

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 5 JULY 2011

REPORT BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

BISHOP'S STORTFORD 20 20 VISION
AND GOODS YARD SITE BRIEF

WARD(S) AFFECTED: All Bishop's Stortford Wards

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To inform members of the progress being made by the Bishop's Stortford 20 20 Group and to seek endorsement and adoption of a site brief for the area known as the Goods Yards Site in Bishop's Stortford.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL:</u> that:	
(A)	the Draft Bishop's Stortford Goods Yard Site Development Brief as attached is adopted as the Council's vision and objectives for the site;
(B)	minor amendments are delegated to the Director of Customer and Community Services in consultation with the Leader;
	and
(C)	used for development control purposes in determining planning applications relating to the site;
	and
(D)	used to inform emerging Local Development Framework strategies and policies.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 On 24 November 2009 Executive received a report to update them on the progress being made by the Bishop's Stortford 20 20 Visioning group and to seek adoption of a Vision document for Bishop's Stortford.

- 1.2 The Executive had previously agreed to the establishment of a multi agency board to develop a long term vision for the future of Bishop's Stortford. Chaired by the leader of the Council, membership was drawn from a wide range of statutory agencies, businesses and enterprise and representatives of the community.
- 1.3 The work of the group has been to identify and consider the major issues which might shape Bishop's Stortford over the next 10 or 20 years. The output being to develop a vision which might influence positive outcomes from the plans and ambitions of statutory, voluntary and commercial organisations who might have a part to play in the town's future.
- 1.4 A draft Vision document was presented to the Executive which recommended to Council that:
 - the principles set out in the Draft Vision Document produced by the Bishop's Stortford 20 20 group should be adopted as being consistent with its ambitions for the Town.
 - the Council affirms its commitment to refer to the 20 20 Vision when making decisions that will impact on the town.
- 1.5 Those recommendations were agreed by the Council on 9 December 2009 and the document 'A Vision for Bishop's Stortford' was subsequently published in January 2010. It is available as a hard copy from the council offices or electronically on the Council's website at www.eastherts.gov.uk/bishopsstortford2020.
- 1.6 On 1 December 2010 The Executive agreed and recommended to Council, the adoption of a site specific brief for the Mill Site in Bishop's Stortford and this is also available at the website shown above.
- 1.7 The purpose of a Site Specific Brief is to set out clear guidelines for potential developers on the local expectations for parts of the site to be retained or developed for the benefits of the town.
- 2.0 Report
- 2.1 *A Vision for Bishop's Stortford* identifies a number of sites in and around Bishop's Stortford town centre which have the potential to contribute to the delivery of the Vision and the delivery of the desired outcomes for the town.

- 2.2 In order to provide a means of positively influencing any development proposals that may come forward for the sites, the 20 20 group undertook to promote the development of a site specific brief for each of the sites. The first brief, relating to the area around the flour mill was completed and agreed by the Executive in December 2010. This, the second such brief to be prepared relates to the area known as the Goods Yard site in Bishop's Stortford and is an informed update of a brief originally prepared in 2004.
- 2.3 The brief has been updated to reflect emerging land uses in and around the town since that time; to build on and contribute to the desired outcomes articulated in the Vision 20 20 document and to reflect the views, aspirations and ambitions of those who live, work and trade in the town.
- 2.4 Consultation on the brief took place through the organisations represented on the 20 20 Group. The purpose of this local initiative consultation was to ascertain where the brief needed to be changed or updated and which were the most preferred aspirations for the site and its surrounds. The consultation provided feedback from a wide range of interest groups and the public through a range of local and national organisations and bodies which were actively involved in developing 'A Vision for Bishop's Stortford'.
- 2.5 Responses received were collated and summarised. Based on the outcome of the work of the 20 20 Group and the feedback from consultations, officers have prepared an update of the Development Brief for the Goods Yard Site. The consultation process covers the Aspirations for the site and prioritised the land uses and outcomes for the emerging development options for the site as follows :
- The need for a greater mix of land uses and less dependence on a dominant land use e.g. residential as portrayed in the 2004 Development Brief.
 - Need for additional car parking which assists the wider town centre parking requirements and commuter parking to be accommodated within a multi-storey car park.
 - Improved public transport hub.
 - The suitability of the site for location of major offices.
 - Inclusion of a high quality hotel.

- Retail opportunities including major retail store.
- High quality of design of buildings and public realm.
- Attractive Riverside frontage.
- Becoming an exemplar for sustainable town centre.

A summary of the feedback received from individuals and representative bodies is provided as **Essential Reference Paper 'C'**.

2.6 The site brief for consideration is provided as **Essential Reference Paper 'D'**. It is also available in its full format, including appendices on the Council's website at the web address given at 1.4 above.

2.7 The site brief reflects the most current and up to date views for the site and is fully supported by the feedback from the consultation process. It is supported by and consistent with the 'Vision for Bishops Stortford 20 20'. If the brief is adopted as policy by the council then the document will become a strong material consideration for development control purposes. If adopted as policy, it will also be able to feed into and inform the Local Development Framework

3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Please refer to **Essential Reference Paper A**.

Background papers;

A Vision for Bishop's Stortford (Bishops Stortford 20 20 group 2010) , Mill Site Development Options Brief and Consultation documents. All documents and appendices to ERP C plus further background papers are available at www.eastherts.gov.uk/bishopsstortford2020

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities</p>	<p>Promoting prosperity and well-being; providing access and opportunities <i>Enhance the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.</i></p> <p>Pride in East Herts <i>Improve standards of the neighbourhood and environmental management in our towns and villages.</i></p> <p>Caring about what's built and where <i>Care for and improve our natural and built environment.</i></p> <p>Shaping now, shaping the future <i>Safeguard and enhance our unique mix of rural and urban communities, ensuring sustainable, economic and social opportunities including the continuation of effective development control and other measures.</i></p> <p>Leading the way, working together <i>Deliver responsible community leadership that engages with our partners and the public.</i></p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>Extensive consultation was undertaken to inform the development of A Vision for Bishop's Stortford. Consultation has also been undertaken through the organisations represented on the Vision 20 20 group.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>The Brief, if adopted by the council will have the status of being a material consideration for development control purposes. It will also be used to inform the content of the Local Development Framework.</p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>None specific to this report</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>None specific to this report</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>The purpose of the production of a site brief is reduce the risk that in the event development proposals come forward for the site, that development would take place that might not realise the best potential for the site and the town.</p>

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'B'**Goods Yard Site Consultees - Bishops Stortford**

