



# Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Local Plan 2016-2036

October 2023



[www.welhat.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.welhat.gov.uk/localplan)



**WELWYN  
HATFIELD**





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# Introduction

# Introduction

## What is a Local Plan

- 1.1 The role of a Local Plan is to set out the Council's planning framework for the borough, identifying how much and what type of development is needed and where it should or should not be accommodated.
- 1.2 The last District Plan was adopted in 2005 and covered the period up to 2011. This Local Plan covers the period 2016-2036. It starts by identifying a number of challenges that the borough will face over the coming years and responds by setting out a vision and policies to address them and to help create the type of place the community would like the borough to be. The policies in the Local Plan replace the saved policies of the District Plan.
- 1.3 Along with the Minerals and Waste Local Plans for Hertfordshire and any Neighbourhood Plans it forms the Development Plan for the borough. The Development Plan is the basis upon which planning applications should be determined unless there are material planning considerations which indicate otherwise.
- 1.4 At the adoption of the Plan, there is currently one Neighbourhood Plan which has been adopted in the borough for the Northaw and Cuffley parish area. Any new Neighbourhood Plans will need to be in conformity with the strategic policies in this Local Plan.

## How has it been prepared

- 1.5 The Local Plan has been prepared following consultation with the local community in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement <sup>(1)</sup> which sets out when the Council will consult the community in relation to the Local Plan, how the Council will engage with the community and who the Council will involve in that consultation. Consultation on the Local Plan has also been carried out in accordance with requirements set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 1.6 The Local Plan also has regard to an extensive evidence base and the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and other national planning guidance. This is discussed in more detail in section 2 of the Local Plan 'Welwyn Hatfield Now'. The Statement of Consultation sets out how the Council has taken into account the comments it has received.
- 1.7 The Local Plan has also been prepared in accordance with the Council's Local Development Scheme <sup>(2)</sup> which provides information about the programme for preparing planning documents to be prepared as part of the Local Plan, including documents that have been produced already and a timetable for the production of future documents.
- 1.8 Sustainability Appraisals and appropriate assessments have been carried out at various stages during the preparation of the Local Plan and this has informed the content of the policies and the selection of sites in this document.

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1 [Adopted Statement of Community Involvement \(3 December 2013\) \(welhat.gov.uk\)](#)

2 [www.welhat.gov.uk/LDS](http://www.welhat.gov.uk/LDS)

# 1 Introduction

- 1.9** The Sustainability Appraisal has considered the social, environmental and economic effects of the Local Plan. It also meets requirements for Strategic Environmental Assessment. It has tested the overall strategy and each policy of the Local Plan, as well as reasonable alternatives, against agreed sustainability objectives.
- 1.10** The Appropriate Assessment (or Habitats Regulation Assessment) accompanying the Local Plan has tested if it is likely to have a significant negative impact on any:
- Special Protection Area - a European designation which protects birds
  - Special Area of Conservation - a European designation which protects habitats
  - Ramsar site - a European designation which protects wetland birds
- 1.11** The Council has worked closely with neighbouring local planning authorities and other relevant bodies to ensure that the Local Plan addresses cross boundary issues adequately and that the necessary infrastructure can be provided. This is a requirement of the Duty to Cooperate for which more details are set out in section 2 of the Local Plan 'Welwyn Hatfield Now'.

## How to use this document

- 1.12** The plan comprises the following sections:
- The Introduction and Welwyn Hatfield Now provides an introduction to local plans, a description of the borough in 2016 and the challenges it faces
  - The overarching spatial strategy and key diagram set out the vision, targets for growth, the approach to delivering sustainable development through the distribution of growth and the review of the Green Belt.
  - Topic specific policies
  - Settlement and site specific policies
  - Implementation and monitoring
  - Appendices - including a glossary of technical terms.
- 1.13** All policies are numbered and appear in a box. There are different types of policies:
- Strategic - these relate to the vision and objectives and set out what the Council's approach is to delivering an objective
  - Development management - these set out general criteria which will be used to determine planning applications and help to deliver the strategy set out in the plan
  - Site allocations - identify sites which are key to the delivery of the plan and are allocated for specific uses on the Policies Map .
- 1.14** Strategic policies are indicated by the prefix 'SP' and the site allocation or development management policies by the prefix 'SADM'. Each strategic policy is followed by the justification for the strategy and how it will be implemented. The SADM policies are followed by a justification.



# Welwyn Hatfield Now

## 2 Welwyn Hatfield Now

### Profile of Welwyn Hatfield

#### Overview

- 2.1** Welwyn Hatfield is located centrally within Hertfordshire, covering an area of approximately 130 square kilometres. The borough is bordered by Hertsmere to the south, St Albans to the west, North Hertfordshire to the north, and East Herts and Broxbourne to the east. The borough also has a short border with the London Borough of Enfield to the south, with Central London around 11 miles south of the borough at its closest point. Around three-quarters of the borough is designated as part of the Metropolitan Green Belt.
- 2.2** The borough has two main towns - Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield - as well as a number of large and small villages providing a mix of urban, suburban and rural areas. Each town and village has its own distinct identity and character - from roman origins in Welwyn to the 20th century garden city and new town growth of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield. The two towns have a wide range of retail and services serving both the towns themselves and the wider local area, as well as large regionally-significant employment areas with a particular prevalence of large businesses and national headquarters. Most of the borough's larger villages also have retail centres, whilst three also have their own employment areas. Hatfield is home to the two main campuses of the University of Hertfordshire, and the main campus of the Royal Veterinary College is located west of Brookmans Park - this gives parts of the borough a notable student population and character.
- 2.3** The borough's location on radial routes out of London means that it is highly accessible by rail and road. The East Coast Main Line has stations at Welwyn North (in Digswell), Welwyn Garden City, Hatfield, Welham Green and Brookmans Park; with services south into London and north towards Stevenage, Cambridge and Peterborough. Cuffley, in the east of the borough, is served by trains south into London and north towards Hertford. The A1(M) passes north-south through the borough, linking London to Peterborough, the East Midlands and beyond. The A414 crosses the centre of the borough, providing links east to Hertford and Harlow and west to St Albans and Hemel Hempstead, whilst the A1(M) connects with the M25 just south of the borough boundary providing further east-to-west links and orbital connectivity around London.
- 2.4** Despite being relatively self-contained with a strong local economy, the borough's good transport links mean that there are high levels of commuting with 18% of borough residents working in London. The borough is itself a key workplace destination for residents of neighbouring districts (notably Central Bedfordshire, North Herts, Stevenage, St Albans and East Herts). This results in strong economic market and housing market linkages with neighbouring districts, and means that the borough is an attractive place in which to live. However, this results in significant challenges with house prices and the resultant need for affordable housing.

## Welwyn Hatfield Now

**Figure 1 Welwyn Hatfield within Hertfordshire, and the wider region**



### The Borough's Natural and Built Environment

- 2.5** The natural environment of Welwyn Hatfield is a key contributor to its character and distinctiveness. Welwyn Hatfield has a diverse range of green infrastructure and environmental assets of local, regional and national importance. This includes Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), Wildlife Sites, protected trees and woodlands, extensive areas of agricultural land, minerals reserves, rivers, floodplains, and a comprehensive network of open space.
- 2.6** The borough's physical geography is broadly defined by a number of watercourses, which primarily run across the borough from west-to-east. The River Lee and River Mimram are most notable, running towards the Thames in East London. The Lee runs in a shallow valley separating Welwyn Garden City from Hatfield, whilst the Mimram runs in a somewhat deeper valley through Welwyn and separates Welwyn Garden City from Digswell. Cuffley Brook and its tributaries form another relatively deep valley between Cuffley, Northaw and the village of Goffs Oak in Broxbourne to the east, and

## Welwyn Hatfield Now

meet the Lee further south in Enfield. The Mimms Brook and River Colne drain the south-west corner of the borough and flow in a very different direction, south-west through Watford to Staines-upon-Thames in Surrey.

- 2.7** With the exception of Welwyn, most settlements in the borough sit atop higher ground. The borough's built up areas are therefore at a relatively low risk of flooding from rivers, although surface water and ground water remain risks. The highest point in the borough is at around 130m above sea level to the east of Brookmans Park, with the lowest at around 45m above sea level as the Cuffley Brook crosses the borough boundary into Broxbourne.
- 2.8** In terms of water resources, the East of England is the driest region in England and the borough has been identified as an area of serious water stress. The Lee and Mimram in the northern half of the borough are underlain by a major chalk aquifer which is a significant water resource, but over-abstraction from the Mimram in particular has become a significant environmental issue. The alluvium soil in the northern half of the borough allows a rapid flow of water into these watercourses, making them relatively susceptible to pollution. The southern half of the borough is underlain by various minor aquifers, important for more local water supplies, and its soil geology renders it less susceptible to pollution.
- 2.9** Minerals such as sand, gravel, crushed rock, chalk and clay are an important natural resource locally - Welwyn Hatfield is at the centre of a sand and gravel belt which stretches across Hertfordshire from Bishops Stortford to Hemel Hempstead. This provides the raw minerals required for constructing and maintaining roads, buildings and other infrastructure. Hertfordshire County Council is responsible for minerals planning for Hertfordshire - part of the former Hatfield Aerodrome site to the west of Hatfield is identified as a preferred area for sand and gravel extraction in the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 2001-2016 (adopted in 2007). The Minerals Local Plan is currently under review.
- 2.10** Welwyn Hatfield has a unique built environment and heritage which forms an important part of the borough's identity. It includes the world's second garden city, 10 conservation areas, 431 listed buildings and structures, 73 areas of archaeological significance, and 5 registered historic parks and gardens. However, whilst the new town heritage of much of Hatfield and parts of Welwyn Garden City remains a significant asset, some areas developed at that time are becoming tired and are likely to be in need of some regeneration and revitalisation in the future and some of that has taken place in recent years.

### The Borough's People

- 2.11** The population of the borough at the 2011 Census was 110,500 people. This was an increase of 13.3% from the borough's population at the 2001 Census, the fastest rate of growth of any of the districts in Hertfordshire.
- 2.12** In the 10 years between censuses, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) produces mid-year population estimates. The estimate for mid-2015 put the population of Welwyn Hatfield at 119,000. This would represent an extraordinary rate of population increase well above the historic trend - it cannot be explained by housebuilding as only 1,030 new homes were built between 2011 and 2015, and natural change in the population (births minus deaths) has only amounted to an increase of a few hundred people in each year. Between the 2001 and 2011 censuses the annual Office for National



## Welwyn Hatfield Now

Statistics (ONS) population estimates did significantly over-estimate the population change taking place within Welwyn Hatfield, and it is possible that the population is being over-estimated once again. However, until the results of the 2021 census are published there is no way to know this for certain.

- 2.13** In order to plan for the future, it is important to understand how the population is likely to continue to change. This has been done using ONS population projections derived from mid-year population estimates - the most recently available during the preparation of this plan were the 2012-based projections. However, during the examination of the plan the 2016-based and subsequently the 2018-based projections were released and taken into consideration. The 2018-based (alternative internal migration variant) projections showed that by the end of the plan period in 2036 the borough's population will have increased to 141,400, an increase of 20,400 people from the estimate for the start of the plan period in 2016. This equates to forecast growth in the number of households in the borough of 9,300 over the plan period. However, this only forms a starting point in considering how the plan meets the need for growth (see Chapter 5).
- 2.14** Figure 2 shows how the age structure of the borough within the ONS population projections is projected to change over the plan period. Among the most notable differences is the extent to which the population is likely to age - in 2016, 15.4% of the population was aged 65 or over, whereas by 2036 this will have increased to 18.1%. The natural change resulting from this (as births exceed deaths) is a significant component of the projected future population increase for the borough, and results in a local need for new specialist care facilities.
- 2.15** It is also evident how the borough's student population influences its age structure - in 2016, 17.7% of the population was estimated to be aged between 15 and 24, with the single largest groups being 19, 20 and 21. This proportion is not expected to change over the plan period, with 17.7% of the population still expected to fall in the 15-24 age group in 2036. Meanwhile, the proportion of the population in the 25-39 age groups is expected to see a slight decline between 2016 and 2036.

**Figure 2 Change in Structure of the Population**



## Welwyn Hatfield Now

### Housing

- 2.16** There are approximately 46,900 homes in Welwyn Hatfield<sup>(3)</sup>. Around 3,400 of these were built over the ten year period from 2006 to 2016, where there was significant housebuilding in parts of the borough and in particular around the former Hatfield Aerodrome. The overall number of homes built within the previous plan period exceeded the target set in the plan.
- 2.17** House prices in the borough are well above the regional and national averages, although slightly below the average for Hertfordshire which is skewed significantly upwards by prices in areas such as St Albans. The average home in the borough in 2015 cost £331,000, against a UK average of £274,000<sup>(4)</sup>. There is insufficient affordable housing in the borough, and there are currently around 1,150 households on the borough's affordable housing waiting list with a recognised housing need<sup>(5)</sup>.

### Economy

- 2.18** It is estimated that there were around 84,000 jobs in Welwyn Hatfield in 2014<sup>(6)</sup>, equivalent to 1.11 jobs for every working age resident. This 'job density' is the 13th highest for all local authorities in the UK (excluding Inner London), and compares to job densities of 0.90 for Hertfordshire, 0.82 for the UK as a whole and 0.80 for the East of England. This makes Welwyn Hatfield a significant workplace destination with a sub-regional role as a centre for employment for surrounding districts - notably Central Bedfordshire, North Herts, East Herts, Stevenage, and St Albans.
- 2.19** Unlike much of the rest of Hertfordshire, the 2000s saw substantial inward investment into the borough by a number of major companies leading to a significant increase in the number of jobs. In particular, the establishment of Hatfield Business Park on the site of the former Hatfield Aerodrome and British Aerospace factory allowed the economy of Hatfield to successfully diversify following their closure in 1993. The number of jobs in the borough continues to rise year-on-year (with the exception of a small decline at the height of the recession in 2010) and is now at its highest ever level, although the rate of increase has reduced from its peak during the 2000s.
- 2.20** Whilst levels of unemployment in the borough increased significantly during the recession, they have remained below the UK average and are now at one of the lowest levels ever recorded. In May 2016, around 850 of the borough's working age residents were unemployed and eligible to claim unemployment benefits - a claimant rate of 1.1%. This is in line with the Hertfordshire average (also 1.1%), and compares to a national average of 1.8%<sup>(7)</sup>. However, levels of unemployment do vary throughout the borough - the Peartree ward within Welwyn Garden City had a claimant rate of 2.8% in May 2016, whereas in Brookmans Park and Little Heath ward the proportion of claimants was a near-negligible 0.3%.
- 2.21** Residents of Welwyn Hatfield earned an average of £590 per week in 2014<sup>(8)</sup>. This was slightly less than the £600 weekly average for Hertfordshire (again skewed significantly by areas such as St Albans), but well above the £520 weekly average for

3 DCLG Live Table 100 on dwelling stock (as of March 2015), plus housing completions 2015/16

4 Land Registry and ONS House Price Index

5 Welwyn Hatfield Community Housing Trust Quarterly Monitoring Report, June 2016

6 NOMIS Official Labour Market Statistics - Job density

7 NOMIS Official Labour Market Statistics - Unemployment claimant rate

8 NOMIS Official Labour Market Statistics - Annual survey of hours and earnings

## Welwyn Hatfield Now

the whole of the UK. Average weekly pay for people employed within Welwyn Hatfield (i.e. regardless of where they lived) in 2014 was slightly lower at £570 per week, but this is well above the Hertfordshire average. This reflects the borough's status as a key workplace destination.

- 2.22** The working age population of the borough is relatively highly skilled - 37% have a degree compared with 36% nationally<sup>(9)</sup>, although the borough's significant student population means that many of those without degrees are currently studying to attain one. Indeed, the proportion of working age people with no qualifications (5%) is well below the national average (9%). Educational attainment in the borough is above the UK average, with 69% of students attaining five or more A\*-C grades compared to 64% nationally - although the figure for Hertfordshire is higher, at 73%<sup>(10)</sup>.

### Health and Deprivation

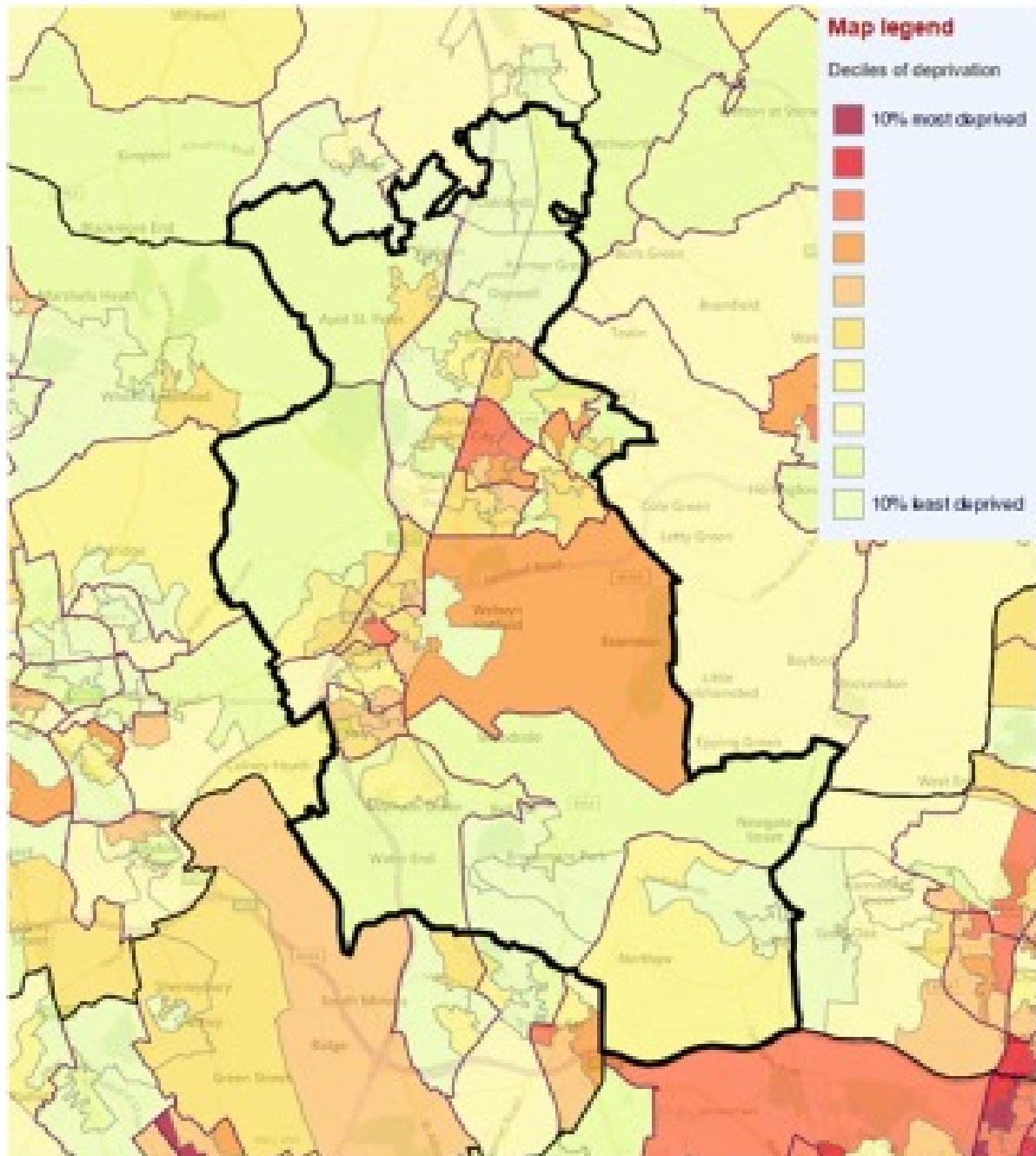
- 2.23** On the whole, the quality of life in Welwyn Hatfield is good. Life expectancy is around two years above the national average at 84.8 for women and 81.5 for men (an average of 83.2), and the borough performs better than the national average on 17 of the 32 indicators in the Department of Health's Local Authority Health Profiles. However there are disparities in the health of those in the most and least deprived areas of the borough - average life expectancy varies from 84.5 years in Welwyn East ward down to 75.2 years in Hatfield Central. Although below the national average, around 1 in 6 borough residents smoke and around 1 in 5 borough residents are obese. Levels of physical activity for adults and children are also below the national average.
- 2.24** Welwyn Hatfield is ranked 266 out of the 326 local authorities in England in the 2015 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (where 1 in the most deprived), placing it in the 20% least deprived local authority areas. This is a notable improvement since the 2010 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, where the borough was ranked 238. The Index of Multiple Deprivation measures a variety of means of deprivation such as income, quality of housing and health; and also provides deprivation figures for small areas (Lower Super Output Areas, of which there are around five per ward). The most deprived LSOA in the borough is within Peartree ward in Welwyn Garden City, whilst the least deprived LSOA is in Oaklands & Mardley Heath.
- 2.25** Even at a small area level, deprivation in the borough is relatively low when compared nationally - none of the borough's 66 LSOAs are amongst the 20% most deprived LSOAs in England. More locally, 3 of Welwyn Hatfield's LSOAs are amongst the 10% most deprived in Hertfordshire and 12 are amongst the 20% most deprived. However, Welwyn Hatfield also has 7 LSOAs amongst the 10% least deprived and 10 LSOAs amongst the 20% least deprived in Hertfordshire. This demonstrates the relatively significant variation within the borough.

9 NOMIS Official Labour Market Statistics - ONS Annual population survey

10 Department for Education Schools Performance statistics, 2014

## Welwyn Hatfield Now

**Figure 3 Deprivation across Welwyn Hatfield - 2015 Indices of Multiple Deprivation**



### Previous Consultation

- 2.26** The policies and proposals within this Local Plan have evolved through a number of previous consultation stages. Each of these is summarised below - a full analysis of the responses to each consultation is available online.



## 2009 Issues and Options Consultation

- 2.27** The Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper was published in spring 2009, and marked the first stage towards preparing a 'Core Strategy' for the borough. Within the former Local Development Framework approach to development plans, the Core Strategy would have set strategic policies for the borough which other development plan documents would then support and add topic-specific details. The main consultation event was held between 4 March and 11 May 2009. The issues for which options were proposed in the consultation document were: how best to protect the environment and address climate change; how to raise quality of life and ensure our communities are sustainable; and how to best make provision for the required levels of growth.
- 2.28** There was a relatively strong response to this consultation, with around 6,700 comments submitted by nearly 1,500 individuals and organisations. Many of the comments were in opposition to some of the potential growth locations proposed, with respondents either opposed to the release of land from the Green Belt or seeing it as a last resort after a rigorous search for brownfield sites. Other key concerns raised included the existing capacity of the borough's infrastructure and its ability to support growth, the need to maintain the character of existing settlements and prevent coalescence between them, and the need to protect the quality of the borough's natural and historic environment.

## 2011 Housing Targets Consultation

- 2.29** The Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper anticipated the need to deliver 10,000 new homes between 2001 and 2021 - the target set by the 2008 Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England. However, this housing target was subsequently deleted by the High Court, and with the impending abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies the responsibility for setting housing targets became the responsibility of local authorities. It was therefore necessary to carry out consultation on housing target options for the first time - the Housing Targets Consultation ran from 6 June to 18 July 2011, with five possible targets set out in a consultation leaflet together with a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- 2.30** There was a lower level of response to this consultation, with around 350 comments submitted. Again, many comments expressed concern at the impact that development could have on the Green Belt, the character and quality of the borough's natural and historic environments, and on local infrastructure capacity and delivery. Some comments reflected on the need for any housing target to form part of an appropriate strategy for development in the borough, and on issues such as the need to match housing growth to local employment opportunities and ensure a sufficient supply of affordable homes. Borough residents generally supported the lowest possible housing target, whilst developers and landowners generally supported higher targets.

## 2012 Emerging Core Strategy Consultation

- 2.31** Taking the previous two consultations into account, the Emerging Core Strategy set out 20 Strategic Policies which together defined the development strategy for the borough over the period from 2001 to 2029. This included a housing target of 6,800 homes, achieved through the designation of two 'Broad Locations for Growth' - one north-west of Hatfield, and one north-east of Welwyn Garden City - in addition to a variety of other sites which would be allocated through a future Site Allocations

## Welwyn Hatfield Now

development plan document. The Emerging Core Strategy Consultation ran from 12 November 2012 to 31 January 2013, with a range of consultation points covering the various policies and proposals throughout the consultation document.

- 2.32** The Emerging Core Strategy consultation saw a higher level of response again, with around 3,500 comments submitted by nearly 1,400 individuals and organisations. Given the range of consultation points the comments raised by respondents were highly varied, but key areas of response included objections to the proposed amount of growth, settlement strategy, revisions to Green Belt boundaries, type and mix of housing, infrastructure delivery, and broad locations for growth.

### 2012 Land for Housing Outside Urban Areas Consultation

- 2.33** Consultation was undertaken on the Land for Housing Outside Urban Areas document alongside the Emerging Core Strategy. This provided further information on potential housing sites that could come forward outside of the borough's urban areas, as part of a development strategy focused on delivering new homes around the borough's two towns. The majority of respondents to the Emerging Core Strategy consultation also responded to the Land for Housing Outside Urban Areas consultation, with around 3,300 comments submitted by nearly 1,300 individuals and organisations. In addition, four petitions totalling over 3,000 signatures were received - three opposed specific potential development sites, whilst one supported the proposed distribution of growth. This broadly followed the pattern of responses - the majority were objections to specific sites, although some were supportive of the approach taken.

### 2015 Local Plan Consultation Document

- 2.34** Following the 2012 Emerging Core Strategy consultation, it had been intended to submit a revised Emerging Core Strategy for examination prior to its adoption. However, changes to the planning system brought about by the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework necessitated a decision to merge the Emerging Core Strategy into a single Local Plan, which would contain the strategic policies from the Emerging Core Strategy (with minor amendments where required) alongside new development management policies and site allocations.
- 2.35** Further evidence work had also indicated a much higher objectively assessed need for housing (around 12,500 homes over a 20 year period), requiring consultation on additional housing sites which were categorised as 'more favourable', 'finely balanced' and 'less favourable'. New site allocation options to meet potential need for new employment floorspace and cemeteries were also included in the document, as well as new protective designations for retail centres and urban open land.
- 2.36** The Local Plan Consultation Document again saw a relatively strong response, with around 5,500 comments submitted by nearly 1,600 individuals and organisations. The vast majority of responses were concerned with the need for housing identified in the document, the resultant settlement strategy, concern at the loss of Green Belt land, and issues with individual identified development sites. Many of the comments received were objections to certain sites being identified as more favourable for a variety of reasons, although a number of comments supported the Council's identification of certain sites as less favourable for development. Similarly, whilst many comments objected to the identified housing need on the basis that it was too high, some respondents questioned whether the evidence base indicated that housing need should in fact be even higher.

## 2016 Draft Local Plan Proposed Submission Document

- 2.37** Consultation was undertaken on the publication of the Draft Local Plan and accompanying policies maps prior to its submission for examination. The consultation took place in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012, and was held between 30th August and 24th October 2016. Some 3,100 responses were received to the consultation, from 1,964 different individuals and groups. The Council also simultaneously consulted on three supporting documents – a Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment of the proposals in the Draft Local Plan, and a revised Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The Statement of Consultation (Regulation 22) was published in 2017.

## Further Consultations

- 2.38** During the Local Plan examination, the Inspector indicated a need for modifications to the plan to increase the housing target in light of the updated full objectively assessed housing need (FOAHN), resulting from the later population and household projections. In 2019, the Council carried out a Call for Sites to investigate if any further housing sites could be identified to assist in meeting the increased need. Over 140 sites were promoted for development and consultation on ‘sites promoted through the Call for Sites 2019’ took place in May – June 2019. Just over 10,200 comments were received from over 2,000 different individuals and groups, significantly more than both the 2015 consultation and the 2016 consultation.
- 2.39** The Site Selection Background Paper 2019 considered different options for the selection of sites. A subsequent consultation was then undertaken on a number of additional sites considered for allocation, as well as changes being considered to some existing sites in the submitted Draft Local Plan. The 2020 consultation ‘Proposed Changes to the Submitted Draft Local Plan 2016 (site allocations)’ ran from February - May 2020, with 790 comments received from 387 different individuals and organisations.
- 2.40** Two further consultations were undertaken on the Inspector’s Main Modifications in 2023.

## Relationship to Other Plans and Strategies

- 2.41** In preparing the Local Plan, the Council has taken into account key objectives of other plans and strategies both within and beyond the borough boundary.

## National Policy

- 2.42** The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other national planning policy must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and in decision making. This Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the 2012 version of the NPPF.
- 2.43** One of the key elements of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which means that local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area. It also means that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly outweigh the benefits or other specific policies in the National Planning Policy Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

## Welwyn Hatfield Now

**2.44** Another important element of the National Planning Policy Framework is the Duty to Co-operate. Public bodies have a duty to co-operate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries, with local planning authorities working together to meet development requirements which cannot wholly be met within their own areas – for instance, because of a lack of physical capacity or because to do so would cause significant harm to the principles and policies of this framework.

### Strategic and Cross-Boundary Issues

**2.45** The 'Duty-to-Cooperate' was introduced via the 2011 Localism Act - whilst planning authorities and other public bodies have clearly always aimed to co-operate, it is now the main means by which they are *required* to do so. Paragraph 156 of the National Planning Policy Framework identifies the following as strategic issues requiring co-operation:

- The need for and provision of homes and jobs in an area;
- The provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development;
- The provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply and waste water treatment, flood risk management, the provision of minerals, and energy supply;
- The provision of infrastructure for health, security, community wellbeing and culture;
- Climate change prevention and mitigation; and
- The conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment.

**2.46** Effective and on-going co-operation has taken place with relevant bodies and neighbouring local planning authorities on the production of this plan. This includes the commissioning and sharing of evidence and the identification of infrastructure requirements. In particular the Council has worked closely with Hertfordshire County Council to ensure the infrastructure implications of individual sites and different distribution options have been properly considered and joint policy wording has been developed with East Herts District Council relating to Policy SP 19 South east of Welwyn Garden City.

### Housing Market Area

**2.47** Welwyn Hatfield does not operate as a self-contained housing market area<sup>(11)</sup>. It functions within a wide housing market area (HMA) formed of whole local authority areas, as is evidenced by the significant levels of workforce commuting between surrounding boroughs and into London as well as strong migration patterns from the south and west. However, evidence indicates that there is a relatively low containment rate within this wide housing market area and that a more tightly defined HMA, built upon sub-authority geographies, reflects those areas which have stronger housing market relationships with Welwyn Hatfield. This is shown in Figure 4 below. The strongest housing market relationships for Welwyn Hatfield are with parts of North Hertfordshire, East Hertfordshire, Broxbourne, Hertsmere, St Albans, and the London Borough of Barnet.

## Welwyn Hatfield Now

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**Figure 4 Welwyn Hatfield Housing Market Area**



**2.48** Whilst the evidence base of neighbouring authorities equally recognise that they do have housing market relationships with Welwyn Hatfield, none of the Strategic Housing Market Assessments for those authorities identify the whole of Welwyn Hatfield as being an integral part of their HMAs. This is because, in each case, those areas are considered to have stronger housing market relationships with other parts of Hertfordshire or areas outside of the county than they do with Welwyn Hatfield.

### **Functional Economic Market Area**

**2.49** An analysis<sup>(12)</sup> of a range of labour market indicators - Travel To Work Areas, analysis of the transport network, local property markets, sectoral composition, supply chains, retail catchment areas, Local Economic Partnerships and administrative geography - concludes that Welwyn Hatfield has clear cross-boundary economic linkages.



## 2 Welwyn Hatfield Now

Specifically, five surrounding local authority areas (Stevenage, St Albans, Luton, North Hertfordshire and East Hertfordshire) form the basis for the Welwyn Hatfield Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA).

**Figure 5 Welwyn Hatfield Functional Economic Market Area**



### Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan

**2.50** The A1(M) Growth Corridor identified within the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan and Growth Deal for 2015-2021 forms the core of the FEMA area, and is reflective of key transport corridors including the A1(M) and the East Coast Main Line. The fringes of the FEMA area fall into parts of the two other LEP Growth Corridors - that for the M1 to the west, and A10 to the east. The LEP is responsible for bidding for and prioritising infrastructure investment within Hertfordshire, and its Strategic Economic Plan is centred around three priorities: maintaining global excellence in science and technology; harnessing relationships with London and elsewhere; and re-invigorating places for the 21st century. The Council is required to have regard to the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan in preparing the Local Plan.

## Welwyn Hatfield Now

### Hertfordshire Local Nature Partnership

- 2.51** The Council is also required to have regard to the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) for Hertfordshire in preparing the Local Plan. The LNP's role is to ensure that the natural environment is considered in decision-making, and has a vision to create a diverse and resilient natural environment within Hertfordshire which can adapt to change; and contribute to environmental outcomes as well as social and economic outcomes.

### The Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 2007

- 2.52** The Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan 2002-2016 (adopted in 2007) allocates land at Hatfield Aerodrome as a Preferred Area for future mineral working. Policy 5 of that plan sets out the approach to minerals sterilisation. These proposals have been taken into account in the selection of sites and the drafting of policies for the Strategic Development Sites in this plan.

### Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Document 2012 and Waste Site Allocations Document 2014

- 2.53** The Waste Site Allocations Document allocates 3 sites within the borough for waste management facilities: Land off Cole Green Lane east of Welwyn Garden City, Roehyde west of Hatfield, and New Barnfield on Travellers Lane in Welham Green. These are identified on the Policies Map. The Waste Site Allocations Document also identifies most of the borough's designated Employment Areas as 'Employment Land Areas of Search' for new waste management facilities, reflecting that they are often an appropriate location for waste management uses.

### Local Transport Plan

- 2.54** In 2014 the County Council commenced a review of its third Local Transport Plan (adopted in 2011). As part of this review the County Council is developing a Transport Vision for Hertfordshire to 2050 which will set out proposals for accommodating growth set out in this and other Local Plans in Hertfordshire. Urban growth area plans will set out more detailed proposals for each local authority area.

### Hatfield 2030+

- 2.55** The Council is a partner to the Hatfield Renewal Partnership, which has worked with the local community to develop a strategic framework for the renewal of Hatfield to guide the ongoing transformation of the town for the next 15 years and beyond. This framework is complementary to the Local Plan and will help drive activity and investment in Hatfield by providing both a strategic context for renewal as well as identifying a portfolio of more specific initiatives and projects intended for implementation over the short, medium and longer term.

### Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Business Plan 2015 – 18

- 2.56** The Welwyn Hatfield Business Plan set out the council's vision and priorities for the borough. The council's vision set out in the Business Plan is *"to make Welwyn Hatfield a great place to live, work and study with a growing vibrant economy"*.
- 2.57** The five corporate priorities identified in the Business Plan form the basis for defining the services which will be provided for residents from April 2015 onwards.

## Welwyn Hatfield Now

### Welwyn Hatfield Corporate Business Plan 2021 - 24

**2.58** The Welwyn Hatfield Corporate Business Plan 2021 - 24 provides five key priorities as identified by residents of Welwyn Hatfield. Each year, the Council publish a Corporate Business Plan to support each of the five priorities, which includes major projects and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) <sup>(13)</sup> that measure the performance of a range of services throughout the year.

**Maintain a safe and healthy community:** work with partners to keep people safe; help improve and maintain the health and wellbeing of residents; provide for a wide variety of leisure covering arts, culture, fitness and sport.

**Protect and enhance the environment:** keep our streets clean and work with residents to reduce litter; improve recycling rates and reduce the amount of waste going to landfill; maintain and improve our green spaces; deliver effective parking services.

**Meet the borough's housing needs:** plan for the housing needs of our communities; increase the supply of new affordable homes; effectively manage the borough's housing stock; allow for sustainable growth that protects our environment and heritage

**Help build a strong local economy:** promote the borough as an attractive place in which to invest; revitalise our town centres and other shopping areas.

**Engage with our communities and provide value for money:** deliver value for money; provide outstanding customer service; ensure fair and open access for our diverse community; effectively communicate what we do.

### Other Relevant Plans and Strategies

**2.59** The spatial implications of other plans and strategies has been taken into account in the preparation of the Local Plan. These include the emerging local plans of neighbouring authorities, the public health strategy for Hertfordshire, the spending and investment plans of infrastructure providers and relevant European directives relating to the protection of water quality, the protection of key species and the environmental assessment of relevant plans and strategies.

## Key Challenges and Opportunities for Welwyn Hatfield

**2.60** There are a number of challenges facing Welwyn Hatfield over the next 15 years which the Local Plan will need to address. There are also a number of opportunities associated with development which the Council should seek to utilise for the benefit of the borough as a whole. The challenges are:

- Addressing climate change, protecting the environment and delivering sustainable development
- Providing the right type and level of growth to meet the needs of the borough
- How best to distribute growth around the borough
- Creating places where people want to live.

**2.61** In addressing these the following matters will need to be taken into account.

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13 [Corporate plan – Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council \(welhat.gov.uk\)](http://welhat.gov.uk)

## Welwyn Hatfield Now

### Economy, deprivation and exclusion

- The borough is generally prosperous with lower levels of unemployment than the national average, however levels of unemployment have started to rise and some areas of Welwyn Hatfield are amongst the most deprived in Hertfordshire. There is a need for job growth to continue to support the local economy and meet the needs of a growing population.
- However recent changes in planning legislation and policy mean the Council does not have the same ability to protect the supply of employment land for the future.
- During the 2000s, there was substantial inward investment in Welwyn Hatfield by major companies in Hertfordshire leading to significant increase in the number of jobs and, in particular, allowing the economy of Hatfield to diversify successfully in the wake of the closure of the British Aerospace factory in 1993. However, due to changing world economic circumstances, this inward investment is now starting to dry up and job growth has started to become more like that experienced in the rest of Hertfordshire.

### Health

- Improving physical and mental health is a key element of quality of life. The most deprived communities in the borough experience poorer health than those in the more affluent areas. Reducing obesity levels and increasing physical activity are national health issues which affect the borough.
- The original concept behind the creation of Welwyn Garden City was to create a town fit for healthy living and the principles which led to the success of the town are still relevant today. The need to plan for urban extensions and a new settlement create the opportunity to build in the infrastructure for 'healthy living' from the start.

### Population growth and the need for housing

- The population is increasing, migration levels have been high in recent years, more people are living on their own, people are living longer and household sizes are becoming smaller all of which creates a high demand for housing.
- There is also a need for more affordable housing. House prices are high in the borough and in 2015 there were 1,150 households on the borough's affordable housing waiting list with a recognised housing need.

### Growth and infrastructure

- Managing the growth of the economy, housing and meeting the needs of our existing communities, against a backdrop of financial constraint, are key issues for the borough.
- Infrastructure that may be needed includes; schools, surgeries, community buildings and sports facilities as well as roads, energy and sewerage. This is likely to require considerable inward investment to overcome issues related to transportation, health care, education and the provision of more new homes. Inward investment can be secured through the planning system but only if it does not compromise the viability of new development.

