

# POLICY HERT3

## LAND SOUTH OF WELWYN ROAD AND WEST OF THIEVES LANE HERTFORD

MASTERPLAN FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

February 2019

**Croudace**   
HOMES.CO.UK





Policy HERT3 allocates two land parcels for development for a minimum of 550 dwellings. Around 250 dwellings are allocated to the land south of Welwyn Road, and around 300 to the north.

We are working on a collaborative basis with the promoters of the land to the north of Welwyn Road. With this in mind, the same highway and drainage consultants have been instructed to act in relation to both sites. This provides a greater degree of certainty and continuity in providing these new urban extensions.

The preparation of an overarching Masterplan Framework for the two sites is required as part of policy HERT3. The Hertford Steering Group has also been set up by the council to better understand the relationship between the two sites and discussions with these members are underway.

This Masterplan Framework responds to these requirements.



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Croudace Homes is a well established regional residential developer founded in 1946 and to this day remains a family run business.

Our mission is to create homes of the highest quality for our customers, to exceed their expectations regarding service and to deliver top levels of performance for our shareholders.

We take care to design our product and site layout to meet the needs of local people, and recognise that consideration of the environment is of ever increasing importance.

Our uncompromising commitment to quality extends to the first class service we offer customers after they have moved in. We are proud of our excellent ratings in national customer satisfaction surveys which place us amongst the top echelon in the house building industry.

Examples of previous Croudace Homes developments are shown to the right, exhibiting a range of building forms and architectural styles.



# The Vision

Croudace are committed to creating a neighbourhood that not only the company are proud of but more importantly the future residents will also be proud to be a part of. We want to create a strong, sustainable community that contributes to and enhances the local area and Hertford as a whole. We want the scheme to meet local needs and to provide benefits and opportunities not currently enjoyed in this location.

These objectives and visions have shaped our proposals.

## 5 Key objectives of the scheme:

- 1 A neighbourhood that is design-led with a strong sense of place
- 2 A neighbourhood that is well connected, accessible and can be easily navigated
- 3 A neighbourhood that provides new housing at a scale and mix which meet local requirements
- 4 A proposal that contributes to and enhances both the current site conditions and the local area.
- 5 A sustainable, safe neighbourhood and thriving community that residents are proud to be a part of.





## Planning Policy

### General

The East Herts District Plan was formally adopted by the Council in October 2018 and sets out the Council's planning framework for the district for the period 2011 to 2033.

Policy DPS1 sets out a requirement for a minimum of 18,458 net additional new homes within the District in the period 2011 to 2033, equivalent to an average of 839 new homes each year.

Policy DPS2 sets out the overall spatial approach to meeting the housing requirement during the plan period (i.e. where the new housing is expected to be located), which includes urban extensions to Hertford.

### Hertford

Policy HERT1 sets out the Council's strategy for accommodating growth in Hertford, which includes 550 homes to the west of the town as part of the overall delivery of a minimum of 950 new homes for the settlement. The detailed proposals for the development of 550 dwellings to the west of Hertford are set out in Policy HERT3. This states that land to the west of Hertford is allocated as a residential site, to accommodate a minimum of 550 homes by 2022, with around 300 homes being provided to the north of Welwyn Road and around 250 homes south of Welwyn Road/west of Thieves Lane.

Policy HERT3 also requires a Masterplan Framework to be prepared, involving site promoters, landowners, East Herts District Council, Hertfordshire County Council, Hertford Town Council and other key stakeholders. This Masterplan Framework responds to this requirement.

Policy HERT3's specific criteria include requirements to provide adequate infrastructure, including for communications to facilitate home working, and upgrades to the sewerage system.

In accordance with the provisions of HERT3 IV(d) development of the site may give rise to the opportunistic use of some minerals during the construction phase in accordance with

matters to be agreed with Hertfordshire County Council, as Minerals Planning Authority.

Further to Policy HERT3, the newly adopted District Plan has a wide range of policies relating to housing, the environment, transport and securing good design. Such policies need to be complied with as a whole.