Contact	Position	Company	Address
Miss Dawn Lloyd	Planning Liaison Officer	Environmental Agency	Apollo Court 2 Bishops Square Business Park St Albans Road West Hatfield Herts AL10 9EX
Geraint Hughes	Stakeholder Manager	Rail and National Express East Anglia,	Oliver Yard 55 City Road London EC1V 1HQ
Architectural Liaison Officer	County Community Safety & Partnership Unit,	Hertfordshire Constabulary	The Campus Welwyn Garden City Herts AL8 6AF
Alissa Ede	Rail Passenger Transport Unit	Hertfordshire County Council	County Hall Pegs Lane Hertford Herts SG13 8DQ
David Humby	Highways	Hertfordshire County Council	County Hall Pegs Lane Hertford Herts SG13 8DQ
Alison Tinniswood	Historic Environment Unit	Hertfordshire County Council	County Hall Pegs Lane Hertford Herts SG13 8DQ
Sue Jackson	Public Transport Unit	Hertfordshire County Council	County Hall Pegs Lane Hertford Herts SG13 8DQ
Paul Maison		British Waterways South East,	510-524 Elder House Elder Gate Central Milton Keynes MK9 1BW
Mr Norman Macritchie		Health & Safety Executive	Woodlands Manton Lane Manton Lane Ind Estate Bedford MK41 7LW

Katherine Fletcher	Planning	English Heritage	Brooklands 24 Brooklands Avenue Cambridge CB2 8BU
East Herts Area		Thames Water Development	Asset Investment Unit Maple Lodge Denham Way Rickmansworth Herts WD3 9SQ

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'C'

GOODS YARD – Bishop's Stortford

Developing a Revised Site Specific Brief: Consultation Process/Emerging Development Options Issues and Aspirations

Introduction

Members of 20 20 Group and various statutory consultees were invited to provide feedback in terms of what elements of the current brief (produced in 2004) are acceptable and also raise key issues that need addressing given emerging land use patterns in the town centre. Issues raised by the respondents were reported to 20 20 Group meeting held on 10th March 2011. At the meeting the 20 20 considered an 'Issues and Aspirations' paper to inform the development of revised brief for the Goods Yard site in Bishops Stortford.

As part of that debate the group considered a range of aspirations for the site. Some were identified in 2004 brief and others from the feedback provided through 20 20 Group members and statutory agencies. The list of aspirations that has emerged, although not definitive were circulated to Members of 20 20 Group and Local Ward Members etc (list of Consultees attached as appendix 1) by letter dated 11th March 2011, copy attached.

Members were requested to respond to the listed aspirations and any other additional in a 'packing order' of priorities.

Response received from Consultees

Details of response received from Local organisations and individuals are set out below.

Aspirations	High	Medium	Low
Additional capacity for cars in the town centre	70%	15%	15%
Additional car parking at the railway station (multi-storey)	80%	10%	10%
Improved public transport hub	55%	25%	20%
Scale and design in keeping with town character	80%	15%	5%
Attractive riverside frontage	70%	15%	15%
Family housing accommodation	5%	60%	35%
Affordable housing	5%	40%	55%
Location for major Offices	55%	20%	25%
Retails opportunities for A1 use	30%	50%	20%
Retail development incorporating a major store	60%	25%	15%
Modest sized high quality hotel	50%	15%	35%

Community services and facilities	55%	35%	10%
Improved leisure facilities	45%	30%	25%
Open space (small park/public square	45%	30%	25%
Low carbon energy opportunities	55%	35%	10%
Marina	15%	30%	55%
High quality design of buildings and public realm	75%	20%	5%
Becoming an exemplar for sustainable town centre	80%	10%	10%
Childcare accommodation	20%	60%	20%

Any Other Comments: Summary of comment received is set out below:

Organisations Comments

Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation

1. Does not want housing growth for Hertfordshire to be centred on Bishop's Stortford, the infrastructure cannot support it
2. The Goods yard site and flour mill site need to be considered as a whole to provide the opportunity to work out a cohesively the town centre infrastructure and this should be condition of any development.
3. Opening up this area is good idea but it should be attractive and a reason in itself to want to visit it. It should become a feature of the town.
4. A major store such as John Lewis would be great
5. Need for a major car park together with public transport interchange facilities. Improved commuter parking and additional visitor parking.
6. A development centred on the Goods Yard would greatly ease the congestion in the town centre but it should become competitor to Harlow or Cambridge. It should retain its image as a market town.
7. The appearance and ambiance of the development is of the utmost importance. The most recent developments (Jackson Square and Riverside) are insipid, uninspiring, amorphous series of blocks and detrimental to the character and well-being of town centre. Please avoid repetition of this disaster.
8. It is important that the town limits growth to match the history and infrastructure of town.
9. There is no need for further affordable housing.
10. Green space is vital for life.

11. High density development should be discouraged. Architecture must be of the absolute highest calibre, in keeping with our historic buildings but incorporating the most up to date energy efficiency measures.
12. River frontage needs to be enhanced not over-shadowed by high rise development.
13. It is vital that the opportunity to improve transport infrastructure is not missed. A link road included here could relieve pressure on Hockerill Junction by allowing traffic to enter the town from a variety of directions.
14. State of the art office facilities would allow existing businesses to expand and attract new businesses

Bishop's Stortford Town Council

1. The Council does not oppose development of height as long as the historic views of St Michaels Church from London Road and Hallingbury are preserved and high rise buildings are not located adjacent to the river.
2. There should be provision for the relocation and expanded South Street Surgery.
3. Although the Council does not regard a dedicated marina as high priority, it does consider it high priority that riverside is an amenity open space, with an attractive frontage, providing facilities for locals and visitors and a pleasant environment.
4. The Council considers that this site should be looked at in conjunction with the surrounding redevelopment opportunities namely the Lancaster/John Whaley & Fife Wilson as well as the Atkins & Cripps site.