## 2 Welwyn Hatfield Now

### Climate change and sustainable development

- Housing and economic growth is likely to lead to an increase in overall greenhouse gas emissions arising from domestic, transport and industrial sectors. In 2014, the borough had higher per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions than the UK as a whole (6.4 vs 6.0 tonnes respectively), with the borough's transport sector markedly higher than the UK average (2.4 vs 1.9 tonnes)<sup>(14)</sup>.
- Welwyn Hatfield is an area of serious water stress. Housing growth is likely to lead to an increase in overall water consumption, and the associated need to treat waste water.
- Changes to legislation and national planning policy in 2015 and 2016 mean that the CO<sub>2</sub> and water performance of new dwellings is now governed by Building Regulations L, with changes to the Building Regulations in 2016 and 2019 expected to bring in tighter standards for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- Any new development will need to be located in places which have good access to jobs, shops, services and public transport and also provide opportunities to travel by foot or on a bike. Provision of measures for water conservation, improved biodiversity, applying the energy hierarchy in new development, and renewable energy can help to ensure that development is more sustainable.

### Town and neighbourhood centres

- Some of the New Town infrastructure is beginning to age and new investment is needed in Hatfield Town Centre and High View Neighbourhood Centre to regenerate these areas.
- There is a need to identify additional shopping floor space in Welwyn Garden City to ensure it remains competitive with other nearby town centres.

### Green Belt and the environment

- The towns and villages within the borough are tightly constrained by the Green Belt and meeting the needs for housing growth cannot be delivered without taking land out of the Green Belt. The quality of the borough's environment, its open spaces and countryside are highly valued by its residents. Directing growth to those areas of least environmental value whilst at the same time creating quality places where people will want to live is a key challenge.

14 UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005-2014 available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-emissions-estimates>

# The Overarching Strategy



## Vision and Boroughwide Objectives

### Welwyn Hatfield in 2036

- 3.1** The Local Plan sets out the Council's long term spatial vision for the borough. In developing the vision we have had regard to the Council's aspirations set out in its Business Plan, the Strategic Economic Plan produced by the Local Enterprise Partnership and the results of previous consultations. The vision below sets out the spatial aspects for development and infrastructure needed to deliver these aspirations.
- 3.2** Objectives provide the link between the vision and the strategic policies set out in the Local Plan. These are based upon national guidance, the results of technical evidence and the comments and feedback received through consultation.

#### Spatial Vision

*Welwyn Hatfield will be a vibrant and culturally rich place where people choose to live, work and spend their leisure time.*

*Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield will continue to be the main focus for shopping, leisure, housing and employment opportunities and the larger villages will continue to be the centres for local shops, services and community facilities for their parish areas. The borough will have a prosperous local economy, which makes best use of its links to London and Cambridge and the benefits associated with being the centre for higher education in the county.*

*15,200 new homes will be built on a range of sites, about two thirds of which will be within and adjoining Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield. New employment opportunities will be provided both within our existing employment areas and in a new life science park at Marshmoor, Welham Green. Partnerships with service providers, government bodies, the Local Enterprise Partnership, developers, other local authorities and other key bodies will ensure the timely delivery of the necessary supporting infrastructure.*

*Opportunities for development within settlement boundaries will be maximised but a planned release of a limited amount of land from the Green Belt will take place to meet the need for 4,738 dwellings up to year 10 which cannot be provided for within the existing towns and villages. Around 1,800 additional dwellings will be required to meet the remaining need for the full plan period to 2036, which may require further Green Belt release. Partnerships with Hertfordshire County Council, adjoining local authorities and landowners will deliver new and improved strategic green infrastructure, to improve access and biodiversity and reinforce the role of the Green Belt between Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield and surrounding towns.*

*A partnership with landowners, local businesses and the community will ensure that Welwyn Garden City town centre continues to be an attractive destination for shopping and new investment will be attracted to deliver a more vital evening economy and reinforce its role as a shopping destination both within and outside the borough. A similar partnership for Hatfield Town Centre will lead to its regeneration, creating a more vibrant centre of which people can feel proud.*

*The Garden City and New Town heritage with their attractive open spaces, well designed good quality housing, pattern of neighbourhoods providing small-scale shops, services and community facilities, and opportunities for a wide range of employment will be*

## Vision and Boroughwide Objectives

*reinforced. The distinctive character and role of our towns and village will be maintained by bringing forward well designed developments. Strategic sites will have been masterplanned along garden city principles.*

*The quality and attractiveness of the countryside for farming, recreation and as a habitat for wildlife will be reinforced. The natural and historic environment in both urban and rural areas will be protected, maintained and enhanced.*

*The borough will play its part in addressing climate change by improving opportunities for travelling by public transport, walking and cycling, using natural resources more efficiently, securing high quality sustainable design and managing the risk of flooding.*

### The borough-wide strategic objectives are:

1. To provide for the borough's development needs over the plan period, in a form which maintains the existing settlement pattern, protects areas of highest environmental value, prevents coalescence of our towns and villages and releases a limited amount of land from the Green Belt.
2. To deliver a sustainable pattern of development by directing the majority of new development to the main towns and limited development to the excluded villages where it can be supported by the timely delivery of appropriate infrastructure, the need to travel is minimised and opportunities for redevelopment on previously developed land can be maximised.
3. To work in partnership with service providers and others to deliver mixed and sustainable communities which are well planned, healthy, active, inclusive and safe, environmentally sensitive, accessible, culturally rich, vibrant and vital, well served, built to high design standards reflecting local character and fair for everyone.
4. To support and reinforce the role of the borough's villages and neighbourhoods and create new sustainable neighbourhoods.
5. To reduce people's impact on the environment by reducing the need to travel, through the prudent use of natural resources, through minimising waste, by managing the risk of flooding and by designing development to take into account future changes to the climate.
6. To maximise the opportunities to travel by sustainable transport modes and manage parking demand.
7. To provide an adequate supply and mix of housing types and tenures.
8. To protect, maintain and where possible enhance the borough's historic and natural environment, its cultural assets and network of open spaces, urban and rural landscapes.
9. To enhance opportunities for and access to recreation, heritage, arts and cultural activities and improve green links both within and between urban and rural areas.

## Vision and Boroughwide Objectives

10. To sustain the vitality of our villages and the rural economy, maintaining a supply of land for agriculture and for other uses appropriate to the countryside.
11. To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of our town, neighbourhood and village centres.
12. To enable Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield to fulfil their role as the main centres of economic activity in the borough, working in partnership with relevant bodies to support growth in the local economy and lifting areas out of deprivation by providing opportunities to improve training, education, health and economic prosperity.
13. To work with and support locally established companies, employers and higher education providers to encourage new investment in the borough.

# Sustainable Development

## Delivering Sustainable Development

- 4.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide a set of guiding principles on sustainable development. These have been used to shape this plan, will be used in the determination of planning applications and in the preparation of neighbourhood plans.

### Policy SP 1

#### Delivering Sustainable Development

The Local Plan seeks to bring about sustainable development in the borough by applying the following principles:

- The need to plan positively for growth in a way which supports economic growth, increases the supply of housing and helps to reduce social and health inequalities in the borough - whilst recognising environmental and infrastructure constraints.
- That new development should contribute to the creation of mixed and sustainable communities which are well planned, promote healthy and active lifestyles, are inclusive and safe, environmentally sensitive, accessible, culturally rich, vibrant and vital, well served, and built to high design standards reflecting local character.
- That the location of new development should deliver a sustainable pattern of development which prioritises previously developed land; minimises the need to travel by directing growth to those areas with good transport networks which are well served by jobs, services and facilities; protects areas of highest environmental value; and avoids areas of high flood risk.
- That the natural and heritage assets of the borough should be protected and enhanced and its natural resources used prudently.
- That adaptation and mitigation principles relating to climate change are incorporated into the design and construction of new development which include energy and water efficiency measures, the use of low carbon and renewable energy, the provision of green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems (SUDs).

The Council will take a positive approach when considering development proposals that reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and the principles set out above.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision, then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account:

- The principles set out above;
- Whether there are any adverse impacts of granting permission which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
- Specific policies in that Framework, such as Green Belt policy, indicate that development should be restricted.

## Sustainable Development

### Justification

- 4.2** There is a legal requirement for planning documents to be prepared with the objective of contributing to sustainable development. This policy sets out those key principles of sustainable development which have guided the development of the Local Plan and against which all new proposals for development should be assessed. Subsequent policies in this document are consistent with the key themes in this policy.
- 4.3** It is in keeping with the government's overall approach to delivering sustainable development and sets out a strategy for bringing forward land in appropriate locations, whilst protecting and enhancing natural resources and heritage assets of the borough, minimising the need to travel and avoiding areas of greatest risk from flooding. It meets the need for housing and economic development at a level which can be supported by the necessary infrastructure and which recognises environmental limits, seeks to protect mineral resources, prevent pollution and minimise waste. It promotes the delivery of high quality sustainable housing within walkable neighbourhoods where residents can easily access services to meet their day to day needs, and designed to protect and enhance the built environment and character of the local landscape.
- 4.4** In order to make the most effective use of our resources, the strategy towards the location of new development throughout the borough is based on maximising the use of previously developed land before greenfield sites. The Council estimates that between the start of the plan period in 2016/17 and 2022/23, around 95% of the borough's new homes will have been built on previously developed land. This is estimated to fall to around 38% between 2023/24 and 2035/36, based on sites and supply currently identified in this plan. Over the plan period this would mean that around 55% would be built on previously developed land. It is estimated that the comparable figure for the plan period for new employment floorspace will be around 60%. As the plan period progresses, it is anticipated that the availability of previously developed land will diminish and our targets will reflect this limited resource. The enhancement of ecological networks and landscape scale restoration is important in addition to protecting existing sites. To compensate for the loss of greenfield land we will seek improvements and additions to the network of green infrastructure.
- 4.5** Evidence indicates that climate change is happening and its effects will be widespread. We are likely to experience wetter winters, hotter drier summers and more extreme weather conditions. Climate change may impact on human health and social behaviour. It is also likely to lead to changes in wildlife habitats and species composition, with resulting gains and losses in the borough.
- 4.6** Welwyn Hatfield has been identified as an area of serious water stress with the Lee and Mimram suffering from over abstraction. There is a limit to what the planning system can deliver in terms of reducing the demand for water. However limiting the amount of development will clearly limit the demand. This strategy therefore adopts a cautious approach to setting the appropriate levels of growth and seeks to deliver a level of housing development that is sufficient for the delivery of social and economic objectives.
- 4.7** The strategy is consistent with the Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2031 which places a strong emphasis on making best use of the existing transport network rather than investing in major new infrastructure schemes and promoting behavioural change to use of more sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling.

## Sustainable Development

- 4.8** The policy supports the spatial vision of the Local Plan and borough wide objectives 1 to 13.

### Implementation

- 4.9** The policy has informed the strategy and policies set out in this Local Plan. It will also form the guiding principles for future Neighbourhood Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents and the determination of planning applications. The use of Health Impact Assessments for large scale development will be incorporated into Environmental Impact Assessments where relevant.

## How Much Growth

### Targets for Growth

- 5.1** Providing a sufficient supply of jobs, homes and retail floorspace is considered essential to supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities to meet the needs of present and future generations. The National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, meeting objectively assessed needs with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against other policies or where specific policies indicate development should be restricted.

#### Policy SP 2

##### Targets for Growth

The Council will support levels of employment, housing and retail growth which are consistent with the vision and objectives of this strategy and the principles of sustainable development as follows:

- Land which makes a valuable contribution to the local economy is designated as Employment Areas, as shown on the Policies Map. Over the plan period, provision will be made for a net increase of at least 55,000 sq.m of new floorspace for industry, offices and warehousing. This will allow for a sufficient supply of jobs in the borough and provide the opportunity for new employment floorspace over the plan period, allowing for flexibility in the face of economic changes. Employment floorspace provision will include the strategic development sites at Marshmoor, Welham Green, and North West Hatfield, as set out on the Policies Map.
- The examination has identified a Full Objectively Assessed Housing Need (FOAHN) for the borough of 15,200 dwellings between 2016 and 2036 (an average of 760 dwellings per annum). Between 1st April 2016 and 31st March 2023, 3,218 dwellings have already been delivered. This plan has identified opportunities on specific sites in and around the towns and excluded villages to facilitate the delivery of 9,343 dwellings between 2023/24 and 2032/33 and 13,400 dwellings over the plan period 2016-36. Opportunities to meet the remaining need will be the subject of an early review of the plan.
- The Council will undertake a review of the Local Plan, which will commence no later than one year after the adoption of the plan. An updated or replacement plan will be submitted for examination no later than three years after the date of adoption of the plan.
- The review would be undertaken in the context of housing need, national policy, and other relevant circumstances at the time. The review will determine additional sites to be allocated to meet the requirement in future years and provides an opportunity to examine the plan's performance to that date.



## How Much Growth

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- Through the provision of a net increase of around 200 bed-spaces for specialist (Use Class C2) residential or nursing care between 2016 and 2036.
- Through the delivery of around 1,350 new dwellings and associated development to the east of Welwyn Garden City, within the administrative area of East Herts. This will act as an extension to Welwyn Garden City and help to meet the need for housing within East Herts and within the Welwyn Hatfield Housing Market Area.
- Opportunities have been identified to facilitate the provision of 12,500 square metres new retail floorspace to meet predicted expenditure growth in the borough as set out in Table 1 through the allocation of sites within existing centres and new centres in some of the Strategic Development Sites and through existing permissions. Given the increasing shift towards online shopping, which was likely accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, the future of retail remains somewhat uncertain. The Council will therefore keep policies relating to town centres and retail under review, and may bring forward revised policies if necessary.

The Council will resist any net loss in the borough's stock of dwellings, authorised permanent Gypsy and Traveller sites and the travelling showpeople site, allocated employment land, and retail floorspace in town, neighbourhood or village centres; unless otherwise in accordance with other plan policies. Areas and sites that are key to the delivery of the growth strategy have been designated or allocated on the Policies Map.

### Justification

- 5.2** This policy makes provision for the development needs of the borough, helping to create the right conditions for the local economy to grow sustainably alongside housing growth. It supports the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan and the Local Plan's spatial vision and borough-wide objectives 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 11 and 12 as well as local objectives for the towns and excluded villages.
- 5.3** **Employment Growth:** Providing the right conditions for a balanced, resilient local economy that can be sustained into the future is a cornerstone of government policy. Planning for employment growth and developing the county's inward investment offer also reflects the priorities and objectives of the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The Council's strategy is to ensure that, as far as it is possible, Welwyn Hatfield is an attractive place for investment for existing businesses and companies new to the area, helping to create new job and training opportunities.
- 5.4** The Council's original evidence base<sup>(15)</sup> considered three different scenarios for job growth over the plan period, using economic forecasts produced by both Experian and the East of England Forecasting Model (EEFM). These resulted in slightly different figures for the number of jobs which should be planned for, and a slightly different make up of these jobs in terms of economic sectors. As it was difficult to tell which of these would be the most accurate, the study recommended that a hybrid scenario of the two forecasts should be adopted. This resulted in the original Local Plan proposing planning for 16,900 jobs and identifying a future supply of employment floorspace of 116,400sqm, which would have been significant growth for the borough.

## How Much Growth

- 5.5** Since submitting the Local Plan, it has become clear that extensive losses of floorspace through permitted development rights would make it difficult to deliver significant net additional floorspace. Furthermore, whilst the evidence base suggested that the Council should plan for significant employment growth, such an approach could result in an increase in the current level of in-commuting into the borough, which would be inherently unsustainable.
- 5.6** Following extensive consideration, the Council decided that the most appropriate approach would be to make some provision for the expected growth in the working age population of the borough. This would ensure that there was provision for an appropriate number of jobs whilst not increasing commuting into the borough.
- 5.7** This approach used the East of England Forecasting Model to forecast a distribution of these jobs across different use classes, which allowed the floorspace requirement to be calculated for B and E(g) classes. As a result, the Council forecasts that it would need to make provision for at least a net additional 85,000 square metres of B or E(g) class floorspace to the end of the plan period.
- 5.8** However, due to constraints and losses of existing floorspace, this will not be possible and the Council estimates that there will be a shortfall of around 30,000 square metres of floorspace over the plan period. However, without releases of land from the green belt, identified in this plan, this shortfall would be far more significant at around 85,000 square metres. The vast majority of this additional floorspace will be provided within the designated employment sites or new mixed-use sites.
- 5.9** **Housing Growth:** In preparing this plan, the Council has taken into account the government's ambitions for economic and housing growth, demographic and economic forecasts, evidence of need and demand, affordability, trends and previous targets, the availability of land, spatial distribution options and infrastructure requirements. It has also considered other policy objectives such as protecting landscapes and critical assets that are sensitive to change and the fact that some of our infrastructure is at or near capacity. Account has also been taken of the great importance attached to the permanence, extent and role of the Green Belt and the fundamental aim of preventing urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open, altering boundaries only in exceptional circumstances and ensuring that they endure beyond the plan period taking account of the need to promote sustainable development.
- 5.10** Having taken into account the supply of housing through completions, urban capacity, sites with planning permissions and a windfall allowance, the Council concluded that a strategy that would constrain housing growth to sites within the borough's urban areas would mean that there would be a significant shortfall of housing when considered against the Objectively Assessed Need. Therefore, achieving sustainable development within the borough without impinging on the Green Belt has been unavoidable and Green Belt boundaries have been amended, where exceptional circumstances existed, in order to achieve sustainable development in the borough.
- 5.11** Housing completions prior to the plan's adoption to 2022/23 total 3,218 dwellings. Opportunities have been identified on specific developable sites in and around the towns and excluded villages to facilitate the delivery of 9,343 dwellings over the first ten years of the plan, following adoption anticipated in 2023/24. A further 839 dwellings have been identified for years 11-13 (2033/34 to 35/36).

## How Much Growth

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- 5.12** Whilst this falls short of the Full Objectively Assessed Housing Need (FOAHN) of 15,200 dwellings over the full plan period 2016-36, an early review will consider additional sites to be allocated to meet the remaining requirement from year 11, and will provide an opportunity to examine the plan's performance to that date. The review will be undertaken in the context of housing need and national policy at that time.
- 5.13** The housing target will positively support the potential for growth in the economy; helping to maintain a good relationship between jobs and homes in the borough and is consistent with the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Delivering the level of growth associated with the housing target will however necessitate development taking place on land that was previously allocated as Green Belt, the impact of which has been considered.
- 5.14** Duty to co-operate discussions with neighbouring local planning authorities means that the Council has been unable in this plan to identify the capacity to address a Welwyn Hatfield shortfall. However, the Council supports proposals for a new neighbourhood comprising around 1,350 dwellings along with primary and secondary school provision, retail and employment uses on land within East Herts which will be located directly to the east of Welwyn Garden City. Development here would act as an extension to Welwyn Garden City and will help to meet the need for housing within East Herts and within this part of the Welwyn Hatfield Housing Market Area.
- 5.15** In addition to the housing target, the Council will also support an increase in specialist residential or nursing care provision to help meet the specific accommodation needs of those who are not able to live independently.
- 5.16** **Retail development:** The Council's strategy for retail development is to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the borough's town, neighbourhood and village centres and to help sustain the rural economy and the vitality of our villages. Though the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on retail and town centres, as well as the wider economy, the Council still believes that town and village centres are at the heart of our communities and should be the focal point for retail, leisure, services and other facilities. Focusing investment in the borough's existing centres, as well as centres serving new neighbourhoods, will also help to promote their economic prosperity as well as helping to ensure that economic activity takes place in the most sustainable locations easily accessible by modes of travel other than the car.
- 5.17** Our evidence<sup>(16)</sup> forecasts that there is likely to be sufficient expenditure generated in the local economy to mean that the amounts of retail floorspace set out in Table 1 would be required. Growth figures to 2033 are being used for this plan. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, forecasts of this type are known to be less accurate beyond a 10 year time horizon. Secondly, with changes in the economy and the ways in which people shop, there is increasing uncertainty as to whether or not the types of forecasting method usually employed are giving reliable estimates of likely future growth requirements for retail floorspace. The figures used to inform the growth figures used in this plan have taken account of foreseeable changes in the amount of turnover that can be generated from retail floorspace. The Council's evidence on retail capacity forecasting, and the long term impacts on retail and town centres from the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent economic recovery will be kept under regular review throughout the plan period.

## How Much Growth

**Table 1 - Retail capacity forecast for Welwyn Hatfield (square metres net)**

Retail capacity type	2033
Convenience goods capacity - Option 1 - foodstore	3,311
Convenience goods capacity - Option 2 - local supermarket / deep discounter	6,760
Comparison goods capacity	19,793

### Implementation

- 5.18 Employment Growth:** In order that the borough maintains a sufficient supply of employment land in the borough to meet long term economic aspirations for growth, employment areas and mixed use areas incorporating employment uses have been identified in Policy SADM 10 and on the Policies Map. Policy SADM 10 also sets out criteria relating to proposals for the change of use of land and premises in employment areas.
- 5.19** The Council's Business Plan has an objective to help build a strong economy. The Council's Economic Development Strategy, alongside the Local Plan, will help to ensure that this objective is delivered. The Council will work with and support local companies, employers and higher education providers to encourage new investment into the borough and to sustain existing investment. It will also work in partnership with Chambers of Commerce, the Local Economic Partnership and the Welwyn Hatfield Alliance.
- 5.20 Housing Growth:** Sites with a potential capacity of 10 or more dwellings in Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield, and 5 or more dwellings in the excluded villages have been allocated on the Policies Map as they are considered to be key to the delivery of the Local Plan. The Policies Map identifies a number of Strategic Development Sites. These are sites that in themselves will deliver one or more years' supply of housing land and will involve the creation of new neighbourhoods or extensions to existing neighbourhoods where new services and facilities of an appropriate scale will be provided alongside new homes. Delivery at all Strategic Sites within the borough will be guided by masterplans as set out in Policy SP 9.
- 5.21** The growth strategy supports proposals for housing growth and associated development on the eastern edge of Welwyn Garden City on land within East Hertfordshire, which will be allocated in the East Herts Local Plan. Future residents and businesses within this new neighbourhood will inevitably look towards Welwyn Garden City for the key services and facilities a community is likely to need, as well as for local job opportunities. The Council will work with others to ensure that development in this location is supported by the appropriate social, physical and green infrastructure and is well integrated with Welwyn Garden City.
- 5.22** The annual target is not a restrictive phased policy and will not in itself prevent the release of any allocated housing site or early development if circumstances allow. The housing target will form the basis for calculating and monitoring Welwyn Hatfield's 5 year housing land supply. If insufficient land comes forward for housing within the plan period, then the strategy to meet the overall housing target will be reviewed.

## How Much Growth

## 5

- 5.23** The increase in bed-spaces for specialist (use class C2) residential or nursing care will be supported in the borough's towns and excluded villages in accordance with policy SP 7.
- 5.24 Retail Development:** Town Centre boundaries and sites for new retail development have been identified on the Policies Map which together with planning permissions will deliver sufficient floorspace to meet the previously forecasted need to 2033. As noted elsewhere, this Local Plan and the evidence base underpinning it were prepared before the Covid-19 pandemic and the consequent impact on retail and town centres, as well as on the economy more generally. It also pre-dates changes to the Use Classes Order 2020 which gave greater flexibility for changes to and from retail uses through Class E. It is currently unclear what impact these, and the subsequent economic recovery will have on town centres and retail in the long term. At this moment in time, it would seem likely that this level of additional floorspace need will be sufficient for later in the plan period than originally forecast. However, it is important to make sufficient provision to meet future demand for town centre uses. As a result, the Council will keep this area under review and if evidence indicates that there have been significant long lasting changes in the economy or changes in the way in which retailing is carried out meaning that the amount of floorspace needed has changed, floorspace targets will be updated through an early review of the Local Plan.

# Settlement Strategy and Green Belt boundaries

## Settlement Strategy and Green Belt Boundaries

- 6.1** The Green Belt boundaries define the borough's towns and villages that are excluded from the Green Belt and help to maintain the settlement pattern. The settlement strategy directs growth to the most sustainable locations at a scale which is consistent with the settlement hierarchy.
- 6.2** In order to plan for a sustainable pattern of growth and ensure that sufficient land is available to meet the borough's development needs, Green Belt boundaries in the borough have been altered, where exceptional circumstances existed, through this Plan.
- 6.3** The continuing maintenance of the general extent of the Green Belt, keeping land permanently open, preventing urban sprawl and neighbouring towns and villages from merging into one another, safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, preserving the setting and special character of historic towns and assisting urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of urban land are key local priorities.

### Policy SP 3

#### Settlement Strategy and Green Belt boundaries

In order to meet the need for housing and employment land this plan has identified land which has been released from the Green Belt. Green Belt boundaries have been defined as shown on the Policies Map. Planting and landscape buffers are proposed, as appropriate, to define newly established Green Belt boundaries, as indicated in the Local Plan and on the Policies Map. Green Belt boundaries will be maintained throughout the plan period and will only be reviewed through a review of this plan.

Consistent with the settlement hierarchy, the primary focus for new development will be in and around the two towns of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield where accessibility to strategic transport networks and public transport is good and the greatest potential exists to maximise accessibility to job opportunities, shops, services and other facilities, and to create new neighbourhoods with supporting infrastructure.

The secondary focus for development will be in and around the excluded villages at a more limited scale, compatible with the more limited range of job opportunities, shops, services and other facilities available in these locations.

In villages and other rural areas of the borough that lie within the Green Belt, development will be restricted so as to be consistent with the type of development envisaged in national planning policy and other policies of this plan.

Development that would result in disproportionate growth to any of the settlements, conflict with the function and position of a settlement within the hierarchy, which cannot be supported by the necessary infrastructure or result in a loss of services and facilities which are considered to be key to supporting local communities will be resisted.



## Settlement Strategy and Green Belt boundaries

### Settlement Hierarchy

Type	Name of settlements	Description and Function
Main Town	Welwyn Garden City	A medium sized town; the borough's largest with good accessibility to road, rail and bus networks, a major town centre and a series of large and small neighbourhood centres. The town provides a key focus for jobs and shops, serving a sub-regional catchment area beyond the borough boundary. Key public services and facilities are concentrated here. A primary focus for new development, which will reinforce its role as the borough's principal centre for economic activity and support the delivery of economic growth.
Town	Hatfield	A medium sized town, with good accessibility to road, rail and bus networks, a town centre and a series of large and small neighbourhood centres. The town provides a key focus for jobs and higher education, serving a catchment area beyond the borough boundary. Shopping, community and leisure facilities serve the town's needs in the main. A primary focus for new development, which will help bring about investment and regeneration and deliver economic growth.
Large excluded villages	Welwyn, Welham Green, Brookmans Park, Cuffley	Villages excluded from (not in) the Green Belt with large service centres, but a more limited range of employment opportunities and services than the two towns. Shops and facilities mainly serve the community needs of these villages and those living in surrounding rural areas. Accessibility to the main road network is good and they are served by rail and/or bus networks. A secondary focus for new development where this is compatible with the scale and character of the village, and the maintenance of Green Belt boundaries.
Small excluded villages and settlements	Woolmer Green, Oaklands & Mardley Heath, Digswell, Little Heath	Villages excluded from (not in) the Green Belt, plus Little Heath which forms a northern extension of the town of Potters Bar in Hertsmere. These have a more limited range of employment opportunities and services than the large excluded villages. One village is directly served by rail services, with the others served by good bus services. Accessibility to the main road network is good. A secondary focus for a limited amount of new development where this is compatible with the scale and character of the village, and the maintenance of Green Belt boundaries.
Green Belt villages	Lemsford, Essendon, Newgate Street, Northaw	Villages set in open countryside and washed over by (within) the Green Belt. Typically residential with limited local facilities and services. Accessibility is mainly via the rural road network and infrequent bus services. None are served by rail. Limited scope for development and only where this would be compatible with Green Belt policy.
Small Green Belt villages and settlements	Ayot St Lawrence, Ayot St Peter, Ayot Green, Burnham Green (part of), Stanborough, Mill Green, Bullens Green, Wild Hill, Woodside, Bell Bar, Water End, Swanley Bar	Small villages and hamlets in rural areas or other areas of development all located within the Green Belt. Typically residential, communities must look towards larger settlements for services and facilities. Accessibility is mainly car dependant. Not generally suitable for further development unless it is compatible with Green Belt policy.



## Settlement Strategy and Green Belt boundaries

### Justification

- 6.4** The settlement hierarchy is consistent with the spatial vision, ensuring that the main focus for future development and key services will be directed towards the two towns of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield with more limited development directed towards the large and small excluded villages and settlements. The hierarchy also provides a framework for settlement level objectives. The policy is consistent with borough-wide objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 10, 11 and 12.
- 6.5** The settlement strategy and hierarchy direct growth to the most sustainable locations, appropriate to the levels of existing infrastructure, services and facilities, and assisting regeneration where needed.
- 6.6** The borough's Green Belt villages, hamlets and other small Green Belt settlements have fewer services and facilities than the excluded villages and many are set in less accessible locations, being largely dependent on car travel. Only a limited level of development will be supported in these less sustainable locations, where this is consistent with Green Belt policy.

### Implementation

- 6.7** Green Belt boundaries are shown on the Policies Map. Policy SADM 34 sets out how planning applications for development in the Green Belt will be determined. The settlement strategy and hierarchy has informed the allocation of sites for uses such as housing, employment and retailing. Over the plan period, the delivery of new housing will be focused towards locations consistent with the settlement strategy and the settlement hierarchy set out in Policy SP 3. The table on the following page sets out the expected distribution of housing growth within the borough, plus other relevant allowances.

## Settlement Strategy and Green Belt boundaries

**Table 2 Distribution of Housing Growth**

	Completions 1 Apr 2016 - 31 Mar 2023	Commitments (1st Apr 2023)	Capacity from Allocations to 2036	Total 2016-36
Welwyn Garden City	1,682	336	4,040	6,058
Hatfield	1,028	193	2,485	3,706
Woolmer Green	76	0	184	260
Oaklands & Mardley Heath	27	7	31	65
Welwyn	185	11	76	272
Digswell	12	21	0	33
Lemsford	0	0	0	0
Stanborough	17	2	0	19
Rural North	6	29	0	35
Welham Green	12	9	316	337
Brookmans Park	63	12	452	527
Little Heath	6	0	98	104
Cuffley	55	14	335	404
Rural South	49	121	4	174
<b>Sub- total</b>	<b>3,218</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>8,021</b>	<b>11,994</b>
Small Sites				16
Windfall				1,390
<b>Total</b>				<b>13,400</b>

- 6.8** It is not possible to identify all of the housing sites which will come forward over the plan period. Local planning authorities may make an allowance for windfall sites in their Local Plans where the evidence demonstrates that windfall sites have consistently become available in the borough. Having paid regard to the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends, a reasonable allowance for windfall development has been made. No allowance is made for residential gardens. Policy SADM 1 sets out the approach to windfall development.
- 6.9** In addition to the overall housing target, there is an assessed need for around 200 additional bed spaces for specialist Class C2 care accommodation. Moves to specialist C2 accommodation can have the effect of releasing properties back into the general housing market (for rent or for sale), although the precise impact of such moves is

## Settlement Strategy and Green Belt boundaries

difficult to quantify. The delivery of specialist C2 accommodation will be reviewed over the plan period alongside the delivery of other types of housing for older people (which form part of the main housing target), to assess whether or not the demand and supply for specialist C2 care accommodation is impacting on overall housing need.

### Windfall Development

- 6.10** Windfall development can make a valuable contribution towards the borough's housing and other land-use land supply. The priority will be to use previously developed land but there may be opportunities to make more efficient use of other land on small-scale infill sites and through proposals in urban areas that intensify the land use without significant adverse impacts. All proposals on windfall sites will need to demonstrate that either sufficient infrastructure exists to support the level of development proposed or that additional capacity can be created as a result of the development. The impact on surrounding residents and the operational nature of surrounding businesses will need to be taken into account to ensure that no significant adverse impact would arise.

#### Policy SADM 1

##### Windfall Development

Planning permission for residential development on unallocated sites will be granted provided:

- i. The site is previously developed, or is a small infill site within a town or excluded village. In the Green Belt, Policy SADM 34 will apply;
- ii. The development will be accessible to a range of services and facilities by transport modes other than the car;
- iii. There will be sufficient infrastructure capacity, either existing or proposed, to support the proposed level of development;
- iv. Proposals would not undermine the delivery of allocated sites or the overall strategy of the Plan; and
- v. Proposals would not result in disproportionate growth taking into account the position of a settlement within the settlement hierarchy.

Windfall sites will also be supported where the proposed development would support communities through the provision of community facilities to meet the demand for new or enhanced community services.

### Justification

- 6.11** The council has made significant efforts to identify and allocate sites to meet its housing target. Whilst the majority of the borough's housing land supply is expected to come forward on allocated sites, evidence from the Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, which reviews historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends indicates that it is reasonable to make an allowance for windfall development, i.e. proposals that come forward on sites that have not been allocated for housing, over the plan period. There may also be a need over the plan-period for service providers to deliver new facilities to meet the demand arising from communities for new or enhanced service provision. This policy facilitates the delivery of development on windfall (unallocated) sites and the approach is consistent with borough-wide objectives

## Settlement Strategy and Green Belt boundaries

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11 and 12. Delivery of windfall sites against the overall housing target will be monitored and if a position of significant oversupply has been reached, the council will review the implementation of this and any other relevant policies of the Plan.





# Topic Specific Policies



## Transport and Travel

- 7.1 Policy SP 4, supported by SADM 2 and SADM 3, will seek to ensure the safety of highway users is preserved, the borough's highway network functions well, and alternative sustainable forms of transport are promoted and secured.

### Policy SP 4

#### Transport and Travel

Consistent with the vision and objectives of this Local Plan, the Council will seek to support both planned growth and existing development with appropriate transport infrastructure, with the emphasis on promoting the use of sustainable modes of travel and on improving safety for all highway users. The Council will work together with the County Council as the local highway authority, Highways England, public transport operators, developers and other relevant bodies to design and fund improvements to transport infrastructure where these are necessary to support growth or to improve accessibility to existing centres, employment areas and community facilities.

### Justification

- 7.2 The Local Plan seeks to achieve a sustainable pattern of development within the borough that minimises the need to travel by directing growth to those areas with good transport networks and which are well served by jobs, services and facilities. It also seeks to address climate change through, among other things, putting in place improved opportunities for travelling by public transport, walking and cycling. The Local Plan's strategy for growth encompasses movement by road and rail, including bus services, walking and cycling and will complement the Local Transport Plan (LTP). Policy SP 4 supports the implementation of these aims and will contribute to the achievement of strategic objectives 3, 5, 6 and 9.
- 7.3 Welwyn Hatfield is served by major north-south links in the form of the A1(M) and the East Coast Mainline rail service, and by the principal east-west road route through central Hertfordshire, the A414. These links offer advantages in terms of accessibility for living and working, but they all suffer from congestion and stress at peak times. The achievement of the level of housing growth proposed in the Local Plan will need to address additional peak stresses on these routes with a series of measures to improve traffic flow as well as investment in sustainable transport measures. Hertfordshire County Council is preparing a Growth and Transport Plan to support the delivery of the Local Plan and the masterplanning of strategic sites will need to take account of the wider impact of the development of those sites on the transport network.
- 7.4 As a local authority member of the A1(M) Consortium the council will continue to lobby Highways England and Government for investment to improve traffic flow and capacity at key locations on the motorway. Additionally, the Council will work with Hertfordshire County Council and other Hertfordshire authorities to address congestion issues on the A414 and seek opportunities for transport improvements to increase the ease of east-west movement across the borough and in the county generally.

## 7 Movement

- 7.5** Whilst transport modelling results and the design of potential highway improvements are critical to understanding how the effects of increased traffic can be mitigated, this work does need to be set in a context where alternatives to the use of the private car continue to be encouraged. This is essential in terms of making best use of the limited space on key parts of the road network during peak periods, as well as from the point of view of environmental sustainability, and health and well-being (e.g. promotion of exercise and reduced air pollution). The Local Plan and its growth strategy therefore promotes the use of rail and bus services where appropriate, as well as providing for new or improved cycling and walking routes, for leisure purposes and for journeys to work, school, shopping and community facilities.

### Implementation

- 7.6** The Council will also work with Hertfordshire County Council to secure implementation through their emerging Local Transport Plan, and Growth and Transport Plan for the borough, and through membership of the A1(M) and A414 consortia. Any necessary developer contributions towards transport services and infrastructure will be secured by means of a Section 106 Agreement in accordance with the Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document on Planning Obligations 2012<sup>(17)</sup> or the Community Infrastructure Levy (once adopted). However, it must be noted that any necessary infrastructure works must be environmentally acceptable and the provision of adequate transport infrastructure in itself will not be sufficient to make the development acceptable if there are substantial environmental objections to it. Policy SP 4 will principally be implemented through the development management system and policies SADM 2 on Highway Network and Safety and SADM 3 on Sustainable Modes of Travel in particular.

#### Highway network and safety

- 7.7** Development which is likely to generate significant movement and travel demand must be assessed comprehensively in terms of its impact on the transport network, in line with SADM 2. Developers will be required to submit a Transport Assessment or Statement with planning applications. These assessments should demonstrate journeys generated for different modes of travel and the ability of the existing infrastructure and services to accommodate this demand, as well as proposing measures to ameliorate impacts and assist in promoting journeys onto more sustainable modes. Assessments or Statements must demonstrate the measures to be taken to minimise vehicular movements through improvements to passenger transport, pedestrian, and cycling facilities and state whether new highways works or traffic management measures will be required.
- 7.8** Assessments should include the level of accessibility for all modes of travel and any proposed parking provision. Proposed new developments will be considered in the light of their potential to reduce the need to travel and their accessibility, particularly for modes other than the car. As part of this, Transport Assessments should demonstrate the effect of development-generated traffic on the transportation system, in particular the traffic and road safety implications on the highway and rights of way network and contain proposals for addressing these implications set out in the transport assessments or statements. Information required in the assessment will include all existing and proposed commercial and residential vehicular and pedestrian movements to and from the site. Loading areas and arrangements for manoeuvring, servicing and

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17 Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (Feb 2012)  
<http://www.welhat.gov.uk/planningobligations>

## Movement

parking of vehicles should also be clearly identified. It should describe and analyse existing transport conditions, how the development would affect those conditions and any measures proposed to overcome any problems. The quantity and design of parking insofar as it impacts on highway safety and capacity will be assessed under SADM 2. The principal assessment of parking will be made in line with policy SADM 12 and the Council's parking standards.

- 7.9** The need or otherwise for Transport Assessments or Statements including the levels of detail required should be based on the land uses and thresholds outlined in Hertfordshire County Council's Highway Design Guidance 'Roads in Hertfordshire' including any subsequent revisions <sup>(18)</sup>. The thresholds in the Guidance are guidelines only and whether a Transport Assessment or Statement is required will be dependent on the specifics of the proposal and on local circumstances. In particularly environmentally sensitive locations a Transport Statement may be required for smaller developments below the thresholds suggested.

