechanism to support this cause is to be supported.

4.8.2 Objectives

4.8.2.1 The policies in this section seek to achieve the following objectives:

- Create new employment opportunities for local residents while protecting amenities for residents
- Create a welcoming, prosperous and dynamic town centre through attractive, integrated refurbishment and development
- Support development in the town and commercial areas to ensure sustainable employment diversity

4.8.3 Objective: Create new employment opportunities for local residents while protecting amenities for residents

4.8.3.1 The need for a business incubation hub has been identified through consultation with the local business community. In Bishop's Stortford and the Neighbourhood Area self-employment is in line with the district, county and national average (6%, source: 2011

Census) and for many, the need to have small, cheap business premises which offer the opportunity to network with other business professionals is crucial to the ongoing success of their business. It will be important that a variety of stakeholders contribute to the identification of a suitable location.

4.8.3.2 The purpose of creating new employment opportunities is to provide employment for local people and bring workers into the Neighbourhood Area. Access to supporting facilities from their place of work will enable people to link work and other activities minimising additional trips outside of the working day. This contributes to sustainability and an improvement in amenity by reducing the need to undertake additional car journeys.

BP1 – Provision of a business incubation centre

a) Proposals for the provision of a business incubation centre will be supported. This should be similar to a scaled down version of the Harlow Enterprise Hub providing a centrally located managed facility with 10-20 rooms including meeting rooms. It should seek to address the following considerations:

- On-site parking facilities, good public transport links, cycle storage and links to the pedestrian and cycle network.
- The facility should be appropriate for the needs of small 'start-up' type business activity including street level access.

4.8.3.3 Thorley Centre, in the Thorley Park Estate, is an example of a thriving local centre which is amply supported by the community. The provision of similar types of retail facilities to support commercial as well as residential developments where they are presently unavailable would be of benefit to the community.

BP2 – Local retailing facilities

a) Proposals for local retail facilities which provide services to large-scale residential development will be supported. These local centres must provide for an appropriate mix of A1 to A5 use classes. Residential accommodation above the shops should be provided if possible. Any proposed development would be aligned with STC1 of the Local Plan 2007 or its successor policy but must not be at a scale that detracts from the offer in Bishop's Stortford town centre.



BP3, BP4 – There are no policies with these numbers

4.8.3.4 In order to maintain policy numbering consistent with that for the Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards these policy numbers have been omitted from the current plan.

4.8.3.5 There is a need to improve digital connectivity within Bishop's Stortford, both for businesses and residents. The investment in the business infrastructure can create opportunities that are of wider benefit to the community and therefore such opportunities to provide collective benefits should be taken where they arise.

BP5 – Provision of business communication infrastructure

a) Up to date business communication infrastructure for the town is paramount and

developers must ensure the following in any new development:

- That the necessary infrastructure is provided to enable new houses and development to connect to the highest broadband speed available in the area.
- In edge of town areas consider supporting the installation of public Wi-Fi internet facility for the benefit of all new development.

b) Installation of mobile communication equipment is to be supported when installed in such a manner as not to be prominent.

c) The provision of electric car charging points will be encouraged in all new business developments and will be a requirement for all major business developments.

4.8.4 Objective: Create a welcoming, prosperous and dynamic town centre through attractive, integrated refurbishment and development

4.8.4.1 Bishop's Stortford town centre is described in the East Herts 2007 Local Plan as a "Minor Sub-Regional Centre" and as the "main shopping centre in East Hertfordshire". However, most residents of the town want it to remain as a historic town centre, whilst expecting it to be improved in terms of quality, diversity and use of resources, such as the river.

4.8.4.2 Whilst the town centre buildings are relatively well maintained and a somewhat limited range of shops and enterprises present, there are some vacant premises and evidence of churn that present challenges for the appearance of the town centre. Evidence from the online town centre survey of shops and businesses carried out in November 2013 suggests that increasing the range and scale of good quality retail shops, particularly, is the

best way to encourage footfall and bring the revenue needed to maintain the fabric of the town centre.

4.8.4.3 It is also important that the retail offering for the town centre remains located where the main shop frontages are now and does not lose vitality and accessibility by being distributed over a wider area. Most of the recognised town centre is within the Bishop's Stortford conservation area and this should provide a useful reference point for maintaining the character and standard of buildings generally within the town centre. Issues of parking in the town centre are addressed in the Transport Policies section.

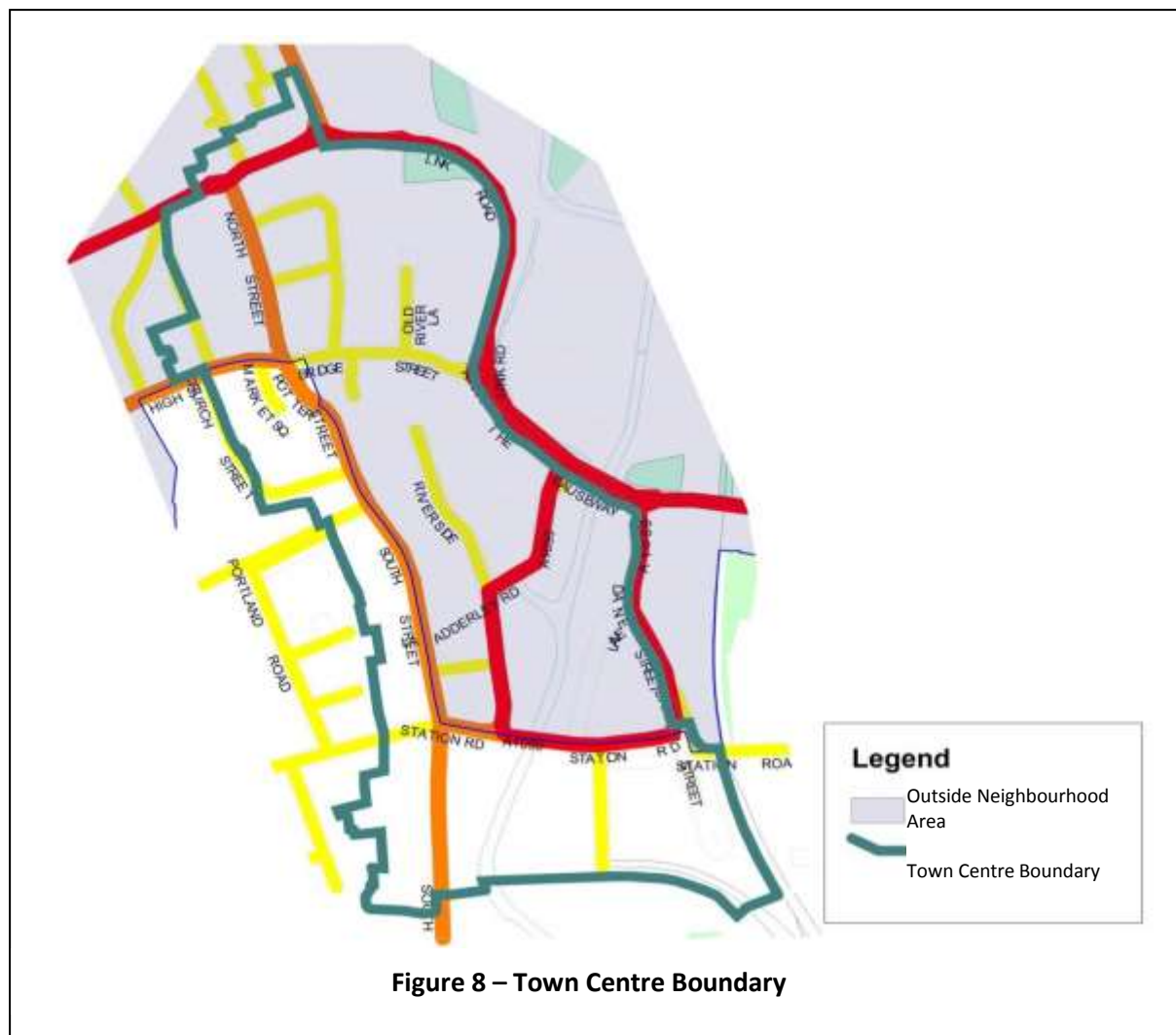
4.8.4.4 National policy aimed at reversing the decline of town centres over recent years is likely to bring opportunities and challenges to the nature of our town centres. Any new development must be appropriate for the town as a whole and for the town centre in particular.

4.8.4.5 The town centre has attracted a number of large blocks of flats in recent years, still not fully occupied. So, whilst residential dwellings can be advantageous in bringing more people to the town centre, this type of imposing building is not liked by residents of the town and will not be favoured.



4.8.4.6 The primary shop front area of the town centre is bisected by a through route for vehicle traffic along South Street, Potter

Street and Market Street. This leads to a barrier to pedestrian movement and undesirable levels of noise and air pollution as well as discouraging use of the street market.



4.8.4.7 The town centre with its many listed buildings, narrow pavements and hills is not easily accessible and has poor facilities for those of reduced mobility. There is a need to go beyond the statutory minimum, and East Herts Council policy, provision for such individuals when considering the merits of new developments.

4.8.4.8 Figure 8 above shows the part of the town centre to which the policies in this Plan relate.

BP6 – Future development of the town centre

a) Significant¹⁹ commercial or retail development which lies within the Neighbourhood Area will be considered against the following criteria:-

- New retail uses close to, or adjoining, existing primary retail frontages will be supported as will changeable modular structures.
- Proposals within or adjacent to the Conservation Area will be expected to harmonise with the aesthetic character of existing buildings. Elsewhere in the

¹⁹ See Appendix 4 – Glossary for definition.

Neighbourhood Area, more innovative styles can be adopted with emphasis on light and space.

- Proposals that seek to reduce the volume of traffic flow and instances of stationary traffic along South Street will be encouraged. Contribution towards transport improvements should be in line with Hertfordshire County Council's recommendation's and seek to promote sustainable modes, encouraged through effective travel planning.
- Developments that go beyond the minimum provision for those of reduced mobility, for example by including disabled toilets under the Disability Rights UK 'Radar' scheme, or by providing suitable premises for motorised scooter hire, will be favoured.