Individual Responses

1. The town does need another development of flats/apartments.
2. There is an opportunity to improve commercial and business focus of the town because of outstanding transport links and site's location with rail travel. The development could prove the catalyst to make Bishops Stortford the business centre located half way between Cambridge and London, yet on Stansted's doorstep. Maybe provide Business and Higher Education interface. State of art office accommodation.
3. Design development that improves the town centre as a whole.
4. The town needs improved access to get people in and out easily and any development must consider existing shopping areas and streets. It must not create old run down areas of the town centre. This can be achieved by designing parking and transport links that encourage use of the entire area of the Town Centre,

5. The site is idea for hotel development and should include a community centre such as child support.
6. Improve existing leisure facilities rather than create new as part of Goods Yard Development.
7. Need for a new link road is critical together with new parking facilities.
8. Adopt a tiered construction as the buildings approach the water edge to allow maximum natural light penetration and to prevent canyon effect.
9. Need for carbon neutral planning and sustainable design is imperative for future. New links across the river to South Street to access businesses on South Street.
10. Access to the town and parking remains a major issue.
11. Need for a large departmental store.
12. The town needs a viable commercial centre. Opportunities are required for larger businesses to expand I the town and not forced to leave the town, due to lack of commercial opportunities.
13. The opportunity to tie this development in with South Street and north of the railway line should be explored to provide better joined up planning for the town.
14. The development is needed to revitalise the whole south end of the Town
15. If Goods Yard is to be developed in the near future then other proposals being put forward for other parts of the town would be more appropriately sited at the Goods Yard, including a Major store and Doctors Poly-Clinic.
16. In any new development better pavements and cycle lanes.
17. Provision of pedestrian bridge besides the existing Station Road Bridge.
18. Anchor Street should be widened.

Conclusion of Aspirations

The individual response questionnaire covering the aspirations for the future of the Goods Yard site has provided a base for priorities of the key land uses and the desired outcomes for the site.

High Priority given to the following uses and outcomes:

- Additional capacity for cars in the town
- Additional car parking at the railway station
- Improved public transport hub
- Location of major offices

- Retail opportunities incorporating major retail store
- Modest sized high quality hotel
- Community services and facilities
- Scale and design in keeping with town character
- High Quality of design of buildings and public realm
- Attractive riverside frontage
- Low carbon energy opportunities
- Becoming an exemplar for sustainable town centre

Medium Priority given to the following uses and outcomes

- Family housing
- Retail opportunities for A1 use
- Childcare facilities

Low Priority given to the following uses and outcomes

- Affordable housing
- Marina

Both the initial response to the 2004 brief and the Local Initiative relating to the aspirations for the site provide a strong lead to securing a mixed use development that helps to consolidate and enhance the function of Bishops Stortford as a major shopping centre attracting a high level of employment opportunities and limited scope for additional residential accommodation.

Emerging Development Options

The results of the consultation process relating to the Aspirations for the site (see Consultation Report) together with the initial response to the 2004 Brief forms the bases of the emerging development options for the site.

The consultation process covering the Aspirations for the site has prioritised the land uses and outcomes for the emerging development options for the site. These are

1. The need for greater mix of land uses and less dependence on a dominant land use e.g. residential as portrayed in the 2004 Development Brief.
2. Need for additional car parking which assists the wider town centre parking requirements and commuter parking to be accommodated within a multi-storey car.
3. Improved public transport hub
4. The suitability of the site for location of major offices.
5. Inclusion of a high quality hotel

6. Retail opportunities including major retail store.
7. High quality of design of buildings and public realm
8. Attractive Riverside frontage
9. Becoming an exemplar for sustainable town centre

East Herts Council



Bishop's Stortford Goods Yard

Updated Site Development Brief

(Updated from 2004 brief)

May 2011



Bishop's Stortford – Goods Yard - Site Development Brief

May 2011

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EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
BISHOP'S STORTFORD GOODS YARD
SITE DEVELOPMENT BRIEF
Updated from 2004 brief

1.0 Background

- 1.1 This site on the edge of Bishop's Stortford Town Centre has been identified by the Council for many years as a key site to accommodate the development needs of the town, including, in particular, enhanced public transport facilities and a mix of retail, leisure, commercial and residential uses. Currently utilised for surface level car parking with vacant scrub and low density woodland, any future redevelopment would provide a unique opportunity to stimulate and encourage all aspects of town centre life.
- 1.2 In April 2004 East Herts District Council prepared a site development brief for the Goods Yard Site to provide a clear planning framework which set out the Council's principal objectives and requirements for the site. Although the site development brief does not have status as a Supplementary Planning Guidance, it is recognised as planning framework guidance for the development of the site in accordance with Policy BIS11 of the adopted Local Plan for East Herts Review 2007. A further reference in Local Development Framework Core Strategy has continued its existence for Development Control purposes.
- 1.3 Recently, the site owners, Network Rail, have indicated their intention to develop the site.

2.0 The Need for revision

- 2.1 There have been significant changes in the Town Centre since the 2004 brief was published. Led by the Leader of East Herts District Council, a cross-stakeholders group has researched and established a Vision for the town (January 2010), which articulates the ambitions of the next decade for the town. It was necessary to update this brief to inform the current local planning policies as part of preparation of the Local Development Framework; to reflect the context of 20 20 A Vision for Bishop's Stortford and recent developments and emerging land use pattern in the wider context of the town centre. In addition the recent District wide studies covering Employment Land 2008, Bishop's Stortford Transportation Strategy 2006 and Retail and Town Centre Study 2008 make recommendations for the future of the site.

3.0 Consultations covering revisions to the 2004 Brief

- 3.1 Members of the Bishops Stortford 20 20 Vision Group and various statutory consultees were invited to provide feedback in terms of what elements of the current brief (produced in 2004) are acceptable and to raise key issues that need addressing given emerging land use patterns in the town centre. Issues raised by the respondents were reported to 20 20 Group meeting held on 10th March 2011. At the

meeting the Group considered an 'Issues and Aspirations' paper to inform the development of a revised brief for the Goods Yard site in Bishop's Stortford. As part of that debate the group considered a range of aspirations for the site. Some were already identified in the 2004 brief and others from the feedback provided through 20 20 Group members and statutory agencies. The list of aspirations that emerged, although not definitive, were circulated to Members of 20 20 Group and Local Ward Members.

- 3.2 The consultation process covering the Aspirations for the site has prioritised the land uses and outcomes for the emerging development options for the site. These can be summarised as a need for greater mix of land uses and less dependence on a dominant land use e.g residential as portrayed in the 2004 Development Brief. Key aspirations are ;
1. Need for additional car parking which assists the wider town centre parking requirements and commuter parking to be accommodated within a multi-storey car.
 2. Improved public transport hub
 3. The suitability of the site for location of major offices.
 4. Inclusion of a high quality hotel
 5. Retail opportunities including major retail store.
 6. High quality of design of buildings and public realm
 7. Attractive Riverside frontage
 8. Becoming an exemplar for sustainable town centre
- 3.3 The emerging development options, response from statutory consultees, stakeholders interest, emerging land use in the town centre and current local plan and national planning policies form the basis for modifications to the 2004 Brief.