### Sustainable Travel for All

- 7.10** As per SADM 3, a travel plan should outline the way in which the transport implications of new development will be managed in order to ensure that there is the least environmental, social or economic impact. Developers should state how new occupiers of or customers to developments will use alternative means of travel that do not involve the use of private cars. Clear targets should be included to enable the Travel Plan to be monitored and reviewed. Residential Travel Plans should support car sharing or other alternative means of travel other than by private single occupancy trips.
- 7.11** The Council will encourage all existing businesses to introduce Travel Plans, particularly those employing large numbers of people. However, it is an easier task at the planning stage, before employees or customers have become set in their travel patterns. It is also easier for the infrastructure necessary to accommodate alternatives to the private car to be incorporated into the design of a site from the outset rather than be fitted in afterwards. The Council will therefore require all new developments above the thresholds set out in the Hertfordshire County Council guidance to be supported by a Travel Plan.
- 7.12** New developments will be expected to encourage cycling through the inclusion of safe cycle routes and parking for cycles. New routes should link with existing or proposed cycle paths. Contributions may be required for off-site facilities. Appropriate secure waterproof storage and changing/shower facilities should be provided within developments. These details should be provided within the application and on plan, as appropriate.

### Highway Network and Safety

- 7.13** The purpose of this policy is to manage the growth in traffic on the highway network resulting from development in the interests of highway safety and maintaining highway capacity.

## Movement

### Policy SADM 2

#### Highway Network and Safety

Development proposals will be permitted provided:

- i. There would be no severe residual cumulative impacts on the local and/or strategic transport network once any cost-effective and achievable mitigation measures have been taken into account. Development proposals which generate a significant amount of traffic movements must be accompanied by either a Transport Assessment or Transport Statement as appropriate in accordance with the criteria in the Hertfordshire County Council Highway Design Guidance<sup>(19)</sup>;
- ii. There would be no negative impacts on highway safety;
- iii. They are designed to allow safe and suitable means of access to and from the site for all users; and
- iv. They provide satisfactory and suitable levels of parking, in accordance with the criteria set out in SADM12 and the Council's parking standards, and taking into account the opportunities for public transport, cycling and walking.

### Justification

- 7.14** The National Planning Policy Framework requires that all developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Assessment. SADM 2 provides the mechanism for achieving this. SADM 2 also supports the implementation of the overall intent of Policy SP 4 and strategy for growth in the borough set out within the Local Plan. The quantity and design of parking insofar as it impacts on highway safety and capacity will be assessed under SADM 2. The design and provision of parking can have implications for highway safety and capacity. It is therefore appropriate for parking to be considered in this context in addition to the Local Plan's main requirements for vehicle parking set out within SADM 12 as well as the Council's parking standards.

### Sustainable Travel for All

#### Policy SADM 3

#### Sustainable Travel for All

- i. All developments at or above the thresholds set out in Hertfordshire County Council's Hertfordshire Travel Plan Guidance will be required to submit a Travel Plan as part of a planning application.

Development proposals should make provision where appropriate for:

19 Hertfordshire County Council: Travel Plan Guidance for Businesses and Residential Development 2014

- ii. Cyclists, through safe design and layout of routes integrated into new development and the wider cycle network and provision of secure cycle parking and where appropriate changing facilities.
- iii. Pedestrians (including disabled persons and those with impaired mobility), through safe, accessible, direct and convenient design and layout of routes within the new development and wider pedestrian network.
- iv. Safeguarding existing Public Rights of Way and promoting enhancements to the network, where appropriate, to offer walking and cycling opportunities.
- v. Public transport, through measures that will improve and support public transport and provide new public transport routes.
- vi. Community transport, through the implementation of Travel Plans where appropriate (for example including measures that will promote car pools, car sharing and voluntary community buses, community services and cycle schemes).
- vii. Servicing and emergency vehicles.
- viii. Facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

## Justification

- 7.15** Sustainable modes of transport should be facilitated through new developments to promote accessibility and integration into the wider community and existing networks. Policy SADM 3 encourages development to support people and businesses in using sustainable means of transport.

## Centres, Services and Facilities

### Retail Development

**8.1** The borough's town centres, neighbourhood and village centres provide a focus for activity and community life providing shopping, leisure, employment, culture as well as other services. This is particularly the case for Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield town centres. Work has taken place to review the potential of the two town centres for retail development and strategies for the development of the two town centres are set out in detail in Sections 14 and 15 of this Plan. Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield town centres sites are identified to meet the bulk of these retail needs. In preparing the plan the Council has taken account of government guidance, notably the sequential approach, and retail forecasts.

#### Welwyn Hatfield's retail hierarchy

**8.2** The borough has a hierarchy of shopping and service centres that broadly accords with the settlement hierarchy set out in Policy SP 3, with the largest concentration of shops and other town centre activities in Welwyn Garden City town centre, followed by Hatfield town centre and, in the two towns, the large and small neighbourhood centres, and outside the towns, the large and small village centres. In Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield, the network of large and small neighbourhood centres is, in part, a consequence of the planned nature of these two New Towns. Centres at each level of the hierarchy perform different functions as set out in Policy SP 5 below. These centres are shown on the Policies Map. The borough also has some out-of-centre retail provision, including the Hatfield Galleria (an indoor mall designer outlet centre with restaurants and a multiplex cinema), Oldings Corner, Hatfield (which currently offers a retail park), Morrisons superstore, Welwyn Garden City and a B&Q, Welwyn Garden City. This provision is outside the retail hierarchy set out in Policy SP 5.

### New Retail Provision

**8.3** The purpose of this policy is to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the borough's town, neighbourhood and village centres and to help sustain the rural economy and the vitality of our villages. Focusing investment in the borough's existing centres will also help to promote their economic prosperity as well as helping to ensure that economic activity takes place in the most sustainable locations easily accessible by modes of travel other than the car.

#### Policy SP 5

##### Quantity and Location of Retail Development

The Council will support the provision of additional retail floorspace to meet forecast expenditure growth to at least 2033 in the defined retail centre hierarchy to deliver the functions set out in the table below. Priority will be given to the provision of additional comparison floorspace in Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City town centres.

## Centres, Services and Facilities

<b>Retail Hierarchy</b>			
Level in hierarchy and Location	Functions	Retail floorspace requirement to 2026	
		Convenience goods	Comparison goods
<b>Major Town Centre</b>  Welwyn Garden City	Welwyn Garden City Town Centre hosts the borough's main cultural, community and civic facilities. It is the borough's main centre for comparison goods shopping (and also serves a wider sub-regional catchment), and provides convenience shopping for the north of the borough.	500sqm	8,900sqm
<b>Town Centre</b>  Hatfield	Hatfield Town Centre provides convenience and comparison shopping for Hatfield, plus community and leisure facilities.	400sqm	1,600sqm
<b>Large Neighbourhood and Village Centres</b>  Haldens, Moors Walk, and Woodhall (Welwyn Garden City); Old Hatfield, High View, and Parkhouse Court (Hatfield); Welwyn, Welham Green, Brookmans Park, and Cuffley	These centres provide a range of facilities, and are the heart of their neighbourhoods. Large convenience stores or small supermarkets are supplemented by other shops which typically include pharmacies, hairdressers, bakeries and newsagents, as well as independent comparison goods retailers. Services include community centres, GP surgeries and pubs - some centres also have post offices.	250sqm <sup>(20)</sup>	100sqm <sup>(21)</sup>
<b>Small Neighbourhood and Village Centres</b>  Hall Grove, Handside, Hollybush, Peartree, and Shoplands (Welwyn Garden City); Birchwood, Crawford Road, Manor Parade, Roe Green, and St. Albans Rd East (Hatfield); Oaklands and Mardley Heath, Digswell	These centres provide a smaller range of facilities, and in most cases their proximity to larger centres means that they generally only provide for day-to-day needs. All have a convenience store or newsagent - whilst some also have facilities such as hairdressers and pubs, they otherwise have fewer services.	150sqm <sup>(22)</sup>	Nil
<b>Individual Small Convenience Stores</b>  Various locations, including petrol filling stations	A number of small convenience shops provide for day-to-day needs in locations where shops in the rest of the hierarchy are not within a convenient walking distance. Several are standalone shops within urban areas, whilst others are part of petrol filling stations.	Not individually analysed	Not individually analysed

21 Applies to Large Village Centres only - there is no identified need for new comparison goods floorspace in Large Neighbourhood Centres  
 20 Requirement of 200sqm in Large Neighbourhood Centres and 50sqm in Large Village Centres  
 22 Convenience goods floorspace need has not been broken down between Small Neighbourhood and Village Centres



## 8 Centres, Services and Facilities

Additionally, the Council will require:

- Small neighbourhood shopping centres including convenience retail floorspace, which would form part of the retail hierarchy, to be provided in the new neighbourhood of North West Hatfield (SDS5/Hat1) and in South East Welwyn Garden City (SDS2/WGC5), which forms part of Birchall Garden Suburb;
- At least one small convenience shop at the former Panshanger Airfield (SDS1/WGC4).

In addition, the Council will support the provision of a small neighbourhood shopping centre in the new neighbourhood of Birchall Garden Suburb in East Hertfordshire.

The Council will promote a range of activities in town centres that cater for the whole community, creating a balanced evening economy including entertainment and late night shopping as well as the provision of a range of eating and drinking establishments. In order to reinforce the retail function and viability of Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City town centres, Core Retail Zones have been identified along with their anchor stores, primary and secondary shopping frontages as shown on the Policies Inset Maps.

Shopping frontages have also been designated in the neighbourhood and village centres where there is a focus on convenience shopping and service facilities for the needs of the local community.

Sites for new development within existing and new centres have been allocated in this plan to meet the need for additional retail floorspace to meet the need to at least 2033.

As a part of a rolling programme of investment, the Council will seek to regenerate and renew Hatfield town centre and existing council-owned neighbourhood centres as defined in the retail hierarchy where this is required. The Council will also support the renewal and regeneration of other neighbourhood and village centres defined in the retail hierarchy.

### **Sequential Approach**

If no suitable, viable and available sites exist in the identified centres (taking account of reasonable flexibility in the format of the proposal), then proposals for sites on the edge of those centres will be considered. If no edge of centre sites are suitable, viable and available, out-of-centre sites will be considered. It is not accepted that specific classes of goods cannot be sold from in-centre locations. Developments will need to demonstrate flexibility in their operational requirements in terms of their format.

Any retail proposals (including extensions) on sites outside centres in the retail hierarchy will be required to demonstrate compliance with the sequential approach to site selection. For those proposals exceeding 500 sq.m gross floorspace, it will have to be demonstrated that the proposal will not have an unacceptable impact on existing town centres. For those proposals exceeding 300sq.m gross floorspace, it will have to be demonstrated that the proposal will not have an unacceptable impact on existing neighbourhood and village centres.

## Centres, Services and Facilities

### Justification

- 8.4** The Council's evidence base<sup>(23)</sup> predicts that capacity will have been generated for about 12,500 square metres of new retail floorspace (net) in the borough by 2026, increasing to about 23,100 square metres by 2032. This floorspace is split between convenience (food) and comparison (non-food). The Council's evidence recommends that, to address the changing nature of town centre shopping, 15 to 20% of the capacity for comparison goods in the town centres be met by food and drink floorspace.
- 8.5** In addition to existing provision, it is anticipated that a new small neighbourhood centre and three new community hubs will be provided at strategic development sites. The retail hierarchy reflects the settlement hierarchy in Policy SP 3, with the largest concentration of shops and other town centre activities in Welwyn Garden City town centre, followed by Hatfield town centre and, in the two towns, the large and small neighbourhood centres, and outside the towns, the large and small village centres. Focusing retailing in town, neighbourhood and village centres helps to ensure that goods and services are available at the heart of communities, where they are available to as wide a range of people as possible, helping to ensure that neighbourhoods and new communities are "walkable" and that higher order shops are easy to get to on foot, by cycle and by public transport, as well as by car. For the town centres, this policy focuses retail within Core Retail Zones which are directly equivalent to the Primary Shopping Areas defined in government guidance. This overall approach is consistent with government guidance on planning for consumer choice, planning for centres and promoting competitive town centres.
- 8.6** This policy ensures that new strategic developments provide access to shops in line with the existing retail hierarchy which is important in achieving sustainable communities.
- 8.7** There is considerable uncertainty in retail forecasting, partly for methodological reasons and partly because there is uncertainty about how recent trends in retailing will play out in the future particularly given the impact on retail and town centres from the Covid-19 pandemic. It is for this reason that the council's strategy for quantity of retail development is focused on at least 2033. The Council will keep its retail evidence base under review.
- 8.8** The thresholds set for requiring retail impact assessments are informed by recommendations contained in the Welwyn Hatfield Retail and Town Centre Needs Assessment Update, May 2016.
- 8.9** This policy supports the spatial vision and borough-wide objectives 2, 3, 4, 5 and 11.

### Implementation

- 8.10** The implementation of this strategy will be assisted by the following policies.

### Development in Designated Centres

- 8.11** To support the delivery of the strategy set out in Policy SP 5, the Council has defined a set of criteria to guide development in town, neighbourhood and village centres.

## 8 Centres, Services and Facilities

### Policy SADM 4

#### Development in Designated Centres

Within the defined boundaries of designated centres the Council will support proposals for new development or changes of use, subject to them not having a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of that centre. Proposals will be resisted where they result in the loss of a use or a facility which attracts people to the centre or which directly serves the centre, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no longer any need for that use or facility.

The Policies Map indicates the boundaries of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield Town Centres; which are defined Core Retail Zones, Anchor Stores, Primary Frontages and Secondary Frontages. The Policies Map also indicates the boundaries of each of the borough's Neighbourhood and Village Centres and whether they are a large or small centre, and defines Retail Frontages within the Large Neighbourhood and Village Centres.

#### Town Centre Core Retail Zones

To maintain the function of Core Retail Zones, planning permission for retail development in the town centre, but outside the Core Retail Zone will not be permitted, unless indicated by the sequential approach.

#### Town Centre Anchor Stores

To maintain the function of the Core Retail Zones in Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield town centres, development will not be permitted which would lead to the loss of all or a significant part of an Anchor Store from a Class E retail use, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the loss would not have a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre.

#### Town Centre Frontages

Planning permission will be granted for Class E uses within the Primary Frontage. To maintain the vitality and viability of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield town centres, within the defined Primary Frontage, the Council will support proposals for changes of use, provided that:

- i. At least 70% of the defined Primary Frontage (by length) within which the unit is located will remain in those categories of class E retail uses considered appropriate in town centres <sup>(24)</sup>;
- ii. There will be no more than two adjoining units in uses other than Class E retail; and
- iii. There will be no loss of an existing active frontage to a non active frontage.

Planning permission will be granted for Class E uses within the Secondary Frontage. To maintain the vitality and viability of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield town centres, within the defined Secondary Frontage, the Council will support proposals for changes of use, provided that:

24 As set out in the definition of "Main Town Centre Uses" in the National Planning Policy Framework

## Centres, Services and Facilities

- i. At least 30% of the Secondary Frontage (by length) within which the unit is located will remain in Class E retail use;
- ii. There will be no more than five adjoining units in uses other than Class E retail; and
- iii. There will be no loss of an existing active frontage to a non active frontage.

### Neighbourhood and Village Centres

Within the defined Retail Frontage(s) of Large Neighbourhood or Large Village centres the Council will support proposals for changes of use where:

- i. At least 50% of the Retail Frontage(s) (by number of units) remain in Class E retail use;
- ii. There will be no more than two adjoining non-Class E retail units within any part of the frontage;
- iii. There would be no harm to the vitality and viability of the centre.

The Council support proposals for changes of use within Small Neighbourhood or Small Village centres where:

- i. The loss would not have a detrimental impact on the provision of Class E retail within the wider neighbourhood or village whose centre the premise is within;
- ii. The centre would remain in a predominantly Class E retail use;
- iii. The proposal would add to the vitality and viability of the centre.

Any new additional retail development at existing neighbourhood and village centres should not generally exceed 500 sq.m gross floorspace.

### Requirement for marketing

Planning permission will only be granted as an exception to the criteria in this policy where there are overriding benefits to the overall vitality and viability of the relevant Town, Neighbourhood or Village Centre. It will also need to be demonstrated through active and extensive marketing over a period of at least 12 months that there is a lack of demand for a Class E retail use in that location.

***Guidance on measuring retail frontages, as well as lists of the addresses included within each frontage, can be found in Appendix D.***

### Justification

- 8.12** This policy facilitates the delivery of a vibrant mix of retail, service and leisure facilities to support the daytime and evening economies of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield town centres. Core Retail Zones (CRZs) have been defined for each of the town centres in the borough containing all of the town centre shopping functions and supporting uses that enhance the viability of the town centre and strategic town centre development sites. More detailed definitions of the strategies and uses for the Welwyn Garden City CRZ and the Hatfield CRZ are contained in the settlement chapters of the Local Plan.
- 8.13** Both town centres contain large stores which anchor the rest of the retail offer, benefiting other shops in the centre. Because of the important role they play, Anchor Stores have been defined in this policy and the loss of their retail use is resisted. In considering

## Centres, Services and Facilities

a proposal where part of an Anchor Store will be lost to a non retail use the assessment of significance will relate to the impact that the loss of any Class E floorspace would have on the vitality or viability of the town centre.

- 8.14** The definition of primary frontages enables the Council to maintain retail as a dominant use in these frontages whilst allowing a more flexible approach to enable a wider range of uses in the secondary frontages.
- 8.15** By defining retail frontages for the borough's neighbourhood and village centres, this policy protects the retail functions of these centres. Whilst they generally offer few higher-order shops and services (which is why primary and secondary frontages have not been designated for these centres), they play an important role in meeting the day-to-day convenience needs of local residents and businesses. In order to properly serve their convenience function, it is important that village and neighbourhood centres retain a good range of shops. This has additional sustainability benefits, reducing the need to make avoidable trips (particularly by car) to other centres elsewhere.
- 8.16** The Large Neighbourhood and Village Centres generally comprise at least 10 retail outlets including large convenience stores or small supermarkets, supplemented by other shops such as pharmacies, bakeries, newsagents and often some independent comparison goods retailers as well. Other services and facilities present within these centres often include hairdressers/salons, community centres, GP surgeries and pubs. Most large centres also have post offices.
- 8.17** The Small Neighbourhood and Village Centres generally comprise 2 to 10 retail outlets and therefore have a smaller range of facilities, and in most cases their proximity to Large Neighbourhood Centres or a Town Centre means that they serve a largely convenience function. All have a convenience store or newsagent and whilst some have facilities such as pubs, these centres do not generally have many services.
- 8.18** Where a developer wishes to bring forward a proposal for new additional retail floorspace within a Neighbourhood or Village Centre, limiting its floorspace to 500sq.m will ensure that harm to other centres within the retail hierarchy through loss of trade will be limited.

### Development outside Designated Centres

- 8.19** Whilst the majority of the borough's day-to-day needs are served by shops within designated centres, there are a number of small individual convenience shops (below 280 sq.m floorspace) in locations where shops in the rest of the hierarchy are not within a convenient walking distance. Several are standalone shops within urban areas and others are part of petrol filling stations, but nevertheless still serve a local role. This policy also sets out the Council's approach on larger out-of-centre retail proposals.

## Centres, Services and Facilities

### Policy SADM 5

#### Development outside Designated Centres

##### Individual Convenience Shops

The Council will resist proposals which result in the loss of individual convenience shops outside designated centres, even where ancillary to another use (such as petrol stations). Planning permission will only be granted where:

- i. The retail unit is vacant; and it can be clearly demonstrated through evidence of extensive, active and realistic marketing over a period of at least 12 months that there is a lack of demand for a shop use in that location; or
- ii. Alternative convenience retail provision is available within an 800m walking distance (not straight line distance); or
- iii. The replacement land use offers compelling benefits which outweigh the loss

Any new individual small convenience shops should not exceed 280 sq.m gross. Extensions to individual small convenience shops should not create a unit which exceeds 280 sq.m gross.

##### Out-of-Centre Retail

Except for Individual Convenience Shops of less than 280sq.m, proposals for new retail development in out-of-centre locations (including the extension of existing retail stores) will be resisted unless it has been demonstrated that no suitable, viable and available sites exist in sequentially preferable locations - see the Sequential Approach in Policy SP 5. The Council will also refuse planning permission for the relaxation or removal of conditions on the type of goods that can be sold from existing out-of-centre units.

#### Justification

- 8.20** In parts of the borough which are further away from the designated retail centres, individual convenience shops fulfil an important day-to-day retail role. In order to be able to continue to meet the needs of local residents it is important that individual convenience shops remain easily accessible to the communities they serve and are given a high level of policy protection. This has additional sustainability benefits, reducing the need to make avoidable trips (particularly by car) to other centres elsewhere.
- 8.21** To achieve this objective, the previous District Plan approach of seeking to protect the retail units within a centre has been retained in this plan. Existing individual convenience shops are too small to be identified on the Policies Map. Where a developer wishes to bring forward a scheme for a new or expanded individual convenience shop, limiting its floorspace to 280sq.m (the threshold above which Sunday Trading Regulations limit opening hours) will ensure that any harm to other centres within the retail hierarchy through loss of trade will be limited.
- 8.22** The Council has identified sufficient sites to meet the floorspace likely to be generated by expenditure growth to 2033 within the hierarchy of retail centres. Directing retail investment to centres in the retail hierarchy helps to make sure that communities have



## Centres, Services and Facilities

easy access to day-to-day shopping facilities and that town centres can thrive. It is for these reasons that retail development in out-of-centre locations and the widening of the range of goods sold at out-of-centre locations will be resisted.

- 8.23** The Welwyn Hatfield Retail and Town Centre Needs Assessment (2016) notes that the Hatfield Galleria is an out of centre designer outlet centre that offers a variety of high street fashion brands (outlet stores). The Galleria's size and relatively close proximity to Hatfield Town Centre means that it attracts many visitors who might otherwise have visited the town centre. In addition the Galleria has a substantial leisure offer including a multiplex cinema and restaurants.
- 8.24** While the Galleria is an important retail destination, it continues to be treated as an out of centre location.

### Shopfronts, Adverts and Signage

#### Policy SADM 6

##### Shopfronts, Advertisements and Signage

The Council will require all proposals for advertisements, signs, new and altered shopfronts, canopies, blinds, shutters and other security measures to be of a high standard of design and incorporate the design principles and policies in the Plan and the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance. Where located within Welwyn Garden City Town Centre, proposals will also be required to incorporate design principles within the Welwyn Garden City Guide to Shopfront and Advertising Design.

#### Justification

- 8.25** Well designed shopfronts, advertisements and signs can have a positive impact on the character and appearance of the borough's retail areas. Whilst the needs of businesses are recognised, it is important to ensure that these are balanced alongside the need to protect the environment (as well as considering the needs of other town centre users). This policy ensures that, where proposals require planning permission or advertisement consent, they are well designed and do not detrimentally affect the character and appearance of an area and are supported by the other design policies in the Local Plan. This is in conformity with borough wide objective 11 to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centres.

### Community Services and Facilities

- 8.26** Community services and facilities that are valued by communities and help to improve the quality of life and improve the sustainability of towns, neighbourhoods and villages as places to live include the facilities listed Table 3. The purpose of Policy SP 6 is to enable communities to be successful by making sure that they are well served by a range of public, private, community and voluntary services and that facilities are appropriate to people's needs, affordable and accessible.



## Centres, Services and Facilities

**Table 3 Community Services and Facilities**

Public Services	Leisure and Culture
Community centres and village halls	Private health and fitness clubs
Healthcare facilities; including hospitals, doctors' surgeries and dentists	Libraries
Schools	Allotments
Pharmacies	Parks and playgrounds
Post offices	Sport and recreational facilities
Recycling centres	Cultural facilities; including arts provision, museums, concert venues and theatres
Cemeteries and crematoriums	Commercial leisure; including cinemas, pubs and restaurants
Places of worship	Spaces for informal activity, including places to hang out

### Policy SP 6

#### Community Services and Facilities

The Council will make sure that communities can easily access a range of community services and facilities by:

- Guarding against the loss of existing community facilities;
- Allowing for the expansion or enhancement of existing community facilities to assist continuing viability, particularly in areas where new development will increase demand;
- Promoting accessible, strategic locations, particularly town centres, for community facilities and services that serve a wider area than local neighbourhoods or villages;
- Working with developers, partners, the community and voluntary sector, on the wider use of buildings, dual use and co-location of services in accessible places and also to address gaps in existing provision;
- Supporting alternative community uses for community facilities that are no longer needed for their current purpose;
- Making sure that existing community facilities and services are improved to meet the day-to-day needs of new and existing residents; and
- Requiring new neighbourhoods to provide for needs of the new communities created by that development.

Additionally, the Council will support:

- The upgrading of facilities where there are known to be gaps in provision, or where existing facilities no longer meet modern day requirements;
- The provision of new facilities where there are known gaps in provision;
- Schemes to open up private or restricted-access facilities to the public; and
- Support the provision of new sports facilities serving a wider area than neighbourhoods or villages at existing sports hubs.

## Centres, Services and Facilities

### Justification

- 8.27** The provision of sustainable communities is central to the vision of this Local Plan. For neighbourhoods and villages to function effectively as communities with a high quality of life, minimising social exclusion and promoting integration and healthy lifestyles, it is important that the people living in them have easy access to a good range of community facilities and services. Having things to do and places to go underpins people's quality of life for all sections of the community. Some facilities need to be provided at the level of the neighbourhood or village, or close by, whereas, for others that are more likely to be of a scale that they should be provided for at strategic locations such as the town centres (for example museums and arts facilities), they should be, at least, easily accessible by public transport.
- 8.28** The Council's evidence <sup>(25)</sup> shows that most of the settlements and neighbourhoods of Welwyn Hatfield have a reasonably good provision of community services and facilities. This is partly a reflection of the New Town legacy wherein Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City were planned to have neighbourhoods that contained community facilities and services that met day-to-day needs. There are, however, certain gaps and shortages in provision in terms of their distribution, for example some villages lack village halls, and in terms of their presence in the borough at all, for example, a lack of places for teenagers to meet.
- 8.29** This policy addresses borough-wide strategic objectives 2, 3, 4, 9 and 11.

### Implementation

- 8.30** This policy includes flexibility so that, if a particular type of community facility is no longer in demand, it can be replaced by another. But the policy's key thrust is to ensure that, as far as possible, existing community facilities and services are retained and, where possible, enhanced.
- 8.31** The same approach applies where new neighbourhoods are being developed. This policy ensures that the provision of community facilities and services is included in the masterplanning of new neighbourhoods whether this is on the site or by way of enhancing existing facilities in nearby neighbourhoods or in town centres.

## New and Existing Community Services and Facilities

### Policy SADM 7

#### **New Community Services and Facilities and Losses of Community Services and Facilities**

The Council will support the provision of new community services and facilities in accordance with appropriate standards and in appropriate locations which are convenient to the communities they serve and accessible by a range of sustainable transport modes, including walking, cycling and public transport, and buildings that are inclusive, accessible, flexible and sited to maximise shared use of the facility.

## Centres, Services and Facilities

Developments that result in additional need for community facilities will be required to contribute towards enhancing existing facilities, or provide/contribute towards new facilities. The Council will encourage the dual use of schools.

Planning permission will only be granted for proposals involving the loss or change of use of community services or facilities in the following circumstances:

- i. It can be clearly demonstrated that there is no longer a current demand for such a facility or for alternative recreational, leisure or community use, or any real prospect of such a demand arising within a realistic timescale; or
- ii. It can be clearly demonstrated that an acceptable alternative means of meeting any such demand is or will become available before the loss of the existing facility; or
- iii. The new development consists of, incorporates, or provides an appropriate alternative recreational or community service or facility, either on site or within the vicinity, of equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location accessible to the local community. Demand should be assessed according to the nature of the existing facility in question.

### Justification

- 8.32** This policy sets out the criteria for assessing applications relating to community services and facilities. Standards for the provision of community services and facilities are mostly contained in the Council's evidence base (which will be updated from time to time), but there may be instances where only national standards, or no standards, apply. Some community services and facilities are town centre uses as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework. For such uses, the Council will use the sequential approach as part of the assessment of whether or not the proposed location for a new facility is appropriate.
- 8.33** Because the provision of community services and facilities is an important part of the Council's vision for maintaining sustainable communities, it is very important that they are not lost. This policy ensures that they can only be lost if they are no longer needed, or if they are satisfactorily replaced. Where there is a proposal for a facility to be lost and not replaced, it will be necessary for the applicant to demonstrate that there is no prospect of demand for that facility arising within a reasonable timescale. The length of that timescale will depend upon the type of facility but would generally be a minimum of three years.
- 8.34** Schools often have sports facilities and halls that are used by the community out of hours. As such they can be important providers community facilities and are especially suited to multiple use. If a school closes that provides these community facilities, the provisions of Policy SADM 7 will apply to ensure that, as far as possible, there is no loss to the local community.
- 8.35** Play areas and allotments are important community facilities that help to sustain healthy and sustainable lifestyles. It is for this reason that the provision of new play areas and allotments will feature in the masterplanning of new neighbourhoods and neighbourhood extensions and that existing provision are safeguarded by this policy.

## 8 Centres, Services and Facilities

### New Cemetery Provision

#### Policy SADM 8

##### Cemetery extension at South Way, Hatfield

CEM01 is allocated as defined on the Policies Map as an extension to the existing cemetery south of South Way, Hatfield. Development within the allocated cemetery site will need to take account of:

- Safe and satisfactory vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist access and routes are provided;
- Maintaining the openness of the site and surrounding areas of countryside and Green Belt; and
- Protection of groundwater.

#### Justification

- 8.36** The Council has a duty to provide, directly or indirectly, an appropriate area of land for the burial of the dead. Welwyn Hatfield has one principal municipal cemetery at The Lawn, South Way in Hatfield which has available burial space. It has been calculated that there will be a need for new burial space towards the end of the Local Plan period (from about 2028).
- 8.37** The Council undertook a study to assess how much land for burial space would be required and the feasibility of using one or more of a range of identified sites across the borough or outside the borough but close to its boundaries<sup>(26)</sup>. The study indicated that a size range from 10 to 15 hectares should be able to provide for burials for a 100 year period. CEM01 was one site identified in the study which could meet the projected need for burial space, and benefits from a number of locational and site-specific advantages over and above the only other site identified outside the urban areas.
- 8.38** The existing cemetery at South Way is within the Green Belt and it is intended that the site for the cemetery extension, CEM01, would remain within the Green Belt also. This is due to the openness and sensitivity of the Green Belt in this location, which the Council wishes to protect by ensuring that any built facilities or other ancillary development associated with the extended cemetery either comply with national planning policy or can demonstrate very special circumstances for an exception to Green Belt policy to be made.

26 Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, 2014, Analysis of Sites for Suitability as a Potential New Cemetery

## Type and Mix of Housing

- 9.1** The development plan should include fair, realistic and inclusive policies which help to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities in both urban and rural areas. The Plan seeks to ensure that over the plan period a range of housing options, in terms of price, tenure, type and size, to meet the needs and requirements of different households such as families with children, couples, single person households, older people, students, Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople will be provided.

### Policy SP 7

#### Type and Mix of Housing

In order to deliver a choice of homes and help create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, provision will be made for a range of housing to support the needs and requirements of different households.

**Housing mix:** Proposals for 10 or more new dwellings should demonstrate how the mix of tenure, type and size of housing proposed on sites has had regard to the Council's latest evidence of housing need and market demand and contribute towards meeting the varied needs of different households including single person households, couples, families with children, older people, people with disabilities and people wishing to build their own homes. For larger sites, there should be a greater opportunity to deliver a broader mix.

**Affordable Housing:** As part of the overall housing target, a proportion of new homes built in the borough will be for affordable housing. Subject to viability, affordable housing will be sought on the following basis (for residential or residential-led mixed use schemes):

Location	On-site delivery target	Site threshold <sup>(27)</sup>
Hatfield (including SDS5)	25%	10 new dwellings or a site of 0.5ha or more
Welwyn Garden City (including SDS1, SDS2 and SDS3)	30%	10 new dwellings or a site of 0.5ha or more
Excluded villages	35%	10 new dwellings or a site of 0.5ha or more
Re-development or re-use of Major Developed Sites or other previously developed sites in accessible locations compatible with Green Belt policy	30%	10 new dwellings or a site of 0.5ha or more

In order to contribute to the creation of mixed communities, the priority will be for affordable housing to be delivered on the main application site. Off-site provision or a commuted payment will only be supported where it can be robustly justified and where it would result in the delivery of at least an equivalent number of new affordable homes or to a broadly equivalent value. Unless otherwise agreed, alternative delivery should be made within the same settlement as the main application site and still contribute to the creation of mixed communities.

<sup>27</sup> Site size threshold is based on a conservative density of 20 dwellings per hectare.

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**Rural Exceptions Sites** to provide small scale affordable housing schemes of up to 4 new dwellings within or adjoining the borough's Green Belt villages, and adjoining those excluded villages where no sites have been allocated for housing within this Plan, will be supported where it can be robustly demonstrated that the proposed development is required to help address the identified housing needs of the local community.

**Self-build and Custom Housebuilding:** On sites of 100 or more non-flatted dwellings, 2% of serviced dwelling plots should be provided to contribute towards meeting the evidenced demand for Self-build and Custom Housebuilding in the borough. Serviced plots of land for Self-build and Custom Housebuilding will also be supported on other allocated sites or permitted windfall sites where overall, this would not result in an over-provision of this type of housebuilding when compared to the Council's supply/demand evidence.

**Housing for older people:** As part of the overall housing target, a net increase of around 620 dwellings will be supported to help meet the varied housing needs of an ageing population, through the provision of a range of housing types and options such as sheltered housing, flexi-care, extra-care, assisted living and other forms of supported housing, provided such developments are located in accessible locations. Around 5% of all new housing delivered at Strategic Development Sites should comprise housing which is specially designed for older people.

**Specialist housing:** In addition to the overall housing target, a net increase of around 200 bed-spaces to help meet the accommodation needs of those who need specialist (Use Class C2) residential or nursing care will be supported in the borough's towns and excluded villages.

**Accessible and Adaptable and Wheelchair User dwellings:** At least 20% of all new dwellings on sites involving 5 or more new dwellings will be required to meet Building Regulations Part M4(2) standards for 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' (or as subsequently amended) the delivery of which should be distributed across market and affordable tenures. This proportion may be varied where dwellings are proposed to meet Part M4(3) standards for 'wheelchair user dwellings' (or as subsequently amended).

**Pitch provision for Gypsies and Travellers:** Sites have been allocated to facilitate the delivery of additional 61 pitches over the plan period to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. Delivery will be phased over the plan period and pitch delivery in the later part of the plan period will be brought forward where the need continues to be demonstrated as evidenced by future reviews of accommodation needs assessments.

**Houses in Multiple Occupation:** To maintain mixed, balanced, sustainable and inclusive communities, applications for Houses in Multiple Occupation will only be approved where they would not create an over concentration of such accommodation resulting in an imbalance within local communities or other significant adverse impacts. Proposals should comply with the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document.

**Purpose built student accommodation:** Purpose built student accommodation to meet the demonstrated needs of higher education providers in the borough will be supported where:

- On campus provision: this is in accordance with a masterplan that has been approved by the Council.



- Off-site campus provision: purpose built student accommodation will be supported where it is highly accessible to a main university or college campus within the borough by walking, cycling and public transport and provides sufficient on-site car parking, where required;
- Applications should be accompanied by details setting out proposals for the organisation and management of the accommodation to demonstrate that the proposal will meet the specific need for student accommodation. Where necessary, the Council will use conditions to ensure that such accommodation remains specifically for students.

## Justification

- 9.2** The policy contributes towards borough-wide objectives 3, 7 and 12.
- 9.3 Housing mix:** Local Plans should seek to deliver a wide choice of homes and help create inclusive and mixed communities, identifying the size, type and tenure of housing that is likely to be required. A mix of housing will therefore need to be provided over the plan period to reflect demographic trends and the needs of different groups in the community.
- 9.4 Affordable Housing:** Evidence indicates that there will be a high need for affordable housing over the plan period and a range of affordable housing tenures, including social rent, affordable rent (at varying levels) and intermediate housing options such as shared ownership, will be required to help meet the need. On affordability grounds, just over half of the newly arising need for affordable housing will require the provision of traditional social rented housing. The on-site delivery targets already reflect evidence of varying degrees of viability across the borough and these will be the starting point for decision making, although viability testing indicates that the delivery of social rented housing may prove challenging in some parts of the borough. Account will be taken of market conditions, which are likely to vary over the plan period, and the precise mix, tenure and type of housing proposed on sites.
- 9.5 Rural Exceptions Sites:** The construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate subject to certain exceptions as set out in national planning policy. However, house prices in the borough's villages and in other rural areas are high and opportunities to deliver new affordable housing are extremely limited. The National Planning Policy Framework allows for limited affordable housing for local community needs in the Green Belt where this is in line with policies set out in a Local Plan. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection to a rural area. Policy SP 7 allows for the provision of small scale affordable housing schemes within or adjoining the borough's Green Belt villages as defined in the settlement hierarchy, and adjoining those excluded villages where no sites have been allocated for housing within this plan and hence where the opportunity to deliver affordable housing would otherwise be constrained.
- 9.6 Self-build and Custom Housebuilding:** The Council is required to keep a register of individuals and associations of individuals who are seeking to acquire serviced plots of land in the authority's area in order to build houses for those individuals to occupy as their sole or main residence and to have regard to the demand evidenced by the register when making provision for serviced plots of land.



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- 9.7 Housing for older people:** Consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework, planning authorities should plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends and the needs of different groups in the community including older people and people with disabilities. In 2011<sup>(28)</sup>, around 15% of the borough's population was aged 65 and over. Forecasts indicate that there will be around 3,650 additional older people (aged 75+) living in the borough by the end of the plan period<sup>(29)</sup> and evidence suggests<sup>(30)</sup> that between 2012-2020 there will be a 13% to 14% increase in people aged 65 and over in Welwyn Hatfield who are unable to manage at least one self-care activity or domestic task on their own. Many people wish to retain their independence and stay in their current homes for as long as possible. For others, options could include moving to a 'granny annex' provided as an addition to a main dwelling occupied by a close relative, or to purpose built sheltered housing, extra-care or flexi-care or other supported living schemes. This plan supports the provision of around 620 dwellings to help meet the varied housing needs of an ageing population as part of the overall housing target.
- 9.8 Specialist housing:** A more specialist care environment will be required for people who are unable to live independently. Accommodation providing residential and nursing care usually falls within Use Class C2. In addition to the overall housing target, this plan supports a net increase of around 200 C2 bed-spaces, primarily to help meet the accommodation needs of older people who need to live in an environment which provides residential or nursing care. However, other people including young people, people with physical disabilities or sensory needs, people with learning difficulties<sup>(31)</sup> and other vulnerable people may also require specialist accommodation.
- 9.9 Accessible and adaptable housing:** Around 14% of the borough's population have a long-term health problem or disability that affects their day to day activities<sup>(32)</sup> and just under 29% of households contain either one person or two or more persons with a long-term health problem or disability<sup>(33)</sup>. Whilst the proportion of Welwyn Hatfield residents aged 18 to 64 with a disability is projected to remain relatively constant, a projected increase in population means that the number of people with disabilities in the borough will also increase<sup>(34)</sup>. Forecasts suggest that around 7% of the population aged 18-64 will have a moderate physical disability and a further 2% will have a serious physical disability<sup>(35)</sup>. National reporting<sup>(36)</sup> indicates that 1 in 3 households with a disabled person lives in non-decent accommodation with 1 in 5 requiring adaptations to their home. In Welwyn Hatfield, between 2011 and 2016, over £4.3m was spent on aids and adaptations to the Council's housing stock. Common forms of adaptations include level entry showers, hoists, kitchen/bathroom adaptations, lifts through floors, ramps/platforms or steps and extensions. In addition, the Council provides (means tested<sup>(37)</sup>) Disabled Facility Grants for home owners/landlords and tenants to cover the costs of essential adaptations to make a home accessible but many households

28 2011 ONS Neighbourhood Statistics KS102EW

29 Welwyn Hatfield Strategic Housing Market Assessment Partial Update 2015

30 Welwyn Hatfield Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014

31 Hertfordshire County Council estimate that there will be an accommodation need for 39 adults with learning disabilities between 2016 and 2030

32 Census 2011 ONS Neighbourhood Statistics QS303EW

33 Table DC1301EW (Census 2011)

34 Welwyn Hatfield Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014

35 Welwyn Hatfield Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014

36 Department for Work and Pension - Office for Disability Issues - Disability Facts and Figures January 2016

37 Means tested for adults not children

will need to finance adaptations from private funds. Each year within the private sector stock in Welwyn Hatfield, there are an estimated 190 instances of falls e.g. associated with baths, stairs or between levels, leading to medical intervention. The personal impact to the individual and the wider financial costs to the health service and society are significant. Designing homes to minimise fall hazards from the start can lead to significant positive social and economic impacts<sup>(38)</sup>.