BP7 – Prosperity and character of the existing town centre

a) A flexible approach to change of use will be encouraged to secondary shopping frontages as per STC3 of the Local Plan 2007. Where it contributes to a range of services aimed at supporting a strong base of quality retail shops concentrated, as far as possible, close to the primary retail frontages.

b) Community services such as the library, post office, tourist office, CAB, GP surgery etc. will be encouraged to remain in the town centre area.

c) Temporary concessions will be considered for 'pop-up shops' and similar short term or seasonal enterprises, providing they do not conflict with the character of the town centre and of the time of the application support the vitality of the high street, aimed at meeting a target of at least 90% occupancy.

d) The street market operating two days a week in North Street, Market Square, Potter Street and South Street should be supported

wherever possible as a valuable contribution to the vitality of the town centre.

Table 1 – Bishop's Stortford Retail Frontages

Primary Frontages	Secondary Frontages
1-3, 3a-13, 13a, 17 Bridge Street (Odd)	12-22 Bridge Street (Even)
2, 2a-10 Bridge Street (Even)	12-18 Church Street (Even)
2 High Street (Even)	1-25 Church Street (Odd)
1-19 Jackson Square (All)	1-13 Devoils Lane
14-16 Market Square (Even)	1-15 Florence Walk (All)
1-9 Market Street (Odd)	1-4 Hadham Road (All)
2-4, 10-34 North Street (Even)	4-10 High Street (Even)
1-23 North Street (Odd)	1-7 High Street (Odd)
9-15 Palmers Lane (Odd)	2-12 Market Square (Even)
1-35 Potter Street (Odd)	1-3 Market Street (Odd)
2-34 Potter Street (Even)	5-9 Newtown Road (Odd)
1, 1b-37 South Street (Odd)	38-42 North Street (Even)
2a, 2b, 2c-12, 12a-16, 16b-32, 32a-34 South Street (Even)	25-31 North Street (Odd)
	2-5 Riverside Walk (All)
	2-10 South Street Centre (All)
	39-45, 45a-47, 47a-79, 79a South Street (Odd)
	36-92, 92a-96, 100-

	102, 102a South Street (Even)
	1-5 Station Road (Odd)
	2-16 Station Road (Even)
	1-12, 12a-14, 19 Sworders Yard
	6 The Causeway
	1-5 The Dells

the edge of town, with access from the bypass (A120 and A1184), to enable change of use of those areas to residential

4.8.5 Objective: Support development in the town and commercial areas to ensure sustainable employment diversity

BP8 – Mixed developments

a) The following will be supported subject to other applicable policies:

- Proposals which seek to enhance the employment opportunities in the town by providing a diverse mix of retail and commercial facilities.
- Developments and refurbishments that modernise existing employment facilities without detracting from the local building style.
- The regeneration or redevelopment of existing industrial sites to commercial business facility.

BP9 – Edge of town development

a) The following will be supported where possible and subject to applicable policies:

- the development of new industrial and/or commercial business uses at the edge of the town.
- the re-location of current industrial areas within the town or near the town centre to

4.9 THE GOODS YARD

4.9.1 Introduction

4.9.1.1 The Goods Yard site has been an area of undeveloped brownfield land on the edge of the town centre between the railway and River Stort that has provided much needed station parking for a number of years. Until recently the site was divided by a spur of fenced off railway track that prevented any meaningful use of the site other than for a number of fragmented car parks forcing circuitous routes for pedestrians using the bus, railway station or nearby facilities.

4.9.1.2 The site was allocated for potential development in the East Herts Local Plan (2007) as BIS15 and is being revisited in the emerging District Plan. Although several proposals for development have been made in recent times, the removal of the railway track spur in 2014 and the current, favourable economic conditions for infrastructure investment, mean there is a realistic prospect for development taking place.

4.9.1.3 Planning of the site should be addressed in a comprehensive manner, generally following 'Building for Life' and 'Active Design' good practice guidelines as mentioned in HDP2 and HDP3, but more specifically policies set out in this chapter.

4.9.1.4 Sensitive re-development presents a huge opportunity to provide a welcoming gateway to Bishop's Stortford and to greatly improve the accessibility of the town centre from the southern side of the town. Coupled with improvements to surrounding areas

there is the chance to transform the site from a barren vista of cars into a vibrant contributor to the life and soul of the town. This was one of the most important findings from the Focus Group session about the development of the Old Goods Yard site held in February 2015.

4.9.1.5 There are considerable challenges, not least because of the shape and location of the site, proximity to road, rail and river and the variety of dominant, largely unattractive architectural forms nearby. It should be recognized that the development can only go ahead if it is viable and sustainable, especially when taking into account the need to increase current parking levels and other potential developments within the town centre, notably that of the Old River Lane site.

4.9.1.6 Many passengers already drive from the Essex and Hertfordshire villages and park at the station. The Herts County Urban Travel Plan for Bishop's Stortford 2012 includes a map which shows the distribution of season ticket holders using Bishop's Stortford station. This is included in the Evidence Base as it shows car parking needs to cater for those coming from well outside Bishop's Stortford itself.

4.9.1.7 The two maps below show the location and detail of the site.



Figure 9 – Goods Yard Location

4.9.1.8 The long term vision for the site is that it should provide an attractive and innovative Gateway to Bishop's Stortford, recognising its contribution to the heritage of the town.

4.9.2 Objectives

4.9.2.1 The policies in this chapter which support that vision are grouped under the objectives below.

- Create a welcoming and pleasant public realm, enhancing the river environment and acknowledging the longstanding links of the area with travel and transport



Figure 10 – Goods Yard Plan

- Provide a transport interchange to promote better connections between all means of transport
- Improve vehicle access routes to the site and connections with the rest of the town
- Provide sufficient car and cycle parking for users throughout the period covered by the Neighbourhood Plan
- Provide easy and safe pedestrian and cycle links to and from the site

4.9.2.2 Policies elsewhere in this document, most notably (but not exclusively) in the sections related to Housing and Design, Green Infrastructure, Transport, also apply to this

site and contribute towards achieving these objectives.

4.9.2.3 Each policy in this section addresses each objective as part of an integrated approach to re-development of the whole site and cannot be used in isolation. Furthermore, the scale of the objectives is such that schemes using only part of this site, other than as part of a comprehensive masterplan for the development of the whole site to be implemented in full, will not be supported.

4.9.3 Objective: Create a welcoming and pleasant public realm, enhancing the river environment and acknowledging links with travel and transport

4.9.3.1 Visitors to Bishop's Stortford arriving at the train or bus station are currently faced with an unappealing scene of parked cars surrounded by a variety of large buildings of uncertain use. New development should seek to transform this current landscape into one that is attractive and encourages people to stay whilst being easy to pass through en-route to the town centre or other parts of the town.

4.9.3.2 Full use should be made of the river and towpath with moorings to improve their connection, as well as views towards St. Michael's Church and the old Maltings buildings across the river to enhance the ambience of the area. The development should call on themes that reflect the historic links of the area with travel and transport, particularly the railways, but also acknowledging association with the river and canal, the nearby coaching route through Hockerill and the present day connection with Stansted Airport.

4.9.3.3 There is a contrast in surrounding buildings between the part of the site to the north of the Stort footbridge where large, ugly commercial buildings and the dull John Dyde flats dominate, compared to the southern end opposite the Maltings where a very traditional flavour is present. Building style should recognize this disparity, and use appropriate styles as described in policy GY1 generally in accordance with the character management principles described for the AECOM Character Assessment, a summary of which appears in Appendix 5. The Oct 2015 focus group mentioned 'The Weave' building in York as an impressive example of innovative, modernistic

styling that could be suitable for the northern end of the site. The curved forms and woven styles echo local themes in a way that could be done for a landmark building in Bishop's Stortford drawing on the transport and industrial heritage of the area. South of the Stort footbridge, building height must be in keeping with existing building height and to keep sight of the river.

4.9.3.4 The low lying nature of the site and its proximity to the river mean any development must be subject to a full flood risk assessment in accordance with Government and District Plan policies in force at the time to protect the improved public realm.



GY1 – Improved public realm

a) Schemes that address all of the following under a comprehensive masterplan for development of the whole site will be supported. A phased approach to the development of the whole site will be considered, provided that infrastructure improvements associated with each phase be completed first.

- An attractive and welcoming appearance, particularly to those arriving in the town in the train station area, providing a memorable gateway to Bishop's Stortford taking account of the important views from the railway station entrance towards the old Maltings buildings, the river and St Michael's Church and maintaining a clear

sightline to one or both of these buildings if at all possible having regard to the development as a whole. Development must be of a high quality that demonstrates an understanding of local history and acknowledges the vernacular style and materials to the south of the Stort footbridge, as well as the scale of nearby buildings to the north of it.

- People friendly features within the built environment such as seats, tree and shrub planting, water features, sculptures, informal meeting places etc. to enhance the appeal of public places and thoroughways. Such features should reflect the historic links of the area with the river and railway industry and their contribution to the town's heritage using a common palette of materials, street furniture and signage.
- Green spaces to improve existing unmanaged scrubland to the south of site, preserving and enhancing existing riverside habitats. A sensible balance should be sought between managed leisure areas, such as pocket parks or play areas, and a lightly maintained natural environment. Mature trees should be kept wherever possible or, if feasible, lifted for use elsewhere.
- Continuous public access to an active river frontage with features such as cafes, recreational areas and moorings to encourage engagement with the river.
- Downwards gradation of building height towards the river/towpath to avoid canyoning of river bank within the site and to maximise sunlight at ground level. South of the Stort footbridge, buildings should be generally lower than on the northern part of the site.

- A full implementation of all flood protection and mitigation measures recommended as the result of the required flood risk assessment to avoid long term adverse impact on the improved public realm.
- Use of the concept of 'shared space' between pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, where appropriate, and with traffic calming, to improve safety and create a relaxed introduction to the town.
- An attractive area including greenery, cafés, public space and small scale retail allowing passers-by to pause and relax. Possible locations for such an area are opposite the Leisure Centre forecourt or the railway station forecourt.
- Suitable surfaces and gradients should be used to enable reasonable wheelchair and motor scooter-access to all areas combined with pedestrian and cycle routes wherever possible.

b) North of the Stort footbridge bold, innovative styling acknowledging local heritage can be used. An iconic building(s) with height using modern materials to create interesting forms would be permissible, providing this graded towards, and did not overshadow, the river.

c) A small scale development to further improve the existing train station facilities that does not increase its existing area by more than 50% will be considered provided it conforms with other policies in this Plan and allows development of the whole site.