4.0 Purpose

- 4.1 The revised brief sets out what the Council will require to be submitted with any planning application for the site as well as a number of section 106 planning obligations. It articulates the Councils' objectives for the site which it shares with partners through the Vision 20 20 Group. It establishes a number of key principles for prospective development and provides advice on preferred uses.
- 4.2 The brief reflects the most current and up to date views for the site and is fully supported by the feedback from the consultation process. It is supported by and consistent with the Vision for Bishop's Stortford 20 20. (January 2010)
- 4.3 Endorsed by East Herts Council it will be able to feed into and inform the Local Development Framework and be a material consideration for planning matters.

- 4.4 Until such time when the Local Development Framework for East Hertfordshire forms the overarching planning document for the district, which will replace East Herts Local Plan, the saved policies including Policies BIS10 and BIS11 of the Local Plan Review 2007 will continue to apply.

5.0 The Site (See Plan 1)

- 5.1 The Goods Yard site, as its name suggests, is centred upon the former freight interchange at Bishop's Stortford Railway Station.
- 5.2 The site currently falls into three main parts, the 'station lease area' the 'freight lease area' and vacant scrub low density woodland particularly fronting the river along the southern half of the site. The whole of the site is in the freehold ownership of Network Rail but let to separate train and freight operating companies. The total site area is 5.6 hectares (13.92 acres) and has boundaries to the north with Station Road; to the northwest with the former John Dyde Training College site and the Anchor Street leisure development; and to west/south with the River Stort.

6.0 Development Plan Context (Planning & Policy Framework)

- 6.1 East Herts District Council is in the process of preparing its Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy; the new overarching planning document for the district which, as part of the East Herts Local Development Framework (LDF), will replace the East Herts Local Plan. An Issues and Option discussion document was subject to consultation during autumn 2010. The responses received will help inform the preparation of the next stage of the Core Strategy, called the Preferred Options. Consultation of the Preferred Options is currently anticipated Spring 2012. The Local Plan 2007 identifies three key sites in the town centre for redevelopment (Policy BIS10). The Riverside/Adderley Road site has been completed. The other two sites remain undeveloped.
- 6.2 Policy BIS10 includes a number of specific requirements for these town centre sites, including:
- Channelling market demand to the town centre;
 - Introducing a variety of new civic, commercial, retail, residential, leisure buildings to stimulate and encourage all aspects of town centre life;
 - Improving and completing open areas in townscape and strengthening and enhancing pedestrian and cycling movements in town centre life;
 - Respecting and taking into account both the recreational and leisure potential of river frontage;
 - Creation of new quality in town;
 - Establishing civic quality in town;
 - Alleviating traffic pressure; and
 - Accommodating car parking demand

6.3 Policy BIS 11 allocates the Goods Yard Site as having development potential. Subject to constraints of highway network capacity and railway operational requirements, a comprehensive development comprising a mixture of town centre uses would be acceptable. In addition to the requirements set out under Policy BIS10 the development proposals are required to meet:

- a) A new road linking the junction of Station Road/Dane Street and London Road;
- b) Development proposals should include residential development with the aim to accommodate 492 units, predominately of smaller size and a significant proportion of affordable housing;
- c) Proposal for development are expected to accommodate adequate rail commuter car parking plus additional town centre parking;
- d) Development to include a fully integrated rail/bus passenger interchange.

In the light of several large scale recent residential developments (dominated by flats) in the town centre, the 20 20 Group Local Initiative consultation exercise gave a strong preference to family accommodation and employment uses. It is considered therefore that the site development brief should put greater emphasis on family accommodation and also encourage greater dominance of employment and commercial uses. This emphasis should form basis of incorporation in the East Herts Local Development Framework Development Plan Documents.

7.0 Proposed Land Uses

7.1 The Council regards this site as being on the edge of Bishop's Stortford Town Centre. It provides an opportunity to secure a mixed use development that would help to consolidate and enhance the function of Bishop's Stortford Town Centre as a Major District Shopping Centre. It can also help to meet some of the town's other needs, including the need for employment, housing, a public transport hub and open space.

7.2 Details of the proposed land uses for the site area as follows:

Retail

The 2004 Brief accepted some retail within the northern section of Goods Yard site in terms of small scale A1/A3/A4 uses to complement the main shopping, centred around South Street/Jackson Square and North Street. Notwithstanding that the consultation exercise covering the Aspirations gave a high priority for retail opportunities, including a major retail store. The accommodation within the Goods Yard site of a major retail store has to be assessed in the context of the likely implications of introducing large scale retail such as a large food store

or a departmental store on the prime shopping area of the town centre centred around Jackson Square/South Street/North Street. A major anchor store retail development outside the primary shopping area of the town centre would change the gravity of existing pattern of shopping in the town. It would compete rather than reinforce the town centre, a view supported by The Retail and Town Centres Study (2008) by Chase and Partners. In view of a greater mix of employment (office use and commercial uses) the brief would emphasize the northern section between the British Rail/Bus Station and Station Road should at least at ground floor level be utilised for small scale retail A1/A2/A3/A4 uses. Opportunities for specialist types of retail outlets which complement the main shopping area around Jackson Square/South Street/North Street.

Office Employment

The site offers a significant opportunity for provision of B1 (office) employment which would assist in meeting demand from small and medium sized businesses in the District and would be in line with the specific reference made under the Economic Development Strategy 2007-2012. At the same time the site also provides opportunity for national or regional business centres or office headquarters given the location next to Bishop's Stortford Rail Station and easy access to Stansted Airport, London and Cambridge. A key feature of the Development Brief is to provide greater opportunity for employment uses including B1 offices.

Hotel

The 2004 Brief included provision for a hotel. The Aspirations consultation exercise reconfirmed the desire for a hotel in this location. A hotel of 100bedroom plus together with a conference centre can be accommodated within the site brief area. However, an assessment of demand for a hotel in this location would need to be made in the context of other existing or proposed hotel provision in the town centre.

Residential

The Aspirations consultation exercise has given a strong preference to family accommodation for both private and social needs.. Preference to family accommodation is well supported by the conclusions of the housing needs of the district as set out in the Strategic Housing Market assessment (2010). Opportunities for such type of accommodation in the form of town houses would be limited due to other key competing land uses including employment. Nonetheless, the southern part of the site, especially facing the River Stort would be an ideal location provided it is integrated into a scheme design which takes account of the existing woodland. Under the saved policies of East Herts Local Plan review 2007, the Goods Yard site forms an important contribution to the District Council's current Housing Land Supply and contributes to meeting the housing target for new homes for period 2001 to 2021 as

set out in East of England Regional Plan. Any reduction in the required provision for this site has to be balanced with creating employment opportunities and implications for pressure for development outside the boundaries of the existing main settlements in East Hertfordshire. With regard to affordable housing, a provision should be made for up to 40% affordable housing in accordance with saved policies HSG3 and HSG4 of the Local Plan 2007.