- 9.10** Clearly, significant financial costs are incurred retro-fitting homes to make them more accessible and adaptable when a need arises. However, a home may not always be suitable or affordable to adapt leaving people with the option of either remaining in an unsuitable property or moving. The evidence suggests that it makes practical, social and economic sense to build a proportion of new homes that incorporate accessible and adaptable design features from the outset, at the start of a building's life, to help people remain independent in their own homes and enjoy a good quality of life, and to minimise overall costs to society.
- 9.11** **Pitch provision for Gypsies and Travellers:** The 2011 Census indicates that Gypsy or Irish Travellers make up 0.14% of the borough's population. As defined ethnic groups, Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers have protected characteristics and under the Equalities Act are protected against race discrimination. In 2011, the Council assessed the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in Welwyn Hatfield and concluded that there was a need for 25 additional Gypsy and Traveller pitches between 2011 and 2016. Estimates around demographic growth suggested that there may be a need for a further 29 pitches between 2016 and 2026. When projected forward a further 5 years, this suggested a possible need for a further 17 pitches; a total of 71 pitches between 2011 and 2031. The provision of permanent pitches was considered to be more pressing than the provision of transit pitches. The borough has one Travelling Showpeople site and the 2011 accommodation needs assessment did not identify a need for additional plots to be provided. Since 2011, 3 pitches have been granted permanent planning permission in the borough.
- 9.12** Consistent with national planning policy<sup>(39)</sup>, and amongst other relevant matters, consideration must now be given to whether Gypsies and Travellers have previously led a nomadic habit of life, the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life, whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances.
- 9.13** In 2016, the Council carried out a review of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Traveller Showpeople. The assessment indicates that there is likely to be a need for 61 Gypsy and Traveller pitches between 2016 and 2032. Whilst it has not been possible to conclude if households registered on the waiting list for a pitch on a public site or associated with unauthorised development activity intend to cease travelling temporarily and lead a nomadic habit of life in the future, there are other relevant matters to consider. The observed demand for pitches, as seen in the context of levels of illegal encampments and unauthorised developments and the waiting list for a pitch on a public site, indicates that there is a shortage of authorised pitches, which is unlikely to be met within the traditional housing stock (bricks and mortar). Making provision for additional authorised pitches in the borough would enable Gypsy and Traveller households to have a settled base from which residents can travel, gain

38 Welwyn Hatfield Quantitative Health Improvement Assessment: Cost of private sector housing and prospective housing interventions in Welwyn Hatfield 2015

39 CLG: National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, August 2015

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access to health services and ensure that children can attend school on a regular basis. It would also help reduce the likelihood of illegal encampments and unauthorised developments, create certainty for communities and where necessary, make enforcement action effective. No need has been identified for additional plots for Travelling Showpeople.

- 9.14 Houses in Multiple Occupation:** Houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) form an important part of the housing stock, providing a valuable supply of privately rented accommodation for a variety of residents including students and those in need of cheaper accommodation. Rents are generally cheaper than those charged for self contained dwellings and are therefore usually one of the more affordable forms of accommodation within the private rented market. However, the borough has a higher proportion of houses in multiple occupation than the national average, with particularly high concentrations in Hatfield; some areas are as high as 50%. This high concentration is changing the character of parts of Hatfield and creating an imbalance within local communities.
- 9.15 Purpose Built Student Accommodation:** The University of Hertfordshire has two main campuses in Hatfield. In principle, the Council supports the University's ambitions to improve the quality and quantity of student residences on Campus, where the provision of purpose built accommodation, well located for the educational, support and leisure facilities directly associated with the University, could help reduce the need for car ownership and travel and relieve pressure from accommodation elsewhere in Hatfield that could be suited to meeting general housing requirements.
- 9.16** The Royal Veterinary College, which has one of its main Campuses in the south of the Borough, is the UK's largest, oldest and only independent veterinary school and a leading provider in veterinary education. The present Campus, which accommodates a number of students on-site within a group of purpose built buildings, is vital to the College's rural operations and is currently identified as a Major Developed Site in the Green Belt where all but minor development should come forward in the context of a development brief.

### Implementation

- 9.17 Housing Mix:** Applicants will need to demonstrate how they have taken into account the Council's latest evidence of need in terms of tenure, type and size of dwelling so that a range of housing is delivered to meet the needs of different groups in the community including families with children. The following tables are not intended to perform as a prescriptive policy requirement (they may be subject to review over time<sup>(40)</sup>) but such indicators should be taken into account when submitting a planning application and in decision making.

**Table 4 - Estimated size and type of all new housing required**

1 bed property	2 bed flat	2 bed house	3 bed property	4 bed+ house
14.5%	9.5%	13.7%	40.9%	21.4%

40 The estimated size and type of all housing needed over the plan-period is informed by household projections alongside other data

- 9.18** The size of dwellings likely to be required to meet the overall need for affordable housing<sup>(41)</sup> over the plan period is set out in the table below. The current 'backlog' suggests a need in the early parts of the plan period for greater proportions of 1 bed dwellings whereas for newly arising need over the plan period, a much more even spread of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom properties will be required. Proposals should take account of the Council's latest evidence of need and include a mix of dwelling sizes; not just one size of affordable dwelling.

**Table 5 - Affordable housing need by number of bedrooms**

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
<b>Overall net new need</b>	40%	24%	27%	9%

- 9.19 Affordable Housing:** The on-site delivery target will be applied to the nearest whole number of dwellings, e.g. a development of 16 new dwellings would require the provision of 6 new affordable homes (where 5.6 is 35% of 16). The Council estimates that affordable homes will account for around 20% of all new homes built in the borough over the plan period, although the precise level of delivery may be subject to external influences and viability. Wherever possible, secure arrangements will be put in place to ensure that affordable housing will be retained for initial and subsequent occupants or that any subsidy is reinvested in the provision of new affordable housing locally.
- 9.20 Rural Exceptions Sites:** This policy supports the provision of affordable housing in perpetuity on small Rural Exception Sites where it can be demonstrated by robust evidence from a Parish or Neighbourhood Plan, or rural housing needs survey that there is a need for affordable housing to help meet the identified affordable housing needs arising from these settlements and surrounding rural areas for households with a demonstrable local connection. The lack of a Neighbourhood Plan would not necessarily preclude a small site from coming forward.
- 9.21 Self Build and Custom Housebuilding:** The Council has a Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register and the demand for serviced plots will be monitored to inform the implementation of this policy on allocated or windfall sites. Measures will be put in place, either through the use of planning conditions or planning obligations to secure serviced self-build or custom housebuilding plots on relevant sites. The requirement to provide plots will be reviewed and waived only where it can be robustly demonstrated that plots have been made available and actively, continuously and extensively marketed at a realistic market value for at least 12 months. The Council recognises that there may be certain high density developments where all, or a very high proportion of, dwellings are proposed to be flats. In such circumstances, the policy requirement will be considered on a site-by-site basis in light of other relevant local plan policies and objectives for the site, together with any robust evidence presented by the applicant on the feasibility of including self-build or custom housebuilding plots as part of the overall design and layout of the site.
- 9.22 Housing for older people:** The policy requirement for affordable housing applies to all types of residential development falling, in whole or part, within Use Class C3, subject to viability and other material considerations. Where developments provide self-contained homes for occupation by individual households such as sheltered, extra-care housing or supported living schemes; these are more likely to fall within

41 Figure 6.8: Welwyn Hatfield SHMA Partial Update 2015

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Use Class C3 rather than Use Class C2, although the precise nature of a proposal will need to be considered on a scheme by scheme basis as schemes will vary and some may not be deemed to fall into either Class C2 or Class C3. The provision of 'granny annexes' will be supported but as these are ancillary to a main dwelling, a 'granny annex' will not count as a new dwelling.

- 9.23 Specialist Housing:** Specialist schemes will be supported in the borough's towns and excluded villages where accessibility to services and facilities is good. However, where a proposal is likely to lead to a concentration of specialist accommodation in any one neighbourhood area, primary health care service providers should be consulted to ensure that the residents will be sufficiently supported by primary health care services.
- 9.24 Accessible and Adaptable Housing:** The policy includes an on-site delivery target so that a proportion of all new homes on sites involving 5 or more new dwellings will make a positive contribution towards creating a stock of housing which is accessible and adaptable for future occupants in accordance with Building Regulations requirements for M4(2) and M4(3) (or as subsequently amended). The policy requirement is a 'minimum' requirement for sites involving a qualifying number of new dwellings and wherever practical and viable, all homes specially designed for older people should be built to at least M4(2) standards. Delivery to M4(3)(2)(a) standard will be required across all tenures and delivery to M4(3)(2)(b) standard will only be required where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that dwelling. For both M4(2) and M4(3), provision will be rounded up to the nearest whole number. For the M4(2) and M4(3) standards to be applied, a condition on a planning consent must require it.
- 9.25 Gypsy and Traveller accommodation:** Needs assessment will need to be reviewed during the plan period but in order to positively plan now for the needs of Gypsies and Travellers, this plan allocates a number of sites. Table 6 below indicates that the delivery of 61 pitches is anticipated across 7 sites, to potentially include an element of transit provision. The size of any new site should generally not exceed 15 pitches, and in most cases will be smaller. Allocations associated with Strategic Development Sites either made within Strategic Development Sites or on suitable alternative sites nearby. Delivery will be phased over the plan period to ensure that as far as possible, a supply of deliverable or developable sites will be maintained throughout the plan period. Pitch delivery beyond 2027 will be brought forward where the need continues to be demonstrated. The Council will continue to work in partnership with service providers, support groups and the local Gypsy and Traveller community to review accommodation needs over the plan period.



**Table 6 Gypsy and Traveller Sites and Pitch Provision**

Site	Site Ref	Number of pitches provided		Total
		2022-2027	2027-2032	
Foxes Lane, Welham Green (extension to existing site)	HS35 (GTLAA01)	12		12
Marshmoor Lane, Welham Green	GTLAA03		1	1
Four Oaks, Oaklands and Mardley Heath	HS32 (GTLAA04)	6		6
North West Hatfield	SDS5 (Hat1)	8	7	15
Barbaraville, Mill Green (extension to existing site, in-part to meet need from this site and in-part an off-site contribution for SDS5 (Hat1))	HS33 (GTLAA08)	4		4
North East Welwyn Garden City	SDS1 (WGC4)	6	6	12
South East Welwyn Garden City	SDS2 (WGC5)	6	5	11
		42	19	61

**9.26 Houses in multiple occupation:** An Article 4 Direction is in place across Hatfield and development is managed in accordance with an adopted Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD sets out the levels of concentration that will be used in the determination of planning applications along with other relevant standards. The coverage of the Article 4 direction may be extended to other parts of the borough or a new Article 4 introduced where considered necessary.

**9.27 Student accommodation:** Masterplans may be brought forward for the delivery on on-campus purpose built student accommodation but the Council recognises that not all students will be accommodated on campus. Whilst a number of students may reside with family if local enough to commute, many will move into the borough for the period of their studies. The demand for off-site campus accommodation is mainly satisfied through the private rented market, for example in shared houses or in purpose built student accommodation. In Hatfield, planning permission is required to convert a single family dwelling into shared accommodation. Off campus purpose built provision will need to demonstrate that it is meeting a specific need for such accommodation. Supporting information could include a nomination agreement with one or more educational institution in the borough. Off campus provision will also need to be in accessible locations. However, care will need to be taken to ensure that existing residents and communities are not adversely affected by the scale or concentration of such uses in any one area. In accordance with national planning guidance, the provision of student accommodation may be counted towards the number of completed dwellings based on the amount of accommodation that it releases in the housing market.

## 9 Housing

### Loss of Residential

- 9.28** In order to make best use of existing resources and effectively manage the overall level of housing in the borough, there is a policy presumption against the loss of existing dwellings. However, Policy SADM 9 sets out the circumstances in which site specific or other circumstances may outweigh the general policy objective set out in Policy SP 2 and these will be taken into account in the determination of planning applications.

#### Policy SADM 9

##### Loss of Residential

Proposals which result in the loss of one or more dwellings will only be permitted where:

- i. The resultant development would result in a net gain in the overall number of dwellings on the application site; or
- ii. It can be demonstrated that the existing dwelling is significantly affected by adverse environmental conditions and there is no reasonable prospect that the impacts can be adequately mitigated against to create a healthy living environment for existing or future occupants; or
- iii. The social, economic or environmental benefits of doing so are demonstrated to significantly outweigh the need to minimise net losses to the borough's housing stock.

Any net loss of authorised permanent sites or a reduction in the number of authorised pitches for Gypsies and Travellers or plots for Travelling Showpeople will only be permitted where it can be robustly demonstrated that the overall need for sites or pitches/plots no longer exists.

##### Justification

- 9.29** A shortfall in the housing target could arise if net losses to the borough's stock of dwellings are allowed to take place. Even on a piecemeal basis, net losses to the level of housing in the borough would create additional development pressures elsewhere, and such losses will be resisted except in the circumstances set out in the policy.



## The Local Economy

- 10.1** This policy sets out the Council's strategy to plan for jobs, guide the future of the local economy and the local workforce, and allow the borough to reach its full economic potential. It is consistent with the strategy of the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

### Policy SP 8

#### The Local Economy

The Council will support economic prosperity, encourage inward investment and the creation of a range jobs by:

- Resisting the loss of land from industrial, storage, office and research uses;
- Retaining a stock of good quality employment land and premises;
- Ensuring that provision is made to meet the needs of business sectors that are already well represented in Welwyn Hatfield and those that are looking to invest in the area;
- Maintaining a balance of types of employment so that opportunities are available for people with a range of different skills and levels of skill;
- Ensuring that provision is made for a range of opportunities, in terms of sites and premises, to allow new and emerging sectors to be accommodated; and
- Recognising the important role played by other employment generating uses (including retail) in providing employment and contributing to the local economy.

New office, industry and warehousing development should be located in the designated employment areas defined on the Policies Map. At designated employment areas, the supply of land for industrial, office and warehousing uses will be protected against changes of use for other purposes.

In the most accessible locations within its suite of designated employment areas, the Council will permit high value employment uses in well-represented and growing sectors of the local economy including life sciences (including pharmaceuticals, medical technology and biotechnology), software and digital, and green industries, retail (back office functions, not shops) and business services.

Across the designated employment areas, a range of types of employment and business and a stock of sites and premises of varying qualities for small and medium sized businesses will be retained in the borough. The Council will encourage the provision of small business units through measures such as premises sharing and the conversion or sub-division of larger buildings to form small units.

In rural areas, small scale business diversification on farms will be supported where it contributes to the viability of the farm, provides local employment and accords with Policies SP 25 Rural Development and SADM 34 Development within the Green Belt.

The Council will support the provision of childcare facilities for employees, as part of employment-generating development, where sufficient demand from the employment area can be demonstrated.

## Economy

The provision of training facilities or other opportunities to improve the skills and qualifications of the resident workforce and help sections of the workforce that are disadvantaged in the labour market (particularly school leavers not in employment, education or training) will be promoted and contributions to support these schemes will be sought. Where it addresses a specific skill requirement of the local workforce, the provision of such facilities in designated employment areas will be supported. Training initiatives will be also supported.

The Council will also support the provision of other uses that are ancillary to, but supportive of, Class B or Class E(g) uses in designated employment areas.

### Justification

- 10.2** Welwyn Hatfield is an important centre for jobs. It is strategically placed between London and Cambridge on the A1(M) corridor, an area that has been identified by the LEP as being important for the UK's pharmaceutical and bioscience sector and for advanced engineering. Welwyn Hatfield also has a large functional economic market area covering several surrounding local authority areas. In 2013, it provided 83,000 jobs<sup>(42)</sup>. Government figures<sup>(43)</sup> for 2013 show that the job density (the ratio of jobs to the working population aged 16-64) has increased significantly as the economy recovers to 1.10, meaning that there are significantly more jobs than workers living in the borough. This is well above not only the national and county averages but also the London average, highlighting the continued attractiveness of the borough as a place to locate a business.
- 10.3** Government guidance requires local authorities to plan proactively to meet the needs of business and support a successful local economy. It is estimated that just under half of all jobs in Welwyn Hatfield are accommodated in industrial, office and warehouse premises (known as Class B and Class E(g) uses). The Council's evidence shows that, to meet predicted growth in employment, loss of land from Class B and Class E(g) uses should be minimised as far as possible. Since 2013, substantial amounts of Class B and Class E(g) employment floorspace have been lost through the permitted development right enabling offices to be converted to residential without planning permission. Whilst this may continue to some degree, the Council has introduced an Article 4 Direction which removes this permitted development right on some key employment areas. This should help restrict further losses through the plan period and may introduce further directions if necessary.
- 10.4** Two new employment areas for Class B uses have been designated. EA10 London Road, Woolmer Green provides a substantial area of employment in a relatively rural setting, including an area currently undeveloped which may enable future expansion or a new business to locate. EA11 Cole Green Lane, Welwyn Garden City, provides employment on the edge of Welwyn Garden City, close to Birchall Garden Suburb and incorporates an existing waste site. Land is also being allocated for Class E(g) as part of a mixed use designation at Marshmoor in Welham Green (site SDS7), which has been promoted as a potential location for bioscience research and would be highly accessible from elsewhere in the London-Cambridge corridor. At Broadwater Road

42 Inter-Departmental Business Register 2015 via NOMIS <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/default.asp>

43 Inter-Departmental Business Register 2015 via NOMIS <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/default.asp>

## Economy

West (SDS3), at least 5,800 square metres of Class E(g) employment floorspace will be provided in addition to that which was already provided on the site as at 1st April 2016.

- 10.5** Hatfield Business Park, Hatfield and Shire Park, Welwyn Garden City have acted as foci for high value employment uses so far. They contain some of the best quality office space in the borough. Significant amounts of Grade A office space have been lost from the borough since the introduction of permitted development rights allowing changes of use from Class E(g) offices to Class C3 residential.
- 10.6** The Council's Economic Development Strategy 2015/16 notes that one of the borough's strengths is the diverse range of businesses it has. The strategy set out in this policy acknowledges that, to function effectively, the local economy needs a range of businesses to be able to trade, not just in high value sectors, and that a range of types and levels of skill need to be provided for. It is for this reason that the strategy seeks to maintain a range of types of business premises to allow for the needs of small and medium sized enterprises as well as larger businesses. To ensure that there is a match between jobs and skills locally the policy encourages the provision of training facilities in employment areas. This challenge is also addressed by the Economic Development Strategy which contains an action for the Council to work with schools, colleges, universities and employment / training agencies to develop skills.
- 10.7** For the reasons set out in Chapter 5, the Council sought to make provision for the growth in the working age population over the plan period. Notwithstanding the gains in floorspace that will accrue from the mixed use designation (including Class E(g) employment) at Marshmoor and Broadwater Road West, losses of office floorspace that have taken place since 2016 and the losses that are likely to occur in the future mean that the supply of Class B and Class E(g) floorspace the Council is planning for is about 30,000 square metres short of the 85,000 square metres identified in the most recent analysis, though this is subject to some uncertainty. It is clear that the Council cannot meet its full requirement for employment floorspace without having to designate further sites in the Green Belt and without this the shortfall would increase by a further 54,400 square metres. National policies have also restricted the ability of the Council to retain existing employment land. For this reason, it is important that existing reserves of employment land are, as far as possible, retained in Class B and Class E(g) uses and measures are implemented to ensure that this happens.
- 10.8** The rural economy is an important part of Welwyn Hatfield's local economy. A case study in the Central Hertfordshire Employment Land Review, November 2006, showed how effective some existing small business units on a farm in Woolmer Green were at providing useful services and employment for local people. It is important that this part of the local economy can continue its role.
- 10.9** The provision of childcare facilities in close proximity to work helps businesses to function because it assists employees with children to maximise their working hours.
- 10.10** This policy supports the spatial vision and borough-wide objectives 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12 and 13.

## Economy

### Implementation

- 10.11** The implementation of this strategy will be assisted by the following policy which designates employment areas and mixed use areas in which Class B employment uses can take place and protects them from changes to other uses.
- 10.12** The Council has put in place Article 4 Directions to prevent the loss of important employment space to residential on several key sites and will consider further such directions if necessary. To further protect employment areas and to ensure that they contain the most appropriate uses, on new planning permissions the Council may use conditions or planning obligations to restrict changes to different uses falling within the same Use Class or to restrict the use of permitted development rights. As Welwyn Garden City Employment Area has been significantly affected so far by permitted changes from offices to residential, the Council will also consider putting in place an improvement plan for that area.

### Employment Development

#### Policy SADM 10

##### Employment Development

The following areas of land, as set out on the Policies Map, are designated as employment areas for Class E(g), B2 and B8 and associated land uses:

##### Designated employment areas

Ref	Area	Use classes	Site area
EA1	Welwyn Garden City Employment Area	E(g), B2 and B8	130.8ha
EA2	Burrowfield, Welwyn Garden City	E(g), B2 and B8	12.0ha
EA3	Great North Road (North), Hatfield	E(g), B2 and B8	4.2ha
EA4	Beaconsfield Road and Great North Road (South), Hatfield	E(g), B2 and B8	4.7ha
EA5	Fiddlebridge Lane, Hatfield	E(g), B2 and B8	1.6ha
EA6	Previously developed parts of Hatfield Business Park	E(g), B2 and B8	86.3ha
	Undeveloped parts of Hatfield Business Park (as at 01/04/2016)	E(g)	
EA7	Bishop Square, Hatfield	E(g), B2 and B8	7.1ha
EA8	Travellers Lane, Welham Green	E(g), B2 and B8	29.7ha
EA9	Sopers Road, Cuffley	E(g), B2 and B8	3.3ha

Ref	Area	Use classes	Site area
EA10	London Road, Woolmer Green	E(g), B2 and B8	1.3ha
EA11	Cole Green Lane, Welwyn Garden City	E(g), B2 and B8	5.8ha

The following areas of land, as set out on the policies map, are mixed use areas which will incorporate land for Class B employment uses:

### Mixed use development sites incorporating Class B employment uses

Reference	Area	Use class
SDS3	Broadwater Road West SPD Site (North)	E(g)
SDS3	Broadwater Road West SPD Site (South)	E(g)
SDS5	North West Hatfield	E(g)
SDS7	Marshmoor	E(g)

In the designated employment areas, subject to other policies in this plan, planning permission will be granted where:

- i. Development (including changes of use) is for the use classes set out in the table above;
- ii. Any retail elements of the development would clearly be ancillary to the main business use and the extent controlled by condition or planning obligation accordingly. Where necessary, conditions will be used to restrict changes between different uses falling within the same Use Class.
- iii. New industrial, storage, office and research buildings (currently Use Classes B and E(g)) will be subject to conditions or planning obligations to restrict changes to different uses falling within the same use class and/or allowed under permitted development rights. On existing sites, the Council will consider the use of Article 4 Directions to remove permitted development rights where necessary.

Proposals that would result in a loss of land from Class B uses to another use or uses whether in a designated employment area or not, will only be permitted where:

- iii. It can be demonstrated through active, extensive and realistic marketing over a period of three years that the land or premises are no longer required to meet future employment land needs and that there is a lack of demand for the land or premises in that location;
- iv. The proposed use is compatible with neighbouring uses and, where applicable, would not prejudice the continued use of neighbouring land for employment; and
- v. In accordance with Policy SP 8, they provide facilities that are supportive of Class B or Class E(g) uses.

Motor vehicle sales / showrooms, car hire businesses, petrol filling stations and retail warehouse clubs will only be permitted in designated employment areas. Planning permission will be granted, subject to other policies in this plan, where:

## Economy

- vi. It would have adequate servicing facilities; and
- vii. It would not have an adverse impact on the provision of employment land and jobs in terms of the cumulative impact of similar uses in the locality.

### Justification

- 10.13** There are very few sites in the designated employment areas and mixed use sites incorporating Class E(g) employment uses that have yet to be developed.
- 10.14** The Council's evidence base shows that even with all of the land allocated as designated employment areas set out in this plan, it will be difficult to provide sufficient employment floorspace to meet forecast job requirements to 2036. For this reason, and in the face of likely continued losses of employment land resources through permitted development rights for converting offices to housing, it is appropriate that the council protects all of its designated employment land as far as it is possible to do so to husband resources for the future. Where an employment site is shown to be genuinely unfit for future requirements to the end of the plan period, it is important that this loss does not have the effect of rendering nearby sites unsuitable for continued employment uses. An example of this would be where the re-use of an employment site for housing meant that neighbouring employment uses that produced noise could no longer operate.
- 10.15** The Council recognises that there is a demand for motor sales / showrooms. This use falls within sui generis. The environmental impacts in terms of traffic and associated noise are such that employment areas are the most suitable location for this use. Whilst these types of use provide jobs, they do not provide Class B or E(g) jobs and the Council will need to take this into account when considering planning applications.

# Quality of New Development

## Place Making and High Quality Design

- 11.1** High quality design and planning is the art of making places for people and nature. It is concerned with the function and connection of buildings, spaces and people, movement and urban form, nature and the built fabric, whether buildings and places are aesthetically pleasing and the processes for ensuring high quality places are delivered and maintained. Places need to be environmentally sustainable, connect physically and socially with the surrounding area and help foster a sense of belonging and stewardship. Policy SP 9 sets out the strategic framework, supported by SADM 11 and SADM 12, for pursuing these aims.

### Policy SP 9

#### Place Making and High Quality Design

Proposals will be required to deliver a high quality design that fosters a positive sense of place by responding to the following principles in an integrated and coherent way.

#### Respond to character and context

- Proposals have been informed by an analysis of the site's character and context so that they relate well to their surroundings and local distinctiveness, including the wider townscape and landscape, and enhance the sense of place.
- Proposals are of an appropriate density (typically between 30 - 50 net dwellings per hectare) that combines the efficient use of land with high quality design that respects character and context. Higher density development will be encouraged in accessible locations, such as around transport hubs or town and neighbourhood centres, where this is appropriate.

#### Legible, permeable and well connected

- Places are easy to understand and navigate by virtue of the layout; hierarchy and design of routes; height, scale and design of buildings; and views and vistas, and other landmarks such as public art.
- Places are accessible, permeable, well connected and easy to move through for all in society. New routes connect into the existing route network and are safe and pleasant to use.
- Public spaces seek to prioritise the pedestrian and cyclist above motor vehicles in their layout, landscaping and provision of street furniture/facilities.

#### High quality public space and landscaping

- Proposals provide an appropriate amount of public open space that is well sited and designed to help create and enhance a sense of place.
- Public open spaces are coherent, attractive, multi-functional, safe, inclusive and utilise high quality soft and hard landscaping.
- Public open spaces promote health and wellbeing, with play and leisure spaces well located and attractively designed to encourage their use.
- Continuity of frontages and appropriate definition of spaces is created or maintained through the siting, layout and design of routes, buildings, landscaping and boundary treatments.



## Quality of New Development

### Space for nature

- Proposals make space for nature, enable the movement of wildlife through the development, and protect and improve the connectivity of habitats at the wider landscape scale.
- Layout and design of development respects and guides people's interaction with spaces for nature, with strategies in place to manage and maintain the ecological integrity of those spaces.

### Vibrant and diverse

- Proposals offer an appropriate mix of uses to support sustainable and vibrant places to live, work and visit.
- Public spaces and publicly accessible buildings are designed to be inclusive, promote social interaction and provide opportunities for informal cultural and economic activities.

### Safe and secure

- The design of buildings and boundary treatments create a sense of safety and security that is consistent with achieving active, welcoming, legible and permeable places.
- Building entrances and public spaces are appropriately sited, designed and lit in order to maximise natural surveillance and a sense of safety. Proportionate steps may need to be taken to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience in locations where large numbers of people may be expected to congregate<sup>(44)</sup>.

### Healthy and Active

- Open space should be multi functional, attractive and accessible public spaces, which facilitate sport and physical activity.
- The internal and external layout, use and design of buildings should promote opportunities for physical activity.

### Building function and form

- Development proposals respect neighbouring buildings and the surrounding context in terms of height, mass and scale.
- Development proposals are of a high quality architectural design that creates coherent and attractive forms and elevations and uses high quality materials.
- Alterations to buildings relate well to the character and proportions of the existing building and its curtilage, the surrounding context and the street scene in terms of their siting, height, mass, scale, detailed design and materials.
- Buildings and their approaches are accessible and provide adequate internal amenity and functionality for occupiers and users.

44 Locations such as transport hubs, shopping centres, places of worship, visitor attractions and commercial centres and where advice obtained from the relevant agencies indicates that appropriate steps need to be taken.

# Quality of New Development

## Taller buildings

In addition to other design principles and criteria set out within the Local Plan, proposals for taller buildings should positively respond to the following matters within their design solution:

- Clustering with other existing or proposed taller buildings within the immediate and wider area.
- Long distance views.
- Impact on skyline, townscape, the historic environment and landscape.
- Shadowing and overlooking.
- Micro-climate and wind tunnelling.
- Relationship and interaction with the street and human scale.

## Masterplanning

A comprehensive approach will be taken to the development of large sites. Masterplans will provide a spatial framework and, as a minimum, will set out the vision and objectives for the development; establish the quantum and distribution of land uses; identify sustainable transport linkages and a movement hierarchy; and establish the core design concepts for the site, which will be based on the principles set out in this policy. The masterplan should be informed by an appropriate evidence base together with consultation and be agreed by the Council prior to the determination of any relevant planning application.

Masterplans will be required in the following circumstances:

- Proposals for 500 or more dwellings; or
- Large scale <sup>(45)</sup> mixed use proposals; or
- Proposals related to major development (as defined by the NPPF) in the Green Belt; or
- Sites where there are potentially complex or sensitive issues such as listed buildings, conservation areas or heritage assets, including those with archaeological interest; or
- Sites in multiple land ownership, where coordination between parties will be required to ensure the delivery of a high quality, coherent development; or
- Mixed-use sites where consideration needs to be given to their integration into the surrounding area.

## Justification

- 11.2** The borough's towns, villages, neighbourhoods and rural areas have their own distinctive character and their own unique history that are valued by local communities. The amount of growth that will be delivered during the plan period, whether in the form of urban regeneration, urban extensions of various scales, or small alterations to individual buildings will affect the character and quality of the borough's built environment and public realm for many years to come. The National Planning Policy Framework recognises that high quality design is central to the delivery of sustainable

45 Mixed use proposals comprising of at least 500 dwellings and/or at least 10,000m<sup>2</sup> of employment floorspace.

## Quality of New Development

communities. It makes it clear that good design is indivisible from good planning, with the planning system playing a key role in improving design quality. To this end, the Local Plan should contain robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area<sup>(46)</sup>.

- 11.3** High quality and sustainable design can also deliver other benefits. For instance, well designed development can provide an environment for healthy living by supporting more active lifestyles, providing places for social interaction, and enabling interaction with nature all of which can help benefit people's physical and mental health. Well designed and built homes, commercial buildings and neighbourhoods also have legacy benefits as they often retain their general appeal, value and marketability over their lifetime. New residents and businesses are also more likely to take pride of place and support efforts to help maintain and invest in the buildings and neighbourhoods if they are of a high quality design and build at the outset. Therefore a well designed built environment should remove the need for overt measures around safety and security such as incongruous and unsightly barriers and the proliferation of gated developments, which will be resisted.
- 11.4** It is therefore of paramount importance that development is of a high quality design so that it integrates well with the existing built and natural environment. This can be done without stifling innovation and creating places that are functional yet attractive, enjoyable, healthy and vibrant to live, work and visit. Equally, new growth provides opportunities to enhance positive features, such as historic character in the borough, and improve any areas that have experienced neglect or insensitive development in the past. SP 9 together with SADM 11 and SADM 12 will help achieve these aims by focusing upon those design elements which are integral to the function and aesthetic of buildings and places. Buildings should have a positive relationship with relevant heritage assets and their setting and the historic character that contributes to the area's distinctiveness. Together these policies will contribute to the delivery of strategic objectives 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9.

### Taller Buildings

- 11.5** A taller building is defined as one that is significantly taller than its surroundings resulting in a prominent feature on the skyline. Welwyn Hatfield is not generally characterised by taller buildings but there are emerging pressures for this type of development and the National Planning Policy Framework encourages higher density development in accessible locations.
- 11.6** Applicants will be expected to demonstrate a good understanding of an area's character and context in order to identify if a proposal is considered tall and if it is likely to be appropriate. Tall buildings can have a visual and environmental impact and it is important that these issues are addressed. The views of these buildings, at different distances, need to be considered. The zones of visual influence of a proposal should be defined and used to understand the character of the areas that may be affected.
- 11.7** Buildings should have a positive relationship with their location. Drawings and models should be used to demonstrate how proposals will deliver a high quality scheme and pre-application consultation is encouraged.

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46 Paragraphs 56-58 of the National Planning Policy Framework

# Quality of New Development

## Implementation

- 11.8** The design of any scheme should be founded upon a proportionate yet robust analysis of character and context. Where the character and context of proposals require it, the design approach may give emphasis to particular objectives, such as landscape or heritage protection, where these are considered to be of critical importance to the success of any proposed development. In order to encourage a strong sense of place, new development should reflect spatial context and character at different (often overlapping) scales, as outlined below.

### Character and Context Analysis

**Settlement:** such as role and function in the hierarchy of settlements, historic setting and settlement pattern, landscape and green infrastructure networks.

**Neighbourhood:** such as function of local area (housing, employment, university accommodation), connections to facilities, socio-economic trends, movement patterns, density.

**Site:** such as street patterns, access and connections, topography, environmental constraints, views and existing buildings (for example height, massing)

**Building:** such as architectural details, scale, height and massing in relation to existing buildings, materials.

Sources of information about locally distinctive character and context in the borough include the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance, Digswell Character Appraisal, Conservation Area Appraisals, Landscape Character Assessments and the Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study.

- 11.9** Taking account of this spatial context will help to avoid 'anywhere development' and create a distinct identity where people feel a sense of belonging and ownership. This is not to say that new development must be a mirror image of the surrounding built environment, rather it must respect and relate to it positively and seek to form a positive addition to the immediate and wider townscape and landscape. The Council will expect any new development proposal to consider local character and context, drawing on relevant documents and design resources. More guidance on the character and urban design of different areas across the borough is set out in a number of documents, including the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance and Conservation Area Appraisals.
- 11.10** The Council will encourage the use of pre-application consultation and Design Review prior to a planning application being submitted so that a robust design framework can be discussed and agreed at an early stage to arrive at the best possible design solution. Design Review should, in particular, be undertaken for major development proposals and proposals that are in a sensitive location or which have the potential to alter the character of a place significantly.
- 11.11** Applicants will be required to submit a Sustainable Design Statement. This will replace the typical Design and Access Statement and summarise the design rationale, explain how the design responds to the character and context of the site, and how any requirements or criteria contained within the Local Plan that influence design and place

## Quality of New Development

making will be met. In particular, the Sustainable Design Statement should explain how the principles and criteria of SP 9, SP 10, SADM 11, SADM 12, SADM 13 and SADM 14 will be implemented. Where appropriate, the Sustainable Design Statement should also summarise how the design response supports and is consistent with site or area-specific supporting documents (e.g. development briefs or SPDs) and other Local Plan policies, notably those on movement and sustainable travel, heritage, ecology and environmental pollution so that it can be demonstrated how the design responds to these issues in a holistic and integrated way. The Sustainable Design Statement should be provided alongside and in addition to any issue-specific assessment that is required via the Council's validation checklist, for example a Biodiversity Report, Flood Risk Assessment, Landscape Strategy or Heritage Impact Assessment. This is so a particular planning or design matter can be demonstrated and considered in detail, whilst illustrating how the response to that individual matter relates to the overall design rationale and holistic response.

**11.12** Development proposals and the Sustainable Design Statement should be informed by the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance, the Hertfordshire Building Futures Toolkit<sup>(47)</sup> and associated guidance, as well as other relevant Area Action Plans, Design Codes, Supplementary Planning Documents, development briefs or orders, and related appraisal and assessments (e.g. Landscape Character Assessments). The design of proposals should also take account of other policies within the Local Plan that have a relationship with design, in particular Movement, Critical Assets and Green Infrastructure policies, in order for proposals to comply with the Development Plan in an integrated and holistic way.

**11.13** Nationally Described Space Standards will be required via SADM 11 and enforced by the use of planning conditions; however, applicants are strongly advised to integrate the new standards, and other standards or provisions required elsewhere in the Local Plan (e.g. wheelchair accessible and adaptable design), into development proposals at the earliest appropriate stage so that they inform feasibility, viability and design appraisals in a holistic way.

## Amenity and Layout

### Policy SADM 11

#### Amenity and Layout

- i. All proposals will be required to create and protect a good standard of amenity for buildings and external open space in line with the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance, and in particular should ensure:
  - a. The levels of sunlight and daylight within buildings and open spaces, and garden areas in particular, are satisfactory.
  - b. Dwellings are dual aspect, wherever feasible, in order to enable passive ventilation and avoid the need for mechanical ventilation, subject to any noise and air pollution mitigation measures that are required to make the proposal acceptable.
  - c. External private or communal garden space, in its extent and design, meets the reasonable needs of its users

## Quality of New Development

- d. A reasonable degree of privacy to new and existing private living space and the main private garden area, with overlooking limited to an acceptable degree. The design of new communal garden areas should seek to create spaces that provide opportunities for privacy or seclusion for residents, particularly where residents do not have access to private balconies or other private external space.
  - e. New development is not overbearing upon existing buildings and open spaces.
  - f. The outlook and visual amenity afforded from within buildings and private/communal garden areas should be satisfactory, taking account of the relationship with neighbouring buildings and the wider street scene, including the design of parking, boundary treatments and landscaping.
  - g. Shared circulation space and routes to private entrances within flatted development should be of sufficient width, be welcoming, and be naturally lit wherever possible.
- ii. As a minimum, all proposals for C3 dwellings will be required to meet the Nationally Described Space Standard, unless it can be robustly demonstrated that this would not be feasible or viable.
  - iii. Proposals for Houses in Multiple Occupation will be expected to meet the criteria set out within the Council's Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document.
  - iv. Proposals for 'granny annexes' will be supported, where the extension to an existing dwelling is modest in size and subordinate in scale to the main dwelling. The annex should be designed in such a way that it can function as an integrated part of the main dwelling whilst allowing for a degree of independence for the occupant(s). Vehicular access and garden areas should be shared with no boundary demarcation or sub-division of garden areas.