4.9.3.5 Bishop's Stortford is already the primary retail centre for East Hertfordshire. The primary shop front areas are in North Street, South Street and Jackson Square. In contrast, the Goods Yard site with large numbers of people passing through (the railway station had almost 3 million users in

2012/3) and close to flatted residential areas will be able to support a balanced offering of small scale retail outlets, service shops and more informal cafes and restaurants.

4.9.3.6 Residential use is essential if development of the site is to be viable but, although the existing Local Plan policy BIS11 specifies a minimum of 700 homes (of which 250 have already been built), the 2014 Town Survey suggest little appetite amongst towns people for further significant residential development in this area. The outstanding requirement of 450 new homes is still considered excessive, mainly because of the additional car parking required and impact on local traffic and air quality. However, in order to maintain consistency with the emerging District Plan, a minimum of 400 homes must be planned for.

4.9.3.7 It is inevitable that the majority of housing on the site is flats and it has been seen from the popularity of the recent Churchill development of retirement flats in nearby South Street that this type of provision is well liked by older people. The Goods Yard development is close to the town centre as well as public transport connections and will have its own service/retail offering and communal areas making it attractive to those looking for a smaller property with easy access to most amenities. For the same reasons, those of all ages with mobility issues could find a home in the development suitable and appealing for them. Other groups, such as young professionals, wanting an attractive, high quality home less than an hour from the centre of London would also find such homes attractive. Both market housing and affordable housing should be built to a high standard suitable for both older and disabled residents.

4.9.3.8 A number of attempts have been made to re-locate the South Street surgery

which is in unsuitable premises for a modern practice and the presence of an easily accessible local medical centre within the development is suggested. Significant numbers of people attending the consultation days suggested this location as a suitable new site for the practice, although the NHS decision making body may favour another location, yet to be confirmed. Re-locating the surgery with an associated pharmacy within the development would, however, increase footfall outside of the busy commuter times and help viability of the scheme.



4.9.3.9 The Business & Employment study (Wessex Economics, Town Wide Employment Study for Bishop's Stortford, for East Herts Council 2013) shows there is a demand for high quality office space close to the town centre as older, unsuitable premises are converted to other uses or replaced. However, although the current Local Plan in force strongly recommends office space as a use of the site, the continued availability of the Charringtons offices suggest a conservative approach to further large scale provision of new office space without clear justification. Bishop's Stortford no longer has a major hotel and its position close to Stansted airport and other transport links suggest that a modest hotel operation could be viable. Hotel use would increase activity outside the busy travelling time and contribute to the sustainability of the development. Light industrial uses are no longer suitable for this

site due to the poor road access and adverse impact on the nearby river and homes.

4.9.3.10 Results from the Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan All Saints, Central, South and Part of Thorley Questionnaire showed that 55% of respondents would increase their usage of the town centre were more public conveniences available. Thus, the provision of public conveniences in a development as large as this is considered very important.



GY2 – Site Uses

a) Only comprehensive schemes that include and address all of the following will be supported:-

- Residential use up to at least 400 dwellings, or whatever lower limit supersedes this in the draft District Plan once it is made;
- Built to a high standard with easy access for those of all ages and abilities;
- Dwellings to be sited away from the railway line and any busy vehicle access points allowing for suitable noise and air pollution mitigation;
- Shop premises aimed at secondary shop front uses such as small scale retail, service and food outlets for both passing trade and local patronage.

b) Schemes that include the following will also be supported, unless further evidence based

investigation by developers can demonstrate they are unsuitable or unnecessary:-

- Office space (B1 Business) of high quality;
- Local medical centre, not a main hub;
- Hotel, located close to the transport interchange;
- Buildings that, because of their scale, position or mix of uses can benefit from a renewable energy source;
- Public conveniences available to all.

4.9.4 Objective: Provide a transport interchange to promote better connections between all means of transport

4.9.4.1 The railway station is the sixth busiest in the Hertfordshire commuter belt, just behind Elstree and Harpenden, with almost 3 million journeys starting or finishing there in 2012/3 (HCTS 2012 Appendix D 53). It is on the main line between Cambridge and London which also services Stansted Airport and use will grow substantially with the large scale residential developments planned in Bishop's Stortford and over the adjacent Essex border.

4.9.4.2 The hive of activity and traffic congestion seen around the station in the morning and evening peak periods indicate that movement between the different modes of travel could be far more efficiently organised and encourage greater use of sustainable means of transport. Currently, the bus standings are separated from the train station entrance with both having poorly defined and restricted pedestrian and cycle connections to them, crossing or close to taxi and car park traffic.

4.9.4.3 It is strongly recommended that the area close to the railway station forecourt is formally recognised as a transport interchange

and the development of the site which includes this area provides just such an opportunity. Transport for London, who have had to deal with the same challenges many times within the capital, have a template guide 'Interchange Best Practice Guidelines' that could be used during the design and delivery process to tailor the best possible solution for Bishop's Stortford.

4.9.4.4 Schemes are normally tailored to meet the following criteria:-

- Efficiency – operational use, movement to and within, sustainability
- Usability – accessibility, safety and security
- Understanding – wayfinding, information, legibility
- Quality – built design, urban realm, sense of place

All four criteria should have equal importance in the design of proposed solutions.

GY3 – Transport interchange

a) Only schemes that follow best practice (e.g. the TFL 'Interchange Best Practice Guidelines' reference guide) will be acceptable. The interchange must be safe and efficient to use for all types of users and usages.

b) The catchment area when assessing current and future needs for those arriving in vehicles (private cars, taxis and buses) is defined as that bounded by points halfway between Bishop's Stortford railway station and the next nearest mainline station with dedicated parking for rail users of more than fifty cars. The catchment area for pedestrians is defined as within the town boundary, extending to 10 miles for cyclists.

c) Developers will be required to establish current and future usage through an independent assessment, taking into account additional use due to all relevant development

schemes within the catchment area that at the time of assessment:-

- have planning approval but await execution, or
- are under planning application, or
- are specified as likely to be delivered within the lifetime of the District Plans of East Herts and Uttlesford.

d) The transport interchange must be close to the train station entrance and allows easy movement between the different modes of transport, notably bus, train, taxi, cycling and walking (including wheelchairs and mobility scooters) with the following features:-

- be safe, well lit, and have high quality, weather proof waiting areas as well as a generally open layout to enhance the user's perceptions of personal security;
- be configured in such a way to enable the introduction of intelligent transport systems, e.g. dynamic bus stand allocation, with up-to-date real time information and timetables that are well positioned and accessible remotely using mobile devices;
- have signage provided in a position and format that is easily read by all, including the partially sighted and those unable to stand;
- have dedicated space for efficient taxi rank operation, separate from private car access to parking;
- have cycle parking/storage as near as possible to the train station entrance;
- have private car drop-off/pick-up points to site at London Road and Dane Street train station exits, and at the proposed new southern car access point.

4.9.5 Objective: Improve vehicle access routes to the site and connections with the rest of the town

4.9.5.1 Currently, the only access to and from the site for private vehicles (approximately 1,000 spaces for public and residential parking plus set down and pick up), buses in and out of the bus station and taxis to and from the railway station, is via two entrances/exits onto Station Road within less than 100 metres of each other, one of which is a narrow one way street with alternating, traffic light controlled flows. Congestion, particularly in the evening as trains arrive, is routine and, although it does eventually subside outside the peak morning and evening periods, the restricted access greatly exacerbates the situation.

4.9.5.2 Furthermore, cars approaching the town centre from the south have only two reasonable options when looking for parking, one via South Street onto Adderley Road or via the Hockerill junction onto the Causeway or Station Road, both of which enter or cross the one-way system. The Hockerill junction is already an air quality monitoring area where recognised acceptable levels of pollution are regularly exceeded. Unless an additional access to the site is made, the additional traffic load created by increased use of the Goods Yard development plus large scale residential developments elsewhere in the town and surrounding districts will increase standing traffic and pollution levels at all the known pinchpoints. It should be noted that the NPPF Planning Practice Guidance states that air quality is relevant to planning decisions where a development would 'Significantly affect traffic in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development site or further afield', which is almost certainly the situation here.

4.9.5.3 Fortunately, the extent of the site southwards to London Road at Tanners Wharf provides an opportunity to mitigate the impact of the increased traffic flows by creating a new two way access point to parking on the site. This would avoid the need to use the Hockerill junction and Station Road for vehicles coming from the South. Failure to provide such an access away from the town centre road system would effectively mean any development of the site would not be acceptable due to the resulting increase in congestion and air pollution.

4.9.5.4 Notwithstanding the above recommendation, sound traffic modelling, as described in TP1, must be used to inform any decisions about changes to road layout and junctions around the site.

GY4 – Vehicle connections to and from the site

a) Sound traffic modelling, in accordance with TP1, shall be used to determine the changes to road configurations and connections around the development.

b) Unless such traffic modelling can demonstrate wait times and pollution levels will be within the limits set in TP1 at all junctions affected by the development, only schemes that provide the following access solution will be acceptable:

- Two-way southern car access to the site for parking from London Road near Tanners Wharf, minimising interruption to traffic flow on London Road.
- Two-way car access to the site for parking from Station Rd, minimising interruption to traffic flow on the one-way system.

c) Schemes that additionally have a north-south throughway link between London Road and Station Road will be preferred.

d) Schemes that restrict or prevent full development of the site or future access to the site from London Road near Tanners Wharf will not be supported.

4.9.6 Objective: Provide sufficient car and cycle parking for users throughout the period covered by the Neighbourhood Plan

4.9.6.1 In the Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire 2014 improved car parking was top of the improvements that would encourage people to visit the town centre more and better cycle parking was a significant reason for people to want to leave their cars at home when making journeys within the town.

4.9.6.2 Although the car and cycle parking currently on or around the Goods Yard site are for those using the station, it is essential that increased needs for car parking stemming from the development are fully accommodated and that car parking demand particularly is not pushed out into the other town centre car parks.

4.9.6.3 The catchment area when assessing both car and cycle parking must cover a reasonable area for both types of use and take account of future developments within those areas.