Public Transport/ Parking

The location of main line rail station and bus station within the site brief area provide an important opportunity to the creation of a Passenger Transport Interchange. Such a facility can also combine the provision of a multi-storey car park to accommodate both commuter and town centre parking requirements. The Aspiration consultation has given high priorities to these facilities. The Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth Urban Transport Plan (UTP) is currently in preparation, and is being coordinated by Hertfordshire County Council. The findings of the UTP should be considered as part of the overall scheme design and transport strategy for any planning application.

Link Road

The Local Plan 2007 and the 2004 Brief provide for a Link Road running through the site. The likely impact of such a proposal should be subject to transport modeling and testing. Additionally, the impact on the overall Master Plan and other design and sustainability considerations should be assessed and discussed with the District Council and County Council as Highways Authority.

Open Space/Public Realm

The brief should provide clear relationship with River Stort in terms of physical and visual aspects. A series of open spaces of interest together with the creation of high quality public realm should form part of the details of any future development of the site.

Other Related Uses

There is opportunity and desire for inclusion of child care facilities, walk-in surgery and modes of small scale community facilities.

8.0 Land Use Linkages and Integration

- 8.1 The Goods Yard site offers a unique opportunity to bring an urban renaissance to this part of Bishops Stortford. It is important that the future development of the site should have a clear relevance to the historic and emerging land use pattern taking shape in the town. As part of the Master Plan requirements the Council would expect details showing linkages (physical, visual and land uses which complement) to

the surrounding key town centre shopping, leisure and cultural areas and thereby contribute to the viability and vitality of the town centre. The opportunity of any 'joined up' urban design framework, e.g. in terms of land uses and design approaches, in order to produce an attractive 'new quarter' (as referred in the Roger Evans Study, 1996) with good linkages to the town centre and the adjoining sites is an important consideration. For example, provision of new public spaces within the development should be comfortable and attractive destinations for pedestrians. Opportunity for environmental improvements along the River Stort, an important pedestrian linkage, should be considered. This link should be an integral feature of any application(s) optimising the value of the River Stort as an asset for both the site and surrounding area. The site development should consider the integration to the proposed land uses, through dual use and vertical mixed uses of urban built form, for example flats/ shops/ offices/ car park. Physical linkages in the wider context of the town centre including the adjacent Anchor Street Leisure complex and the nearby Rhodes Centre, South Street, the Mill site and the town centre shopping must also be considered.

9.0 Design and Built Form

- 9.1 The Council will expect any planning application for this site to be accompanied by a Design Statement in accordance with the requirements of PPG 1 Annex A. Good design plays a vital role in securing places that are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. The following provides an indication of the principal design objectives for the site.
- 9.2 Layout:-The key parameters affecting the layout of the development are:
- The requirement to provide replacement station-user car parking in the form of a multi-storey car park (above or below ground level) located close to the other principal station facilities;
 - The requirement to provide a new and improved public transport interchange close to the other principal station facilities and also where good quality pedestrian links to the town centre can be provided;
 - The requirement to secure the provision of a link road (see section on Traffic) between Station Road and London Road.
- 9.3 Subject to the technical requirements that affect the link road design, a logical layout would place station-related and public transport facilities within the eastern part of the site (close to the station), with the interchange in the northern part of the site (close to the town centre) and the link road serving effectively as a new street bi-secting the site and allowing access to the western part of the site, where the majority of the other uses would be located. However the design should take account of the guidance as set out in the Manual for Streets Version 2

and Roads in Hertfordshire, 3rd edition.

9.4 There is some potential for commercial development in conjunction with the station. However, the focus for retail, leisure, hotel and office use should be the northern part of the site, where high quality pedestrian linkages can be promoted between the station, the interchange and the town centre. Here there is the opportunity to create new public spaces to contribute to the vitality of the new quarter during the day and in the evening, in conjunction with the adjoining Anchor Street leisure development.

9.5 Architectural Form

Any proposal for this site should create an iconic and distinctive development, including a landmark building and innovative design, whilst respecting the historic character of the surroundings particularly when viewed from the river. It should have a high quality and coherent design to create a well mixed integrated development. Because of its location and relationship with the surrounding buildings and features, including extensive riverside frontage the scale of building should reflect the broader character of Bishops Stortford as a market town and be generally low to medium rise with good street enclosure. Development opportunities to create new water inlets or water features would be encouraged as part of the overall design concept especially part of the site facing the river frontage. Any development should be consistent with the Bishops Stortford Waterscape and Landscape Strategy – (British Waterways). There should be a strong design concept behind the development proposals that links the built form with open spaces and new contrasting visual elements. The development should be of varied scale and size, whilst retaining an urban form, with clearly defined boundaries and active ground floor frontages within the commercial part of the site. It should aim to promote safety and security through its design, avoiding dead ends, darkened areas and blind corners. The design of all parts of the proposal should have proper regard to the relationship with the surroundings, should develop and enhance local character and add interest and variety and become a sinuous element of urban fabric.

9.6 Specific Urban Design Requirements

There are a series of specific urban design considerations that the Council will expect to be taken into account in any proposals for the site. They are:

9.6.1 *Landscape/topography*

The site has very defined boundaries. They include the railway and station to the eastern side and the River Stort to the west/south. Measures to improve the linkages both across and along these boundaries, especially the River Stort, helping to integrate the area with the adjoining John Dyde Site and the town centre will be an important consideration for determining the development of the site.

Improvements to links across the river Stort towards the South Street and Rhodes Centre will ensure the integration of Goods Yard in its wider context. Particular thought should be given to enhancing the existing river environment through the improvement of the tow path, the use of active frontages and by integrating the river into the site through landscaping and use of open amenity space. Provision of seating for the local residents should also be incorporated.

9.6.2 *Views and Vistas*

The size and topography of the site affords the opportunity to open up views across the site to create new and interesting views and vistas. New views and vistas will provide additional interest within the site, encourage pedestrian movement through and beyond the site boundaries especially the towpath and the town centre. The principle vistas from the railway station and the new link road should be framed by buildings of sufficient urban scale to provide enclosure and provide cues to the environment beyond. No buildings in the development should obscure the views of St. Michaels Church from Hallingbury Road.

9.6.3 *Pedestrian/cycle links*

One of the principle considerations when preparing a new scheme for the site is the need to provide improved linkages between the towpath/town centre and the development site. Also pedestrian and cycle links with the adjoining John Dyde site and beyond would be an important consideration. Opportunities exist to create clear visual links between different elements of the site and its surroundings. Detailed attention should be paid to the design and layout of the pedestrian and cycle links, to ensure that they are safe, attractive and easily accessible for people with disabilities.