### Housing

Policies HOU1 to HOU8 set out additional detailed requirements for new housing developments and include:

- Policy HOU1 – Type and Mix of Housing
- Policy HOU2 – Housing Density
- Policy HOU3 – Affordable Housing
- Policy HOU7 – Accessible and Adaptable Homes
- Policy HOU8 – Self-Build and Custom Build Housing

The planning application will propose an appropriate mix of housing tenures, type and size that reflects the needs of the local area in accordance with Policy HOU1.

As required by Policy HOU2, the scheme will need to make efficient use of the land while respecting the surrounding character and appearance of the area in relation to the built and natural environment.

Policy HOU3 (Affordable Housing) requires the provision of up to 40% of new houses to be affordable. The final scheme design will ensure that the affordable homes are integrated within the site, with the specific size and tenure of the affordable units through the application process with the Housing Officer.

Policies HOU7 and HOU8 require all new dwellings to meet the Accessible and Adaptable Building Regulations Standard as well as 1% of new units to be available for prospective self-builders.

The final scheme design will set out how these requirements are to be achieved.



Sites allocated for housing in Hertford from East Herts District Plan



Allocated site west of Thieves Lane for 250 dwellings from East Herts District Plan

### Design

Policy DES1 seeks to ensure that all significant development proposals are informed by a detailed Masterplan Framework. Such Masterplan Frameworks ensure new developments are well designed, respond positively to the distinctive characteristics of a particular site and respect the surrounding character in terms of height, scale, materials, layout and overall architectural style.

The scheme to be submitted as part of the planning application will respond to and reflect the principles set out in this Masterplan Framework Document. This will ensure that the scheme represents a well-designed proposal that respects the surrounding character and landscape.

### Transport

Policy TRA1 ensures all schemes achieve sustainable transport by being located in an area close to a range of shops and other services where residents have real choice about their mode of travel. The site is located close to a range of services including primary and secondary schools, community hall, shops, public house, train station and bus stops. The scheme design will need to ensure permeability for pedestrians and vehicles, including a potential bus route which will help provide for sustainable connectivity.

The scheme layout will offer future residents a real and varied choice of non-car based travel thereby resulting in a truly sustainable development in transport terms. On-site parking for cars and cycles will accord with Policy TRA3 and the relevant guidance.

Policy TRA3 also requires that provision should be made for charging points for low and zero carbon vehicles and refers to the Council's Supplementary Planning Document "Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development", which stipulates (amongst other things) that for garages to be counted as parking spaces they should have minimum clear internal dimensions of 2.6m x 5.6m or 3.2m x 5.0m so as to allow for storage beside or behind the parking space. Car ports should have minimum internal clear dimensions of 2.4m x 4.8m. The proposed garages and car ports

will meet or exceed these dimensions. Where practical electric car charging points will be provided to houses and infrastructure will be included in shared parking courts to allow for the future provision of vehicle charging points.

### Open Space and Natural Environment

Policy CFLR1 entitled Open Space, Sport and recreation ensures new residential developments meet the necessary Accessible Natural Greenspace standards set by Natural England. The heart of the proposal is an area of public open space which provides for informal recreation. In addition to this the boundaries of the site contain additional areas of open space all of which will contribute to the well-being of future residents. The design of the scheme has been mindful of the public right of way which runs from Welwyn Road to the ancient woodland at the most narrow section of the site. The footpath will further contribute to the enjoyment and leisure aspects of residents.

Policies NE1 and NE2 ensures all ecological matters are suitably addressed and that schemes should aim for a net gain in biodiversity. The scheme will secure a net gain in site biodiversity and ecological value.

### Heritage

The site is adjacent to the Grade II\* registered park and garden at Panshanger Park. In accordance with the provisions set out in Policy HA1, the scheme will be designed in order to preserve the historic value and setting of this designated asset. The applicant has been mindful of the importance of this site from the outset. The scheme design proposes a green and open buffer around the shared boundary with the park that preserves the setting of the park and with the footpath, provides for access to the park for future residents.