GY5 – Car and cycle parking

a) Only development schemes that address the need for car and cycle parking now and in the foreseeable future as determined in accordance with Policy GY3 parts b) and c) will be acceptable.

b) During the construction phase of development for the site, car and cycle parking capacity must be maintained at the current level and, if any part of the scheme comes into use such that demand increases,

capacity must be increased accordingly within that phase.

c) Suitable cycle parking must be provided in accessible and secure locations within the development for those visiting its facilities, ideally close to where cycle links already exist or are proposed.

d) Car parking must be attractive and of good quality (not exposed steel girder construction). It should also be of a design that feels safe and secure to use even at quiet times of the day with clear separation between cars and those on foot, particularly at vehicle entrance and exit points.

e) All possible steps should be taken at the design stage to ensure that the car entrance and exits operate efficiently and do not cause unnecessary delays.

f) Schemes that additionally include car parking that uses the noise blighted area alongside the railway line will be particularly welcome.

g) Depending on the siting of car parking, and unless traffic modelling can demonstrate they are unnecessary or unsuitable, elevated vehicle access to car parking should be provided from

- Station Road bridge over the railway line and
- London Road between the Tanners Wharf traffic lights and the mini roundabout junction with Hallingbury Road.

4.9.7 Objective: Provide easy and safe pedestrian and cycle links to and from the site

4.9.7.1 There is already a high level of pedestrian traffic to and from the railway station, bus station and other nearby facilities, such as the leisure centre, as well as the area being a through route for school children

coming from one side of the town to nearby secondary schools (as noted in the Feb 2015 Focus Group).



The towpath running from Sworder's Field through to Twyford Lock and beyond is also a popular route for both leisure and those walking to the town centre from the south particularly. Existing safe cycle access is limited apart from the River Stort cycle and footbridge. It is essential that these routes are maintained and improved to make development of the site acceptable and to encourage modal shift towards sustainable forms of transport.

4.9.7.2 Although just outside the Neighbourhood Area, every opportunity must be taken to link with the proposed new footbridge over the river alongside Station Road.²⁰ Other key connection points are marked on the map below (Fig 10). It is recognized that some of these points are just outside the site boundary and do not always have good onward routes to the main destinations within the town. As such, they are good candidates for improvement using S106 developer contributions to mitigate increased pollution from additional traffic as the result of development.

²⁰ HCC Planning Reference ITP13060 Station Road Bridge Widening scheme.



GY6 – Pedestrian and cycle links

a) Only schemes that address and include the following will be supported:-

- Pedestrian/cycle throughway from the train station forecourt in Dane Street (shown as 1 in Fig 11) to the River Stort cycle footbridge (2 in Fig 11).
- Pedestrian/cycle route along tow path following the river bank from southern tip of site (3 in Fig 10) towards the John Dyde flats and Station Road Bridge (4 in Fig 11), keeping an appropriate soft edge to the riverbank.
- Pedestrian/cycle throughway from the train station forecourt in Dane Street (1 in Fig 11) towards London Road/Hockerill (5 in Fig 11).
- Pedestrian/cycle way from the train station forecourt in Dane Street (1 in Fig 11) to a point on Station Road opposite 'The Fountain' (6 in Fig 11).
- Pedestrian/cycle throughway from the train station forecourt in Dane Street (1 in Fig 11) to town centre using an enhanced riverside pathway under the Station Road river bridge linking to the proposed new footbridge over the river alongside Station Road (7 in Fig 11), unless further evidence based investigation by developers can demonstrate this is not feasible.

- b) Schemes that do not provide pedestrian links that are capable of convenient connection to the new Station Road footbridge will not be supported.
- c) In keeping with TP3, schemes that follow circuitous routes, or that pass through car parking or its access space will not be supported.
- d) Schemes that do not comply with the standards defined in TP4 will not be supported. It is expected that developer contributions will be forthcoming to improve footpath and cycle way routes outside the site to mitigate the inevitable adverse impact on traffic and hence pollution in the surrounding area.

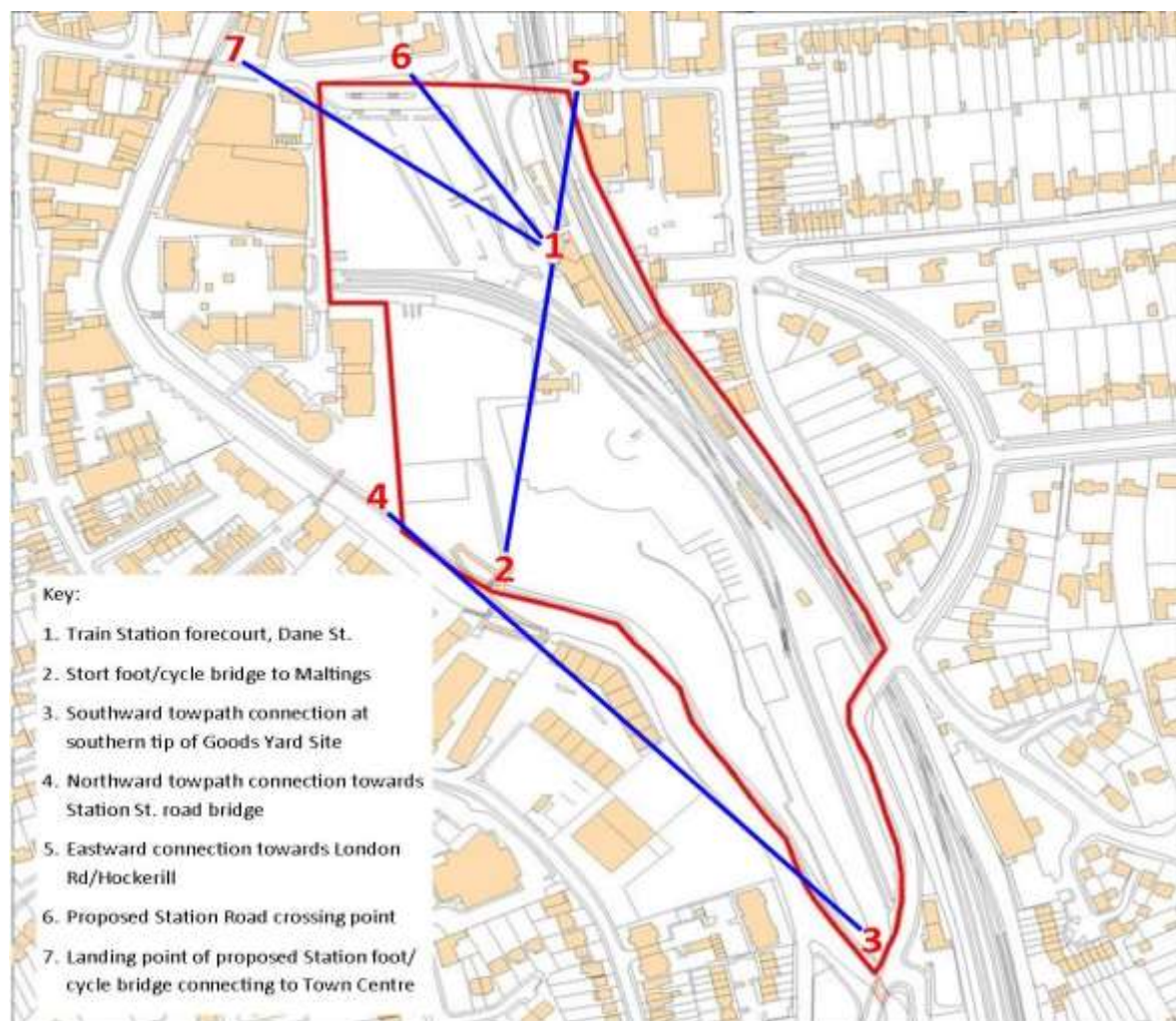


Figure 11 – Pedestrian and cycle links

4.10 LAND SOUTH OF BISHOP'S STORTFORD

4.10.1 Introduction

4.10.1.1 The area referred to in the emerging District Plan as 'Land South of Bishop's Stortford' (also colloquially known as 'Bishop's Stortford South' is currently designated as Metropolitan Green Belt and is used for Grade 2 arable land. It lies predominantly within Thorley Parish. The site is bounded by the London Road/Thorley Street main access route into Bishop's Stortford to the east; St James Way ring road to the south; Whittington Way access road to Twyford and Thorley Park estate to the north and Obrey Way - a narrow link road from Thorley Park to St James Way on the west. Both the London Road/Thorley Street and St James Way are busy roads into and out of Bishop's Stortford town.

4.10.1.2 The site has open views to the east/south east looking towards the Hallingburys and drops 20 metres from Obrey Way to London Road/Thorley Street. This site is the first view of the 'gateway' to Bishop's Stortford on the left when approached from the south and if it is developed it should give a favourable impression of the town's character. New roads should ensure existing views and vistas are maximized – for example the views to the east and south east and views towards the church at Thorley.

4.10.1.3 Immediately adjacent to the site, separated by Obrey Way, lies the Green Flag Southern Country Park. This is a very well used recreational facility for all ages and includes a teenage activity area, dog agility equipment area, fishing lake, marshland bird sanctuary, conservation areas for wildlife and many different pathways used for health walks and the public in general. It attracts people from a

wide area and can be accessed by car in Thorley Lane East off Obrey Way.

4.10.1.4 The Hertfordshire Way right of way runs across the site and has open uninterrupted views to the east and south east. There is also a footpath which runs between Obrey Way and Thorley Street. The site includes ancient hedgerows and a small brook river that runs from Obrey Way to the London Road/Thorley Street into the River Stort flood plain and area of Special Scientific Interest. Both the hedgerows and the footpaths have established trees and flora with the expected wildlife in both.

4.10.1.5 The emerging District Plan proposes that the Green Belt be amended to exclude this site and that the land be allocated for the development of 750 homes, a secondary school and a primary school. Supporting infrastructure, access and a business park are also proposed.

4.10.1.6 As this site is at the southern edge of Bishop's Stortford and the nearest community facilities at Thorley Neighbourhood Centre are more than the DfT's guidelines for reasonable walking distances it would be necessary to incorporate such facilities to promote social cohesion and encourage walking and to reduce car usage.

4.10.1.7 In September 2012 the Secretary of State upheld refusal of development of the land (for a scheme involving two schools) on the basis that the special circumstances required to justify inappropriate development of the Green Belt had not been demonstrated. In his conclusions the Planning Inspector also found that there would be a significant adverse effect on the Hertfordshire Way.

4.10.1.8 In September 2015 East Herts Green Belt Technical Review undertaken by Peter Brett Associates showed 'the site suitability of release for potential development to be low'.