9.6.4 *Building Heights.*

The Council accepts that the need to replace existing station user car parking in the form of a multi-storey car park may impose certain requirements for the design and massing of that element of the scheme. The new quarter should integrate successfully with the existing pattern of development in the area. The design and height of new buildings on the site must pay proper regard to the relationship with its surroundings. The Council is satisfied that across such a large site it would be appropriate to consider a range of building heights varying between 3 storeys and 6 storeys. Because of the special character of the River Stort and its margins the Council would expect the elements of the development directly fronting the river to typically not exceed 3 storeys in height. However, exceptions could be made where a landmark feature is proposed or it forms part of a building block. Higher storey heights would generally be more appropriate around the public transport interchange area and the boundary of the site along Dane Street/Station Road. Landmark and Public realm features within the development will be welcomed. These features

(including statues, fountains, flowerbeds, seating etc) will be necessary elements of any application(s).

9.6.5 *Car Parking*

It is important to consider a design-led approach to the provision of car parking space that is well-integrated with a high-quality public realm. The design of the parking areas should complement the form and appearance of buildings that they serve, present an attractive appearance and be designed to incorporate high standard of personal safety for users and meet 'Secured by Design' and 'Secured Car Parks' guidelines (ACPO Crime Prevention Initiatives Limited, www.securedbydesign.com, www.securedcarparks.com). Car Parking should be provided within a multi- storey form, i.e. undercroft or underground parking. Limited areas of surface level parking may be appropriate, especially to serve the needs of disabled drivers and short term parking. The potential for dual use of the surface parking areas should also be considered. The use of materials and the appearance of the surface parking areas within the street scene and landscaping and street furniture need to be given particular consideration.

9.6.6 *Amenity/Public Realm.*

A series of inter-connected open spaces and areas of interest should be provided within the site. These spaces should respond to the variety of needs of the different user groups. This will help facilitate the development of an environment of distinction and quality and help promote a sense of pride of place. The overall layout plan should incorporate a series of focal points, for example around the station area and along key pedestrian routes to the towpath/town centre and adjacent to the Leisure Centre. These can be developed to provide visual links and areas of interest and promote the physical links through and beyond the site. The focal points could be enhanced through good quality landscape design including lighting, a public arts strategy etc. Maximum opportunity should be taken in the site layout to create a development based on a network of spaces (streets, squares and courtyards) and movement patterns emphasising 'connectivity' for all users in line with national guidance.

The development must safeguard the amenity provided by the River Stort through its water and its banks, which form a continuous feature, attractive for their natural and semi natural qualities.

The new build environment must respect the natural environment of the Stort Corridor.

Discussion will need to take place with the Local Authority regarding ongoing future responsibilities for the environmental and amenity management of the development.

10.0 Traffic, Parking and Access Improvements

- 10.1 Although Policy BIS11 of the East Herts Local Plan 2007 sets out the provision for a road through the Goods Yard site linking Station Road with Dane Street and London Road, for purposes of easing traffic congestion in the town its requirement as part of the future development of this important site is subject to the outcome of the Bishops Stortford and Sawbridgeworth Urban Transportation Study. Currently being coordinated by Hertfordshire County Council. The findings of the UTP should be considered as part of the overall scheme design and transport strategy for any planning application. The Link Road proposal contained in the Local Plan policy BS11 should be subject to transport modelling and testing, particularly in order to assess the likely traffic impacts elsewhere in the town centre. This could also apply to the proposal for a multi-storey car park.
- 10.2 Wider Town Centre Traffic Implications:- The wider traffic implications of the development need to be assessed using the County Council's SATURN traffic model (or other approved methodology). Modeling should include other local committed development and sites as referred in policy BS5 of the adopted Local Plan, to test alternative town centre highway scenarios and determine the need for off-site highway improvements at other key junctions around the town. The development should also incorporate other sustainable transport improvements linked to the development in line with the longer term aims of the Bishop's Stortford Transportation Plan including the preparation of a Green Travel Plan for individual components of the development (e.g. offices) if needed.
- 10.3 Public Transport:- A Passenger Transport Interchange needs to be provided adjacent to the refurbished station building and include a forecourt area for buses, suitable layover area, taxi rank, kiss and ride and cycle parking facilities etc. The new interchange is to be pedestrian friendly and meet all disability requirements being fully accessible from both the station and town centre. The design and layout of the Interchange needs to be carefully considered and early consultation with Hertfordshire County Council and the Local planning Authority is advised. A high quality waiting areas departure screens, CCTV, lighting, etc.
- 10.4 Pedestrian/cycle access:- The development must be pedestrian/cycle friendly and achieve a series of links to the town centre and surrounding areas. Cycle links to the site from the surrounding area, which enhance cyclist safety and convenience, should be provided. Safe and direct pedestrian and cycle links to and from public transport stops, the railway station and the River Stort will also be required. Any necessary bridge improvements to improve access over the River Stort will be sought by a financial contribution. Signage should be used to identify the routes/paths through the site and the links with adjoining facilities such as the railway station, leisure centre and town centre.

- 10.5 Other Access Issues:- The opportunity to provide an access from the link road to serve the John Dyde Training College site should be investigated.
- 10.6 Parking:- The adopted parking standards as set out in the Local Plan pre-date the publication of new PPG 13, but are applied by the Council as a maximum standard. These are set out in the case of the Goods Yard Site. However the Council recognise that its location on the edge of the town centre and close to the railway station and public transport interchange mean that some flexibility should be adopted when assessing the appropriate parking provision which ought to be made both for individual elements of the development commuter parking and for the site as a whole. Parking for cyclists should be provided on site. Cycle parking should be secure and located as close as possible to the uses which it serves.

Currently the site caters for 576 surface level commuter parking spaces for the Bishop's Stortford Railway Station. Replacement of this facility should be in the form of a multi-storey car park in accordance with Policy BIS11 of the adopted Local Plan which states that adequate rail commuter car parking plus land sufficient for additional town centre parking must be provided.

11.0 Master Planning/Phasing

- 11.1 The Council expects prospective developer/s to develop the site in accordance with a conceptual master plan which shall be submitted with a planning application or as part of a pre-application stage. This will enshrine the principles set out in this brief within an overall design code that sets out parameters for overall design and layout. It is possible that the site will be developed in stages with some development being carried out within the southern part of the site to enable the provision of the replacement multi-storey car park and access arrangements (with or without a link road) before the existing facilities in the northern part of the site are redeveloped.
- 11.2 Any phased development will have to demonstrate how it will be linked into the overall development of the remainder of the site. Each phase should represent a satisfactory entity, both in itself and in relation to its surroundings, and not inhibit the satisfactory development of further phases.