### Justification

**11.14** Internal space within new dwellings is an important factor in creating homes that support a high quality of life and allow households and families to meet their current needs whilst also being flexible enough to accommodate changes in their circumstances. In recognising this, the UK Government have established a Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS)<sup>(48)</sup> as an optional requirement Local Planning Authorities can place upon new dwellings. The NDSS seek to ensure the internal space of new dwellings is sufficient, provided their adoption is viable and feasible.

**11.15** Analysis undertaken by the Council indicates that dwellings delivered in the borough<sup>(49)</sup> which were granted permission under the previous District Plan were, on the whole, deficient when compared to the NDSS. The analysis showed that the gross internal floor areas of open market housing in the sample:

- All 2 bed properties in the sample had a gross internal floor space that was greater than 10% below the NDSS.

48 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard>  
49 38 dwellings of various sizes and types across 21 consented schemes submitted between 2007 and 2014



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- 57% of 3 bed properties had a gross internal floor space that was below the NDSS, with 43% more than 10% below the NDSS.
- 50% of 4 bed properties had a gross internal floor space that was below the NDSS, with 25% more than 10% below the NDSS.
- For 3-4 bed properties as a whole, 64% were below the NDSS and 50% were more than 10% below the NDSS.

- 11.16** Regarding room widths and floor areas, the sample indicated that bedrooms other than the main bedroom were on average around 20% below the NDSS within approximately 30% of the 2-4 bed houses sampled. These past deficiencies and the clear national policy objective together indicate the need for the NDSS to be implemented in order to ensure the housing stock in the borough supports a high quality of life.
- 11.17** Proposals for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) will not be required to meet the NDSS. Applying the NDSS to HMO proposals would be problematic due to the way in which internal space is divided up and used. In particular, the way in which the NDSS has different standards for main double bedroom, other double bedroom and single bedroom would not support the creation and maintenance of a private room for each household that is of satisfactory proportions. As such, the Council will continue to apply the criteria set out in the Council's HMO SPD, including the separate space standards, which have been implemented successfully since adoption of the SPD and standards in 2012.
- 11.18** External private space is important to creating homes that meet people's needs and support appropriate living conditions. External private spaces should be proportionate to the size of the dwelling and the expected make up of the household that are likely to occupy it. External private space should enable occupants to enjoy their home, allowing space for play and socialising and catering for domestic needs, such as storage of refuse, clothes drying and storage of bicycles and other items typically too large to be comfortably stored within the dwelling. Flatted development will be also required to make adequate provision for external private space through the use of balconies and/or courtyards wherever feasible and appropriate to improve enjoyment of the dwelling. Where this is not possible, communal external space should be designed to maximise amenity for users, with careful siting and design of communal refuse storage and cycle parking areas.
- 11.19** A wide range of other factors also have a significant influence upon the internal and external amenity of dwellings and other types of development. These include levels of sunlight and daylight, relationship with other buildings and elements of the built environment (e.g. Roads), ventilation, and general outlook.
- 11.20** 'Granny annexes' provide living accommodation for dependent relatives as an extension to an existing dwelling. They should not however create a self-contained dwelling.



# Quality of New Development

## Parking, Servicing and Refuse

### Policy SADM 12

#### Parking, Servicing and Refuse

##### Parking

- i. The type and quantum of vehicle and cycle parking provided within development proposals will be informed by the standards set out in the Council's parking standards taking account of:
  - a. The site's location and accessibility to public transport, services and facilities;
  - b. The nature and degree of parking demand likely to be associated with the development and opportunities for shared parking; and
  - c. The need to promote more sustainable forms of travel within the borough.
- ii. The siting, layout and design of vehicle and cycle parking, including detached garage blocks, within development proposals will be required to ensure that an attractive and coherent street scene is maintained, that the main purpose of any adjacent open space is protected, and that parking spaces are appropriately related to the part of the development that they serve.
- iii. An appropriate level and type of vehicle charging infrastructure will be incorporated into town centre parking areas and at new or regenerated neighbourhood centres where the opportunity arises. Appropriate provision should also be made within new residential, employment and leisure related development. The Council will bring forward more detailed policy on electric vehicle charging provision requirements in developments at an early opportunity.

##### Servicing and refuse

- i. Appropriate provision of service areas and refuse storage and collection areas should be made according to the nature of the development. Such areas and access to them should be appropriately sited and designed to ensure they can:
  - a. Perform their role effectively without prejudicing or being prejudiced by other functions and users;
  - b. Maintain an attractive and coherent street scene and protect visual amenity; and
  - c. Avoid creating risk to human health or an environmental nuisance.

## Justification

- 11.21** Whilst planning to reduce the need to travel and support greater levels of walking, cycling and use of public transport are instrumental to moving towards more sustainable modes of travel and away from private motor vehicle dependence, the fact that the majority of people are likely to depend upon private motor vehicles to travel within and beyond the borough for work, leisure, domestic and personal reasons during the plan

## Quality of New Development

period cannot be ignored. The appropriate provision and design of parking, and in particular car parking associated with residential areas, is therefore critical to achieving a high quality public realm and street scene without undermining a transition toward more sustainable forms of travel.

- 11.22** What constitutes an appropriate quantum of parking (and types of parking, e.g. disabled bays) is highly dependent upon the nature of development (both proposed and existing) and the area's connectivity to walking, cycling and public transport routes, the level and quality of public transport servicing the area, and the prevalence of amenities and facilities within the area which people are likely to use. The Council's parking standards should be used to inform an assessment of these factors and the proposed level of parking provision. Proposals for HMOs will also be considered against the criteria set out within the Council's HMO SPD. 'Car Parking: What works where' also provides useful guidance on parking layout and design. Parking proposals will also need to take account of any impact on highway safety and capacity, in line with SADM 2. An integrated or detached domestic garage(s) should be of a size that is capable of accommodating a modern family car with space for getting into and out of the car comfortably.
- 11.23** The provision and design of servicing and refuse facilities, including access routes for vehicles, how refuse receptacles would be presented for collection and boundary treatments to these facilities, also have an important influence on the resultant quality of the street scene and public realm. Their design should be informed by the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance and consultation with the relevant service providers at an early stage of the design process. Proposals for HMOs will also be considered against the criteria set out within the Council's HMO SPD.

## Sustainable Design and Construction

- 11.24** Policy SP 10 sets out the strategic approach to promoting more environmentally sustainable development within the borough, supported by more detailed criteria set out in SADM 13 and SADM 14.

### Policy SP 10

#### Sustainable Design and Construction

Proposals that adopt sustainable design and construction principles, as set out below, within an integrated design solution will be supported. This should be demonstrated via a Sustainable Design Statement and associated plans.

#### Materials and waste

- Reuse land and buildings wherever feasible and consistent with maintaining and enhancing local character and distinctiveness.
- Reuse and recycle materials that arise through demolition and refurbishment, including the reuse of excavated soil and hardcore within the site.
- Prioritise the use of materials and construction techniques that have smaller ecological and carbon footprints, where appropriate.

## Quality of New Development

- Consider the lifecycle of the building and public spaces, including how they can be easily modified to meet changing social and economic needs and how materials can be recycled at the end of their lifetime.
- Space is provided and appropriately designed to foster greater levels of recycling of domestic and commercial waste.

### Water sensitive design

- Water sensitive design principles and practices are integrated into development proposals to sustainably address water supply, consumption and quality, extreme rainfall, drainage and flood risk in a holistic way that supports other design aims and objectives.

### Energy and climate change

- Layout and design of the site and building(s) reflect the energy hierarchy to maximise opportunities to reduce carbon emissions.
- The use of renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure is used where it is appropriate and consistent with other policies.
- Proposals are responsive to how the climate will change over their lifetime and minimise their contribution to the urban heat island effect.

### Landscape and biodiversity

- New and existing habitat and landscaping are incorporated into the layout and design of proposals in line with sound ecological principles.
- Site and building-level landscaping and features promote biodiversity and help achieve other aims, such as climate change adaptation, flood risk and amenity.
- Newly created habitat and soft landscaping prioritise the use of native species. Non-native species are only used if they significantly help achieve other policy objectives, such as adapting to climate change.
- Proposals seek to create space for growing food, both at a building and wider community scale.

### Justification

**11.25** The National Planning Policy Framework states that planning and development must be responsive and resilient to environmental risks and climate change, and seek to protect and enhance other aspects of the natural environment, objectives which the National Planning Policy Framework states are central to sustainable development. Paragraph 93 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that the planning system can help achieve radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and increase the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy. The UK Climate Change Act 2008 aims to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by at least 80% below 1990 levels by 2050, and 50% by 2025. Analysis by the Committee on Climate Change, who recommend carbon reduction targets to the UK Government, indicate that the UK is not on track to achieve a 50% reduction by 2025. The UK's fifth carbon budget now sets a target of a 57% reduction on 1990 levels by 2030. The impacts associated with a changing climate relate to increased summer temperatures, increased winter precipitation and more extreme weather events. The indirect impacts of droughts, heat waves and prolonged/more intense precipitation upon the built environment are likely to include increased overheating of buildings and urban environments, increased flood risk, a

# 11 Quality of New Development

decline in water resource availability and quality, and less stable ground conditions for buildings and other infrastructure. The natural and built environment will therefore need to both mitigate climate change by reducing emissions and also be designed to cope with future, not historical, climatic conditions wherever information and data enables this. To achieve these objectives, the National Planning Policy Framework requires Local Plans to adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

- 11.26** New development should also seek to enhance its overall environmental performance. The whole life cycle of a building - from construction, through occupation and renovation, to eventual demolition - can result in major resource inputs. By optimising the design of buildings using the principles set out in SP 10 there is considerable potential to reduce the need for inputs and the ecological and carbon footprint of development, and can potentially enhance the environment whilst reducing costs for developers and occupants.
- 11.27** In order to achieve these aims, SP 10 promotes a built environment that uses resources prudently, is responsive to environmental risks and climate change, and seeks to protect and enhance other aspects of the natural environment. Addressing flood risk and surface water management within Welwyn Hatfield is an important planning objective, as identified within the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Hertfordshire County Council's Flood Risk Management Strategy. Policy SP 10, supported by SADM 13 and SADM 14, will also contribute towards the delivery of strategic objectives 3, 5 and 8.

## Implementation

- 11.28** The Council will encourage the use of pre-application consultation and Design Review prior to any planning application being submitted so that the sustainable design and construction principles and targets set out in SP 10 and SADM 13 are addressed at an early stage in an integrated way.
- 11.29** Applicants will be required to submit a Sustainable Design Statement. This should explain how the principles and criteria of SP 9, SP 10, SADM 11, SADM 12, SADM 13 and SADM 14 will be implemented. Where appropriate, the Sustainable Design Statement should also summarise how the design response supports and is consistent with site or area-specific supporting documents (e.g. development briefs or SPDs) and other Local Plan policies, notably those on movement and sustainable travel, heritage, ecology and environmental pollution so that it can be demonstrated how the design responds to these issues in a holistic and integrated way. The Sustainable Design Statement should be provided alongside and in addition to any issue-specific assessment that is required via the Council's validation checklist, for example a Biodiversity Report, Flood Risk Assessment, Drainage Strategy or Heritage Impact Assessment. This is so a particular planning or design matter can be demonstrated and considered in detail, whilst illustrating how the response to that individual matter relates to the overall design rationale and holistic response.
- 11.30** The Building Futures Sustainable Design Toolkit and associated modules on matters of energy, climate change adaptation, water, materials and waste, landscape and biodiversity, noise and air should be used to inform the response to SP 10, SADM 13 and SADM 14 according to the scale and nature of development<sup>(50)</sup>. Proposals should also be informed by the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance, relevant Master

50 The Sustainable Design Toolkit can be accessed via <http://www.hertslink.org/bfintranet>

## Quality of New Development

Plans, Area Action Plans, Design Codes, Supplementary Planning Documents and development briefs or orders as appropriate. The design of proposals should also take account of other policies within the Local Plan that have a relationship with sustainable design and construction in order for proposals to comply with the Development Plan in an integrated and holistic way.

- 11.31** Regarding SADM 13, proposals for non-residential development should submit a BREEAM Pre-Assessment Report, in place of the Sustainable Design Statement, alongside the planning application to demonstrate compliance. Water consumption targets will be enforced via a planning condition requiring the higher standard within Building Regulations Part G to be met.
- 11.32** Applicants are strongly advised to integrate the solutions required to satisfy SADM 13 at the earliest appropriate stage so that they inform feasibility, viability and design appraisals alongside other policy requirements that need to be met. Where an applicant considers the BREEAM or water efficiency requirements to be unfeasible or unviable, this will need to be supported by a robust viability appraisal.
- 11.33** Information demonstrating how SuDS have been integrated into proposals, as required by SADM 14, and how proposals will impact upon Ordinary Watercourses should be summarised as part of the Sustainable Design Statement and set out in more detail within a Drainage Strategy which adopts a structure and format consistent with the Lead Local Flood Authority's published guidance, including the 'Developer's Guide and Checklist' and 'Pre-application Guidance'.

### Sustainability Requirements

#### Policy SADM 13

##### Sustainability Requirements

- i. All major development proposals must demonstrate that they have sought to maximise opportunities for renewable and low carbon sources of energy supply where consistent with other Local Plan policies.
- ii. All non-residential development with a floorspace of 1,000 square metres or more will be required to meet at least BREEAM 'Excellent' unless it is demonstrated that it is not technically feasible or viable to do so, in which case such proposals will be required to demonstrate a 'Very Good' rating.
- iii. All newly constructed dwellings will be required to achieve an estimated water consumption of no more than 110 litres/person/day, with water reuse and recycling and rainwater harvesting incorporated wherever feasible to reduce demand on mains water supply.

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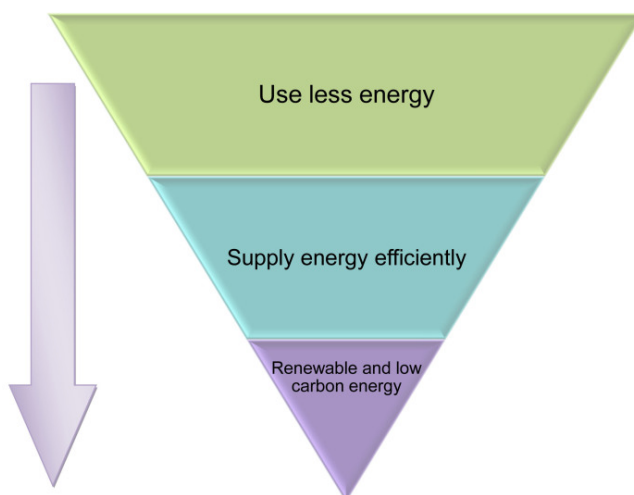
### Justification

**11.34** Per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Welwyn Hatfield have reduced by approximately 23% between 2005 and 2014, compared to a 31% reduction UK-wide<sup>(51)</sup>. There have been some marked variations towards the end of the period due to domestic emissions being influenced by weather conditions and the sources of electricity supply. This indicates how the energy and CO<sub>2</sub> performance of homes and where the energy that heats and lights buildings comes from are critical factors in reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions at the local and national level, particularly in the face of a changing climate, alongside efforts to facilitate more sustainable forms of travel. Given the scale of new residential development that will come forward in the borough, which broadly equates to a 25% growth in the number of dwellings, it will be vitally important that new dwellings maximise opportunities to avoid CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and respond to a changing climate in order to help achieve the targets enshrined in law by the Climate Change Act 2008 and for local communities to be sustainable over the longer term.

### Energy

**11.35** The design and planning process, working in tandem with the Building Regulations system, can have a significant influence upon how much energy is required to light, heat and cool buildings to a comfortable degree. Therefore, in addition to the Building Regulations regime the Council will expect everything 'beyond the front door' of all development proposals to reflect the Energy Hierarchy (and Steps 1 and 3 in particular), as explained below.

**Figure 7 Energy Hierarchy**



#### 1. Avoid energy use

**11.36** By ensuring the following passive design elements are optimised to reduce the need for artificial lighting, heating and cooling the design of buildings can play a significant role in reducing a building's overall energy demand:

- Site layout and relationship between buildings and adjacent uses

51 UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005-2014 available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-emissions-estimates>



## Quality of New Development

- Orientation of buildings and whether they have a single or dual aspect (or more).
- Elevation design, including materials choice, fenestration design, shading devices and eaves design
- Planting and soft landscaping, including green roofs, which can afford shade and stabilise microclimates.

**11.37** Guidance on how buildings can be optimised to avoid the need for artificial lighting, heating and cooling is available via the Building Futures Sustainable Design Toolkit and associated Energy and Climate Change module<sup>(52)</sup>.

### 2. Use energy efficiently

**11.38** This step in the Energy Hierarchy is principally governed by Building Regulations, and is concerned with the performance of the fabric of the building (walls, floors, roof, windows and doors).

### 3. Use renewable and low carbon sources of energy supply

**11.39** A number of technologies of differing scales can be used to provide renewable or low carbon sources of energy supply. Each technology has its strengths and weaknesses and some will be more suitable than others in certain contexts (such as Listed Buildings). The choice of technology will depend upon the context of the site and proposal. Wind turbines within built up areas have been found to be inefficient and ineffective and will therefore not be supported. Guidance on renewable and low carbon technologies is available via the Building Futures Sustainable Design Toolkit and associated Energy and Climate Change module.

**11.40** The Hertfordshire Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Study (2010) identified district heating opportunity areas in Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield where heat demand is high. The cost of the infrastructure means that viability is limited to higher density areas and is most effective serving a mixture of uses. Developers in district heating opportunity areas should, where possible, consider district heating and how the mix of uses, density, layout, design, and phasing of the proposal could support its use. Where a district heating network does not yet exist, applicants should consider installing heating and cooling equipment that is capable of connection at a later date.

**11.41** Proposals for new development will need to demonstrate in their Sustainable Design Statement or BREEAM Report how the design of the proposal reflects the energy hierarchy and how the opportunities and options for renewable and low carbon energy supply have been considered and the reasons for the chosen solution.

### Water

**11.42** Hertfordshire is one of the driest counties in the UK yet has a population of over 1 million drawing up water resources. Welwyn Hatfield (and the two principal towns in particular) have been identified as an area of serious water stress<sup>(53)</sup> which means that:

52 <http://www.hertslink.org/bfintranet>

53 Water stressed areas – final classification, Environment Agency 2013



## Quality of New Development

- The current household demand for water in the area is a high proportion of the current effective rainfall which is available to meet that demand; or
- The future household demand for water is likely to be a high proportion of the effective rainfall available to meet that demand

**11.43** In 2014, per capita consumption of water within Affinity Water's Water Resource Zone 3, which Welwyn Hatfield falls into, was 153.7 litres/person/day which was above the national average. As noted in their Water Resources Management Plan 2015-2020, Affinity Water are committed to rolling out a programme of metering to help domestic customers better understand their water consumption and help them use water more efficiently. They identify that the per capita consumption of water in new properties within Affinity Water's overall area is on average 122l/h/d<sup>(54)</sup>, which reflects the impact of the basic requirement set out in Building Regulations Part G.

**11.44** Yet despite this, water consumption remains a significant issue within the borough and across Hertfordshire which the planning system can help address. The new regime of Technical Housing Standards put in place for England allows Local Plan policies to set water efficiency requirements for newly constructed dwellings above the basic Building Regulations requirement. The level of water stress in Welwyn Hatfield and the wider area demonstrates the need for this policy and its implementation via planning conditions. The impact upon viability of meeting this additional requirement has been identified as negligible<sup>(55)</sup>.

**11.45** It is also important that, where appropriate, simple and more innovative measures such as water butts, rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling systems are pursued alongside the use of water efficient internal fixtures (taps, baths, showers, etc) to further reduce the demand upon mains water and the amount of water which requires treatment. The use of water butts and rainwater harvesting can be particularly beneficial in householder extensions, conversions and changes of use as it would reduce the amount of 'clean' water entering the building's original drainage which is highly likely to connect to the mains network.

## Flood Risk and Water Management

### Policy SADM 14

#### Flood Risk and Surface Water Management

- Development proposals in areas at risk of flooding from any source should be informed by and be consistent with relevant national planning policy and guidance, local and regional strategies and plans, and the latest flood risk information available.
- Flood Risk Assessments will be required in line with national policy and guidance and should be prepared in accordance with the requirements and advice set out in the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. In addition, proposals that require a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment will be required to:

54 Affinity Water Water Resources Management Plan 2015-2020

55 Welwyn Hatfield Viability Study 2015; Housing Standards Review Impact Assessment 2014

## Quality of New Development

- a. Protect and enhance the flood risk management function of existing overland flow routes, watercourses and flood plains/storage areas to ensure there is no net loss of flood storage, flows are not impeded, and opportunities to make space for water are taken.
  - b. Maintain an appropriate development free corridor along watercourses and take opportunities to naturalise watercourses to improve their ecological status, biodiversity and habitat connectivity.
- iii. All major development proposals, and all proposals in areas identified as being at risk of surface water flooding, will be required to manage surface water runoff and surface water flood risk via the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems that:
- a. Have been incorporated into the layout and design of proposals at the earliest stage of scheme design;
  - b. Are designed in accordance with the national non-statutory technical standards (or their successor) as well as guidance and advice provided by the relevant flood risk management bodies;
  - c. Wherever feasible improve upon peak greenfield runoff rates, particularly in locations identified as experiencing surface water flooding problems, in order to help reduce overall flood risk in the wider area;
  - d. Use management and control measures that aid multi-functionality of space, enhance visual amenity, support biodiversity and allow for safe interaction with the water environment, as opposed to hard engineered and/or sub-surface features which will be resisted;
  - e. Protect water quality by using an appropriate number of treatment stages before discharging to the ground or a surface water body;
  - f. Avoid discharging to a combined sewer particularly in locations where the existing sewer network is identified as having constrained capacity; and
  - g. Enable maintenance of individual measures and the system as a whole to be undertaken in a financially sustainable way and without significant disruption to occupiers and users of development.
- iv. Sustainable Drainage Systems that include measures for managing surface water runoff beyond the individual building or plot-level will be required to demonstrate how the long term maintenance of the system will be secured.
- v. All development proposals should seek to incorporate suitable source control measures at the building and plot-level. The loss of permeable surfaces and other features which help reduce and manage surface water flood risk without suitable compensatory provision will be resisted.

### Justification

**11.46** The overarching aim of development and flood risk planning policy in the UK, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance, is to ensure that the potential risk of flooding from all sources is taken into account at every stage of the planning process. To this end, the Council has worked with the Environment Agency, Hertfordshire County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority and

## Quality of New Development

other stakeholders to develop a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment that has helped to direct development allocations in the borough to areas with the lowest probability and risk of flooding. However, some allocations will need to consider fluvial and surface water flood risk, albeit of limited extent. Similarly, proposals for windfall development elsewhere within the borough may be at risk of flooding. Therefore, there is a need for a policy approach to flood risk within the Local Plan that is proportionate to its context and is consistent with national policy and guidance.

- 11.47** The wider framework governing flood risk and how it is considered within Welwyn Hatfield is principally composed of the following:
- Paragraphs 93-94 and 99-104 of National Planning Policy Framework
  - Flooding and Coastal Change section of the National Planning Practice Guidance
  - DEFRA guidance 'Local planning authorities: strategic flood risk assessment'
- 11.48** Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are surface water management practises which aim to enable surface water to be drained in a way that mimics (as closely as possible) the run-off and drainage of a parcel of land prior to its development.
- 11.49** There are a number of ways in which SuDS can be designed to meet surface water flood risk, water quality, biodiversity and amenity goals. Given this flexibility, SuDS are generally capable of overcoming or working alongside various constraints affecting a site, such as restrictions on infiltration, without detriment to achieving these goals. The overall design of SuDS schemes should take account of the principles set out in SADM 14 alongside other policies within the Local Plan that have a relationship with the water environment, biodiversity, design and place making. Specific regard should be given to the UK Government's non-statutory technical standards, National Planning Practice Guidance, guidance published by Hertfordshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority including 'SuDS Design Guidance for Hertfordshire, March 2015', and the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment which includes information and guidance on managing surface water through the use of SuDS.
- 11.50** For SuDS techniques that are designed to encourage infiltration, it is imperative that the water table is low enough and a site-specific infiltration test is conducted. Where sites lie within or close to Groundwater Source Protection Zones or aquifers, further restrictions may be applicable and guidance should be sought from the Environment Agency.

## Environmental Assets

### Protection and Enhancement of Critical Environmental Assets

- 12.1** SP 11 sets out the strategic approach to the protection and enhancement of the borough's critical environmental assets within the planning process, supported by detailed criteria for considering development proposals set out within SADM 15, SADM 16, SADM 17 and SADM 18.

#### Policy SP 11

##### Protection and Enhancement of Critical Environmental Assets

The protection, enhancement and management of the environmental, ecological and historic assets within the borough, will be sought commensurate with their status, significance and international, national and/or local importance.

The best and most versatile agricultural land that has the greatest potential for local food security will be protected.

Proposals affecting the water environment should protect and enhance the ecological status of water bodies and maintain its flood management function. The borough's flood plains will be protected by avoiding development in Flood Zones 2 and 3 in accordance with national policy and guidance.

Development that would secure positive improvements to and ensure the long-term conservation of ecological and heritage assets for the enjoyment of future generations will be supported.

Designation of ecological and heritage assets will be supported where it is deemed appropriate and necessary to safeguard them for the enjoyment of future generations.

New areas of Urban Open Land created through development of the sites allocated within this Local Plan will be protected and maintained during the plan period.

### Justification

- 12.2** The borough's most valuable environmental, ecological and historic assets include its functioning ecological networks, networks of green and blue infrastructure, landscapes, listed buildings, historic parks and gardens, Urban Open Land, and other assets of importance including general environmental amenities such as a good air quality and rights of way. The Council is committed to protecting and where possible enhancing these assets as they make an important contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of the area, quality of life and the richness of biodiversity within the borough. The Local Plan has to balance the need to protect, sustain and enhance these assets while at the same time providing for growth. The Local Plan seeks to ensure that the borough's most valuable assets are protected by directing development to those areas of least value and significance and that the adverse effects of development are avoided or mitigated. SP 11, in combination with the SADM policies below, will help achieve these aims and contribute towards the delivery of strategic objectives 3, 8, 9 and 10.

## Environmental Assets

**12.3** Greatest protection is given to those assets which are of highest significance, according to their relative status and importance. Tables 7 and 8 set out the main types of assets in the borough according to their level of protection, status and importance.

**Table 7 Statutorily protected designated assets of international, national and local status and importance within the borough**

Importance	Natural Assets	Historic Assets
<b>International</b>	Special Protection Areas Special Areas of Conservation Other features protected by the Habitats and Birds Directive	None
<b>National</b>	Sites of Special Scientific Interest Other features protected by domestic legislation e.g. Wildlife & Countryside Act	Ancient Monuments Listed Buildings (Generally those at Grade I and Grade II*)
<b>Local</b>	Local Nature Reserves	Conservation Areas Listed Buildings (Generally those at Grade II)

**Table 8 Non-statutorily protected designated assets of international, national and local status and importance within the borough**

Importance	Natural Assets	Historic Assets
<b>International</b>	None	None
<b>National</b>	Ancient Woodland Chalk river habitats Species and habitats of principal importance listed in domestic legislation, e.g. The Natural and Environment and Rural Communities Act	Registered Historic Parks and Gardens
<b>Local</b>	Local Wildlife Sites Community Forest	Areas of Archaeological Significance Unregistered Historic Parks and Gardens

**12.4** Alongside these are a number of other natural and historic assets of importance, including landscape character areas; mapped ecological networks of various habitats; the water environment; woodland, orchards, trees and hedgerows; remnants of Roman settlement; and un-registered historic parks and gardens.

**12.5** The Welwyn Hatfield Landscape Character Assessment 2002 identifies 29 different landscape character areas within the borough, many of which extend over the borough boundaries. At the time of the assessment 24% of these were found to be in poor condition mainly because of land use change. Each character assessment sets out a strategy and objectives for improving landscape character and quality within each area, and the Council will seek to deliver these within development in accordance with SADM 16 through the development management process.

## Environmental Assets

- 12.6** Part of the borough is located within the boundary of the Watling Chase Community Forest area, where the aim is to achieve major environmental improvements in terms of the provision of green infrastructure such as planting trees, areas for nature, landscape enhancement and the provision of public open space around urban areas. The Council will support delivering the aims of the Watling Chase Community Forest through the appropriate retention and and protection of trees, or planting of new and replacement trees.
- 12.7** The principal watercourses in the borough comprise the River Lee, the Upper Colne, the Mimshall Brook and the Mimram. These rivers, their tributaries, and river valleys or corridors are a key characteristic of the borough's landscape as well as being important for water resources, biodiversity, recreation and for their function as floodplains. The Mimram is a chalk stream and a nationally important habitat.
- 12.8** In addition to sites of national and international nature conservation importance are around 200 Local Wildlife Sites in the borough. These were first identified in the Welwyn Hatfield Habitat Survey which was carried out by the Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre and Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust in the 1990s, with known changes updated annually.

### Implementation

#### Heritage

- 12.9** The borough has ten Conservation Areas and 74 Areas of Archaeological Significance which have been defined on the Policies Map. Conservation Area Appraisals and the Historic Environmental Record can provide useful evidence on the significance of assets. Heritage Impact Assessments provide an assessment of the potential impact of proposals on the significance of heritage assets and identify measures to mitigate that impact where this is possible.
- 12.10** To assist the assessment of impacts upon Conservation Areas, applicants will be required to submit detailed plans and elevational drawings showing the proposal in relation to its surroundings and to provide documentary evidence of impacts of any demolition and new development on the significance of the Conservation Area and heritage assets therein and where relevant on views from and to the Conservation area.
- 12.11** Where proposals require a Heritage Statement, Heritage Impact Assessment and/or an Archaeological Assessment, these should provide information about:
- i. The significance of the architectural, archaeological and historical interest and character of the asset;
  - ii. The principles of and justification for the proposed development or works;
  - iii. The likely impact on the significance of the asset, including its setting and, where relevant, the wider views to and from the asset.
- 12.12** The Assessment should explain sources of information details of expertise used and steps taken to avoid or minimise any adverse impacts on the significance of the asset. The type and amount of detail required will vary according to the particular circumstances of each application. Therefore, advice concerning the scope of such assessments should be obtained from the Natural, Historic and Built Environment Advisory Team at Hertfordshire County Council.



## Environmental Assets

**12.13** Local Authorities have a duty, under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to consider whether further reviews of their Conservation Areas are called for. As part of the monitoring process, and to assess the need for such reviews, the Council will endeavour to produce a character appraisal for each of the Conservation Areas in the borough. These character appraisals will identify those areas in need of review or enhancement, provide guidance for the design of new buildings and alterations to existing buildings and guide the standard of development expected from the Council's own works and those of statutory undertakers. Where, following a conservation area review or character appraisal, unsympathetic alterations or improvements to buildings or neglect to infrastructure and landscape are causing damage to the character of these areas the Council will carry out a dual policy approach of implementing a programme of works for the maintenance and enhancement of their historic and architectural character including the use of Article 4 directions under the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order, to remove permitted development rights.

### Ecology and Landscape

**12.14** The Council will encourage the use of expert ecological and landscape consultants in the preparation of proposals where appropriate so that the impact on natural assets and landscape is robustly dealt with. Similarly, early engagement with the Council's own ecological and landscape officers and advisors will be encouraged when preparing proposals. Where appropriate, the use of Design Review prior to any planning application being submitted can also help improve the ecological and landscape aspects of proposals from a multi-disciplinary perspective.

**12.15** The mitigation hierarchy should be followed at all times to limit adverse impacts on ecology and biodiversity. The hierarchy consists of the stages below which should be applied in sequential order as part of an integrated design.

- **Avoid:** This can be achieved by site selection (i.e. a sequential approach), siting and layout of development within a site, and innovative design.
- **Reduce:** This can be achieved, for example, by setting the development into the ground and the implementation of sensitive building and landscape design (such as retention of existing habitats)
- **Remediate:** This can be achieved, for example, via replanting and screening within the site.
- **Compensate:** This can be achieved via off-site measures that help achieve an overall net gain in biodiversity or improvements to the structure and function of ecological networks in the wider area.

**12.16** Not all impacts can be mitigated, and mitigation itself can lead to problems. Monitoring will be essential to identify and overcome any unanticipated problems as they arise. The use of off-site compensation should be considered in consultation with the Council's ecological and landscape officers and advisors. Proposed compensatory measures should be informed by both qualitative and quantitative assessments of biodiversity and ecological impacts. In order to ensure that mitigation measures are successfully delivered and maintained, financial and other provisions will be sought, where appropriate and necessary, via the use of planning conditions, planning obligations and legal agreements. Off-site compensatory measures should be supported by all necessary provisions that are required to ensure those measures achieve and maintain their conservation objectives for at least the first thirty years post-completion of the development, and whenever possible for the lifetime of the development.



## Environmental Assets

- 12.17** Proposals will as a minimum be expected to be in line with CIEEM guidelines on ecological impact assessments and the recommendations set out in the relevant British Standards<sup>(56)</sup>. Implementation of the principles within SP 11 and SADM 16 and the recommendations set out in the British Standards should be demonstrated via the Sustainable Design Statement or other ecology assessment where it is deemed appropriate according to the nature and scale of the proposal and site. The Building Futures Sustainable Design Toolkit and associated Landscape and Biodiversity module should also be used to inform proposed ecological and landscape measures as part of both the site design and proposed mitigation measures<sup>(57)</sup>.
- 12.18** The Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessments should be consulted and used to inform and consider proposals, in terms of their appropriateness and overall design, in line with the requirements set out in SADM 16.

### Urban Open Land

- 12.19** Areas of Urban Open Land (UOL) have been designated on the Policies Map. New areas of UOL which meet the criteria set out below will also be treated as designated UOLs, as per SADM 17, despite not being shown on the Policies Map. The criteria for designation are:
- i. The land is vital to the form and character of the built-up area; or
  - ii. The land, in whole or part, provides an important visual and physical break within the built-up area; or
  - iii. The land contributes, in whole or part, to a wider green chain or open corridor; or
  - iv. The land is important or could in future be important, in whole or in part as a local amenity, in terms of its landscape qualities, its wildlife or ecological value, or its use as an informal space for passive or active recreation; or
  - v. The land, in whole or part, is of notable wildlife significance; or
  - vi. The land is already identified by the County Council as Common Land; or
  - vii. The land is used as a formal space for active recreation.

### Environmental Pollution

- 12.20** Regarding land contamination, the Council will use planning conditions and/or planning obligations to ensure compliance with remediation strategies and land use requirements as well as the ongoing monitoring of sites.
- 12.21** Regarding air pollution, the Council will apply conditions or obligations to mitigate against adverse impacts of developments on air quality.
- 12.22** Regarding noise pollution and vibration, Noise and Vibration Impact Assessments will be required for all applications with the potential to cause disturbance, or are considered to be noise and/or vibration sensitive development. The Council will require the use of all available and up to date guidance and British Standards within noise and vibration assessments to ensure robust collection and assessment of data is achieved. The assessment should outline the potential sources of noise and/or vibration, and how these may have a negative effect on local amenity. The assessment should also outline how the developer intends to overcome these issues. The use of facade protection as

56 BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity code of practice for planning and development, BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction, and BS 3998:2010 Tree work.

57 <http://www.hertslink.org/bfintranet>

## Environmental Assets

mitigation will be considered to be a last resort approach. The assessment must ensure it is fully representative of the noise climate and/potential noise source, for example taking account of day and night time levels, wind direction, weather effects, operational issues and non-standard operating procedures.

- 12.23** In assessing proposals the council will follow guidance in DEFRA's Noise Policy Statement for England 2010<sup>(58)</sup> and associated planning practice guidance, which the hierarchical approach within SADM 18 reflects. Appropriate conditions will be imposed to ensure adequate levels of protection against noise or vibration where the proposal is deemed acceptable. Conditions will be applied that ensure development can achieve required noise criteria before being occupied or operational which are based on measurement rather than assumed noise levels.
- 12.24** Regarding light pollution, the Council will use the guidance contained in the Institution of Lighting Engineers Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Light Pollution (or equivalent) and other appropriate guidance and standards when considering any Lighting Assessment. Careful lighting schemes and installations that avoid adverse impacts on people, the character of places and the natural environment, and which minimise spillage and glare, will be encouraged. Where appropriate, the Council may require landscaping to minimise the effects of external lighting.

## Green Infrastructure

- 12.25** Green infrastructure is a network of multi-functional green spaces, both urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, and quality of life benefits (NPPF. pp.52). It includes open spaces, water ways, wildlife habitats, green corridors, parks, gardens, allotments, woodlands and landscape and heritage assets, and can play an important role in mitigating climate change and creating sustainable places. The purpose of this policy is to build upon the recommendations of the National Planning Policy Framework and plan positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of green infrastructure.

### Policy SP 12

#### Green Infrastructure

The Council will work with partners to actively support the creation and enhancement of strategic green infrastructure across the borough. Opportunities to link existing green spaces and to improve public access and amenity will be supported in order to provide a comprehensive network of functional and linked spaces for the benefit of wildlife, biodiversity and the community. The Council will aim to ensure there is no overall net loss in green infrastructure across the borough within the plan period. Development that would compromise the integrity, functionality or cause significant fragmentation of the green infrastructure network will not be permitted.

Priorities for the creation and enhancement of green infrastructure include river corridors, sites designated for their nature conservation, heritage and/or landscape value and areas of Urban Open Land that are important for community recreation. Development proposals within the borough should plan positively for, and contribute to, the creation and management of high quality, multifunctional green spaces that are linked to the

## Environmental Assets

surrounding green infrastructure network. To ensure beneficial results for biodiversity and habitat creation, Hertfordshire's Ecological Networks Mapping should be used (where appropriate) and, once available, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, to inform the location and nature of green infrastructure provision.

New development should meet the standards for the provision of open space set out in the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document including play spaces, allotments, sports pitches and other recreational facilities, as well as any other initiatives taking place in the borough including those listed below.