4.10.1.9 A decision by the District Council to amend the Green Belt boundaries would be controversial and throughout the consultation process the proposed development of Land South of Bishop's Stortford has been consistently unpopular with the majority of the town's residents. However the Neighbourhood Plan has no influence over this decision. It can deal only with the consequences should it occur.

4.10.1.10 As there is a state of uncertainty in regards to the outcome of the emerging District Plan, this Neighbourhood Plan provides for the two possible outcomes namely either that the land in question is removed from the Green Belt, or it is not. Certain policies in this plan apply only if the land is removed from development as part of the emerging District Plan process and in this case the Neighbourhood Plan focuses on shaping any possible development to ensure that growth complements and enhances the surrounding area and does not undermine the integrity of the Green Belt that surrounds it.

4.10.2 Objectives

4.10.2.1 The policies in this section seek to achieve the following objectives:

- Ensure that any development is in keeping with surrounding areas, presents a graduated edge to the surrounding Green Belt areas, includes inclusive community facilities and has adequate traffic planning
- Ensure any development does not have a negative impact on the local features of the natural landscape and neighbouring green spaces

4.10.2.2 Policies elsewhere in this document, most notably (but not exclusively) in the sections related to Housing and Design, Green Infrastructure, Transport, also apply to this site and contribute to achieving these objectives.

BSS1 – Conditional Policies

a) Policies BSS2-BSS5 apply only in the circumstance that a significant development becomes possible on all or part of the site known as Land South of Bishop's Stortford²¹

b) In the absence of the circumstance in a), policies in force at National, District and Neighbourhood Plan level, including in particular policies related to Green Belt, will continue to apply to the site.

4.10.3 Objective - Ensure that any development is in keeping with surrounding areas, presents a graduated edge to the surrounding Green Belt areas, includes inclusive community facilities and has adequate traffic planning

BSS2 – Setting and character of buildings

a) Housing around the periphery is to be no higher than two storeys with styles and palettes to complement the local landscape and adjacent developments at Thorley Park, Twyford estate and Thorley Street.

b) The interior area of the housing development is to be predominately two storeys and no higher than 2.5 storeys except around the central community facilities where well designed 3 storey houses would be permitted.

c) Design and layout should ensure that views of the open countryside to the east and south are maintained from some key focal locations (for example major community facilities) near

²¹ The most probable scenario in which this circumstance would arise is if the policy changes envisaged in the emerging District Plan, over which this Neighbourhood Plan has no control, come into force.

the centre of the development unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this is not realistically practicable.

d) Proposals encompassing the creation of discrete neighbourhoods of distinct character for a planned development of this size would be supported.

e) Only development proposals that include suitable technologies for energy efficiency will be supported.

f) The design, height, massing and materials of any envisaged community and commercial buildings must be in keeping with the area, particularly housing in Thorley Street, and have adequate parking.

g) To mitigate loss of amenity to houses to the west of London Road, Thorley Street – especially the listed buildings – a buffer zone with suitable screening would be expected.

h) Any secondary school, if constructed on the site, should form an attractive visual feature of the site and be no higher than three storeys.

BSS3 – Community facilities

a) This site is detached from the nearest community facilities at Thorley Neighbourhood Centre and more than the Department for Transport's guidelines for reasonable walking distances. Any proposals for the development of this site must enable social interaction and public services for the local community: local shops, a community hall, outdoor and indoor meeting places, allotments, health services and facilities that are accessible to all. They should be in suitable locations, served by a choice of sustainable travel and be of an appropriate scale and flexible design to enable multiple uses throughout the day.

b) Proposals must include inter-connected green spaces/recreational areas within the

site which should be commensurate with and proportional to the numbers and types of occupants anticipated.

BSS4 – Access/egress to site

a) The developer must consult with Hertfordshire Highways Department for travel plans and a traffic study to ensure the extra traffic associated with this site does not impact unfavourably on the surrounding areas.

b) Access points should be modelled and designed to minimize extra traffic flows through the residential area of Thorley Park.

c) To avoid extra junctions on St James Way the principal vehicular access to the site should include the use of the existing roundabouts at the east and west ends of the site unless traffic modelling shows that this is not feasible. Cyclists and pedestrians should have access to development from Whittington Way.

d) The developer will be expected to construct or pay for the construction of safe, level access across Obrey Way to the Southern Country Park and to the footbridge to St James Church, Thorley.

e) The access road to any possible business park should be separate from access to the housing area to avoid any extra traffic within the housing area.

f) The location and access to new educational facilities should not cause congestion within the development and surrounding areas. Buses, coaches and cars must have an adequately sized, dedicated off road drop-off and pick-up area.

4.10.4 Objective: Ensure any development does not have a negative impact on the local features of the natural landscape and neighbouring green spaces

BSS5 – Hertfordshire Way and green spaces

a) The Hertfordshire Way crosses this site and its open aspect and some views to the open countryside must be maintained. This is used as a Bridleway and the minimum width should be 3m. Fencing adjacent to the footpath, if any, must be low visual impact and the design and layout of the site such that the open aspect is maintained and views not obstructed by built structures. To protect the existing flora & fauna a 10m wildlife corridor either side of the right of way should be maintained unless it is demonstrated that other appropriate measures would be more effective in terms of protecting and enhancing biodiversity.

b) Maintenance of the Hertfordshire Way would be the responsibility of the developer for the first 10 years after which the developer must agree with the Planning Authority responsibilities for maintenance thereafter.

c) The ancient hedgerow to the south of the site and two copses of mature trees must also be preserved.

d) Water courses should not be culverted and treated as a feature above ground and must be protected to conserve the SSSI east of London Road and any wildlife in situ.

4.11 BISHOP'S STORTFORD HIGH SCHOOL SITE

4.11.1 Introduction

4.11.1.1 The governors of the Bishop's Stortford High School have expressed an interest in moving to the Land South of Bishop's Stortford site, should this site be approved for development and this proposal received formal support from Hertfordshire County Council on 11th July 2016.

4.11.1.2 Should the Bishop's Stortford High School site be vacated during the life of this plan then subject to a future planning application 200–250 houses could be built on this vacated site. This site is bounded by existing mature housing estates on three sides and the main London Road on the other.

4.11.2 Objectives

4.11.2.1 The policies in this section seek to achieve the following objectives:

- Ensure new housing is in keeping with surrounding area
- Ensure the inclusion of sustainable leisure, recreational and other public facilities on site

4.11.2.2 Policies elsewhere in this document, most notably (but not exclusively) in the sections related to Housing and Design, Green Infrastructure, Transport, also apply to this site and contribute to achieving these objectives.

4.11.3 Objective: Ensure new housing is in keeping with surrounding area

BSHS1 – Setting and character of buildings

a) New housing should be no higher than two storeys with styles and palettes to

complement the local landscape and adjacent housing.

4.11.4 Ensure the inclusion of sustainable leisure, recreational and other public facilities on site

BSHS2 – Connectivity

a) Proposals for development of this site must ensure good pedestrian and cycle links to the surrounding development.

b) The existing woodland area and path alongside the existing playing field (The Spinney) must be retained as a green pedestrian and cycle through-route and to maintain a buffer area between new and existing houses. Consideration must be given to enhancing connectivity at either end to exploit opportunities for developing the Spinney as a sustainable route from the southern edge of town into the town centre.

4.12 BISHOP'S STORTFORD EAST OF MANOR LINKS

4.12.1 Introduction

4.12.1.1 According to the 2007 Local Plan policies, this area is designated Metropolitan Green Belt. One part of the area is scrubland, used as a buffer between the Golf Club and existing residential development and a wildlife refuge (including at times used by protected species), the other is a Golf practice area used by members of the Golf Club.

4.12.1.2 Within the emerging District Plan it is proposed that the Green Belt boundary is amended and an area currently within the Green Belt is allocated for development of 50 dwellings.

4.12.1.3 A decision by the District Council to amend the Green Belt boundaries would be controversial. However, the Neighbourhood Plan has no influence over this decision and

can deal only with the consequences should it occur.

4.12.1.4 The areas of Manor Links, Cecil Close and Shortcroft which directly adjoin the proposed development consist of large low rise mature bungalows and two-storey houses on large plots with open aspect to the proposed development site and a sense of space broken by a selection of mature trees. Mayes Close and Norris Close would experience traffic and footfall should the development proceed.

4.12.1.5 With 50 new houses in this area there will be extra pressure on the existing already busy surrounding roads. This pressure is due to school traffic twice a day plus traffic to and from the town centre and to the M11 and airport along the Dunmow Road. The household recycling centre in Woodside Industrial Estate plus industrial vehicles to this site also generates considerable traffic

4.12.1.6 As there is a state of uncertainty in regards to the outcome of the emerging District Plan, this Neighbourhood Plan provides for the two possible outcomes namely either that the land in question is removed from the Green Belt, or it is not. Certain policies in this plan apply only if the land is removed from development as part of the emerging District Plan process and in this case the Neighbourhood Plan focuses on shaping development to ensure that growth complements and enhances the surrounding area and does not undermine the integrity of the Green Belt that surrounds it.

4.12.2 Objective

4.12.2.1 The policies in this section seek to achieve the following objective:

- Ensure any development sits comfortably within the surrounding area, presents favourable vistas, provides community facilities which include open spaces and

play areas and has adequate traffic planning and mitigation.

4.12.2.2 Policies elsewhere in this document, most notably in the sections related to Housing and Design, Green Infrastructure, Transport also apply to this site and contribute to achieving this objective.

4.12.2.3 In accordance with HDP1 the development should be designed and built on Garden Village/City principles to blend with other adjacent developments and to create a soft edge between it and the surrounding Green Belt area.

4.12.2.4 In accordance with HDP5 there is an opportunity to supply much needed bungalows capable of being adapted if necessary. There is also a need to provide easily accessible sheltered and supported housing.

4.12.3 Objective: Ensure any development sits comfortably with the surrounding area, presents favourable vistas, provides community facilities which include open spaces and play areas and has adequate traffic planning and mitigation

BSEM1 – Conditional Policy

a) Policy BSEM2 applies only in the circumstance that a major development becomes possible on all or part of the site known as east of Manor Links²²

b) In the absence of the circumstance in a) policies in force at National, District and Neighbourhood Plan level, including in

²² The most probable scenario in which this circumstance would arise is if the policy changes envisaged in the emerging District Plan, over which this Neighbourhood Plan has no control.

particular policies related to Green belt, will continue to apply to the site.