12.0 Affordable Housing

- 12.1 With regards to affordable housing, a provision should be made for up to 40% affordable housing in accordance with policies HSG3 and HSG4 of the East Herts Local Plan. The Council's Affordable Housing & Lifetime Homes Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides further information. With regards to the size and tenure structure of the affordable housing provided the Council would seek a mix as set out in

the current New Affordable Homes Commissioning Brief. This can be found on the Council's website. Policy HSG6 of the Local Plan requires 15% of dwellings in new residential developments to be constructed to 'Lifetime Homes' standards. This requirement will need to be designed into any proposed scheme, especially as Lifetime Homes tend to require the provision of specific dimensions, including parking spaces. Further information regarding this matter can also be found in the Council's Affordable Housing & Lifetime Homes SPD.

13.0 Planning Obligations

- 13.1 In accordance with policy IMP1 of the Local Plan the Council will be seeking financial contributions towards the mitigation of the social, environmental and infrastructure impacts of the development. The Council's Planning Obligations SPD outlines the approach taken to seeking contributions from developers for the provision of appropriate infrastructure, services and community facilities.

14.0 Technical Requirements

The following technical requirements should be considered when formulating the development proposals.

Air Quality

The main influences on air quality in Bishop's Stortford are likely to be road traffic on local roads and the M11. Stansted Airport may also affect air quality in the region but due to the prevailing south westerly wind is unlikely to have such an effect on Bishop's Stortford. Air quality data derived from monitoring locations around Bishop's Stortford indicate that air quality is good in terms of National Air Quality Standard Objective limits. This is a situation that the Council will seek to maintain. Consequently consideration should be given to the effect any proposals may have on existing air quality.

Archaeology

The site area is in Area of Archaeological Significance No.114, as identified in Local Plan. This includes medieval and post-medieval town of Bishop's Stortford. The site lies south of the medieval core of the town, within an area of intense later post industrial development of the town and in between the Stort Navigation and the railway station. In accordance with PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment, Policy HE 6.1, an archaeological desk – based assessment of the development, together with an historic building assessment of all standing structures should be provided. Once the results of initial investigations are made available, the County Archaeologist will be able to advise further on any additional work or mitigation which may be required. This work should be undertaken prior to a formal application being submitted.

14.3 Ecology

A large proportion of the site comprises car parking, access roads, railway sidings, and former storage areas. However, approximately a third of the site comprises a mix of woodland and scrub adjacent to the River Stort. This has characteristics of wet woodland (a UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitat) composed of Willow, Birch and Alder, and is used by breeding birds. Areas to the east of the woodland are dominated by tall ruderal species and scrub. The woodland and river corridor are important at the local level as a green corridor but are not afforded any statutory or non-statutory protection.

There are several bat roosts within a short distance of the site and bats have been recorded along the river corridor through the town. Trees on the site have a low roosting potential but the site is used for foraging. No evidence of the use of the site by Badgers has been found; Otters are believed to use the River Stort.

Information supplied by Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre (HBRC) indicates the presence of Grass Snakes and Common Lizards along the railway line. London Essex & Hertfordshire Amphibian and Reptile Trust (LEHART) records reptiles present within 1km of the site. Common Lizards or Slow Worms have not previously been found on the site although the presence of Grass Snakes on the site could not be ruled out. No Great Crested Newts have been identified on the site and there is no record of breeding ponds within 1km of the site.

Any planning application will need to take proper account of the ecological value of the site and consider the retention and enhancement of key ecological assets.

14.4 Flood Risk

The site lies adjacent to the River Stort Navigation, which is designated as a Main River watercourse at this location. The site is within Flood Zone 2 as defined by Environment Agency. Development in Flood Zone 2 will need to pass the sequential test in accordance with PPS25as. It will be necessary to undertake a Flood Risk Assessment. Particular focus should be put on the problems associated with the drains on site that caused flooding in the past. An 8 metre buffer zone will need to be left free from any permanent structures including fences and other obstructions. This buffer zone is required in order to improve access to the watercourse for riparian owner and/or Environment Agency to carry out flood defence functions and also provide an ecological buffer zone to protect the river environment.

The development will also need to consider how surface water is dealt with on site. Surface water discharge from site should not exceed the Greenfield run off rate for the site, normally 2 and 8 litres/sec/hectare.

Any planning application will need to demonstrate how the principles of Sustainable Drainage System (SuDs) have been applied to the

development in line with guidance contained in Appendix F of Planning Policy Statement 25.

14.5 Land Contamination and Hydrology

The River Stort and site lies in a channel of reworked glacial deposits, cut into Chalk by the river. The geology of the site reflects this situation and comprises a superficial layer of made ground overlying deposits of sandy gravels and silts and clays, the thickness of which varies greatly. The sands and gravels are considered to be a minor aquifer of high permeability and the fissured upper chalk as a major aquifer of high permeability. Due to these levels of permeability and the likely connectivity between the minor and major aquifers, the vulnerability of the major aquifer is considered high. The groundwater is at a very shallow depth below the surface (between 0 and 6metres). The shallow depth of ground water (and likely contamination) could increase the risk to groundwater and is likely to result in some restriction on the infiltration of surface water and types of pilling at the site

A small number of areas of the site have been found to have significantly elevated concentrations of contaminants. Much of the made ground appears to have been effected to some degree by a number of different contaminants and groundwater and the adjacent river are considered vulnerable to off-site migration. At the planning application stage, a Desk Study (a Preliminary Risk Assessment) which assesses the potential land contamination to be present must be submitted. The Environment Agency would favour the provision of an 8m buffer zone free from buildings, fencing and formal garden planting along the river to enhance the character of the watercourse. The Agency also recommends that flow balancing be incorporated into the drainage proposals for the development.

Any planning application will need to fully assess the implications of land contamination and ensure that a remediation strategy is in place prior to development commencing.

14.6 Noise and Vibration

Areas of the site are in Noise Exposure Category (NEC) C and B as defined in PPG24 'Planning and Noise' with the most notable sources being road traffic and the railway line. The railway is the dominant source of vibration.

The planning application should consider the noise and vibration environment of the site and ensure that public spaces as well as residential units are sympathetically placed.

14.7 Sustainability

Efforts should be made to enhance sustainability by seeking to reduce emissions, generate more energy from renewable sources, incorporate sustainable urban drainage systems, reduce waste generation, encourage more recycling and encourage more visitors by public transport, walking, cycling and boating. Any new development will be

required to comply with Code for Sustainable Homes in accordance with requirements set out and implemented in Building Regulations.