Developer contributions will be sought to deliver strategic green infrastructure including that identified in the Welwyn Hatfield Green Infrastructure Plan and green infrastructure proposals brought forward in the Local Plan. Support will be required to deliver the following projects:

- Implementation of the Hertfordshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan;
- Improvements to the River Mimram and Lea corridors;
- Greening of the urban environment in Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield;
- Implementation of the Welwyn Hatfield Green Corridor project:

### **Welwyn Hatfield Green Corridor**

The council will work with partners and developers to enable the delivery of a Green Corridor located east to west across the borough between Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield. The diagram in Figure 8 below indicates the broad extent of the Green Corridor, its onward linkages including to existing green infrastructure, and its relationship to the new development sites allocated elsewhere in this plan.

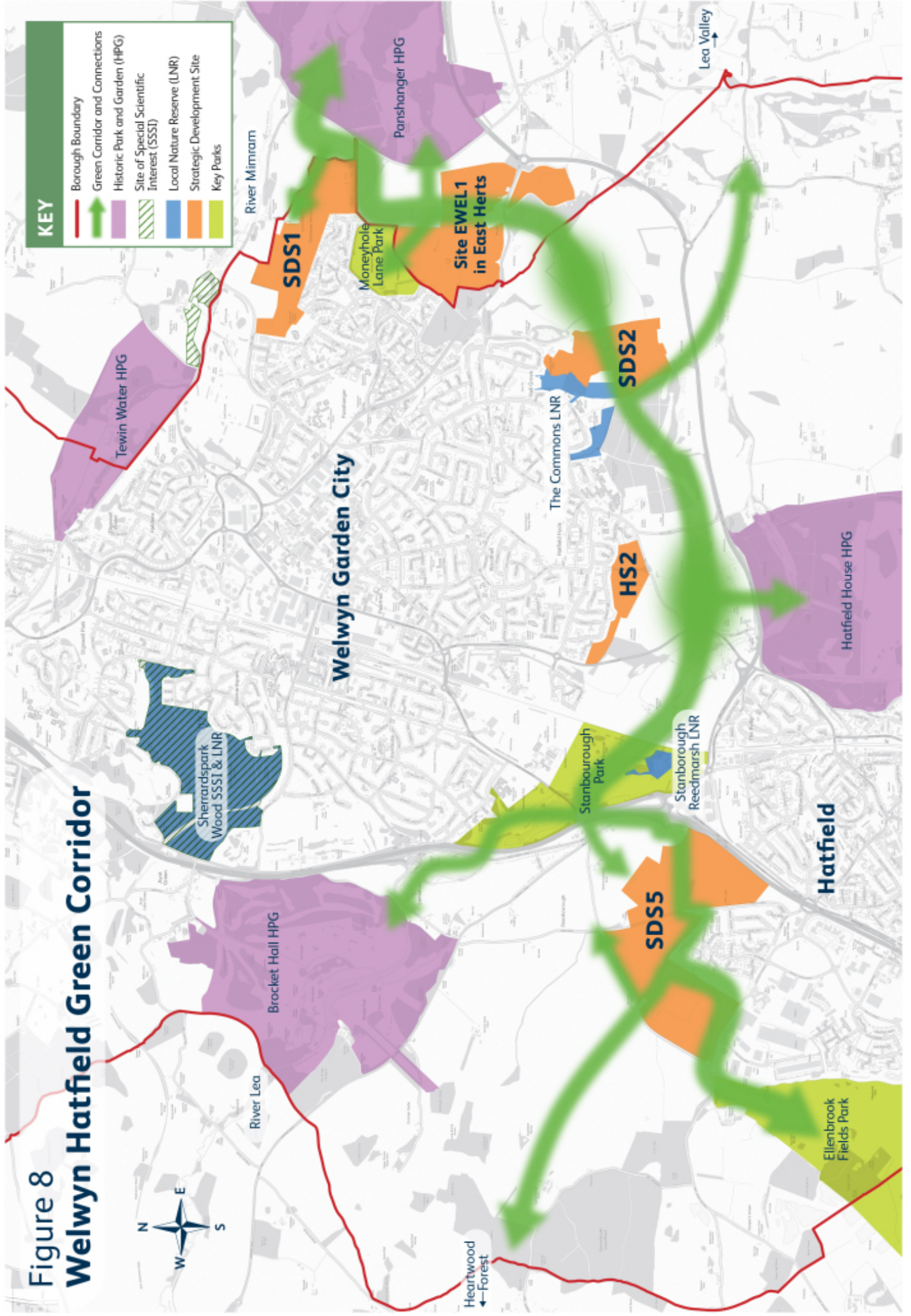
The Green Corridor Project will provide new strategic connections to Ellenbrook Country Park, Symondshyde Great Wood and Heartwood Forest in the West, and Stanborough Park, the Commons Wood Nature Reserve, and Moneyhole Lane Park to connect to Panshanger Park, the River Mimram and Lea Valley in the east. In particular, the Council will work with Hertfordshire County Council as mineral planning authority and St Albans District Council as adjoining authority to maintain appropriate and safe public access to Ellenbrook Country Park during mineral extraction within the Park, and to restore and enhance the Park for public access and biodiversity following extraction.

The Green Corridor will connect existing green infrastructure, ecological assets, footpaths, cycleways and bridleways, and provide a community resource that will help maintain a sense of space/separation between Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield consistent with its Green Belt function. It will provide opportunities for the creation of new green spaces; wildlife and biodiversity projects; circular leisure routes; play, sport and leisure facilities; and new off road routes linked to the surrounding area.

Proposals for the development / creation of the Green Corridor will be detailed in the emerging Green Corridor Supplementary Planning Document and will be incorporated into the masterplanning of strategic sites. Proposals for development within or adjacent to the Green Corridor must have regard to the aims, objectives and projects identified in this document and avoid any negative impact upon existing ecological assets, valuable areas of green or blue infrastructure and public rights of way. Development that would jeopardise implementation of the Green Corridor project will not be permitted.



**Figure 8**  
**Welwyn Hatfield Green Corridor**



## Justification

- 12.26** The policy is consistent with this Plan's spatial vision and will contribute to the delivery of strategic objectives 1, 2, 6, 8, and 9. The policy will contribute to the Council's priorities of maintaining healthy communities and protecting and enhancing the environment as identified in its Business Plan.
- 12.27** Access to the countryside, parks, allotments, play space and sports pitches support healthy and active lifestyles and are essential for the creation of sustainable communities. In urban areas, open space can make a significant contribution to the form, character and high quality built environment of the borough. Open space can sometimes be of historic significance, perhaps as part of a conservation area or simply contribute to visual amenity by providing views and vistas or simply through its beauty. It can also play a vital role in supporting biodiversity. The provision of open space is a key concept of Garden City masterplanning which was incorporated into the design of New Towns and is characteristic of both Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City.
- 12.28** National Policy states that Local Plans should be supported by evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable the amount of development proposed within the local area. The Council has produced a number of studies to identify future infrastructure requirements for the borough which form the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 12.29** The Assessment of Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation 2009 reviewed the levels of provision of open space, the function it performed and set standards for new provision. The Planning Obligations SPD 2012 adopts the analysis of the Assessment of Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation by establishing what quantum of land and/or financial contributions will be required to provide open space for a range of purposes, including allotments, amenity green space, natural green space, parks and gardens, formal play provision (LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs) and outdoor sport. These documents build upon the *Fields in Trust* publication 'Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond The Six Acre Standard'<sup>(59)</sup> which makes recommendations on the quantum and accessibility of types of open space that should be provided to serve new development and existing communities.
- 12.30** The Council's Open Space Surveys, 2001 and 2002, identified more than 200 areas of open space which perform this critical function in the built environment. These were designated as Urban Open Land (UOL) in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, April 2005. The Council's strategy set out in Policy SP 12 and SADM 17 continues the approach of protecting existing areas of UOL. New areas of UOL will be designated in accordance with this approach.
- 12.31** The Welwyn Hatfield Green Infrastructure Plan 2011 provides an overview of existing green infrastructure assets within the Borough and sets out an assessment of the functions of the green infrastructure to provide multiple environmental and social and in some cases economic benefits. It considers opportunities for enhancement and creation of green infrastructure and outlines a series of potential projects to deliver the multi-functional benefits whilst providing advice on taking green infrastructure proposals

59 Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond The Six Acre Standard, Fields in Trust, October 2015 <http://www.fieldsintrust.org/guidance>

## Environmental Assets

forward through spatial planning policies, the potential for implementation through development management proposals and delivery through existing mechanisms or through CIL contributions once a Charging Schedule is adopted.

- 12.32** Further to this the Council have been working with partners to develop proposals to create a Green Corridor running east to west across the Borough between Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield. Evidence gathering has included walkover surveys, desk-based research, a workshop event, and meetings with appropriate organisations and landowners. The findings of this process have been used to produce a stage one report, which identifies objectives for the corridor and a set of high level proposals for implementation. Following further refinement, the report will be developed into an SPD identifying key projects to be implemented within the corridor and arrangements for long term management.
- 12.33** Hertfordshire Ecological Network Mapping uses habitat inventory and other data to generate potential habitat network maps, identifying how habitats are spatially related to each other and where the highest priorities are for expanding them and linking them together. They can also act as an alert to where the greatest sensitivities are likely to be in relation to the protection and enhancement of ecological networks, and where there is greatest potential for biodiversity gains from development. Local Nature Recovery Strategies are a new system of spatial strategies for nature and environmental improvement required by law, which must agree priorities for nature's recovery, map the most valuable existing areas for nature, and map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals.
- 12.34** Green infrastructure will play an important role in enabling the amount of development proposed within this Local Plan by providing important areas for recreation and maintaining a sense of separation between urban locations. Changes proposed in this plan will reduce Green Belt land within the borough from 79.1% to 76.6% of the total area, however Urban Open Land (UOL) will increase from 1.85% to 2.92% for the borough. If managed appropriately, this increase in UOL provides the opportunity to ensure communities have access to high quality outdoor recreation and leisure facilities and are able to benefit from access to the natural environment.

### Implementation

- Through the implementation of the Council's Green Corridor Project
- Through the determination of planning applications and the implementation of policy SADM 16
- Partnership working with developers and relevant bodies and organisations
- Incorporating proposals for Green Infrastructure into Masterplans and development briefs
- Through the designation of Urban Open Land (UOL) and Wildlife Sites
- Through the use of CIL and Planning Obligations
- Through the implementation of the Council's Open Space Strategy, to manage Council owned open spaces in the borough. The Council's Open Space Strategy 2009 sets out a 10 year management plan to ensure that open spaces owned and managed by the Council are maintained and improved to ensure that they are safe, accessible and sustainable and continue to fulfil a range of functions that benefit the whole community.



# Environmental Assets

## Heritage

### Policy SADM 15

#### Heritage

Proposals which affect designated heritage assets and the wider historic environment should consider the following:

- The potential to sustain and enhance the heritage asset and historic environment in a manner appropriate to its function and significance.
- Successive small scale changes that lead to a cumulative loss or harm to the significance of the asset or historic environment should be avoided.
- Proposals should respect the character, appearance and setting of the asset and historic environment in terms of design, scale, materials and impact on key views.
- Architectural or historic features which are important to the character and appearance of the asset (including internal features) should be retained unaltered.
- The historic form and structural integrity of the asset are retained; and
- Recording appropriately the fabric or features that are to be lost or compromised and making provision for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation.

A Heritage Statement, Heritage Impact Assessment and/or Archaeological Assessment will be required if the scale and/or nature of the proposal are likely to have an impact on the significance of all or part of the asset. An assessment may be required in locations which are not designated but where the potential to contain heritage assets exists or further understanding of the significance of known heritage assets is needed.

Permission for proposals that result in substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset including a Conservation Area, and to its setting, will be exceptional or wholly exceptional in accordance with national policy and guidance.

Proposals that result in less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset will be weighed against the possible public benefits of the development in that location and whether or not these significantly outweigh that harm and the desirability of preserving the asset, and all feasible solutions to avoid and mitigate that harm have been fully implemented.

Proposals that result in harm to the significance of other heritage assets will be resisted unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh that harm, taking account of the asset's significance and importance, and all feasible solutions to avoid and mitigate that harm have been fully implemented.

#### Justification

- 12.35** Within the borough of Welwyn Hatfield there are many and diverse heritage assets of varying importance which are not only limited to designated assets such as listed buildings, conservation areas, ancient monuments and registered parks and gardens but also other non-designated assets, features and landscapes with historical significance. These include the two New Towns, one of which originated as a Garden City, that have historical significance beyond the local level; remnants of Roman



## Environmental Assets

settlement; Repton landscapes; areas of archaeological interest; places of worship; defence installations; burial grounds; farms and field patterns; and sites of manufacture. Together, they give the borough a rich and unique social, cultural, economic and ecological history that has been shaped over many centuries.

- 12.36** By their nature, heritage assets and the wider historic environment are a finite resource that are socially, culturally, economically and often ecologically important. Therefore their conservation and preservation is an important consideration within the planning process. This is recognised within specific legislation<sup>(60)</sup> and national planning policy<sup>(61)</sup> which establish the desire and intent to preserve and conserve heritage assets and the historic environment according to their relative significance. However, change at various scales will occur within the borough in order to meet social, economic or environmental needs and to ensure individual heritage assets can continue to make a social, cultural and economic contribution. It is important that such changes avoid creating harm to heritage assets and the historic environment, or at least mitigate that harm to an acceptable level when considering the significance of the heritage asset and historic environment and the benefits that change would bring. SP 11 and SADM 15 carry forward this intent and approach within the Local Plan.

### Conservation Areas

- 12.37** Conservation Areas contain significant links with the past, in terms of the historical development of the borough and traditional forms of architecture. In particular, they contain most of the borough's Listed Buildings. National planning policy gives great weight to the conservation of designated assets including Conservation Areas. The Council will therefore resist proposals for demolitions within Conservation Areas, particularly of those buildings which make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area which should be retained and adapted for re-use, unless the harm to the significance of the asset is outweighed by the benefits arising from new proposals in line SADM 15 and national policy. The wider effects of demolition, redevelopment and other alterations that require planning consent on the character of the Conservation Area will be assessed before consent is granted. Where appropriate, the Council will ensure, by the use of planning conditions that historic materials and/or components arising from demolition or other works to historic buildings are set aside either for re-use in alterations works to the building. Surplus material should be disposed of to a bona fide architectural salvage company.
- 12.38** Where new buildings are acceptable they must be designed to harmonise with their surroundings and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area in terms of siting, form, scale, detailing and landscaping and materials.
- 12.39** Guidance on advertisements, shop front security, shop awnings, canopies and blinds in Conservation Areas is provided in the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance.

### Listed Buildings

- 12.40** The preservation of the historic and architectural character of listed buildings is of great importance. Any alteration or extension must pay full attention to the existing fabric and to its sensitive repair where decay or neglect is causing damage. The Council will consider the use of repairs notices and emergency repairs notices, where appropriate, to effect repairs to buildings not held in good repair or under threat due to neglect. The

60 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

61 Section 12 of the NPPF

## Environmental Assets

Council will normally expect traditional methods and materials to be used, wherever possible, in any works carried out to a Listed Building. These should be fitted to the existing fabric rather than vice-versa. However, discrete repairs using “modern” materials will be considered, where these would preserve more historic fabric. Successive alterations to listed buildings, to address short-term trends or ownerships should be avoided if they lead to successive cumulative loss of significance. When considering applications for Listed Building Consent, the Council will give particular regard to the desirability of preserving the building, the character and appearance of the building, its setting and those features which make it special.

- 12.41** Maintaining a historic building in its current use would normally be most likely to maintain its historic and architectural character and significance. However, in some cases an alternative use may better achieve these aims but successive changes of use to follow short term economic trends which would lead to cumulative loss of significance should be avoided. The most profitable use for an historic building may not necessarily be the most appropriate.
- 12.42** There is a general presumption in favour of the preservation of Listed Buildings. Demolition will be acceptable only in very exceptional circumstances. In assessing proposals for the demolition of Listed Buildings the Council will consider the following factors:
- The condition of the building and the costs involved in repairing and maintaining it;
  - The adequacy of efforts made to retain the building in use;
  - The merits of alternative proposals for the site.
  - Whether the building has been deliberately or without reasonable care been allowed to deteriorate
- 12.43** Where proposals for the demolition or major alteration of a Listed Building are submitted they should be accompanied by a Heritage Impact Assessment setting out the historic, archaeological and architectural significance of the structure affected by the proposal, and assessing the impact of the proposed demolition work.
- 12.44** In cases where exceptional circumstances result in consent being granted for demolition or major alteration to a Listed Building, an appropriate condition will be imposed requiring the developer to secure an appropriate programme of historic building recording and archaeological investigation prior to the commencement of any works, including a photographic record. The scope of any programme of historic building recording or archaeological investigation should be agreed in consultation with the County Council’s Natural, Historic and Built Environment Advisory Team. A full report of this recording work should be submitted to the Council and the County Council Archaeological Advisor for approval.

### Historic Parks and Gardens

- 12.45** Historic parks and gardens, both within and neighbouring the borough, make a key contribution to the borough’s heritage and quality and character of the landscape, reflecting cultural and horticultural ideas of their time, with some being of greater than local importance. They often provide outstanding landscape settings for Listed Buildings, have rare plant collections and may be an immensely valuable ecological resource contributing to biodiversity. They also frequently contain both designated and undesignated heritage assets of archaeological and architectural interest, as well as

## Environmental Assets

historic landscapes. Unregistered Historic Parks and Gardens can also be of local importance, although the majority of them within the borough have been considerably changed due to past development.

- 12.46** Historic parks and gardens are a fragile resource, which can easily be damaged beyond repair, or lost forever. The Council will seek to preserve the character and setting of Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, and unregistered parks and gardens according to the integrity and significance. The Council will work with the County Council, the Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust and the Hertfordshire Gardens Trust to promote the protection and enhancement of parks and gardens within and neighbouring the borough.

### Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Areas of Archaeological Significance

- 12.47** The four Scheduled Ancient Monuments and numerous archaeological sites and areas of interest are an important part of the borough's heritage. The list of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Areas of Archaeological Significance (AAS) are not exhaustive and will be revised as necessary. Exclusion from either designation should not imply that a site has no archaeological significance. There is considerable potential for as yet unknown heritage assets to be discovered and these may include unsuspected finds. Known Heritage Assets are recorded on the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record and these range from nationally designated assets such as Scheduled Monuments, Listed buildings and Registered Parks and Gardens to heritage assets of local significance. The Historic Environment Record is a dynamic dataset, which is updated constantly, to reflect new discoveries made in Hertfordshire. This data is available to view on Historic England<sup>(62)</sup>.
- 12.48** Some of the most important concentrations of archaeological remains recorded on Historic Environment Record are identified on the Policies Map as Areas of Archaeological Significance. AASs are places within the borough deemed to be of moderate or high archaeological potential, based on evidence from known heritage assets (buildings, sites, features and finds). This does not mean that areas outside the AASs are without archaeological potential, and important archaeological remains may exist elsewhere in the borough. These areas have been identified in order to alert applicants to the need to consider the archaeological implications of their proposals at the earliest possible stage in order to minimise potential conflict. From time to time alterations to existing AASs, or identification of new AASs will be required based on new data or understanding of significance. However, the Council will seek to protect other valuable remains throughout the borough.
- 12.49** In considering planning applications on sites within the Areas of Archaeological Significance or other sites of potential interest, the Council will, as necessary, seek guidance from the County Council's Archaeologist. Where appropriate the Council will seek to secure the enhanced management of sites and remains within the borough.
- 12.50** Where proposals may affect remains of archaeological significance, or may be sited in an area of archaeological potential, developers will be required to undertake an archaeological assessment (if necessary with a field evaluation). The scope of any programme of archaeological investigation should be agreed in consultation with the County Council's Natural, Historic and Built Environment Advisory Team. A full report

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62 <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

## Environmental Assets

of this recording work and any findings should be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the County Council Archaeological Advisor for approval before an application can be determined.

- 12.51** Further information on existing archaeology, as well as other archaeological information and *advice as to the scope of any such archaeological assessment* can be obtained from the Natural, Historic and Built Environment Team at Hertfordshire County Council.
- 12.52** Where development proposals affect heritage assets of less than national significance the Council will seek preservation in situ of such remains, if appropriate. If planning permission is granted for development that would affect heritage assets, conditions will be imposed to ensure that they are recorded and preserved in situ if appropriate, or that adequate provision is made to ensure that they are properly investigated and recorded and that the results of these investigations are analysed and published. Where practicable, the management and presentation of archaeological sites and their settings will be enhanced.

## Ecology and Landscape

### Policy SADM 16

#### Ecology and Landscape

##### Ecological Assets

- i. Proposals will be expected to maintain, protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity, the structure and function of ecological networks and the ecological status of water bodies. All developments <sup>(63)</sup> will be required to deliver a measurable biodiversity net gain of at least 10%.
- ii. Proposals that would result in loss of or harm to:
  - a. International sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves, Local Nature Reserves or other statutorily protected features or species, will be refused unless:
    - the mitigation hierarchy has been followed, to firstly avoid, reduce and remediate direct and indirect adverse impacts before considering compensation; and
    - imperative reasons of overriding public interest can be demonstrated.
  - b. Ancient Woodland, veteran trees, chalk river habitats or habitats or species of national principal importance, will be refused unless:
    - the mitigation hierarchy has been followed, to firstly avoid, reduce and remediate direct and indirect adverse impacts before considering compensation; and
    - the need for, and benefits of, the development significantly outweigh the loss or harm.

63 As set out in Environment Act 2023

## Environmental Assets

- c. Local Wildlife Sites, other habitats, species and ecological assets of local importance, including ecological networks, woodland, orchards, protected trees and hedgerows and allotments, will be refused unless:
- the mitigation hierarchy has been fully implemented to avoid, reduce and remediate and compensate direct and indirect adverse impacts; and
  - the need for, and benefits of, the development outweigh the loss or harm.
- iii. Where compensation is required to make development acceptable within ii) above, necessary financial and/or other provision will be required to deliver and maintain ecological and biodiversity objectives over appropriate time scales

### Landscape

Proposals will be expected to help conserve and enhance the borough's natural and historic landscape and sit comfortably within the wider landscape setting.

Proposals will be assessed for their impact on landscape features to ensure that they conserve or improve the prevailing landscape quality, character and condition. Proposals should take full account of the relevant Landscape Character Assessment and adopt the strategy and guidelines for managing change set out therein. Regard should also be had to relevant advice contained within the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record.

### Justification

- 12.53** Consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework, plans should identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity. Opportunities to improve biodiversity should be integrated as part of the design of proposals, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity. The policy requirement for biodiversity net gain of at least 10% reflects the mandatory requirement set out in legislation, and will be applied to development within scope, with reference to legislation and guidance on this matter. The net gain shall be calculated using the most up to date Biodiversity Metric (or where appropriate, the Small Sites Metric), as hosted by Natural England.
- 12.54** National planning policy sets a clear intent and approach for protecting and enhancing the natural environment, moving from the past outcomes of development resulting in a net loss of biodiversity to achieving net gains for biodiversity and nature within the development process.
- 12.55** The borough contains and neighbours a number of protected nature conservation sites and important habitats including Special Areas of Conservation, Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites, Ancient Woodland, chalk rivers and wider mosaic of habitats and species which give the borough a rich ecology. Whilst there are no protected landscapes, the character of the borough is shaped by distinctive landscapes as illustrated within the Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment.
- 12.56** Development can have a damaging effect on natural assets and landscapes, and fail to maximise opportunities to improve the natural environment, if such matters are not carefully considered. SP 11 and SADM 16 will together ensure protection of the borough's natural environmental assets commensurate with their status and importance,

## Environmental Assets

and wherever possible achieve enhancements to the natural environment through measures such as landscaping, green infrastructure and ecologically sound habitat and species management regimes that improve the quality of the natural environment.

### Urban Open Land

#### Policy SADM 17

##### Urban Open Land

Areas of Urban Open Land are designated on the Policies Map. Proposals for development within Urban Open Land will only be supported where they would:

- i. Assist in the maintenance or reinforcement of their function as essential open areas;
- ii. Be of a scale which would not compromise the value of the Urban Open Land or use of the open space as defined in terms of its criteria;
- iii. Not result in the loss or net reduction in size of any playing pitches or community recreation facilities, subject to the considerations set out in SP 6 and SADM 7; or
- iv. Be educational development associated with the delivery of school facilities required to meet the evidenced need for additional school places where it can be demonstrated that the impact on the Urban Open Land has been reduced to the minimum possible and where the provisions of criterion iii of the policy have been met.

New areas of open space created during the plan period which meet the criteria for designation as Urban Open Land will be given the same level of protection as land designated as Urban Open Land on the Policies Map.

### Justification

- 12.57** Open areas of urban land are considered vital to the form, character and quality of the built-up areas of the borough in terms of the urban open land criteria and are therefore defined as Urban Open Land. The provision of open space is a key concept of Garden City masterplanning which was incorporated into the design of New Towns and is characteristic of both Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City.
- 12.58** The Council's strategy set out in Policy SP 12 and approach to proposals within areas of Urban Open Land set out in SADM 17 continues the Council's approach of protecting areas of Urban Open Land. New areas of open space which meet the criteria for Urban Open Land designation created during the life time of the plan will be protected in the same way as those designated on the Policies Maps.



# Environmental Assets

## Environmental Pollution

### Policy SADM 18

#### Environmental Pollution

When considering development proposals, the Council will adopt the approach set out below to ensure that pollution will not have an unacceptable impact on human health, general amenity, critical environmental assets or the wider natural environment.

#### Contaminated land and soil pollution

Planning applications for proposals on land formerly used for industrial, commercial or utilities purposes, or land which is considered to be contaminated or potentially contaminated, must be accompanied by a preliminary Contaminated Land Risk Assessment.

Proposals which, by their nature, risk contributing to soil and water pollution will be required to demonstrate how this risk will be avoided or mitigated to an acceptable level.

#### Air Quality

Prevailing air quality and potential impacts upon air quality arising from airborne emissions, dust and odour associated with the construction and operation of a proposal (including vehicular traffic) will be considered when determining planning applications. Proposals that would result in or be subject to unacceptable risk to human health and the natural environment from air pollution, or would prejudice compliance with national air quality objectives, will be refused.

An Air Quality Assessment that demonstrates how prevailing air quality and potential impacts upon air quality have been considered and how air quality will be kept to an acceptable standard through avoidance and mitigation will be required for major and minor development proposals that are:

- i. Likely, due to the nature of the proposal, to give rise to significant air pollution;
- ii. Within an Air Quality Management Area;
- iii. Within 50 metres of a major road <sup>(64)</sup> or heavily trafficked route <sup>(65)</sup>;
- iv. Within proximity to a source of air pollution which could present a significant risk to human health; and/or
- v. Particularly sensitive to air pollution due to their nature, such as schools, health care establishments or housing for older people.

The potential impact of proposals upon odour levels, or their sensitivity to prevailing sources and levels of odour, should be considered and addressed. Where appropriate, the Council will require an Odour Impact Assessment to be provided, including an Odour Management Plan where necessary.

64 As defined under the Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006 Regulation 3(8) - trunk roads, motorways and principal or classified roads with more than three million vehicle passages a year; and considered by the Secretary of State to be regional, national or international. In 2016, the A1(M), A414, A1000, A1001, A1057 and A6129 met this definition

65 Heavily trafficked routes in the borough are defined as the B156, B197, B656, B1000 and Coopers Green Lane

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### Noise and Vibration

A Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment will be required for proposals with the potential to cause disturbance to people or the natural environment due to noise and/or vibration and for proposals that are considered to be sensitive to noise and/or vibration.

Proposals that would result in or be subject to noise pollution and/or vibration that is:

- i. Very disruptive and would have an unacceptable adverse effect on human health or the natural environment will not be permitted.
- ii. Disruptive and would have a significant adverse effect on human health or the natural environment will be refused unless the need for, and benefits of, the development significantly outweigh the harm and all feasible solutions to avoid and mitigate that harm have been fully implemented.
- iii. Intrusive and would have an adverse effect on the quality of life or the natural environment will be resisted unless all feasible solutions to reduce to a minimum and mitigate that harm have been fully implemented, including the use of planning conditions.

### Light pollution

Proposals that include external lighting schemes, including floodlighting, will be approved where it can be demonstrated through a Lighting Assessment that all of the following criteria can be satisfied:

- i. The lighting scheme is the minimum required for security and operational purposes;
- ii. Glare and light spillage are minimised;
- iii. The amenity of residential areas is not adversely affected;
- iv. The visual character of historic buildings and conservation areas are not adversely affected;
- v. There would be no dazzling or distraction of drivers using nearby roads;
- vi. There would be no unacceptable adverse impact on the character or openness of the countryside and the green belt; and
- vii. There would be no unacceptable adverse effects on species, habitats or the wider natural environment.

## Justification

**12.59** The National Planning Policy Framework outlines the role planning has in creating healthy places and to prevent unacceptable risks to health and the environment arising from pollution.

**12.60** National planning policy establishes the objective for planning and new development to support healthy inclusive communities<sup>(66)</sup> and to prevent unacceptable risks to human health, the natural environment and general amenity arising from pollution (para 120). Planning should aim to avoid unacceptable and significant adverse impacts on health, quality of life and the natural environment associated with new and existing development<sup>(67)</sup>.

66 NPPF, paragraph 69

67 NPPF paragraphs 109 and 123

## Environmental Assets

### Contaminated land and soil pollution

- 12.61** The Council will encourage proposals for the development and reuse of land which is or may be contaminated in line with the general thrust of national planning policy. Under the 1995 Environment Act the Council has a duty to identify sites which may be contaminated and determine the remediation requirements.
- 12.62** When considering planning applications for the development of land which may be contaminated, the Council will need to assess whether, in the light of the type of contamination, the proposed development will be suitable and whether there are likely to be any unacceptable risks to health or to the environment arising from its development or future occupation. In considering whether planning permission should be granted, the Council will need to be satisfied that there will be no unacceptable risks including impacts on the quality of surface or groundwater that may arise from remedial works or the proposed use of the site in relation to the type of contamination. After remediation, land should not be capable of being classified as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- 12.63** The responsibility for decontamination rests with the developer or owner. The Council will normally require developers to undertake a full investigation to establish the level of contamination in soils and/or groundwater/surface waters on such sites and undertake the necessary remediation measures, if necessary by imposing conditions on planning permissions. Where required planning applications must be accompanied by a full survey of the level of contamination and proposals for remediation measures. All investigations of land potentially affected by contamination should be carried out in accordance with established procedures, in particular the Council's *Guide to the Assessment and Remediation of Contaminated Land*<sup>(68)</sup> and *BS 10175:2011+A1:2013: Investigation of potentially contaminated sites*.

### Air pollution

- 12.64** Air pollution can have a significant influence on human health, quality of life and the health of the natural environment<sup>(69)</sup>. Children, older people and those suffering from existing health problems have been found to be particularly sensitive to air pollution, both in terms of causing and exacerbating health problems<sup>(70)</sup>. New development has the potential to affect or be affected by prevailing air quality, and therefore planning decisions have a key role in protecting and where possible improving air quality in order to protect health and critical assets and promote a higher quality of life, in line with national planning policy<sup>(71)</sup>.
- 12.65** Major developments, road related development, traffic levels and some types of industry can increase emissions which reduce air quality, whilst certain types of development are particularly sensitive to air pollution. The major source of air pollution in the borough is traffic emissions. This reflects the high levels of car ownership and the key strategic transport arteries which run through the borough such as the A1(M) and A414, as well as other major and heavily trafficked roads. Whilst air pollution is typically seen as an 'outdoor' issue associated vehicle emissions, air quality within buildings is an equally important consideration which can be influenced by a combination of external and

68 <http://www.welhat.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=511&p=0>

69 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/air-pollution/effects>

70 World Health Organization 2016, [http://www.who.int/topics/air\\_pollution/en/](http://www.who.int/topics/air_pollution/en/)

71 NPPF paragraph 109

## Environmental Assets

internal factors. Similarly, dust and odour associated with existing and new development (including construction) can cause nuisance and be harmful to people and the natural environment and are therefore an important consideration.

- 12.66** The Council is required to assess air quality in its area, and assess whether levels of air pollution exceed the national air quality objectives set by the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in order to comply with European Directive limits to protect human health. If the Council finds any places where the objectives are not likely to be achieved, it must declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and publish a Local Air Quality Plan which sets out the actions being taken to improve air quality.
- 12.67** Air quality monitoring in Hertfordshire is coordinated through the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Air Pollution Monitoring Network. In June 2015 a new Air Quality Strategic Plan for Hertfordshire was approved by Hertfordshire County Council and the 10 District/Borough Councils, and the Council's own 2015 Updating and Screening Assessment on air quality in the Borough concluded that air quality in the Borough is currently below the limit values and meets the Government's air quality objectives set for local air quality management (LAQM). The Council will continue to monitor air quality and report on an annual basis including the potential cumulative impacts arising from new development adjacent to the A1(M1) corridor and large developments generating high levels of vehicular movements and changes in vehicle flow.
- 12.68** As air quality is currently below the limit values no AQMAs have been designated, although AQMAs may be designated during the plan period. However, the ability of the Council to monitor air quality is restricted by resources and technical feasibility and therefore the absence of an AQMA does not mean a specific area is not subject to high levels of air pollution. Any development within or adjacent to areas designated as Air Quality Management Areas or areas with the potential to be designated as an AQMA must have regard to guidelines for ensuring air quality is maintained at acceptable levels as set out in the Air Quality Strategy.

### Noise and vibration

- 12.69** Noise and vibration can have a detrimental effect on health and the natural environment. National planning policy requires local policies to avoid giving rise to unacceptable noise impacts and give careful consideration to proposals that would have significant adverse effects. SADM 18 adopts a hierarchical approach to achieve this.
- 12.70** The siting, layout, landscaping and detailed building design of proposals, coupled with other noise-specific mitigation measures, should seek to avoid and minimise the adverse impacts of noise and vibration rather than rely upon expensive and ineffective retrospective measures. The Council will seek to ensure that noise-sensitive developments, such as housing, schools, residential and nursing homes, are separated from major sources of noise both to protect new occupiers and users and to avoid prejudicing existing development and uses. The Council will also seek to ensure that new development with a potential for causing noise nuisance are sited away from noise-sensitive land uses, both existing and known proposed developments. Noise can be accompanied by vibration that can cause disturbance. *British Standard 6472-1:2008 Evaluation of human exposure to vibration within buildings* will be used to evaluate exposure to vibration.

## Environmental Assets

**12.71** In considering noise pollution and vibration aspects of proposals, the Council will take into account:

- Possible future increases in noise levels.
- The introduction of noisy activities into some residential and rural areas that have very low background noise levels.
- The nature of noise sources, such as intermittent sources of noise which can be more disruptive than constant or anonymous sources, and uses such as fast food restaurants, public houses and night clubs which generate noise from within the establishments and through the activities of users within the immediate area in the evening and late night activity;
- That whilst design measures such as orientation, layout and double glazing can reduce noise within buildings, such measures are less effective in reducing the level of noise experienced in external amenity areas. As far as possible residents should have access to a peaceful (below 50dBA Leq) external amenity space
- Traffic associated with 24 hour warehousing and distribution, and other uses which give rise significant HGV and other traffic generation.
- Noise issues created by the use and operation of development itself, such as plant and services.

### Light pollution

**12.72** Light pollution concerns the adverse effects of light spillage from artificial light installations. Artificial light is beneficial for community safety and security, and for maximising the use of buildings and facilities, such as sports and playing facilities. However, artificial light can be detrimental to both people and wildlife if poorly designed or installed. Street, security and commercial lights as well as sports floodlighting can illuminate wide spaces beyond those for which it is intended. Residential amenity, rural and urban views, and habitats and species can be detrimentally affected. Artificial light can change the character of the countryside at night by creating the impression that it is urbanised, and thereby harm the character and openness of the Green Belt and of the night sky. Policy SADM 18 seeks to ensure that light pollution from lighting schemes is kept to a minimum and based on sound justification.

# Infrastructure

## Infrastructure Delivery

**13.1** In order for communities to be successful, it is vital that they are well served by a range of infrastructure that is appropriate to people's needs, affordable and accessible. The term infrastructure encompasses a wide range of services and facilities provided by both public and private sector agencies, but can generally be grouped into three main areas:

- **Physical Infrastructure such as:** transport infrastructure (roads, public transport, pedestrian and cycle routes, public rights of way and bridleways), cemeteries, communications, district heating systems, gas and electricity infrastructure, water provision and treatment, sewerage works and waste collection, recycling and disposal.
- **Social Infrastructure such as:** primary and secondary schools, nurseries, further education, primary and secondary healthcare, public emergency services, sports and recreation facilities, community facilities, libraries, cultural services and places of worship.
- **Green Infrastructure such as:** open space, allotments, parks and gardens, formal and informal green space, green corridors, river corridors, waterways, greenways, urban open land, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, nature conservation areas, Watling Chase Community Forest and sports pitches.

**13.2** Different types of infrastructure are also required to support different scales of development within an area:

- On a smaller scale, **on-site** infrastructure (including roads and walkways and cycleways, gas pipes and electricity cabling, water supply and waste water disposal pipes etc) is necessary to enable the delivery of a specific development;
- At a **neighbourhood** level, infrastructure is required to mitigate the impact of the development and support the day to day needs of the new population, for example community facilities, GP surgeries, schools, places of worship and sports facilities; and
- At a more **strategic** level, larger pieces of infrastructure (including new waste disposal facilities, sewage treatment works, cemeteries, electricity sub-stations, and improvements to the strategic highways network etc) are needed to support population and economic growth across the borough and the wider area.

**13.3** Policy SP 13 will ensure that settlements within the borough are supported by infrastructure that is accessible, affordable and appropriate to the needs of the community it serves, with the aim of promoting community cohesion. The policy is consistent with both the Council's vision and the borough's Community Strategy vision for sustainable communities.

### Policy SP 13

#### Infrastructure Delivery

To support the delivery of sustainable communities, the Council will ensure that suitable provision is made for new or improved infrastructure, required to meet the levels of growth identified in this Local Plan.



## Infrastructure

The Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan sets out the key infrastructure projects that will be required to deliver the objectives of the Local Plan.

Developers will be required to contribute to the reasonable costs of enhancing existing infrastructure or providing new physical, social and green infrastructure, required as a result of their proposals, through either financial contributions (including planning obligations or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)), or by direct provision of such infrastructure on-site within the development.

The Council will use grant funding, Section 106 agreements, unilateral undertakings, planning conditions, and when adopted, the Council's CIL Charging Schedule, to secure this. The adopted Planning Obligations SPD sets out guidance in relation to the negotiation of Section 106 contributions and will be updated in due course to reflect the Council's approach to planning obligations once the Community Infrastructure Levy has been implemented.

Supporting infrastructure should be provided in advance of, or alongside, the development, unless there is sufficient existing capacity. The appropriate phasing for the provision of infrastructure will however be determined on a case by case basis.

Furthermore, the Council will continue to work with its partners to address existing deficiencies and secure appropriate levels of funding.