BSEM2 – Master-planning, setting and character

a) Housing is to be no higher than two liveable storeys with styles and palettes to complement the local landscape and adjacent development of Manor Links, Shortcroft, Mayes Close, Cecil Close and Norris Close. Properties immediately adjacent to Manor Links should be a single liveable storey to meet community needs and to form a smooth transition to the adjacent Green Belt.

b) The design and layout of the site must:

- include open spaces to enable social interaction for the local community
- be sympathetic to wildlife and maintain natural ditches and culvert. There should be opportunities for preserving and enhancing on-site assets and maximising opportunities to link into existing assets and enhance biodiversity. Consideration should be given to maintaining some of the existing scrubland as a wildlife haven.
- Preserve the route of the disused railway line to protect wildlife.

c) The access point to the site must be selected following appropriate traffic modelling to ascertain the safest route. Manor Links, Shortcroft, Dunmow Road and Parsonage Lane and schools' traffic must be specifically considered.

d) Unless traffic modelling shows that it is impractical the developer must construct or fund a formal crossing suitable for pedestrians and cyclists at Dunmow Road where Manor Links exits to provide a safe route for pedestrian traffic from this development.

5 Monitoring and Review

5.1 MONITORING THE PLAN

5.1.1 Monitoring

5.1.1.1 This plan covers the period 2016–2031. Development will take place during this time, both in the Neighbourhood Area and outside it. This will have an impact on the area and on its relationship to the town as a whole. In addition during the currency of the plan the current saved policies of the Local Plan will be superseded by the new District Plan. During the compilation of this Neighbourhood Plan the Town Council has had regard to the emerging District Plan as well as the extant Local Plan, so this is not expected to be a significant issue, nevertheless it is important that the effectiveness of the plan is monitored in the light of these developments.

5.1.1.2 The monitoring framework must answer two questions, namely:

- Are the policies being applied effectively?
- Are the policies achieving the objectives of the plan?

These will be monitored principally by the Town Council as a part of the process for review of planning applications. The Town Council already tracks and comments on all applications made and furthermore tracks the determinations made by East Herts Council and compares them to recommendations made by the Town. This process can be extended to track cases where decisions rest on or are influenced by policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, and thereby whether the policies are being applied effectively. This will be monitored approximately on an annual basis and reported through the appropriate Town Council committee (currently the

Planning Committee). The monitoring period may be adjusted based on initial results.

5.1.2 Review

5.1.2.1 If monitoring shows that the policies in the plan are not being applied effectively or the Plan is failing to achieve its objectives, action may be necessary to address the shortfall. This action could include:

- working with the East Herts Council and other partners to establish measures to make policies more effective
- negotiating with developers to secure the plan objectives and influence the shape of development, acting as a broker between landowner, developer and community
- supporting partner bids for funding to deliver key facilities
- supporting the creation of forums for strategic planning, for example for sports and leisure facilities
- a partial or whole review of the Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for All Saints, Central, South and part of Thorley Parish
- merging this plan with the Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads wards.

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Appendix 3 – Policy Context and Background

The following plans and documents support the policies in the chapters identified

Housing and Design

- National Planning Policy Framework (para. 47 to 68)
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 (the East Hertfordshire Local Plan)
- East Herts draft District Plan (2015)
- Hertfordshire County Council Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (Adopted) November 2012
- Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016 (Adopted 2007)
- East Herts Council's Affordable Housing and Lifetime Homes Supplementary Planning Document (Local Plan Second Review 2007)
- Bishop's Stortford Draft Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan', prepared in August 2012
- The vision as set out in the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group document (2009/10)
- Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, December 2014
- Strategic Land Availability Assessment 2015 (SLAA)
- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)
- Building for Life 12: Third Edition – January 2015
- West Essex and East Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Sept 2015)
- Town and Country Planning Association: Creating Garden Cities and Suburbs Today (2012)
- Secured by Design (Guidance owned by the Association of Chief Police Officers)
- East Herts District Council Strategic Housing Market assessment January 2010 and update March 2013
- East and South East Operating Area Housing Market Report (August 2014)
- EHDC Housing Needs Survey 2014/15
- Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards 2014–2031
- DCLG Technical Housing Standards – nationally described space and water efficiency standard (March 2015)
- AECOM Bishop's Stortford Heritage and Character Assessment (Feb 2016)

Green Infrastructure

- National Planning Policy Framework (para.73–78, 79–90, 94, 109–125)
- East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review 2007 (the East Hertfordshire Local Plan) & East Herts draft District Plan 2014/15

- Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards 2014
- Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire 2014
- Local Plan and the Open Space, Sports and Recreation Supplementary Policy Document, 2009 (www.eastherts.gov.uk/openspacespd)
- East Hertfordshire Council's draft 'Parks and Open Spaces Strategy' 2013-2018
- East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan 2011
- Everyone Matters – A Sustainable Community Strategy for East Hertfordshire 2009-2024
- Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan 2006
- The vision as set out in the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group document (2009/10)
- Bishop's Stortford Draft Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan', prepared in August 2012 – see green spaces elements
- Southern Country Park & Beyond – Management Plan 2013 – 2018
- A Vision for the Future – Bishop's Stortford Waterspace & Landscape Strategy 2009
- British Plant Communities Volume 3: Grasslands and Montane Communities
- British Plant Communities Volume 1: Woodlands and Scrub
- British Standards Publication BS 42020: 2013. Biodiversity – code of practice for planning and development
- Bishop's Stortford Heritage and Character Assessment, February 2016, AECOM
- Thames River Basin Management Plan (TRBMP), Oct 2015
- East Herts Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2008
- Defra: Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services, Aug 2011
- Defra: Rights of Way Circular (1/09), Guidance for Local Authorities, Version 2 October 2009

Transport

- National Planning Policy Framework (para. 29, 30–32, 35, 36, 39, 40)
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007
- Supplementary Planning Document, Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development, June 2008
- Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan - see 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 3.2
- Hertfordshire County Council Bus Strategy 2011–2031, June 2011
- Hertfordshire County Council Rail Strategy, April 2011
- 'Roads in Hertfordshire', Highway Design Guide 3rd Edition
- Urban Transport Plan - Stage 1 Report, Steer Davies Gleave 2010
- East Herts Air Quality Planning Guidance Document (2016)

- Hertfordshire Air Quality Management Plan (Policy 13.9)
- Travel Plan Guidance for Business and Residential Development, Hertfordshire County Council (Emerging document, Consultation January 2014)
- Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire 2014
- Hertfordshire Travel Survey 2012 Report
- Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan Live www.hertsdirect.org/ltpl
- Hertfordshire County Council Corporate Plan 2013-2017
- Sustrans Design Manual 'Handbook for Cycle-friendly Design' April 2014
- London Cycle Design Standards (March 2015)
- HCC Active Travel Strategy April 2013
- Manual for streets 2007
- Department for Transport Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (March 2016)
- Herts Traffic and Transport Data Report 2014
- Department for Education Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance, July 2014

Education

- National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 38 and 72
- BS Town Council NP for Silverleys and Meads Wards 2014–2013
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007
- East Herts draft District Plan January 2014
- Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire 2015

Health

- National Planning Policy Framework (paras.69 & 70)
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007
- East Herts draft District Plan (Preferred Options Consultation) January 2014
- East Herts Draft Health and Well-being Strategy
- East Herts Health Profile 2015
- <http://www.hertsdirect.org/your-council/hcc/partnerwork/hwb/>
- East and North Herts Trust Priorities: <http://www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk/>
- Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust Priorities: <http://www.pah.nhs.uk/>
- Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, December 2014

Sport, Leisure and Community

- National Planning Policy Framework (para.73)

- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007
- Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads 2014
- East Hertfordshire District Council Bishop's Stortford North S106 Sports Investment Strategy December 2015
- East Herts District Council Sport Investment Strategy Report findings
- 2009 Supplementary Planning Document 'Open Space, Sport and Recreation'
- East Herts Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Audit 2010
- East Herts Assessment of Sports Facilities 2011
- Sport England: Village and Community Halls Design Guidance Note, reference 1038, January 2001)
- Charity Commission: Village Halls and Community Centres, reference RS9, December 2004

Business and Employment

- National Planning Policy Framework (paras.19, 20, 21, 23, 42–43)
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007
- East Herts Draft District Plan 2014 policies RTC-1 to 5, BISH-3, BISH-7, BISH-10, BISH-11, ED-1 and ED-
- Wessex Economics, Town Wide Employment Study for Bishop's Stortford, for East Herts Council (2013)
- DTZ Economic Development and Employment Growth report for East Herts Council 2012.
- Nathaniel, Litchfield & Partners Retail and town centre Report, September 2013
- Peter Brett Associates, town centres and Retail report October 2014
- Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire 2014
- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)
- The A10/M11 Growth Area Economy, Hertford LEP, June 2015
- The London-Stansted-Cambridge Corridor: Economic Characteristics and Performance report - January 2016
- Business Stortford www.businessstortford.com

The Goods Yard

- National Planning Policy Framework (chapters 2 and 4)
- East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review 2007 (the East Hertfordshire Local Plan) & East Herts draft District Plan 2014.
- Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire 2014
- Wessex Economics, Town Wide Employment Study for Bishop's Stortford, for East Herts Council (2013)

- TFL Transport Interchange Guide
- Herts County Urban Travel Plan for Bishop's Stortford (2012?)
- Herts County Travel Survey 2012
- The vision as set out in the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group document (2009/10)
- Bishop's Stortford Draft Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan', prepared in August 2012.
- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)
- Building for Life 12: Third Edition – January 2015
- EHDC Goods Yard Development Brief
http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/t/i/Agreed_Goods_Yard_Brief_-_July_2011.pdf
- Communities and Local Government Planning Policy Statement 25 (2006) 'Development and Flood Risk'
- East Herts Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- AECOM Bishop's Stortford Heritage and Character Assessment (Feb 2016)

Land South of Bishop's Stortford

- National Planning Policy Framework
- Planning Practice Guidance Note (PPGN - paras 044 and 045)
- Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire, December 2014
- Bishop's Stortford Heritage and Character Assessment Draft AECOM 2016
- Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards 2014
- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)
- British Standards Publication BS 42020: 2013 Biodiversity – code of practice for planning and development
- Building for Life 12: Third Edition – January 2015
- DCLG Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard
- Defra: Rights of Way Circular (1/09), Guidance for Local Authorities, Version 2 October 2009
- East and South East Operating Area Housing Market Report (August 2014)
- East Hertfordshire Council's draft 'Parks and Open Space Strategy' 2013 – 2018
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 (the East Hertfordshire Local Plan)
- East Herts Adopted Local Plan (April 2007)
- East Herts Council's Affordable Housing and Lifetime Homes Supplementary Planning Document
- East Herts District Council Housing Needs Survey 2014/15