The Council supports the advice provided in Building Futures. The link to Building Futures is www.hertslink.org/buildingfutures. This is a series of practical guides produced on behalf of Hertfordshire local authorities to support sustainability measures in all new developments. Regard should be paid to this advice in terms of development proposals.

Particular attention is drawn to Hertfordshire Low and Zero Carbon Study (2010) which identifies the site falling within an opportunity area for a decentralised or low-carbon heating scheme. Planning application should assess the feasibility of this opportunity. The council will require the development to achieve a meaningful CO₂ reduction from on site renewable sources in line with Central Government 2009 Renewal energy Directive and where feasible encourage zero carbon development.

Renewable sources of energy make an important contribution to secure, sustainable and diverse energy supplies. Additionally, Environmental Agency seeks that all development achieves water efficiency standards. Water efficiency standards should be included for all commercial (BREAM) and residential (Code for Sustainable Homes) developments associated with this site

14.8 Waste Reduction and Recycling

Waste is an issue with important planning and environmental implications, which need to be considered as an integral part of sustainable development. Within any proposal, consideration must be given to the effective storage, collection and recycling of waste generated by future commercial and residential occupiers of the development. The Council when considering proposals for development will have regard to the volumes and types of waste generated by the development during construction and subsequent occupation. Facilities to enable maximum recycling by residents/visitors and proposals to maximise waste will need to be incorporated into the design and should be considered at an early stage

14.9 Refuse Collection

New development proposes must enable adequate servicing and vehicle manoeuvring space for refuse vehicles and ensure that there is no adverse impact.

15.0 Application Requirements

- 15.1 Because of the nature of the proposed uses, the size of the site and the likely scale of the development it is probable that any planning application would require formal "Screening" in accordance with the 1999 Environmental Assessment regulations in order to determine whether formal Environmental Impact Assessment has to be

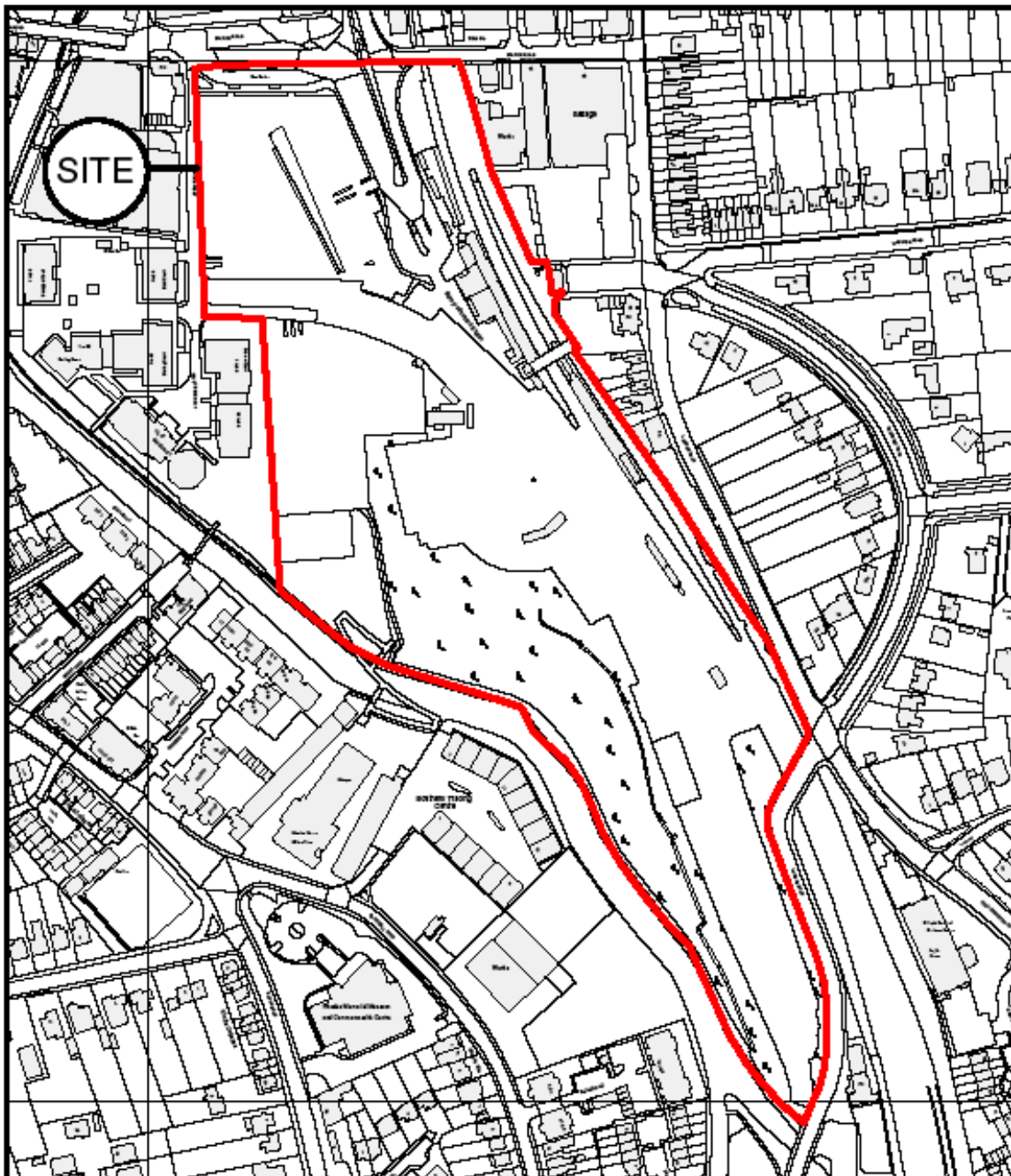
undertaken.

15.2 Whether or not EIA is needed, the Council will expect any planning application to be accompanied by:

- A Design Statement
- A Transportation Assessment
- A Flood Risk Assessment
- A Tree Survey
- An Archaeological Assessment
- An Energy Statement

Related and Supporting documents/Bibliography

1. Goods Yard Site Development Brief 2004
2. Goods Yard Developing a Revised Site specific Brief: Issues and Options
3. Aspiration Questionnaire – Bishop’s Stortford 20 20 Group
4. Goods Yard – Consultation Process/Emerging Development options
5. Saved Policies’ East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007
6. East Herts Local Development Framework – Core Strategy – Issues and Options Consultations
7. A Vision for Bishop’s Stortford – Bishop’s Stortford 20 20 Group



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