### Justification

- 13.4** National policy states that Local Plans should be supported by evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable the amount of development proposed for the area, taking account of its type and distribution. SP 13 supports delivery of infrastructure and the wider spatial vision of the Local Plan and help achieve strategic objectives 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 12 and 13.
- 13.5** To this end, the Council has produced an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to support the delivery of the Local Plan objectives. The IDP is based on a detailed assessment of the infrastructure needs of Welwyn Hatfield, and provides an indication of the specific requirements for the different types of infrastructure. The information is based both on the future plans and service requirements of infrastructure providers, and on standards for provision derived from the Council's evidence base.
- 13.6** The Council has produced, itself or in co-operation with others, a number of studies to identify future infrastructure requirements for the borough, which form the basis of the IDP. These include:
- Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Study (2009)
  - Welwyn Hatfield Sports Facilities Study and Strategy (2011)
  - Green Infrastructure Plan (2011)
  - Strategic Green Infrastructure Plan (2011)
  - Rye Meads Water Cycle Study (2009)
  - Water Cycle Study (2010)
  - Hertfordshire Water Study (2016 - ongoing)
  - Traffic Modelling including the Welwyn Hatfield and Stevenage Hitchin (WHaSH) model (2013 to 2016)

## Infrastructure

- Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Investment Strategy (2009)
- Hertfordshire Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Study (2011)

**13.7** Whilst these studies acknowledge that there are existing infrastructure deficits in the borough, their main focus is on the new demands created upon the borough's infrastructure by the planned level of new development.

**13.8** The technical work demonstrates that while there are no absolute infrastructure constraints to the delivery of the development proposed in the Local Plan, key infrastructure items, some of them substantial, will be required to facilitate the levels of growth proposed for the borough, and these are discussed in turn below.

### Transport

**13.9** Improvements to the highway network will be crucial in facilitating the development identified in the Local Plan, particularly the delivery of the strategic growth locations. These works will however need to take place alongside the promotion of sustainable means of travel, minimising congestion and emissions. This will support the local economy whilst also protecting quality of life and air quality and improving accessibility and road safety.

**13.10** The Council has undertaken extensive transport modelling work since 2010, first using the Highways Agency 'Diamond' model and subsequently a bespoke strategic model - the Welwyn Hatfield and Stevenage Hitchin (WHaSH) model - to test the impact of the planned housing and employment growth identified in the Local Plan on the highways network in and around the borough to 2031.

**13.11** This work has shown that, as a result of planned growth around Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City, pressure on Junction 4 of the A1(M) and the adjoining Jack Oldings roundabout will increase substantially. There would also be significant traffic growth at Junction 3 of the motorway. More detailed modelling work has looked at the component parts of this traffic growth and potential queueing locations, and has informed the consideration of possible junction and link improvements to reduce congestion.

**13.12** Further north on the motorway, Highways England has implemented lane alterations on the northbound approach to Junction 6 (Welwyn) with the aim of reducing congestion where the three running lanes reduce to two, but this work has not achieved the desired result.

**13.13** In addition to the above, the WHaSH model shows that a number of key local roads, especially around the strategic growth locations, become close to or over capacity. Alongside the modelling work, initial studies identifying possible mitigation measures and producing broad costs of such measures have been undertaken. Further work on mitigation designs and alternatives will be required, to develop a range of measures to ameliorate the impact of growth on the highways network.

**13.14** The Council has also previously undertaken detailed transport modelling work in relation to future retail development in Welwyn Garden City Town Centre. This identified a number of highway mitigation measures that will be necessary to cope with an increase in retail floorspace in the town centre, and these measures are further discussed in the Welwyn Garden City Town Centre North SPD adopted by the Council in 2015.

## Infrastructure

- 13.15** Public transport in the borough will need to be improved to support the planned levels of growth identified within the Local Plan, to reduce pressure on the highways network, and tackle the issue of climate change. Given this, the Council will look to work with developers and/or landowners, public transport providers, and Hertfordshire County Council to ensure that all new development is well supported by public transport to promote accessibility and connectivity.
- 13.16** Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC) Local Transport Plan and associated documents identify a number of transport projects for the borough, including the enhancement of Hatfield Station. The enhancement of Hatfield Station, including new and refurbished station building, lift access to the northbound platform, new bus interchange and taxi facilities, cycle parking and multi-storey car park was completed in 2015. This was a partnership project involving this Council and Gascoyne Cecil Estates alongside Network Rail, the train operator and HCC. As part of the Hatfield 2030+ project looking at regeneration of Hatfield, and its town centre in particular, options for a new bus interchange in a remodelled town centre will be considered.
- 13.17** Additionally, HCC has improved the bus station arrangements in Welwyn Garden City Town Centre. The part replacement and/or enhancement of the pedestrian bridge over the railway at Welwyn Garden City Station is also identified as an objective in the Broadwater Road West SPD (as part of the re-development of the former Shredded Wheat site on Broadwater Road). The Council is also aware of existing passenger capacity issues on the East Coast Main Line, which may need to be addressed to support the planned levels of development in the borough.
- 13.18** Infrastructure to support walking and cycling will also need to be provided across the borough to ensure that new development is delivered in a sustainable way, and the Council will work with developers and/or landowners and its partners to ensure that new development is well supported by pedestrian footpaths and cycleways, and that where appropriate existing infrastructure is enhanced to meet the level of demand. This will assist us in promoting accessibility, connectivity and healthy lifestyles.

### Sewerage

- 13.19** One of the key infrastructure considerations for the borough is that of sewerage capacity. Capacity constraints have been identified at the following sewage treatment works:
- Blackbirds (which serves Brookmans Park, Hatfield, Little Heath, Welham Green);
  - Maple Lodge (which serves Brookmans Park, Hatfield, Little Heath, Welham Green);
  - Rye Meads (which serves Digswell, Oaklands, Welwyn, Welwyn Garden City, Woolmer Green);
  - Deephams (which serves Cuffley); and
  - Mill Green (which serves Hatfield, Welwyn Garden City).
- 13.20** These sewage treatment works also serve other parts of Hertfordshire, and it will therefore be necessary to work with neighbouring local authorities to take forward significant upgrades to these waste water treatment works where required, in order to support the planned levels of housing and employment growth. Further to this, where specific upgrades to waste water treatment works are required to deliver certain sites,

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it will be important for the land owner/ developer to work with Thames Water to ensure that the necessary infrastructure can be delivered at an appropriate stage in the development process.

- 13.21** The Council will seek to ensure that there is adequate surface water, foul drainage and sewage treatment capacity to serve all new developments. Developers are encouraged to discuss their proposals with Thames Water ahead of the submission of any application to help ensure that any network reinforcement works are delivered in tandem with development. Where necessary phasing conditions will be used to ensure that any relevant phase of development is not occupied until any necessary network upgrades have been completed or it has been confirmed that sufficient capacity exists within the existing network.
- 13.22** To deliver site SDS1 (WGC4) North East of Welwyn Garden City and site SDS2 (WGC5) South East of Welwyn Garden City, improvements to the connection to Rye Meads Sewage Treatment Works (STW) will be required. To deliver site SDS5 (Hat1) North West of Hatfield, Mill Green Sewage Treatment Works STW will need to be upgraded and a new direct connection to the STW will be required.
- 13.23** The Council will continue to engage with Thames Water, local authorities within the Rye Meads catchment, the Environment Agency and Natural England to ensure the need for additional capacity is reflected in appropriate plans and strategies and delivered without causing harm to the European Site.
- 13.24** Our environmental appraisals recognise that it will be necessary to take a precautionary approach to avoid causing harm to the Lee Valley SPA, which surrounds the Rye Meads wastewater treatment works. Where it cannot be demonstrated that proposals can be accommodated within the limits of existing or planned wastewater infrastructure, Grampian conditions or other appropriate mechanisms will be used.
- 13.25** Furthermore, upgrades may be required to Mill Green Sewage Treatment Works and Maple Lodge STW to deliver urban extensions around Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield.

### Utilities

- 13.26 Electricity Transmission and Distribution:** UK Power Networks are the electricity supplier for the borough. Electrical supply planning is reactive, although demand is modelled to an extent on 'natural growth' in energy demand. UK Power Networks modelling is updated annually and gives an estimate of the future loads in the network and indicates where and when the network may reach capacity and whether further works, such as upgrading of a sub-station, will be required.
- 13.27** UK Power Networks have indicated that the primary networks in Welwyn Garden City all have capacity, and that there is also capacity at the sub station at Cuffley. However they have identified capacity issues at Hatfield, and have stated that further development in Hatfield could require the provision of a new primary sub station, and associated cabling, in this area.
- 13.28 Gas Transmission and Distribution:** Whilst the Council is not aware of any major gas transmission or distribution requirements for the borough, new on-site gas infrastructure will be required as part of any developments.

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**13.29 Renewable Energy:** The Hertfordshire Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Study 2010 identified opportunities areas for a range of renewable and low carbon technologies within the borough. This was a high level assessment and the opportunity areas for wind and solar (primarily beyond the urban area) did not not fully reflect the restrictions which green belt policy would place upon wind and solar energy proposals, which would be required to demonstrate very special circumstances that outweigh the harm to the green belt, and any other harm. As such, proposals for wind and solar farms will be considered on a case by case basis, taking into the site specific circumstances. Recent changes to national planning policy on wind energy do enable Neighbourhood Plans to identify areas that are suitable for wind energy. This approach complements other changes which require proposals to demonstrate that the concerns of the local community can be overcome before a proposal can be deemed acceptable. As such, the Council will work with local communities, landowners and developers to ensure that renewable energy proposals are appropriately considered. The Council will also work with developers to ensure that renewable energy solutions are integrated into all new built development where it is appropriate.

### Communications

**13.30** Earlier government aims for ensuring the UK is at the leading edge of global digital technology were set out in the Digital Britain Bill (November 2009). The Digital Britain Final Report (2009) included actions to strengthen and modernise the communications infrastructure and included the aim of delivering the 'Universal Service Broadband Commitment' so that everyone had access to broadband technology by 2012.

**13.31** 'Connected Counties' was a partnership made up of Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire County Councils and BT. The programme built on BT's commercial fibre broadband programme which had already made the high-speed technology available to more than 400,000 households and businesses across the counties.

### Waste and Recycling

**13.32** The Council will seek to ensure through the policies of this Local Plan and any site specific SPD (as appropriate), that:

- Provision will be made for the storage and collection of waste and recyclables; and
- In all large-scale developments, sufficient land is made available for the provision of neighbourhood recycling centres where necessary to augment collection from individual premises and to complement the existing network of recycling facilities in the borough.

**13.33** In addition, and where considered necessary, when planning for the strategic growth locations identified in the Local Plan, we will work with the County Council to explore opportunities for the provision of waste management facilities in order to help achieve greater self sufficiency in Hertfordshire.

### Green Infrastructure

**13.34** Improvements to the borough's existing green infrastructure network and the provision of new green infrastructure, will be crucial in supporting the levels of development identified in the Local Plan, and particularly the delivery of the strategic growth locations. This will assist us in promoting access to green space and the countryside, improving

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connectivity between places through the use of 'green' networks and promoting healthy lifestyles. The provision of Strategic Green Infrastructure is dealt with in Policy SP 12 of this Local Plan.

- 13.35** Furthermore, the Council's Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Study (2009) sets out standards for the provision of green infrastructure, and play space in the borough, and the Council will expect green infrastructure to be provided on-site in new developments in accordance with these standards, to ensure that communities have access to these leisure assets.

### Health

- 13.36** The Queen Elizabeth II Hospital (QE II) in Welwyn Garden City closed in 2015 as part of a planned reorganisation by the NHS in Hertfordshire. At the same time a new medical facility, the 'New QE II', was opened in the same location. The new facility offers a reduced range of hospital services including;

- General outpatients
- GP services, including in the evenings and at weekends
- Diagnostics – such as CT and MRI scans, x-rays and ultrasound
- Rapid Assessment Unit – for patients who need urgent assessment and diagnostics but do not need to be admitted into hospital
- Endoscopy and day treatments
- Ante and post natal services
- A dedicated Children's Centre
- Therapy services – for example physiotherapy and occupational therapy
- The Vicki Adkins Breast Unit

- 13.37** Other key services formerly provided by the QEII, such as Accident and Emergency and inpatient treatment are now provided by the Lister Hospital in Stevenage, which is the main strategic hospital for the borough's residents, in addition to Watford General Hospital. This has placed increased focus on the accessibility of these hospitals by car and by public transport, which will be a factor in future transport planning.

- 13.38** At a neighbourhood level the Council recognises that new development, and particularly the level of housing growth proposed in this Local Plan, will put pressure on existing GP practices and premises, some of which are already operating at capacity. Given this, the Council will work with its partners in NHS England and in the Clinical Commissioning Groups which now commission healthcare for GP practices to ensure that new developments are well served by doctors and, where possible, other medical services such as dentists and pharmacies, to meet the needs of the population living in those areas.

### Emergency Services

- 13.39** As set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, the Council has engaged with Hertfordshire Constabulary, the Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and the East of England Ambulance Service to ascertain their requirements in relation to the growth proposed in this Local Plan. The Council will work with these emergency services to ensure that necessary facilities to serve the borough are provided, in the interest of the safety and welfare of the borough's population.



## Infrastructure

### Social Infrastructure

- 13.40 Community Facilities:** Welwyn Hatfield has a variety of community facilities, provided by a range of organisations. The Council will support the retention, expansion and provision of community facilities in the borough in accordance with Policies SP 6 and SADM 7 of this Local Plan. In taking forward the strategic growth locations identified in the Local Plan, the Council will work with landowners and/or developers and service providers to ensure that adequate community provision is made and to promote social cohesion.
- 13.41 Sports Facilities:** The Council's Sports Facilities Study (2011) sets out the borough's sports facility and pitch requirements to 2026. This is supplemented by the Sports Facilities Strategy, which sets out the Council's priorities for delivering sports facilities and pitches in the borough, and promotes the enhancement of existing or creation of new sports hubs in and around Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City, to meet the needs of both sports clubs and the communities that use them.
- 13.42** To this end, the Council will work with landowners and/or developers and service providers to ensure that existing deficits in sports provision are remedied, and that new developments are well served by sports facilities and pitches, to support the needs of the population.
- 13.43 Culture and Leisure:** The Council will work with landowners and/or developers and service providers to ensure that new developments are well served by cultural and leisure facilities, including play facilities, libraries, faith facilities, museums, galleries and other leisure facilities, to support the needs of the population.

### Cemeteries

- 13.44** Following the publication of the Local Plan Consultation Document in early 2015, a site was identified for additional cemetery space to meet the longer term needs of the borough. This site adjoins the existing municipal cemetery at South Way, Hatfield and is shown on the Policies Map. Policy SADM 8 of the Plan deals with this allocation.

### Education

- 13.45** Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) has appraised all the primary schools in the borough for expansion, and where feasible, many of the schools that could be expanded within their existing sites, already have been. As a result, HCC has stated that new primary school provision will need to be made to cope with an increase in demand for school places that will result from higher levels of growth.
- 13.46** HCC's demographic projections indicate that to be 97.5% confident of not underestimating the yield of children from new developments, it is prudent to make an allowance of 42 primary pupils per hundred dwellings. This equates to 1 form of entry (FE) of demand per 500 dwellings. It should be noted that in this instance 1FE is longitudinal and relates to 210 pupils i.e. seven year groups of 30 pupils, not reception classes.
- 13.47** Applying this approach helps to ensure that the identification of new school sites is supported by evidence and justified and that a flexible deliverable level of school place provision is catered for in the Local Plan.

## Infrastructure

- 13.48** These yields follow through for secondary provision. Furthermore there may also be the opportunity to plan for 'all through' schools, which essentially cater for children from nursery age until when they leave school at 18. This promotes opportunities for 'dual use' of facilities given that there would be a nursery school, primary school and secondary school on the same site.
- 13.49** To deliver the planned levels of growth in and around Hatfield, HCC has identified the need for three new primary schools to be provided. A new secondary school site will also need to be made available.
- 13.50** Similarly, to deliver the planned levels of growth in and around Welwyn Garden City HCC has identified the need for two new primary schools to be provided. One or possibly two new secondary school sites will also need to be made available.
- 13.51** Land may need to be made available for these new schools as part of the delivery of the strategic growth locations in the borough.

### Implementation

- 13.52** The infrastructure requirements set out above should be regarded as high level. Further detail is set out in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). However, the very nature of some infrastructure means that it will be subject to refinement, adjustment and even substantial change as providers evolve new ways of meeting needs and additional requirements may be identified.
- 13.53** The IDP identifies the infrastructure required to deliver the Local Plan objectives, and the Council will work with its partners to secure the delivery of these projects. Infrastructure requirements may also be identified through Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans.
- 13.54** In addition to setting out the infrastructure requirements for the borough, the IDP also identifies potential funding streams and other mechanisms for delivering the infrastructure projects set out in the plan. Here, in addition to direct delivery through public funding and partnership working, the Council will expect developers to contribute towards necessary infrastructure provision through the payment of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) once a charging schedule is in place or through planning obligations under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 13.55** When dealing with planning applications, the Council will wish to be assured that the development is well supported by infrastructure. In cases where new infrastructure is to be provided, or enhancements to existing infrastructure are planned, the Council will also wish to see that the funding (or a funding mechanism) is in place to deliver this, and that it is delivered in a timely manner to aid community cohesion. In order to ensure that these provisions are met, the implementation of infrastructure proposals will be controlled through the imposition of conditions on planning permissions or the use of Section 106 agreements.

### New Schools

- 13.56** Policy SP 14 will ensure proper provision is made for secondary and primary education within the borough to serve both new and existing communities.

## Infrastructure

### Policy SP 14

#### New Schools

i. The Council's housing target for the plan period leads to a requirement for additional secondary education capacity equivalent to three new secondary schools for the borough. Locations for two new secondary schools are identified within proposed strategic housing sites; one within SDS5 at North West Hatfield and the other at Birchall Garden Suburb, east of Welwyn Garden City within the administrative area of East Hertfordshire District. A site for the third new secondary school is identified at New Barnfield in southern Hatfield, which is previously developed land within the Green Belt. The site of the former school buildings is also a Major Developed Site as defined in Policy SADM34 and shown on the Policies Map.

ii. The Council's housing target for the plan period also leads to a requirement for new primary education capacity. In the case of the new neighbourhoods at SDS1, SDS2, and SDS5, and the site east of Welwyn Garden City within the administrative area of East Hertfordshire District: locations for new primary schools are identified within the proposed new developments. New primary school sites are also identified within housing sites HS11 south of Hatfield and HS22 at Brookmans Park.

#### Justification

**13.57** To accord with the strategic objectives 1, 2 and 5 of the Local Plan, new schools should be located close to the populations they are intended to serve in order to reduce the need to travel and help foster community identity. New development of this type should preferably be located within the existing urban area or the proposed strategic housing allocations to be sustainable and to avoid unnecessary additional impacts on the openness of the Green Belt. Where this is not possible, previously developed sites within the Green Belt should be considered before greenfield sites.

#### Implementation

**13.58** Locations for new schools within the new neighbourhoods will be identified through the preparation of the masterplan for each of those locations which will form the basis for a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Land for these new schools, and appropriate contributions towards their construction, will be secured through Section 106 agreements accompanying any subsequent planning permissions for the delivery of housing or mixed-use development in accordance with the SPD applying to the new neighbourhoods.

**13.59** In the case of any additional new secondary and primary schools required, sites will be identified in accordance with Policy SP 14 and will be secured through negotiation with landowners and the County Council. The necessary school provision will be brought forward through planning applications.

# Settlement Policies

## Welwyn Garden City

- 14.1** Welwyn Garden City is the largest settlement in the borough. The population of Welwyn Garden City in 2011 has been estimated at 46,500 - 42.1% of the borough's total population. Development of Welwyn Garden City began in the 1920s and was built according to the vision of Sir Ebenezer Howard, founder of the Garden City movement, a unique heritage which makes the town famous around the world.
- 14.2** Welwyn Garden City was later designated as a New Town following World War II and more housing was built during the 1950s, largely in the north of the town and east of the railway line. The residential areas were planned as a series of neighbourhoods with neighbourhood centres providing shops and other community facilities. Large areas of office, industrial and warehouse uses and currently were also part of the plan for the town and they accommodate a number of major employers. The town is well served by public transport and by road, with the A1(M) adjacent to the town, a station on the East Coast Mainline and a frequent bus service. The town also contains the QEII Hospital and Oaklands College. Whilst the town's fabric has generally withstood the test of time it does face a number of challenges which the plan needs to address.

### Vision and Objectives for Welwyn Garden City

- 14.3** Ebenezer Howard's vision for garden cities was to provide people with decent places to live away from the poor living conditions of Victorian cities and rural poverty in a place that combined the best features of towns and the best features of the country with jobs, health, social and recreational facilities close at hand - a town designed for healthy living. The original design of Welwyn Garden City reflects this approach with relatively low density development including houses with their own gardens and generous landscaping with carefully designed views and incidental open spaces. Garden Cities influenced the design of the first wave of New Towns after the Second World War. Important characteristics of Welwyn Garden City include:
- A formal layout and architectural style, particularly in the centre
  - The complete integration of the town's landscape into its built form
  - Careful and varied use of spaces, groupings of buildings, building lines and architectural details
- 14.4** Since the New Town era, Welwyn Garden City has continued to develop successfully. However, with the passage of time, a number of challenges face the town:
- The town has a growing population and a need for more homes. Originally designed at a low density there is now a need to consider how higher density development can be accommodated to ensure a more efficient use of land in a manner which retains the character of the town.
  - There has been a loss of employment land to other uses which has weakened the ability of the town to be self contained. The emergence of residential uses at various locations around the main employment area (the result of permitted development rights allowing offices to be converted to residential without planning permission) has compromised the zonal approach to the layout of Welwyn Garden City, and may cause other sites within the employment area to become less attractive to business because of the potential for noise and other complaints from adjoining residents.
  - The town centre needs to remain competitive with other sub regional retail centres but suffers from the lack of a strong evening economy.
  - Much of the social housing stock is ageing at a similar rate.

## Welwyn Garden City

- The town is famed for its central grand landscaped boulevard and network of green squares that are integral to the layout and design of the garden city. These areas need to be protected and will need to be replicated using more innovative solutions such as green roofs, walls, terraces and balconies for higher density development to be appropriately integrated.
  - The east-west divide inherent in the original masterplanning of the town persists limiting connectivity between the town centre and neighbourhoods to the east.
- 14.5** Garden City principles are recognised as a basis for good planning and need to inform how these challenges are addressed. The challenge is to consider how Garden City principles can be updated to reflect the current and future social, economic, environmental and technological needs of the town over the plan period.
- 14.6** Taking into account the outcomes from a stakeholder workshop involving the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA), developers, landowners, residents' groups and associations from Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield, the Welwyn Garden City Society and the Advisory Team for Large Applications, a series of Garden City Principles has been derived to guide the masterplanning of strategic developments.

### Garden City Principles for masterplanning strategic developments

- a. **Clear identity** – a distinctive local identity as a new garden community, including at its heart an attractive and functioning centre and public realm.
- b. **Sustainable scale** – built at a scale which supports the necessary infrastructure to allow the community to function self-sufficiently on a day to day basis, with the capacity for future growth to meet the evolving housing and economic needs of the local area.
- c. **Well-designed places** – with vibrant mixed use communities that support an attractive range of housing type and tenure, local employment types and premises, retail opportunities, recreational, cultural and community facilities designed in accordance with the principles set out in Policies SP9 and 10.
- d. **Strong local vision and engagement** – designed and executed with the engagement and involvement of the existing local community, and future residents and businesses. This should include consideration of how the natural and historic environment of the local area is reflected and respected.
- e. **Transport** – integrated, forward looking and accessible transport options that support economic prosperity and wellbeing for residents. This should include promotion of public transport, walking and cycling, so that settlements are easy to navigate, and facilitating simple and sustainable access to jobs, education, and services.
- f. **Healthy places** – designed to provide the choices and chances for all to live a healthy life, through taking a whole systems approach to key local health and wellbeing priorities and strategies.
- g. **Green space** – generous, accessible, and good quality green and blue infrastructure that promotes health, wellbeing, and quality of life, and considers opportunities to deliver environmental gains such as biodiversity net gain and enhancements to natural capital.
- h. **Legacy and stewardship arrangements** – should be in place for the care of community assets, infrastructure and public realm, for the benefit of the whole community.



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- i. **Future proofed** – designed to be resilient places that allow for changing demographics, future growth, and the impacts of climate change, including flood risk and water availability, with durable landscape and building design planned for generations to come. This should include anticipation of the opportunities presented by technological change such as driverless cars and renewable energy.

Flowing from these principles, it will be necessary to agree and implement comprehensive design principles as part of the masterplanning process. These should allow for creativity and innovation, respecting its heritage but not necessarily mimicking existing Garden City or New Town architecture - new developments should be an asset to the borough.

- 14.7** The Council has developed a vision for the future of Welwyn Garden City which has informed its spatial strategy for the town and takes Garden City principles into account. This vision is supported by a range of objectives which focus on particular issues for Welwyn Garden City, but they form part of a wider overall strategy for the town to maintain and enhance its role.

### Vision for Welwyn Garden City

#### 'Reinforcing the unique heritage of Welwyn Garden City to shape future growth'

In 2032 Welwyn Garden City will have enhanced its role as a sub regional centre for shopping and employment through new investment and increased floorspace in the town centre and its employment areas. The town will continue to be the main centre for healthcare in the borough and a focus for sports facilities and culture. The town's unique heritage as a garden city will have been reinforced through the conservation of its heritage assets and the careful integration and design of new development. New housing will have come forward on previously developed sites within the town in a form which respects the character of the town but with enhanced environmental performance. In addition new extensions to the town will have been planned with the necessary supporting infrastructure to meet its needs.

### Local Objectives for Welwyn Garden City

- 14.8** As well as the borough wide objectives, a set of local objectives have been developed for Welwyn Garden City.
- **WGC Objective 1:** To build upon and respect the unique heritage and design of the town and to protect the 'quality of place' in Welwyn Garden City.
  - **WGC Objective 2:** To ensure that the town centre remains the focus for retail development in order to maintain its role as a leading shopping destination and deliver the town centre strategy.
  - **WGC Objective 3:** To maintain a balanced supply of employment land to fulfil the town's role as a key centre for employment in the area.
  - **WGC Objective 4:** To develop new neighbourhoods and neighbourhood extensions masterplanned according to Garden City Principles.

# Welwyn Garden City

## Heritage of Welwyn Garden City

- 14.9** In line with the Spatial Vision and Borough Wide Objectives, the purpose of this policy is to protect and maintain the unique character of Welwyn Garden City and to ensure that new development protects and enhances it which is in accordance with borough wide objective 8 and local objective WGC1.

### Policy SP 15

#### The Historic Environment of Welwyn Garden City

Welwyn Garden City's historical significance and unique heritage as a garden city designed for 'healthy living' and Mark One New Town should be protected. Proposals for new development should conserve and where appropriate enhance heritage assets and their settings. All development proposals, through their design and detailing, will be required to demonstrate that they have responded to the key characteristics of a Garden City. For all development proposals that require a Sustainable Design Statement or Design and Access Statement, it will be important to demonstrate that the historic environment of Welwyn Garden City is properly understood and considered through a thorough analysis in accordance with Policy SP 9 Place Making and High Quality Design, SP 11 Protection and enhancement of critical environmental assets and SADM 15 Heritage.

For development proposals of between 100 to 499 dwellings applicants will be required to demonstrate how consideration of the historic character and significance of the town has been taken into account at an early stage in the design process through the preparation of masterplans or development briefs.

For sites of 500 dwellings or more the Council will prepare a supplementary planning document, as appropriate, which takes account of the unique heritage of the town and sets out a design framework and detailed guidance within which sites should come forward for development.

#### Justification

- 14.10** The National Planning Policy Framework advises that Local Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment. Welwyn Garden City's heritage is recognised around the world for being the world's second garden city which successfully realised the principles set out by Ebenezer Howard in his book Garden Cities of Tomorrow. The Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area Appraisal, September 2007 further emphasises the historical importance of the town stating that: "it is often held up as the apogee of civilised, sustainable new settlements and a model for others to follow" and that it has international significance.

#### Implementation

- 14.11** This strategy will be implemented through the development management process, the preparation of design guidance and more detailed policies in Supplementary Planning Documents. Analysis of the character of Welwyn Garden City is set out in conservation area appraisals and design guidance produced by the Council. The masterplanning of strategic locations for growth and sites for retail development in the Town Centre

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will provide a design framework and guidance to ensure compliance with Policy SP 15 The Historic Environment of Welwyn Garden City. The Town Centre North Supplementary Planning Document and the Broadwater Road West Supplementary Planning Document already provide such framework and guidance for those sites.

### Welwyn Garden City Town Centre

**14.12** Welwyn Garden City town centre is the main shopping and service centre for the borough providing a number of important civic, cultural, leisure and community facilities with over 80,000sqm (gross) of retail floorspace. The town centre is also classified as a 'Regional' town centre<sup>(72)</sup> and as such faces strong competition from the larger centres of Stevenage, Watford and Milton Keynes which are all in close proximity. The town centre benefits from being highly accessible via road, rail and bus and is also part of the wider Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area. The town centre has some strengths as a primary retail destination, but there are gaps in the quality and range of its retail 'offer' which has resulted in some shoppers choosing other retail centres. In line with the vision for Welwyn Garden City, and taking these points into account, a focused vision for Welwyn Garden City town centre has been derived.

#### Vision for Welwyn Garden City Town Centre

To maintain and enhance the commercial, social and environmental success of the town centre, building upon its unique heritage and strengths to achieve a prosperous and vibrant centre offering a diverse range of activities in an attractive, clean and safe environment for the enjoyment of the community and visitors alike.

### Welwyn Garden City Town Centre Strategy

**14.13** The strategy to deliver this vision is set out in Policy SP 16 and Figure 9 below. It has been prepared in consultation with the Welwyn Garden City Business Improvement District and is closely aligned with the BID's own aspirations for the town centre.

#### Policy SP 16

##### Welwyn Garden City Town Centre Strategy

The Council will support the development of Welwyn Garden City town centre as the borough's primary comparison shopping retail destination. New development should make a positive contribution to improving the town centre's viability and vitality, support the creation of a comfortable, safe, attractive and accessible shopping environment, and improve both the overall mix of land uses in the centre and its connectivity to adjoining areas. This will be achieved, in accordance with the Strategy Diagram below, by:

- Providing opportunities for new retail investment in the town centre and other associated uses, to increase its retail offer and commercial viability and maintain or improve its position in the regional and local shopping hierarchy. The main opportunity for this is the Town Centre North site, HS7

- Maintaining the centre's important civic, cultural and community functions which should remain focused in The Campus area.
- Improving movement and access within the centre, giving priority to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, whilst maintaining and optimising the management of car parking provision.
- Enhancing the quality of its environment, its open spaces and public realm, recognising the character of the garden city, in order to improve its attractiveness as a centre.
- Increasing the diversity of uses in the centre, in particular cafés, restaurants and pubs, but also residential, hotel, offices and leisure, so enhancing its attractiveness as a centre, extending its life into the early evening and providing a broader range of services to local people.
- Providing opportunities for shopping, community and leisure events to encourage more people to visit the town centre.

All new development within Welwyn Garden City town centre will be required to contribute positively to this strategy. Applications for larger scale development (over 1,000sqm floorspace) will be required to demonstrate how the proposal:

- i. Supports the delivery of the town centre strategy;
- ii. Has been informed by the current, emerging and future context of its site;
- iii. Will not be detrimental to the successful current or future implementation of opportunities on other nearby sites, or their ability to meet the town centre vision or objectives.

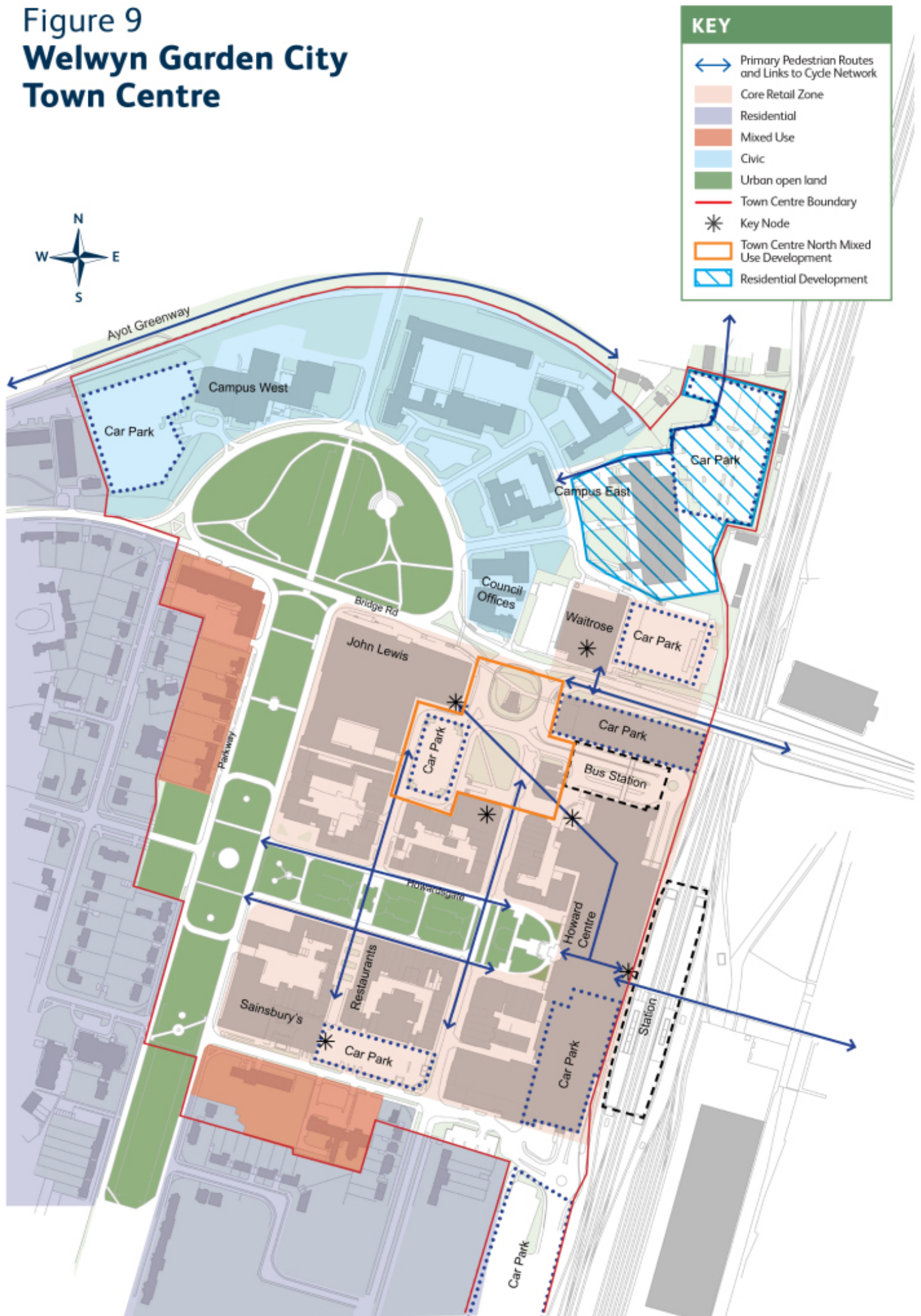
## Justification

**14.14** The Council has reviewed and updated the strategy for the town centre for the period to 2032. This takes into account the findings of the 2016 Retail and Town Centre Needs Assessment, and allocates land to meet the scale and type of retail development needed in Welwyn Garden City town centre. The strategy also sets out the core objectives which development in the town centre will need to consider if it is to make a positive contribution to improving its vitality and viability.

**14.15** The Council continues to support the town centre as the borough's primary comparison retail destination and wishes to address the gaps in its retail and town centre offer so that it can remain competitive and improve its national ranking as a regional centre. In the last ten years development has taken place within the town centre through extensions to the existing Waitrose and Sainsburys supermarkets which has provided additional convenience goods floorspace and enabled the town centre to compete more effectively in the food retail market. However, further investment in new retail floorspace, particularly for comparison goods, is required if the town centre is to maintain its competitive position with other retail centres within the catchment of the borough. To achieve this, the Council considers that investment in the town centre and the development of modern retail accommodation is crucial to attract new 'high street' multiples. On this basis, the Council has allocated the development site HS7 'Town Centre North' within the Core Retail Zone for comparison goods floorspace.



Figure 9  
**Welwyn Garden City  
 Town Centre**



- 14.16** As part of the wider Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area, there are key elements of the character and architecture of the town centre which will need to be considered in relation to any planning proposals. Whilst the Retail and Town Centre Needs Assessment, May 2016 states that the town centre is considered to be an attractive shopping location with a distinctive historic character, the assessment does highlight that in some areas shop frontages were untidy and in need of modernisation. This also reflects the findings of the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area Appraisal (September 2007) which concluded that there are parts of the town centre where its character is being eroded. Also dominant in both the town and the town centre is the feature of generous open space and the park-like areas of landscaping which contribute significantly to the attractiveness of the centre as a shopping destination. The environmental quality of the town centre is one of its most distinctive features and therefore the Council will seek to ensure that all new development in the town centre is planned in a form which protects, conserves and enhances its heritage assets in accordance with Policy SP 15 The Historic Environment of Welwyn Garden City.
- 14.17** As shown in Figure 9, the town centre comprises a retail core built on a grid pattern with four main arteries (Howardsgate, Wigmores North and South, Parkway and Fretherne Road/Stonehills) surrounded by areas of mixed commercial, cultural, community and civic uses which act as a transition zone to the adjoining residential areas. Within this boundary there are a number of sub areas, each of which contain a different range of uses and serves a particular function within the town centre. The Core Retail Zone identifies the core of the town centre, the main role of which is for shopping. There are also a number of complementary uses that include food and drink, service, office and residential uses that support the retail function. It is also the hub for the town's passenger transport services including the railway station, bus interchange and taxi rank. This area is the preferred location for retail uses, as well as supporting uses that can enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre. The boundaries of the town centre boundary and the Core Retail Zone are defined on the Policies Map.
- 14.18** New retail floorspace will be provided in the town centre in accordance with the requirements set out in Policy SP 5 - Quantity and Location of Retail Development.

### Implementation

- 14.19** To deliver the development for the short to mid term retail growth needs, the Council will bring forward the HS7 Town Centre North development site. This will be delivered in accordance with an adopted planning brief (to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document).
- 14.20** To meet the need for longer term growth the Council will consider the allocation of further town centre land following or the reconfiguration of existing retail blocks within the town centre following a review of its evidence base. This will allow the Council to monitor likely levels of future growth whilst taking account of the impact of planned development, the sensitivities of the retail market as well as consideration of the unique heritage and character of the town centre. As well as working with partners such as the Welwyn Garden City Business Improvement District and Hertfordshire County Council with regard to the management of the town centre, the council also propose the following:



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- The promotion and use of the Welwyn Garden City Town Centre Streetscape Design Manual to assist with the day to day management, maintenance and enhancement of the public realm.
- The promotion and use of the Welwyn Garden City Town Centre Shopfront and Advertisement Design Guide to provide further development management guidance on the design of shopfronts, signage and shutters/grilles within the historic town centre environment.
- To work with Hertfordshire County Council and support the implementation of transport projects that will improve accessibility to the town centre and assist with the management of car parking.
- The use of development management policies which will assist with the implementation of the Council's town centre vision and strategy.