- East Herts District Council Local Plan and Open Space, Sports and Recreational Supplementary Policy Document
- East Herts District Council Strategic Housing Market assessment January 2010 and update March 2013
- East Herts District Council Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA)
- East Herts District Green Belt Review September 2015
- East Herts Draft District Plan Jan 2014
- East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan 2011
- East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2018
- East Herts District Council Appeals by governors of Bishops Stortford High School and the Hertfordshire and Essex High School and Science College, Hertfordshire County Council and Countryside properties report by David Wildsmith, Inspector for the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Feb 2012
- The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government's Decision September 2012
- Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan 2006
- Hertfordshire County Council Waste Core Strategy & Development Management policies
- Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Investment Strategy Nov 2009
- Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership (HIPP)
- Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016 (Adopted 2007)
- Secured by Design (Guidance owned by the Association of Chief Police Officers)
- Southern Country Park & Beyond – Management Plan 2013 – 2018
- Sport England Village & Community Halls
- The Office of National Statistics - Neighbourhood Statistics - Land South of Bishop's Stortford
- The vision as set out in the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group document (2009/10)
- Town and Country Planning Association: Creating Garden Cities and Suburbs Today
- Uttlesford District Council's Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (22 October – 4 December 2015)
- West Essex and East Hertfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Sept 2015)
- Gov.uk Public Rights of Way – landowner responsibilities

Bishops Stortford High School Site

- National Planning Policy Framework
- Planning Practice Guidance Note (PPGN - paras 044 and 045)

- Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for All Saints, Central, South and part of Thorley Questionnaire, December 2014
- Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for All Saints, Central, South and part of Thorley, Draft December 2015
- Bishop's Stortford Heritage and Character Assessment Draft AECOM 2016
- Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards 2014
- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)
- British Standards Publication BS 42020: 2013 Biodiversity – code of practice for planning and development
- Building for Life 12: 3rd Edition – Jan 2015
- DCLG Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard
- Defra: Rights of Way Circular (1/09), Guidance for Local Authorities, Version 2 October 2009
- East and South East Operating Area Housing Market Report (August 2014)
- East Hertfordshire Council's draft 'Parks and Open Space Strategy' 2013 – 2018
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 (the East Hertfordshire Local Plan)
- East Herts Adopted Local Plan (April 2007)
- East Herts Council's Affordable Housing and Lifetime Homes Supplementary Planning Document
- East Herts District Council Housing Needs Survey 2014/15
- East Herts District Council Local Plan and Open Space, Sports and Recreational Supplementary Policy Document
- East Herts District Council Strategic Housing Market assessment January 2010 and update March 2013
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- East Herts District Green Belt Review September 2015
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- East Herts Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2018
- East Herts District Council Appeals by governors of Bishops Stortford High School and the Hertfordshire and Essex High School and Science College, Hertfordshire County Council and Countryside properties report by David Wildsmith an Inspector for the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Feb 2012
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- Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Investment Strategy Nov 2009
- Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership (HIPP)
- Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002–2016 (Adopted 2007)
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- Southern Country Park & Beyond – Management Plan 2013–2018
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- The Office of National Statistics - Neighbourhood Statistics
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- Town and Country Planning Association: Creating Garden Cities and Suburbs Today
- Uttlesford District Council's Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation (22 October–4 December 2015)
- West Essex and East Herts Strategic Housing Market Assessment (Sept 2015)

East of Manor Links

- National Planning Policy Framework
- East Hertfordshire Local Plan Second Review 2007 (the East Hertfordshire Local Plan) & East Herts draft District Plan 2015
- Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards 2014
- Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire 2014
- Hertfordshire Local Wildlife Partnership – Site Ref: 35/002/01 Bishop's Stortford Golf Course Grassland December 2014 (date of survey 11.08.14)

Appendix 4 – Glossary

Term	Definition
Affordable Housing	Housing made available, based on the evidence of need, to people who are unable to afford housing at market prices. Affordable housing includes social, rented and shared ownership housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market, and that specifically excludes low cost market housing.
Air Quality Management Area	An area where air pollution is likely to exceed National Air Quality Objectives under the Environment Act (1995), particularly due to road traffic emissions. The area is subject to a programme of assessing air quality against national targets and the development of remedial measures to improve air quality.
Ancient Woodland	Woodland known to have existed continually in a location since before 1600.
Brownfield Site	Land that has been previously developed on.
Business Incubation Centre	A facility which provides micro business the opportunity to work in an office/ workplace environment within the same building as others. All occupants have access to shared facilities such as reception, Wi-Fi, telephony and meeting rooms along with the ability to meet informally and discuss business matters not necessarily in the same industry.
Conservation Area	An area designated under Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as being of 'special architectural or historical interest', the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.
Construction Management Plan	A plan detailing how construction will be managed in order to ensure the effects of construction on residents and businesses is kept to a minimum.
Developer Contributions (or S106 Contributions)	Contributions required under a Section 106 agreement from development to be set aside for future works and services directly related to the development.
Development Plan	Statutory Plans, including Local or District Plans and Neighbourhood Development Plans which are used to determine planning applications.
Exception Test	See Sequential and Exception Tests.
Floodplain	An area of land liable to flood from a watercourse, defined by the Environment Agency.
Garden City	The Town and Country Planning Association characterises a Garden City or Suburb as having generous green spaces linked to the wider natural environment, including a surrounding belt of countryside, with a well-managed network of public parks, private gardens, tree-lined streets and open spaces. It should have beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the very best of town and country living to create healthy homes in vibrant communities. Furthermore, it should

	enjoy strong local cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable neighbourhoods and have integrated and accessible transport systems. Communities should be fostered by long term stewardship of assets, such as allotments, and be sustainable through having a variety of employment opportunities within easy commuting distance of homes. A variety of mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are affordable for ordinary people should also be available.
Green infrastructure	A network of green spaces and other features, such as parks, open spaces, woodlands, playing fields, allotments and gardens providing a range of quality of life benefits for the local community.
Greenfield Site	Land where there has been no previous development.
Housing Associations	Independent, not-for-profit organisations that work with councils to offer flats and houses to local people on the Housing Register.
Infrastructure	Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.
Lifetime Homes	The 'Lifetime Homes' standards seek to make homes more flexible, convenient, safe, adaptable and accessible than most new homes, as defined in the EHDC Affordable Housing & Lifetime Homes Supplementary Planning Document.
Listed Building	Any building or structure which is included in the list of 'buildings of special architectural or historic interest' as defined in the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
Local Referendum	A direct vote in which electors in the Neighbourhood Area (or larger area if recommended by the Independent Examiner) will be asked to either accept or reject the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
Major Development	A development defined as major development in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 i.e. Development involving any one or more of the following— (a) the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits; (b) waste development; (c) the provision of dwellinghouses where — (i) the number of dwellinghouses to be provided is 10 or more; or (ii) the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more and it is not known whether the development falls within sub-paragraph (c)(i); (d) the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more; or (e) development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more;
Mitigation	Measures taken to reduce adverse effects of a development.
Modal Shift	The trend that sees more journeys made by a sustainable form of transport, usually away from cars and towards walking, cycling or public

	transport.
National Planning Policy Framework	Sets out national policy and how this is expected to be applied.
Neighbourhood Area	Area to which a proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order will relate.
Neighbourhood Plan	A local plan prepared by a parish council and community representatives for a particular neighbourhood area, which includes land use topics. If accepted by an independent examiner and passed by a simple majority at referendum, the Plan carries equal weight to other adopted local plans.
Objective	An aim or a goal to assist in achieving the overall vision for the area.
Open Space	All open space of public value including land, rivers, canals and lakes which offer important opportunities for recreation and can act as a visual amenity.
S106 Contributions	See Developer Contributions.
Secured by Design	The official flagship initiative of the Association of Chief Police Officers, supporting the principles of 'designing out crime'.
Sequential and Exception Test	The methodology recommended by the National Planning Policy Framework to ensure that new developments are sited in the most appropriate locations.
Shared Equity Housing	Shared equity is where more than one party has an interest in the value of the home, with the aim of reducing the cost of occupancy, e.g. an equity loan arrangement or a shared ownership lease.
Shared Space	Shared space is a design approach that seeks to change the way streets operate by reducing the dominance and speed of motor vehicles. No particular class of usage within the space has priority over any other when moving around and responsibility for safe and free movement is shared by all.
Sheltered Housing	Housing which is purpose built or converted exclusively for sale to elderly people with a package of estate management services and which consists of grouped, self-contained accommodation usually with communal facilities and normally with a warden.
Significant Development	A development of a scale sufficient to trigger the requirement for a Transport Assessment in accordance with Roads in Hertfordshire: Highway Design Guide 3 rd Edition i.e.: Residential development in excess of 80 units Non-food retail development of more than 1,500m ² Gross Floor Area (GFA) Class B1 Business of more than 2500m ² GFA Class B2 General industrial of more than 4,000m ² GFA Warehousing (use class B8) of more than 5,000m ² GFA
Social Housing	Subsidised housing for rent allocated on the basis of need.
Supplementary Planning Document	Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local or District Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for a

	development of specific sites or a particular issue.
Supported Housing	As for 'Sheltered Housing', but designed for those with physical or learning disabilities rather than just the elderly.
Sustainable Communities	Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future.
Sustainable Development	Development that allows change without damaging the environment or natural resources and that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Vision	A series of statements describing how an area would like to be at some time in the future.

Appendix 5 – AECOM Character Assessment Summary

This Appendix contains a summary of the AECOM Heritage and Character Assessment for the Neighbourhood Area divided up to describe the land and townscape features of each sub-area. As developments arise in any sub-area, it is expected that the Key Character Management Principles applicable for that sub-area will guide developers in designing suitable buildings, streets and spaces for their location.