### Climate Change

Policies CC1 and CC2 requires residential development to demonstrate how they have considered climate change and how they can mitigate and adapt to climate change over time. Such issues will be addressed in any future planning application. However, and as an overarching position, the scheme will be

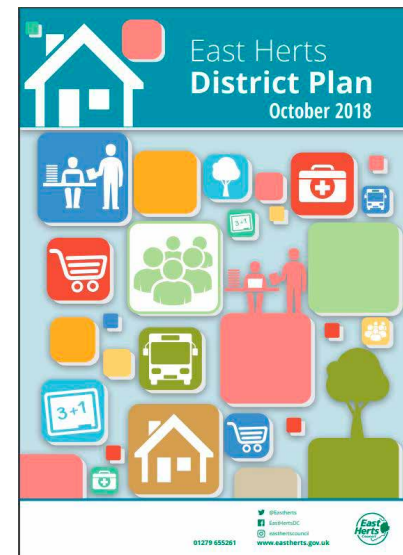
designed to accord with both policies by providing new well-designed energy efficient dwellings that will be able to respond to and adapt to climate change.

Policy DES4 also seeks to ensure that schemes provide for innovative design, new technologies and construction techniques, including zero or low carbon energy and water efficient design and sustainable construction methods. The policy also seeks to ensure that new technologies are catered for, seeking the provision of high speed broadband connectivity through the provision of Fibre to the Premises.

### Summary

Croudace Homes, alongside Woolf Bond Planning will be making a detailed planning application for around 250 dwellings. The development will feature a mixture of one to four bed properties including the provision of 40% affordable housing in accordance with policy. The planning application will have regard to the policies and requirements of the development plan.

This Masterplan Framework will inform the detailed scheme design.





## Physical Context

The site is located to the west of Hertford, and is adjacent to the Sele Farm area of the town. The site is an open field and is formed by a large rectangular field and a smaller rectangular field that runs parallel to Welwyn Road. Together these form an L shaped plot of land. The site is bound by Welwyn Road to the north and Thieves Lane to the east.

There is existing housing to the north and east of the site which spreads into Hertford town. To the west of the site is Panshanger Park which is a Grade II\* registered park and garden. A public right of way runs through a narrow section of the site, linking Welwyn Road and Blakemore Wood.



VIEW 1



VIEW 2



VIEW 3



VIEWS FROM WELWYN ROAD



# Character Analysis

## Immediate Vicinity

As seen from the photos, the surrounding development was predominantly built between 1960 and 1990 with some small pockets built within the last 10 years. These developments are typical examples of developments built during this time and are not distinctive in style to Hertford.

It would therefore not be appropriate to adopt the same architectural style on this scheme; however, similar materials can be utilised to create a development that is sympathetic to its surroundings.



## Wider Area

The majority of good examples of residential architecture found within Hertford are of Victorian/Georgian era properties with some located within the Hertford Conservation Area.

These are distinctive to Hertford and a style that incorporates some of the features and elements of these buildings would create a scheme with a sense of place.

As the site is located on the edge of Hertford towards the open countryside, it is also appropriate to respect the style found within the surrounding villages, particularly on parts of the scheme that front the Ancient Woodland and towards Panshanger Park.

## Site Constraints

### Site Topography

The site is bound by Welwyn Road, Thieves Lane and the woodland belts of Blakemore Woods and Chesher's Plantation. The site slopes gently from the north west to the south east, spanning from 72.50m to 69.00m above ordnance datum. There is a steep bank between Thieves Lane and the site, starting from the south east corner and gradually reducing towards the roundabout where it meets Welwyn Road. At its steepest there is a level difference of 2.5m between the road and the site.

### Vehicular Access

The proposal includes two new access points to the site as agreed with Hertfordshire County Council, one from Welwyn Road and the other from Thieves Lane. These two points will be connected by the main spine road of the development which will provide primary access to all dwellings. The spine road will contain features to reduce vehicular speeds through the development, thus discouraging the route being used as a potential shortcut between Welwyn Road and Thieves Lane.

### Pedestrian Access

There are various potential points for pedestrian access to the site, including off the roundabout where Welwyn Road and Thieves Lane meet. There is an existing public right of way which cuts through the site between Welwyn Road and Blakemore Wood. This will be retained and enhanced to make a clear path through the site. The pedestrian access from the roundabout will provide a visual link to the protected woodlands and allow for easy access to the neighbourhood centre of Sele Farm which lies to the north east. See page 10 for further details.