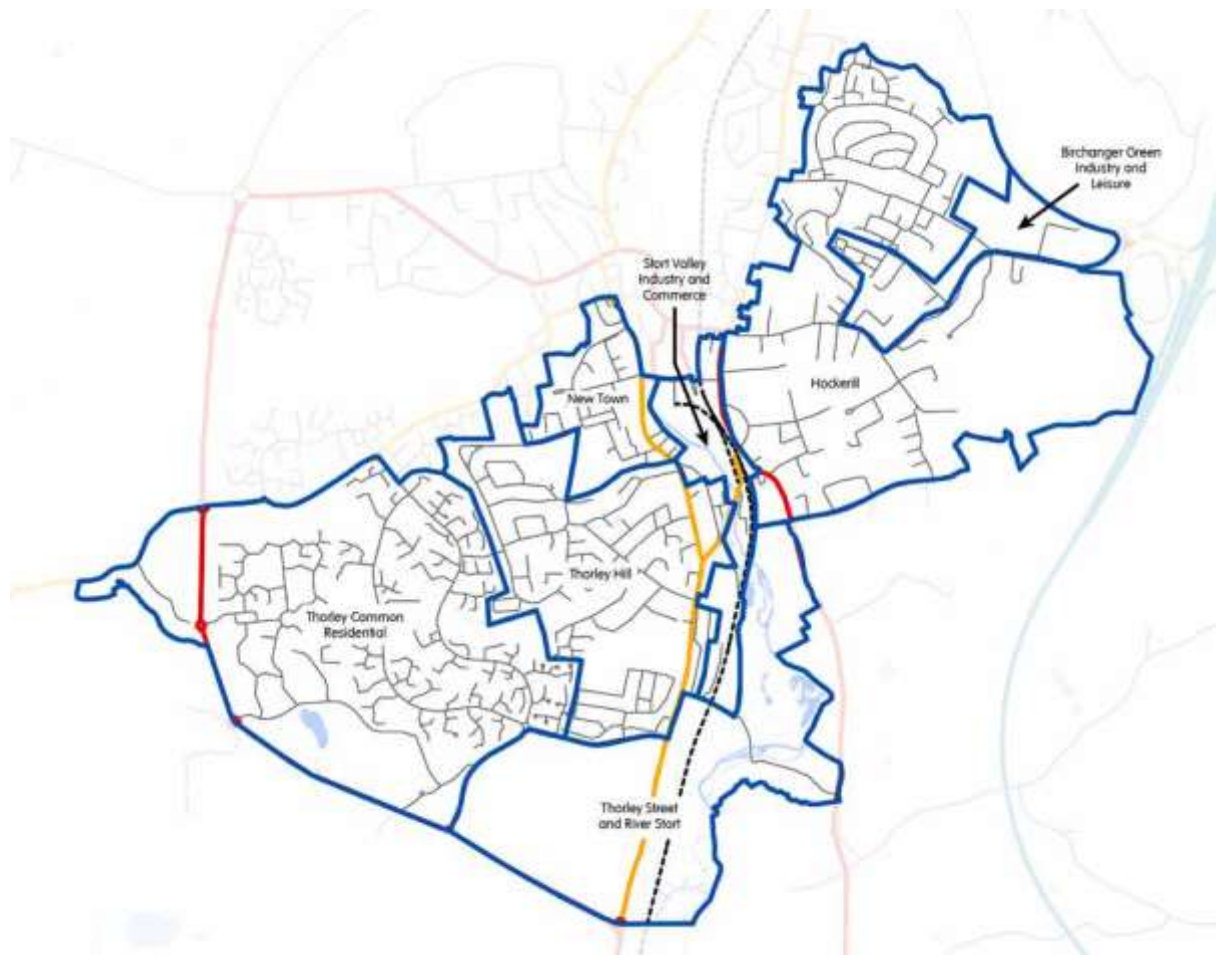


Fig 11 – Map showing the seven Townscape Character Sub-areas

- TCA01 – Hockerill
- TCA02 – Birchanger Green
- TCA03 – Stort Valley
- TCA04 – Newtown
- TCA05 – Thorley Common
- TCA06 – Thorley Hill
- TCA07 – Thorley Street and River Stort

Sub-area ID	Name	NP Policy Reference	Key Character Management Principles
TCA 01	Hockerill	HDP2/BSEM1	Future development adjacent to Green Belt should provide a buffer of green space on the edge
		HDP2/BSEM1	Proposals which retain or enhance well-vegetated front gardens that demonstrate a strong relationship with the street are more likely to be acceptable than proposals to introduce substantial areas of paving for parking
		HDP2	Views along Parsonage Lane and Warwick Lane towards the town centre and higher ground to the west of the town should be retained
		HDP2/BSEM1	New residential development should respect the existing proportions of the street, with building frontages set back behind generous front gardens, and scale of adjacent buildings and the shape and continuity of the roof lines
		HDP2/BSEM1	Development in the north should seek to strengthen the existing structure of the landscape and retain the wooded backdrop to longer distance views
		HDP2	The setting of historic buildings which are locally distinctive, such as the Nags Head Public House, should be protected and enhanced
		GIP1	Birchanger Wood should be protected and enhanced through active management
		HDP1/GI	A strategy for street tree management and replanting to increase the age structure and range of species to ensure continuous contribution of tree cover to streets, increased diversity and resilience to environmental change
TCA 02	Birchanger Green	HDP2/BP8	Future development should consider opportunities to introduce a mix of uses
		HDP2	The scale of new buildings should be minimised and should be no taller than the surrounding residential development around the boundaries of the area
		HDP2	Mature trees, woodland and hedgerows, which divide the area and enclose development, should be reinforced and enhanced

		TP4	Routes across the area for pedestrians and cyclists should be improved to enhance permeability and legibility
		BP10	A strategy should be developed to manage traffic and on-street parking within the area
		BP8	A strategy to reduce the visual impact of signage within industrial estates should be considered
TCA 03	Stort Valley	HDP2/GY1	Proposals for new development should be of high architectural quality, should demonstrate an understanding of the history and context of the area and make reference to vernacular style and materials and the scale of adjacent buildings
		GY1	Development within the northern part of the area should sustain and reinforce the historic and cultural links between the town and river
		HDP2/GY1	Development should be set back from the River Stort and the intervening space should be publicly accessible and include generous areas of public green space
		GY1	Development should not exceed four storeys in height to maintain views across the town from the east and west and with landmarks
		GY1	Opportunities to create a more active edge to Station Road and Anchor Road should be explored to improve the quality and vibrancy of the public realm
		GY1	A common pallet of materials, street furniture and signage should be developed to enhance the quality and legibility of the public realm
		GY2	Links between the town centre and railway station should be enhanced through a comprehensive public realm scheme
		GY6	Connectivity to the River Stort green corridor for pedestrians and cyclists should be enhanced
TCA 04	New Town	HDP2/BP6	Future development should maintain views from green space and along streets in the west of the St Michael's Church and across roof tops within the town centre. Development proposals in excess of four storeys are not likely to be acceptable
		HDP2/BP6	Development along South Street and Potters Street north of Station Road should incorporate active frontage and

			improvements to the quality and appearance of shop fronts should be supported
		HDP2/BP6	Future development within the Conservation Area should retain and enhance original shop fronts.
		HDP2	The high quality public realm in the northern parts should be extended to enhance legible connections and permeability of the area
		HDP2	In streets where front gardens are common, proposals which retain or enhance well-vegetated front gardens that demonstrate a strong relationship with the street are more likely to be acceptable
		HDP2	Development proposals south of Station Road between South Street and the River Stort should create physical connections with the river and enhance its setting and accessibility to the public
		HDP2	The junction of South Street and Station Road should be enhanced through development and public realm improvements to reinforce this key node between the station and the town centre
TCA 05	Thorley Common	HDP2	The strong landscape framework which encloses and divides the area should be protected and sustained
		HDP2	Proposals which retain or enhance well-vegetated front gardens that demonstrate a strong relationship with the street are more likely to be acceptable than proposals to introduce substantial areas of paving for parking
		HDP2	Development should protect and enhance existing blocks and belts of woodland and incorporate new planting to further enhance the quality of the area
		HDP2	Development should sustain views across green space to local landmarks and wooded hills beyond to maintain legibility
		HDP2	A strategy should be developed to improve legibility through the residential estates in this area and provide connections between adjacent residential areas for pedestrians and cyclists
		GIP1	Active use of the green spaces on the edges of the area should be encouraged to deter fly tipping

TCA 06	Thorley Hill	HDP2	Proposals which retain or enhance well-vegetated front gardens that demonstrate a strong relationship with the street are more likely to be acceptable than proposals to introduce substantial areas of paving for parking
		HDP2/BSHS1	Infill development should reflect the scale, density and roof line of adjacent buildings, and arrangement and offsets of buildings from the street and should include front gardens
		GIP1	A strategy for street tree management and replanting should be developed to increase the age structure of tree stock and range of species to ensure continuous contribution of tree cover to streets, increased diversity and resilience to environmental change
		GIP2	Public green space within the residential estates should be protected and enhanced
TCA 07	Thorley Street and River Stort	HDP2/BSS1	Future development in the south of the area should provide a clear transition between town and countryside and incorporate new green spaces and wherever possible, integrate existing vegetation
		BSS1	A buffer of green space should be provided along Thorley Street to protect the setting of the area and the many listed buildings along London Road
		GIP2	The semi-natural character of the River Stort corridor and Rushy Mead Nature Reserve should be protected and enhanced through active management
		BSS1	The materials proposed for any new development should be responsive to the vernacular style and materials of the area
		GIP?	A strategy for street tree management and replanting along London Road should be developed to increase the age structure of tree stock and range of species to ensure continuous contribution of tree cover to streets, increased diversity and resilience to environmental change
		TP4/BSS14	Opportunities to increase and improve connections between Thorley Street, the River Stort and Rushy Mead Nature Reserve should be maximised
		BSS1	Proposals which retain or enhance well-vegetated front gardens are demonstrate a strong relationship with the

			street are more likely to be acceptable than proposals to introduce substantial areas of paving for use as driveways
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Appendix 6 – Potential Encroachment of Plan Allocations on Consultations Zones

HSE Reference Number	TRANSCO Index Number	Pipeline Operator	Pipeline / Location Name	Location Map Reference (Start)	Location Map Reference (Finish)	Inner Zone (Metres)	Middle Zone (Metres)	Outer Zone (Metres)
7547	1804	National Grid Gas PLC	Thorley / Bishops Stortford (1TNO)	TL 480198	TL 491205	15	15	15