### Retained Landscaping

Wherever possible landscaping surrounding the site will be retained and enhanced. Additionally there is a 15m buffer to the western boundary of the site which prevents development in this zone adjacent to the ancient woodland.





## Site Opportunities

### Opportunities

The site offers many opportunities which have been detailed below:

- Visual corridor with views towards the Blakemore Woods from the junction where Welwyn Road and Thieves Lane meet
- The scheme will seek to provide for additional views from and through the site towards the adjacent woodland, registered park and open space
- Potential spine road linking the two vehicular access points
- Sustainable drainage features located at the south of the site due to the topography of the land
- Heart of the development in the centre of the site in the form of a village green
- Location for key buildings which provide a gateway to the site and frame the views to the ancient woodland
- Suitably located pedestrian links which provide access through the site and to the existing network
- Pedestrian links at the roundabout which provide easy access to the Neighbourhood Centre of Sele Farm
- Open Space to the edge of the development providing the buffer to the woodland and green spaces which can be overlooked by housing

### Design Concept

The proposal has been designed to respond to site specific constraints and to take advantage of the opportunities detailed above.

A focus of the proposal will be to incorporate the visual corridor towards Blakemore Woodland. Buildings will be located to frame the view and will open up towards the woodland to maximise this opportunity. Additional views towards the woodland and the outer edges will be provided through and from within the scheme.

A spine road will link the development and provide primary vehicular access throughout the site. Properties fronting onto the spine road will be up to three storeys which will provide a strong frontage and help form a key character area of the development.

Softer frontage will be provided to the edge of the development with the style of dwellings reflecting their location within the site.



## Key Considerations

### Public Consultation and Engagement

We have sought to engage with key local stakeholders throughout the preparation of the draft proposals for the site.

This has included meetings and correspondence with the local steering group, meetings with the local planning authority, correspondence with local councillors, and presentations to the Council. We have also held discussions on the scheme with the Sele Neighbourhood Plan team.

A public exhibition was held on 11 July 2018 and was a particularly helpful process that has been used to inform local residents as to the proposals for the site. The feedback received from attendees has also helped to shape and form the emerging proposals.

Just over 1000 letters were distributed to the public inviting them to the consultation event.

A total of 79 people attended and a total of 39 feedback forms were received.

The principal comments received from local residents at the exhibition were in relation to the need to ensure adequacy and capacity of supporting infrastructure such as schools and doctors' surgeries to cope with the demands placed on services by additional residents.

Local residents were also keen to ensure that traffic was managed and that the character of Panshanger Park is respected.

The local residents' comments will be addressed through the overall scheme design, whilst mitigation for local services will be secured in the form of a legal agreement.





## Key Considerations

### Governance and Stewardship

Public areas and spaces that are not adopted by East Herts District Council or Hertfordshire County Council will be brought under the control of a management company. The management company will be established by Croudace Homes and future residents will contribute towards the associated maintenance costs.

Once fully established and the scheme is complete, Croudace will transfer the land to the Management Company with elected residents as named Directors of the company. From this point onward residents will have full control of the company and can decide how these areas are governed.

The areas under the control of the management company could include roads, public open space and SuDS features. Maintenance schedules of each component, and objectives where appropriate, will be established with annual reviews to assess their success.

The public areas and spaces to be controlled by the management company will be established through the legal agreement as part of the planning application process.



### Drainage

The Environment Agency's (EA) Flood Map for Planning indicates that the site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1 (low probability). The site is considered at low or negligible risk of all sources of flooding aside from surface water which presents a manageable risk within the lower area of the site. Based on the constraints of the site there is potential to include Sustainable Drainage Features in the form of attenuation basins at the south of the site.

### Heritage

The site immediately adjoins the grade II\* registered park and gardens at Panshanger Park, with the closest listed building being grade two listed The Dell on Hertingfordbury Road. Beyond that lies the Hertingfordbury Conservation Area which contains 27 individually listed buildings. Due to the nature of the proposed development, and the intervening landscape, it is not considered that the conservation area of Hertingfordbury would be affected by the proposed development. The proposal for the site has been sensitively designed to respect the local heritage assets.

# Key Considerations












## Landscaping

The site is devoid of any existing trees of note, having been in arable use for many years, however the site is bound by existing woodland to the West and South, with some isolated trees along the boundary with Thieves Lane and Welwyn Road. The woodland to the West is classified as 'Ancient Woodland' and the woodland to the south is covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) forming part of the wider Panshanger Park. There are a number of aged trees surrounding the site, mainly Oaks with the adjoining woodland areas, but no veteran trees have been identified in the recently updated tree survey. The ancient woodland to the West of the site requires a 15m buffer to any development in order to comply with the advice of Natural England. Landscaping buffers and existing boundary trees will be established and utilised to merge the new development into its rural setting. Key open space areas will be included throughout the development and a LEAP (Local Equipped Area of Play) is to be incorporated into one of these open space areas. Any areas of open space that are not adopted by the Local Authority will be maintained in perpetuity by a management company established for the site in accordance with a regularly reviewed maintenance plan.

## Ecology

The site is dominated by two arable fields of intrinsically low ecological importance, such that development of this habitat is not predicted to result in significant adverse effects. The landscaping will be designed to encourage biodiversity which will provide an overall net gain in biodiversity once the development is complete. Ecological assessments of the site and adjoining areas have been undertaken, in particular in light of the adjoining Panshanger Park wildlife site (58/025) to the west. Bat, badger, bird, and dormouse surveys have been undertaken, along with arable plant surveys and arboricultural studies of the trees both around the edge of the site and in the adjoining woodlands. These have identified the need to maintain appropriate buffers between any development and the ancient woodland, and to have the front of properties facing the woodlands rather than having back gardens abutting the woodland edge, amongst other measures, which will inform the layout of the development.



-  Application Boundary
-  Residential development area
-  Existing planting to be retained
-  Potential existing planting to be removed
-  Potential existing planting to be retained and reduced in width to circa 2m
-  Potential native hedge planting
-  Retained visual green link
-  Potential open space
-  Approximate SUDS zone
-  15m Ancient woodland buffer
-  Children's Play Area (approximate location)





# Sustainable Transport and Highways

## Sustainable Transport

**Vehicular Access** - The two vehicular access points off Thieves Lane and Welwyn Road will be linked by a spine road. Secondary and tertiary roads will stem from the spine road and provide vehicular access throughout the development.

**Cycle Routes** - The streets within the site will be designed to be cyclist and pedestrian friendly with low vehicle speeds and good connections beyond the site onto the proposed improved cycle route along Welwyn Road.

The developers will work with the highways authority to allow for the provision of a cycle route alongside Welwyn Road in accordance

with the allocation policy. This will create better connections heading from the site to the town centre and station as well as towards the other proposed development site further to the west.

**Bus Links** - The primary road which links Welwyn Road and Thieves Lane will allow for a potential bus route to run through the development. Within a 5 minute walk of the development there are bus links which provide access to Ware, Harlow and Hertford Town Centre.

**Pedestrian Routes** - Access points are located around the edge of the site, linking the development to the existing pedestrian network. A foot way will run around the site from the north west corner adjacent to Welwyn Road to the south east corner parallel

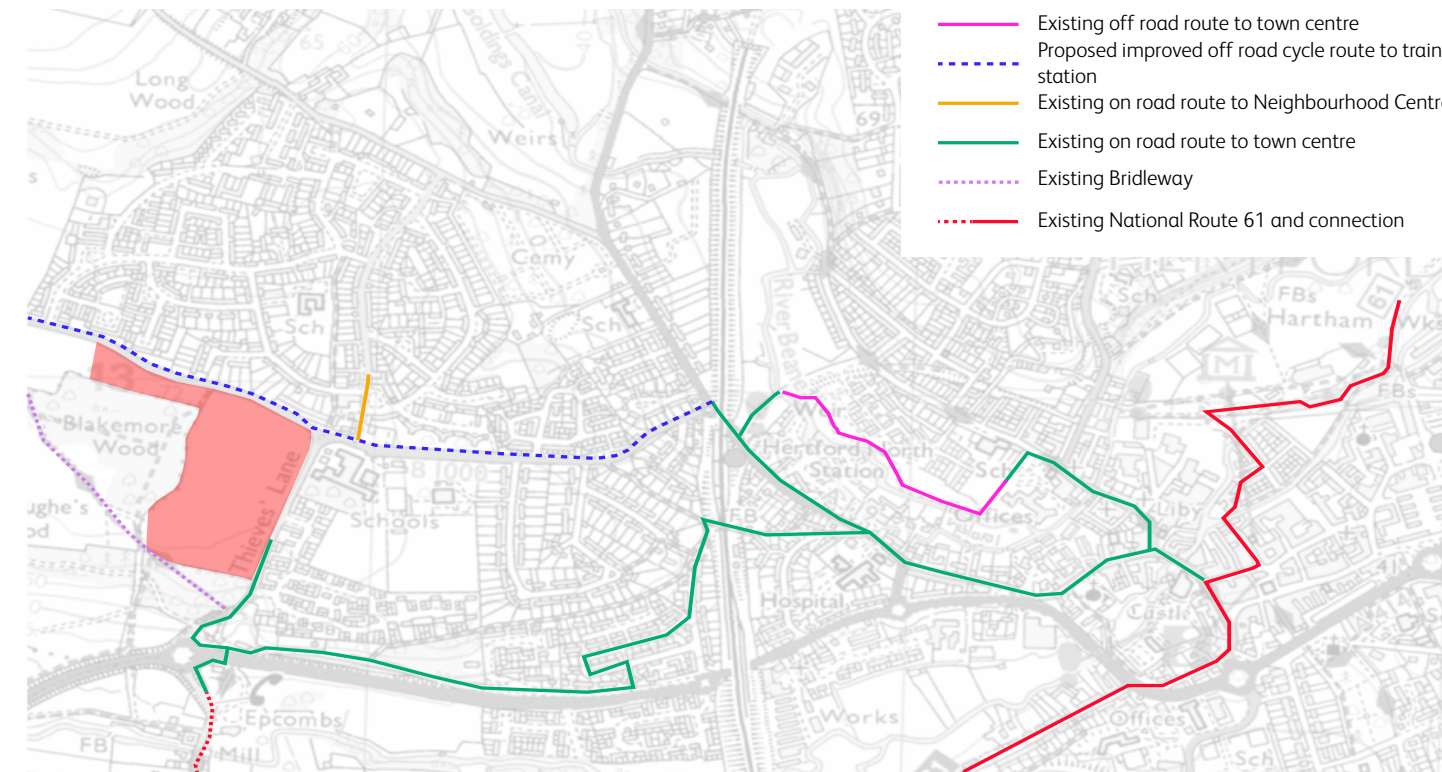
to Thieves Lane. New crossing points will be introduced over Welwyn Road and Thieves Lane as well as improved crossings at the junction between Welwyn Road and Thieves Lane, together providing safe access to the new development.

## Highways

The Thieves Lane site is in a location that provides residents with an excellent choice of transport modes including bus, cycle and pedestrian routes and train lines which will minimise vehicular movements compared to many other locations around Hertford. Destinations within walking distance include Primary and Secondary Schools, local shops, Hertford North train station and the town centre. A prime consideration in providing the new homes is to improve highway safety and reduce traffic speeds on Welwyn Road and Thieves Lane. Discussions are being held with the highway authority regarding the introduction of 30mph speed limits on both roads, as well as traffic calming measures and pedestrian crossings.

Improvements will be made to the junction of Welwyn Road and Thieves Lane at the north-eastern corner of the site. This will allow for pedestrians to cross both roads safely, affording access on foot to the neighbourhood shops, school and other facilities as well as the wider town beyond. Other crossing points on Thieves Lane and Welwyn Road will also be provided. There are two vehicular access points proposed, one off Thieves Lane and the other on Welwyn Road. The main street passing through the site connecting the two accesses will be designed to accommodate buses such that the existing Sele Farm estate bus service could potentially be extended to pass through the site.

The above measures offer new residents real alternatives for travel other than the car but in addition a Travel Plan has been prepared for the residential development to provide additional incentives to travel by means other than the car.



Map showing cycle routes from the site



## Character Areas

### Green Link

The Primary Green Link connects the ancient woodland of Blakemore Wood to the wider area upon approach to the scheme from the North West. It creates an important visual corridor and route to the ancient woodland with key buildings framing the view from outside the scheme.

The link will be of a width to ensure woodland views are significant when viewed from the north east corner, drawing pedestrians into the scheme with buildings providing active frontage and natural surveillance for the entirety of the route.

A potential art feature which has been inspired by local surroundings will terminate the green link. Trees will line the Green Link and will be positioned to ensure that they will grow to mature proportions.



### Village Green

The Village Green forms a central green space which will act as the heart of the development, creating a formal area of open space within easy access to all future occupants of the scheme.

The open space will consist of a secure Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) that will provide opportunities for formal play whilst the remaining open space will offer more informal and casual use. Semi mature trees will be planted to surround the village green.

The built form will help to enclose the green and provide natural surveillance to provide a safe space for all users.



### 1 Connections

The scheme will integrate with its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones, including to the network of foot and cycle routes, which link to the town centre, railway station and Sele Farm neighbourhood centre to the north east and Panshanger Park to the west.

### 2 Facilities and Services

The scheme is within a short walk of the Sele Farm neighbourhood centre where a range of shops and services are available. Hollybush Primary, Hertford St Andrew Primary, St Joseph's Catholic Primary and The Sele School Secondary schools are also within a short walk of the development. The connections to these facilities are set to be improved with the off-site highways works and contributions towards education are to be secured by legal agreement. Areas of open space are to be provided on site with the inclusion of play equipment.

### 3 Public Transport

The proposed spine road through the site is designed to accommodate a potential bus route and stops will be provided. This will provide connections to the town centre, railway station and local towns and villages.

### 4 Meeting Local Housing Requirements

The development will provide a mix of housing types and tenures to address local housing needs, this will include a variety of new affordable, open market and self-build homes. A proportion of these will also be adaptable to allow for long term occupation.

### 5 Character

Plans for the site will incorporate distinct character areas. The overarching architecture will take inspiration from the properties distinctive to Hertford to create a development that is appropriate for its setting and will integrate into the town.

### 6 Working with the site and its context

The existing view towards the Ancient Woodland from the Welwyn Road/Thieves Lane roundabout is to be retained and celebrated. The proposed scheme will be sensitively designed to respect views to and from Panshanger Park. Existing trees and hedgerows are to be retained where possible and an open space buffer is to be incorporated against the Ancient woodland.

## 7 Creating well defined streets and spaces

The scheme is a landscape led design with hard and soft landscaping defining area of the development. All streets and spaces will have active frontage from the built form which responds accordingly to the area in which it is located.

## 8 Easy to find your way around

Landmark buildings and areas will act as nodes and navigation points within the development, enabling natural and easy way-finding through.

## 9 Streets for All

All proposed streets will be designed to encourage low vehicle speeds with a proportion of shared surface streets with pedestrian users given priority.

## 10 Car Parking

All allocated parking is to be off-street, located close to people's homes with the parking set back as far as possible so as not to dominate the street scene. Visitor parking will be provided throughout the scheme. Where practical electric car charging points will be provided to homes. Garages will be of a size that will allow for convenient use as parking and storage.

## 11 Public and Private Spaces

A mixture of open spaces will be provided within the scheme with elements of play equipment provided and wider areas of open space. Private spaces will be clearly defined and a management company will maintain any areas of open space in perpetuity that are not adopted by the Council. The management company will also maintain in perpetuity such drainage features and roads that the Council does not adopt.

## 12 External Storage and Amenity

All new homes will be provided with the required level of storage for waste and recycling. Storage will be located within a distance of the collection point that will encourage users to return them to their permanent position which will be out of view from public spaces. All dwellings will be provided with adequate secure and convenient cycle storage facilities.