**14.21** Policies SADM 19 and SADM 20 assist in the implementation of this strategy.

### Development in the Core Retail Zone

#### Policy SADM 19

##### Town Centre North Development Site - HS7

Land at Town Centre North, as shown on the Policies Map is allocated for major retail-led mixed use development of around 6,000 square metres of comparison goods and 100 dwellings. Development should only be carried out in accordance with the Town Centre North Supplementary Planning Document (April 2015) which gives detailed guidance on matters such as quantity and type of development, design, heritage, public realm, access and movement as well as sustainability issues.

Should a larger development opportunity come forward in this location, the Council will consider its suitability in the light of the need for the additional floorspace and the ability of the transport infrastructure to accommodate an increased number of trips.

The Council will require any development to be designed to a high standard to:

- i. Preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and its setting;
- ii. Create a new entrance to the town centre on its north side;
- iii. Enhance the public realm and landscape within the town centre and achieve a strong visual linkage between the town centre, the Campus and the Campus East car park area;
- iv. Achieve good pedestrian access and linkage with the rest of the town centre;
- v. Ensure efficient vehicle movement on surrounding roads;
- vi. Provide adequate car parking to meet the needs of the development;

- vii. Improve passenger transport provision in the town centre; and
- viii. Provide a range of retail units, which would enhance the quality of the retail provision in the town.

### Justification

**14.22** The Town Centre North site at HS7 is the preferred location to meet future identified comparison retail needs given its location within the Core Retail Zone of the town centre and the potential linkages with the Howard Centre and John Lewis. The site is 1.3 hectares and has the capacity to accommodate up to 5,800sqm of additional retail floorspace. In addition, the site provides the opportunity to intensify and diversify uses in the town centre. The site is also suitable for new housing provision as part of a mixed use scheme with the potential to deliver approximately 100 residential units. Other core land use objectives for the site include the provision of new public realm that can provide events space to encourage more people to visit the town centre (as well as the re-providing any lost green space) and the opportunity to encourage appropriate evening economy uses to extend activity in the town centre. It is possible that a larger site could be assembled but any scheme at a larger scale would need to be considered in terms of its impact on the town centre and its infrastructure.

**14.23** The Town Centre North site is in an important location in the town centre and is surrounded by a number of key buildings occupied by major shopping destinations and retailers. Analysis of the site presents a number of key issues and constraints which will need to be considered and addressed in any development of the site. In addition the town centre's Conservation Area status means that new development will also need to sustain and enhance the significance of this heritage asset. To ensure that development of this site meets both high standards of design and the needs of both the market and its customers, the Council has prepared a planning brief to guide the future development of the site. The Town Centre North Supplementary Planning Document was adopted in 2015 and provides detailed information on the type of development, design and layout constraints that need to be considered whilst also seeking to highlight how development of this site can help to address the wider objectives of the town centre strategy.

## Development outside the Core Retail Zone

### Policy SADM 20

#### Acceptable uses outside the Welwyn Garden City Core Retail Zone (The Campus, Parkway and Church Road)

In Welwyn Garden City Town Centre, as shown on the Policies Map, the Council will encourage the retention of existing civic, cultural, community and leisure uses at The Campus. Where an existing use is no longer required the Council will allow proposals for changes of use or development for office, hotel, leisure, cultural, community, education and residential uses provided that the proposal would meet development criteria i to v below.

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On the western side of Parkway and the south side of Church Road, as shown on the Policies Map, the Council will allow proposals for changes of use or development for office, community, cultural and residential uses provided that they meet development criteria i to v below.

Development criteria:

- i. Maintain and where appropriate enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre;
- ii. Preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area and its setting;
- iii. Not harm the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential areas;
- iv. Be properly integrated into the retail core of the town centre, including the provision of good pedestrian linkages; and
- v. Provide adequate highway access and servicing arrangements and would not be detrimental to the highway network including highway safety.

At The Campus, proposals for new civic, cultural, community or leisure facilities or to modernise, extend or re-provide the existing facilities will be supported. Proposals which result in the loss of such facilities will need to satisfy the requirements of SADM 7. Where the site currently provides car parking which serves the needs of the town centre as a whole, this must be replaced within the development site or in an appropriate alternative location.

On the western side of Parkway and the south side of Church Road, Proposals for new or replacement buildings, and any significant alterations or extensions to existing buildings in these areas will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the development proposed would enhance the character of the conservation area.

Proposals for new cultural or community facilities or to modernise or extend existing facilities will be supported. Proposals which result in the loss of such facilities will need to need to satisfy the requirements of SADM 7.

### Justification

**14.24** Outside the Core Retail Zone, the area surrounding The Campus contains the main civic, cultural and community buildings in the town, including the Council Offices, Oaklands College WGC Campus, Campus West Entertainment Venue (providing theatre and cinema) and the town's main library. This mix of uses is complementary to the main town centre offer and functions well on the edge of the town centre. The Council wishes to see this area retained for civic, cultural and community uses. Should any of the existing land uses become redundant, the Council will allow a change of use or redevelopment for a mix of uses for office, hotel, leisure, cultural, community, education and residential uses.

**14.25** The properties on the western side of Parkway and and on the southern side of Church Road are within the town centre boundary but outside the Core Retail Zone. These areas contain a mix of uses and serve to reinforce the vitality and viability of the town centre whilst acting as a transition zone between the retail core of the town centre and the surrounding residential areas, helping to reduce noise and disturbance. These buildings are also important in the context of the Conservation Area. In particular properties 8 to 22 Parkway are a group of six properties which have retained their original integrity as a planned group and despite now being in commercial use, have retained their essential domestic form and architecture reflecting their origins as some

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of the earliest homes in the Garden City. Should any of the existing land uses become redundant, the Council will allow the conversion and change of use of buildings for office, cultural, community and residential uses.

### New Dwellings in Welwyn Garden City

#### Policy SADM 21

##### Housing allocations in Welwyn Garden City

In accordance with Policy SP 2 and Policy SP 3 the sites below are allocated on the Policies Map for development in Welwyn Garden City.

##### Strategic sites

Site	Location	Use	Dwelling Capacity	Delivery within plan period
SDS1	North east of Welwyn Garden City	Residential-led mixed use	872	0-10 years
SDS2	South east of Welwyn Garden City	Residential-led mixed use	600	0-10 years
SDS3	Broadwater Road West SPD site and Bio Park	Residential-led mixed use	1,863	0-15 years

##### Other key sites

Site	Location	Use	Dwelling Capacity	Delivery within plan period
HS2	Creswick	Residential	340	0-10 years
HS3	80 Bridge Road East	Residential	32	0-10 years
HS4	Ratcliff Tail Lift site, Bessemer Road	Residential	110	6-10 years
HS5	Hyde Valley House, Hyde Valley	Residential	13 <sup>(73)</sup>	0-10 years
HS7	Town Centre North Development Site	Retail-led mixed use	100	6-10 years
HS6	Land at Gosling Sports Park, Stanborough Road	Residential	100	6-10 years
HS8	St Michael's House, Holwell Road	Residential	22	11-15 years
HS12	Town Centre North - Campus East	Residential	250	0-5 years
HS31	YMCA, 90 Peartree Lane	Residential	29	0-5 years
HS34	Neighbourhood Centre, Hollybush Lane	Residential	16	6-10 years

73 Development of this site will follow the loss of 46 care home bedrooms, currently being re-provided on another site

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Proposals for the allocated sites will need to have regard to the site-specific considerations set out in the table below in addition to other relevant planning policy, planning objectives and other material considerations.

### Justification

**14.26** In line with the Settlement Strategy, sites have been allocated in the Plan to deliver around 4,300 new dwellings in and around Welwyn Garden City. Each site has a number of considerations that need to be taken into account including those set out in the table below.

**Table 9 - Site specific considerations: Welwyn Garden City**

Site	Site specific considerations
SDS1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to Policy SP 18</li> </ul>
SDS2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to Policy SP 19</li> </ul>
SDS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to Policy SP 17</li> </ul>
HS1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access arrangements need to be rationalised</li> <li>Bus stops need to be upgraded</li> <li>Potential loss of habitat will need to be addressed</li> </ul>
HS2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ecological impacts would need to be mitigated, including buffer to wildlife site</li> <li>Wastewater infrastructure needs to be upgraded</li> <li>Retain public rights of way and enhance public access to areas of recreation</li> <li>Clearance from electricity lines and pylons</li> <li>Sustainable urban drainage to address possibility of surface water flooding</li> <li>A substantial tree planting screen within the Green Belt along the site's southern boundary, and additional green infrastructure supporting the delivery of the green corridor in order to provide a strong Green Belt boundary, protect the Green Belt's open character and mitigate any heritage impacts.</li> </ul>
HS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access arrangements need to be rationalised</li> <li>Wastewater infrastructure needs to be upgraded</li> <li>Air quality because of queueing traffic on Bridge Road East</li> <li>Traffic noise</li> <li>Potential for contaminated land which would require remediation</li> </ul>
HS4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acceptable vehicular and pedestrian access arrangements need to be secured</li> <li>Noise from adjacent road, as well as adjacent commercial uses</li> <li>Wastewater infrastructure needs to be upgraded</li> <li>Development here would have to take account of the site's proximity to a Site of Special Scientific Interest</li> <li>Potential for contaminated land which would require remediation</li> </ul>
HS5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>
HS7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development will need to accord with the Welwyn Garden City Town Centre North Supplementary Planning Document and Policy SADM 19</li> </ul>
HS6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wastewater infrastructure needs to be upgraded</li> <li>Railway and traffic noise</li> </ul>

Site	Site specific considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for contaminated land which would require remediation</li> <li>• Need to mitigate possible ecological impacts of the development</li> <li>• Site is partly within the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area</li> <li>• Proximity to listed buildings</li> <li>• Development will need to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area and its setting</li> <li>• A positive relationship will be achieved between existing/new sports facilities and new residential uses having particular regard to potential noise and lighting issues.</li> <li>• A masterplan will be required to support the planning application, setting out how the development will support the delivery of enhancements to the remainder of Gosling Sports Park and help sustain it for future use by the community.</li> <li>• Any potential loss of sports facilities will need to be justified in accordance with Policy SADM7.</li> </ul>
HS7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptable access arrangements need to be secured</li> <li>• Possible air quality issues would need to be mitigated</li> <li>• Development here would have to take account of the site's location within an Area of Archaeological Interest and close to a Local Wildlife Site and Site of Special Scientific Interest.</li> </ul>
HS8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access arrangements need to be rationalised</li> <li>• Potential for contaminated land which would require remediation</li> <li>• Potential protected ecology within the site, notably bats</li> <li>• Site is adjacent to an Area of Archaeological Significance</li> </ul>
HS12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air quality/noise survey and report will be required at planning application stage due to proximity to railway</li> <li>• Railway land asset protection measures</li> <li>• Heritage impact assessment will be required (WGC Conservation Area)</li> </ul>
HS31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A noise survey and report may be required at planning stage</li> <li>• Electricity cables in the north east of the site could have design/layout implications</li> </ul>
HS34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southern part of the site is within outer groundwater source protection zone</li> <li>• Electricity sub-station and gas governor located on the site may impact on layout</li> </ul>

### Mixed Use Development Site at Broadwater Road West

**14.27** The purpose of this policy is to guide the development on this important site at the centre of Welwyn Garden City. This policy supports the spatial vision and borough-wide objectives 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13.

#### Policy SP 17

##### Mixed use development site at Broadwater Road West (SDS3/Pea102, Pea02b and Pea02c)

Land at Broadwater Road West is allocated for development to accommodate approximately 1,863 new homes over the plan period. Mixed use development on this site will comprise primarily employment, housing, leisure and rail-related uses.



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Development on this site will comply with the Broadwater Road West Supplementary Planning Document. Development on this site will conform to the Strategy Diagram shown in Figure 10 below and the following principles:

- i. To create a sustainable neighbourhood with an appropriate mix and density of uses for its central location; and to support living and working in close proximity;
- ii. To establish strong connections between the east side of town, the site and through to the town centre by the provision of footpath and cycleway links;
- iii. To provide a wide mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, including a minimum of 30% of all units as affordable housing unless it can be robustly demonstrated that such a proportion would not be viable; housing for older people;
- iv. To use the industrial heritage as a cue for form, character and identity – re-use listed structures and ensure sympathetic development;
- v. To adopt the urban design principles set out in the Broadwater Road West Supplementary Planning Document;
- vi. To accommodate large scale uses which would best be located near the town centre;
- vii. To incorporate open space in accordance with the principles set out in the Broadwater Road West Supplementary Planning Document;
- viii. At least 5,800 square metres of Class E(g) employment floorspace will be provided in addition to that which was already provided on the site as at 1st April 2016;
- ix. About 1,850 dwellings will be provided in addition to those already provided on the site as at 1st April 2016. Affordable housing will be sought on the basis of an overall 30% on-site delivery target;
- x. Provision will also be made for community uses, fitness / leisure, retail (about 570 square metres), cafés / restaurants / bars and a hotel;
- xi. Building heights should be lower in the southern part of the site;
- xii. The setting of, and longer views to and from, heritage assets, including Hatfield House, should be preserved.

Development at this site must contribute towards school provision off-site in the immediate vicinity. Development at this site will also need to include upgraded wastewater infrastructure and take into account noise from the railway and adjacent commercial activities as well as the potential for contaminated land.

Once constructed, all new class E(g) development on this site will be afforded the same policy protection as that accorded by Policy SADM10 of this plan.

## Justification

**14.28** Broadwater Road West is a former industrial site, across the East Coast mainline railway from Welwyn Garden City Town Centre. The site adjoins Welwyn Garden City Railway Station which serves as an interchange between frequent trains, the local bus network and walking and cycling facilities. This highly accessible location presents the opportunity for high density development. The provision of employment here is an important component of the plan's strategy to provide employment in highly accessible locations. This mixed use development site (as set out on the Policies Map) is the subject of the Broadwater Road West Supplementary Planning Document, December 2008. The council's vision for Broadwater Road West is to deliver an energetic and pioneering scheme of development which integrates the spirit of the garden city with the very best of high quality 21st Century design, seizing the opportunity to enhance the local environment and create a sustainable, supported neighbourhood of an appropriate scale, which successfully integrates with the local community. It is envisaged that 1,863 new homes will be delivered across the area as a whole spread across the sites Pea102 (289 dwellings), Pea02b (1403 dwellings) and Pea02c (171 dwellings).

## Implementation

**14.29** The masterplan framework and design guidance for development of this site set out in the 2008 Broadwater Road West Supplementary Planning Document will be used when considering planning applications for development on this site. The amount of development set out in Policy SP 17 reflects the council's latest information and evidence.

Figure 10  
**SDS3 Broadwater Road West**



KEY	
	Site Boundary
	Main Vehicular Route
	Railway
	Pedestrian / Cycle Route
	Vehicular Access Point
	Pedestrian / Cycle Access Point
	Mixed Use Hub
	Health Centre / Community Building
	Landmark / Feature Building
	Landscape Buffer
	Tree Planting
	Green Space
	Area of Residential Development
	Area of Mixed Use Development 'E'
	Existing Development

## North East of Welwyn Garden City

**14.30** This policy allocates land north east of Welwyn Garden City for development in accordance with the growth and settlement strategy of the Plan.

### Policy SP 18

#### North East of Welwyn Garden City - SDS1

Land to the north east of Welwyn Garden City, at Panshanger, is allocated for development to accommodate approximately 870 new homes over the plan period.

A Masterplan, to be prepared by the site promoter working with the Council and other stakeholders, and subject to public consultation and confirmation by the local planning authority, will set out the quantum and distribution of land uses, access, sustainable design and layout principles. The Strategy Diagram in Figure 11 below will inform the Masterplan, which will form an element of the planning obligation for the site and to provide further guidance on site specific matters. Any application for development should be preceded by, and consistent with, the Masterplan.

The site will be planned comprehensively, in order to create a new extension to the neighbourhood of Panshanger, incorporating Garden City principles. These principles will be enshrined in a Design Code to be adopted as part of the planning permission (outline or equivalent) and implemented through the consideration of details.

In accordance with the relevant Local Plan policies the site will provide:

- A wide mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, including a minimum of 30% of all units as affordable housing unless it can be robustly demonstrated that such a proportion would not be viable; housing for older people; and serviced plots of land to contribute towards meeting evidenced demand for self-build and custom housebuilding;
- Gypsy and Traveller provision sufficient to accommodate a total of 12 pitches;
- A new convenience shop in an accessible location to meet the day-to-day convenience shopping needs of new residents and to augment the existing neighbourhood centre at Moors Walk;
- A 2 form entry primary entry school that allows for dual use for community purposes;
- Sustainable transport measures including the improvement of pedestrian links, cycle paths, passenger transport and community transport initiatives within the site and linking to adjoining streets, footpaths and cycleways;
- Suitable access arrangements and any necessary wider strategic and local highway mitigation measures;
- Formal and informal open spaces for leisure and recreation, including play areas, sports fields, allotments and community orchards. Spaces will contribute to wider ecological networks including a strategic green infrastructure corridor from St Albans through to Hertford. As such, spaces should:

## Welwyn Garden City

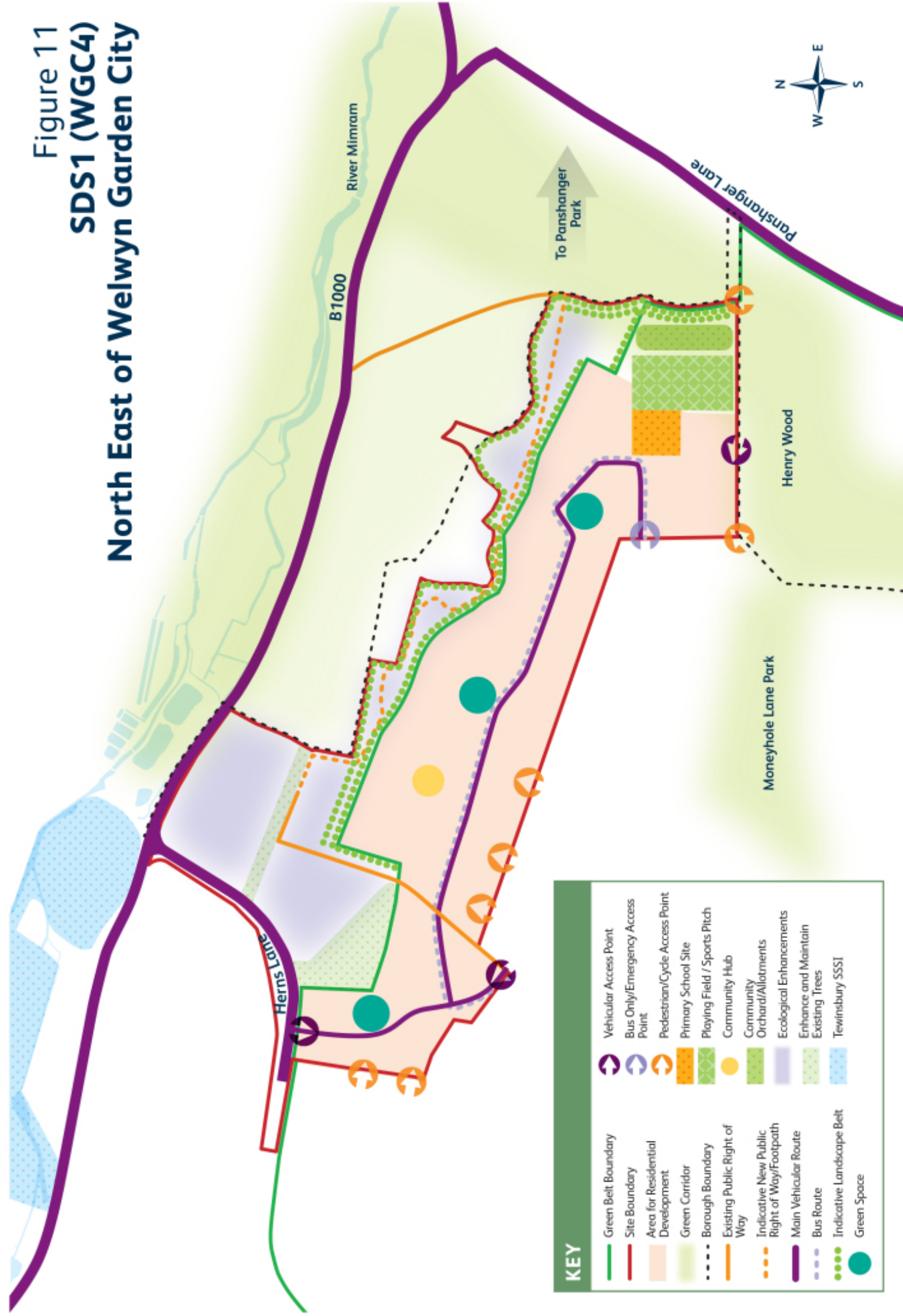
- be accessible to new and existing communities;
  - provide upgraded routes for walkers and cyclists, including a route around the periphery of the development;
  - provide safe routes for wildlife, protecting and enhancing wildlife assets;
  - balance the needs of recreation and nature, providing animal infrastructure and undisturbed areas
- 
- The conservation and, where appropriate, enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, both on-site and in the wider area through careful masterplanning and appropriate mitigation measures, having regard to the findings of the heritage impact assessment;
  - Landscaping and planting;
  - An area of ecological enhancements in the north and east of the site;
  - A structural landscaping area to the north in advance of any development to minimise its visual impact on the surrounding landscape, heritage assets and long distance views including views from and across the Mimram valley;
  - Necessary utilities, including integrated communications infrastructure to facilitate home-working;
  - Sustainable drainage and provision for flood mitigation; and
  - New community facilities including a community hall.

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

The developer will need to demonstrate that the 'opportunistic' use of some minerals on-site within the site itself has been fully considered, subject to it not prejudicing the delivery of housing within the plan period.



Figure 11  
**SDS1 (WGC4)**  
**North East of Welwyn Garden City**





## Welwyn Garden City

### Justification

- 14.31** Most of the development here is proposed to take place on the site of the former Panshanger Aerodrome, which closed in 2014. This is the only significantly-sized housing site in Welwyn Hatfield that is not in the Green Belt. Since 1993, the site has been designated as an Area of Special Restraint in the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan. This designation meant that the land was safeguarded for the duration of the District Plan but could potentially be released for development in future plans should evidence show that it was required. In the light of evidence about the need for housing in Welwyn Hatfield, it is appropriate that site be released for development now.
- 14.32** Sport England consider that, before it was closed, Panshanger Aerodrome was of at least regional importance to air sports and is likely to be confirmed as Significant Area for Sport (SASP) once the identification process has been completed by the sport's governing body. On balance, the Council consider that the need for housing is of greater importance than the need to retain a former airfield facility as a potential SASP for future sport provision. Consequently, it is appropriate to release the site for development now.
- 14.33** A structural landscaping area is required to the north of the site to mitigate its impact on heritage assets and views across the Mimram valley. The proposed development is too small to form a new community in its own right, but it will be designed to form a well-integrated extension to Panshanger, providing a new primary school and community hub which will serve both new and existing development in the vicinity. It supports the spatial vision and borough-wide objectives 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 11.

### Implementation

- 14.34** A large part of the site has outline planning permission, which is subject to a number of agreements and conditions relating to the delivery of ecological enhancements, infrastructure and an illustrative masterplan. The expansion of the site during the preparation of the local plan from 650 to about 872 dwellings means that some enhancements to those requirements may be appropriate to deal with the additional population. Therefore, a new masterplan for the expanded site will need to be prepared by the site promoters and incorporated into a new planning consent. It would also be highly desirable to adopt a design code for the site to deliver the high quality design in accordance with garden city principles which the Council requires.
- 14.35** The site has been purchased by Homes England, the government's housing delivery agency. They are committed to working with the Council to ensure delivery of a high quality urban extension at pace. They plan to deliver the spine road and then to act as master-developer for the remainder of the site.

### South East of Welwyn Garden City

- 14.36** This policy sets out the strategy for the development of Birchall Garden Suburb, which is an extension to Welwyn Garden City straddling the boundary between Welwyn Hatfield and East Hertfordshire.

## Policy SP 19

### South east of Welwyn Garden City - SDS2

#### Birchall Garden Suburb

Land at Birchall Garden Suburb is allocated for development in both the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (SDS2) and the East Herts District Plan (EWEL1), to accommodate approximately 1,950 new homes over the plan period, of which 600 will be in Welwyn Hatfield Borough and 1,350 in East Herts District.

East Herts District Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council will continue to work together to ensure that the new suburb is delivered in a comprehensive manner across the local authority boundaries. Mechanisms will need to be established to ensure the effective delivery of infrastructure required to support the development.

A joint masterplan setting out the quantum and distribution of land uses, key views to protect heritage assets, access, sustainable design and layout principles will be prepared by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and East Herts District Council, working with the landowner and other key stakeholders. The Masterplan, which will be informed by the Strategy Diagram shown in Figure 12 below, will inform the Supplementary Planning Document which will provide further guidance on site specific matters. The SPD will provide additional detail with regard to design and layout principles (including any design code), the approach to character areas and site density, treatment of ecological and heritage assets, the approach to remediation, access and sustainable transport measures, the location of a Gypsy and Traveller site, phasing and delivery of infrastructure, mineral extraction and built development. Any application for development should be preceded by, and be consistent with, the Masterplan.

The site will be planned comprehensively to create a new sustainable community incorporating Garden City principles. Land adjacent to the existing edge of Welwyn Garden City will be formal in layout reflecting the character of the Garden City and Garden City principles. Further from the town, lower density development of a more semi-rural character that responds to the locale and landscape will be more appropriate.

The developer must demonstrate the extent of any mineral that may be present and the potential for prior extraction in an environmentally acceptable way has been fully considered. As a minimum, an assessment of the depth and quality of mineral, together with an appraisal of the consequential viability for prior extraction without prejudicing the delivery of housing within the plan period should be provided.

The developer will submit a detailed remediation strategy designed to secure a permanently safe environment for the human population and local wildlife. Following remediation, the developer will submit sufficient information to demonstrate that the site is not capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

In accordance with the relevant Local/District Plan policies the site will provide:

- a. A wide mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, including affordable housing; housing for older people; and serviced plots of land to contribute towards meeting evidenced demand for self-build and custom housebuilding;

## Welwyn Garden City

- b. Two serviced sites for Gypsies and Travellers (4 pitches to be delivered in East Herts and 11 pitches to be delivered in Welwyn Hatfield) to contribute towards meeting the local needs of both authorities, the locations to be determined through the Masterplanning process, taking into account the latest Accommodation Needs evidence of each authority;
- c. A neighbourhood centre in the East Herts part of the development and a small neighbourhood centre in the Welwyn Hatfield part of the development, each in an accessible location and of a size and scale to meet the day-to-day retail needs of new residents;
- d. An employment area in a visible and accessible location in accordance with an up-to-date assessment of need; this area would incorporate the Holdings in Welwyn Hatfield, together with land off Birchall Lane (currently allocated as a Waste Site (ref. AS008) in the Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Document) subject to there being no adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity;
- e. Community facilities, including healthcare (in the East Herts part of the development) and leisure facilities;
- f. Education facilities, including land for a two form entry primary school with Early Years Provision in Welwyn Hatfield. Also land for all-through school in East Herts to include a primary school of up to three forms of entry with Early Years Provision and a secondary school of up to eight forms of entry. All schools should provide for the dual use of facilities for community purposes;
- g. Sustainable transport measures that prioritise and encourage walking, cycling and the use of new and existing passenger transport networks. A sustainable transport strategy should support the application, which will set out the location of new routes and improved connections and will detail what measures will be in place to encourage patronage of passenger transport services from the outset of occupation;
- h. Suitable access arrangements and any necessary wider strategic and local highway mitigation measures, including addressing impacts on the A414 in Hertford, the B195 and the A1(M).
- i. Formal and informal open spaces for leisure and recreation, including play areas, sports fields, allotments and community orchards. Spaces will contribute to wider ecological networks including a strategic green infrastructure corridor from St Albans through to Hertford. As such, spaces should:
  - be accessible to both new and existing communities;
  - provide north-south and east-west connections, providing upgraded routes for walkers and cyclists, including the Lea Valley Path and Cole Green Way;
  - provide safe routes for wildlife, protecting and enhancing wildlife assets;
  - balance the needs of recreation and nature, providing animal infrastructure and undisturbed areas
- j. The conservation and, where appropriate, enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, including Panshangar Registered Park and Garden, Hatfield House, Hatfield Registered Park and Garden, Birchall Farm and Holwell Hyde Farmhouse. Through careful masterplanning and appropriate mitigation measures, having regard to the findings of the Heritage Impact Assessment, a buffer of open land will be required adjacent to Panshangar Park, Birchall Farm and Holwell Hyde Farmhouse.
- k. In order to complement the wider green corridor and ecological network objectives, the site, will protect and enhance areas of ecological importance through a landscape-led green infrastructure strategy. This strategy will create a network of linked habitats across the site which will provide links to green infrastructure outside

## Welwyn Garden City

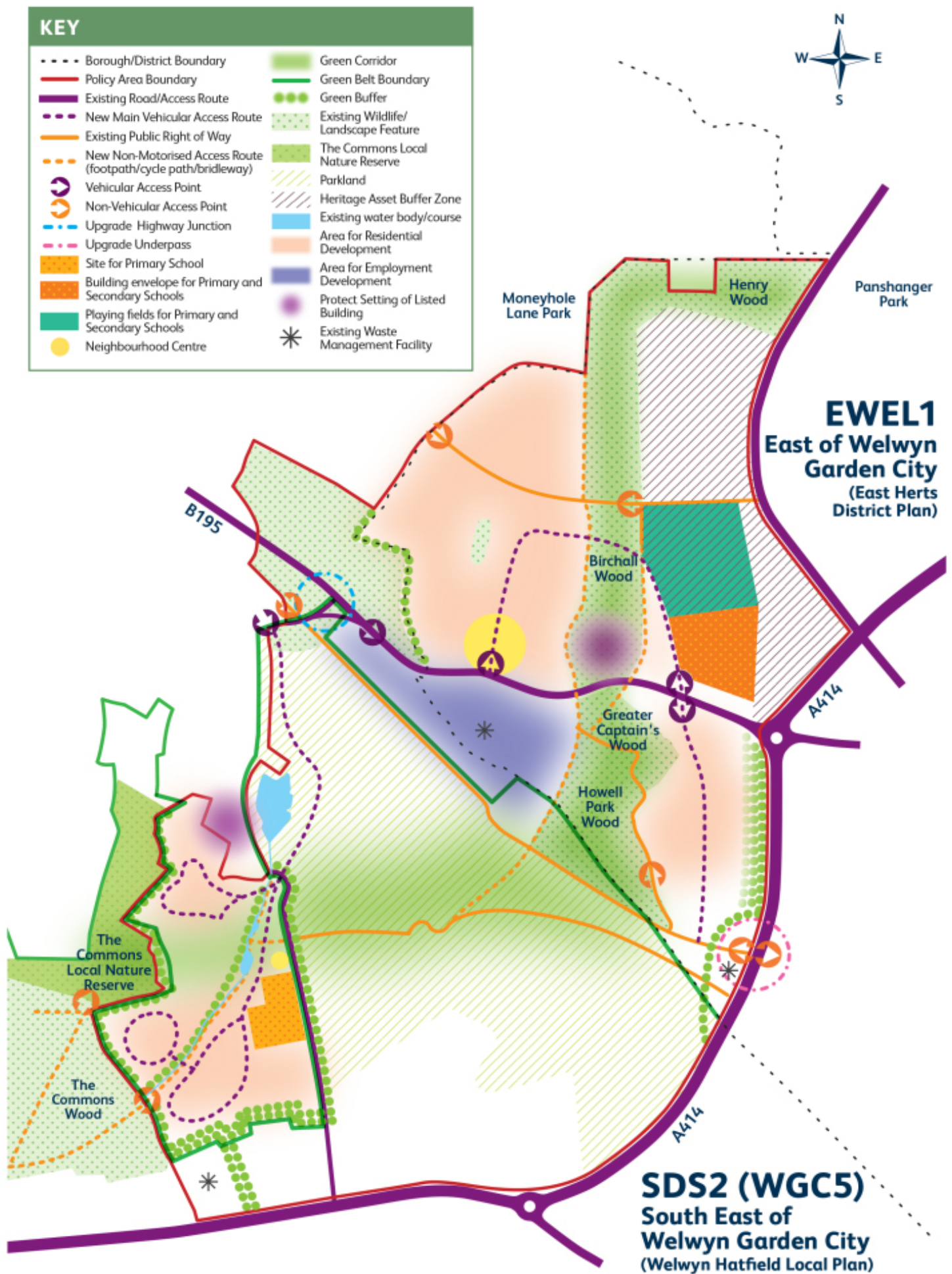
the site, facilitate the migration and movement of species, create buffers alongside existing ecological features, provide for recreational access in a way that protects sensitive habitats, and contributes to achieving net gains to biodiversity across the site. A multifunctional green corridor with a width of about 100m or greater will be provided to link Howell Park Wood with The Commons Local Nature Reserve. An appropriate land management strategy will also be required;

- l. A landscaped green infrastructure buffer adjacent to the A414 and Burnside will be required to provide visual screening, and to ensure that homes and other land uses are not adversely affected by the impacts of noise and air pollution. The buffer will comprise appropriate design features to provide noise and air quality mitigation, flood attenuation, the creation of new habitats and public rights of way. This buffer will also provide visual screening of development from the A414 and mitigate the harm to heritage assets. Appropriate evidence will be required to inform the design of this buffer;
- m. Necessary utilities, including integrated communications infrastructure to facilitate home-working; and
- n. Sustainable drainage and provision for flood mitigation.

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



Figure 12 **Birchall Garden Suburb**



## Justification

- 14.37** Development site SDS2 forms part of a development proposal for a large scale residential scheme for about 1,950 dwellings east and south east of Welwyn Garden City, straddling the boundary between Welwyn Hatfield and East Hertfordshire. This Council has been working with East Hertfordshire District Council to ensure that there is a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to the development of Birchall Garden Suburb. This Council, East Hertfordshire District Council and Hertfordshire County Council (in its capacity as minerals and waste planning authority) will work together with the landowners and other key stakeholders to produce a masterplan for Birchall Garden Suburb which can be adopted jointly as a supplementary planning document.
- 14.38** The whole of Birchall Garden Suburb will function as an extension to Welwyn Garden City. So the whole of the site needs to have ready access to jobs and facilities in Welwyn Garden City. The East Hertfordshire part of Birchall Garden Suburb also presents the only feasible opportunity to provide a new eight form entry secondary school to serve Welwyn Garden City. SDS2 will need to have vehicular access from Cole Green Lane. Pedestrian and cycle links exist and additional ones can be provided to ensure integration with adjacent parts of Welwyn Garden City, as well as access for early phases of development to the small neighbourhood centre at Hall Grove.
- 14.39** SDS2 includes a large area of land that was used for mineral extraction and subsequently used for landfill. This land will not be developed for housing, but will be used as a substantial area of parkland. SDS2 also includes land currently in use as a waste facility to the south of Birchall Lane, straddling the boundary between Welwyn Hatfield and East Herts which is allocated in the Hertfordshire Waste Site Allocations Document, July 2014 alongside The Holdings, an area of land previously used for waste operations. These sites are not in the same ownership as most of the rest of Birchall Garden Suburb, but they are quite close to its centre. It is for these reasons that these sites are included within Policy SP 19 as an employment area. Given that some Class B uses, and particularly waste operations, can be noisy and produce dust, it is important that there is appropriate mitigation to protect the proposed housing and that development does not take place within the proposed employment area that is likely to prevent new housing being built or adversely affect the amenities of existing housing.
- 14.40** It is important to prevent the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral resources (which is a requirement of national policy and the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan) whilst ensuring that the site can be developed for housing during the plan period. It is for this reason that the developer is being required to consider, as a minimum, the opportunistic use of some minerals for development within the site needs to have been considered.
- 14.41** While the whole Birchall Garden Suburb development will be allocated for development in respective Local Plans, in view of its importance and complexity and to enable local communities to help further shape the proposals, there is a need for the subsequent preparation of a masterplan. This will develop the proposals to the next level of detail and will provide a clear platform for the preparation of planning applications. It must be prepared with the full involvement of landowners, local communities and all other interested parties and should comprise:



## Welwyn Garden City

- A Baseline Summary - to analyse existing information, research and community views in order to identify issues and options, known infrastructure requirements and the need for any further research.
- The Masterplan itself - to take forward the baseline summary and develop the Local Plan policy through to development concept stage. It will illustrate the form and disposition of the development and establish the strategy towards matters such as access, sustainable construction standards, open space and design. It will consider infrastructure requirements in greater detail and any necessary matters of avoiding, mitigating or compensating for environmental impacts. It will be fully informed by the views of the local community and interested parties.
- A Delivery Strategy - to identify how the development will be implemented, the programme, any matters to be resolved such as land assembly and preparation, infrastructure requirements and delivery, development phasing and likely need for development contributions. It will also identify the likely need for public sector intervention, by which agency and when.

**14.42** This policy supports the spatial vision and borough-wide objectives 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 11.

### Implementation

**14.43** The masterplanned approach to the development of Birchall Garden Suburb will ensure that it functions as a new neighbourhood and sustainable extension to Welwyn Garden City. The policies for the strategic allocation focus on the principles of development and are not intended to provide policy guidance on every aspect. They must therefore be read in conjunction with other general development plan policies in respective Local Plans, including the development management policies in each Local Plan. Any discrepancies between Local Plans will be discussed and resolved through the jointly agreed masterplan. The policy is accompanied by an illustrative diagram which is to be used as a basis for masterplanning and will also help inform decisions on planning applications.

- 15.1** Hatfield was designated as a 'Mark One' post-war New Town in 1948 largely because of its links with the growing aircraft industry. Hatfield New Town Corporation put in place proposals to grow the town from a population of around 8,500 to 25,000. The 1950s therefore saw the expansion of the town, with new areas of housing laid out between the railway line and the A1, and the rebuilding of its town centre.
- 15.2** Following the closure of the aircraft industry in the early 1990s the former Hatfield Aerodrome site was redeveloped in the 2000s for new housing, a new university campus (for the University of Hertfordshire), neighbourhood shopping and a business park which hosts a number of major employers and has now replaced the jobs lost by the closure of the Aerodrome.
- 15.3** Using small area data from the 2011 Census, the population of Hatfield has been estimated at 37,400 - 33.8% of the borough total. This represents a growth of some 11,500 people since the previous census in 2001, in part due to the 2,000 additional homes that were delivered on the former Aerodrome site. The town is serviced by the town centre and supported by a series of large neighbourhood centres. The town is a regional transport node by virtue of its good accessibility to road, rail and bus networks but there is the need to improve transport connectivity across Hatfield.

### Vision and Objectives for Hatfield

- 15.4** New Towns were designed and delivered with the principles of innovation, experimentation and social development in mind. Characteristics that can often be seen in the New Towns and which are also a key element of Hatfield include:
- The development of neighbourhood units
  - The zoning of industrial and residential areas
  - A pedestrianised town centre and neighbourhood centres
  - Integrated green infrastructure
  - Innovative architecture and design
  - High levels of social housing and community facilities
- 15.5** Together these factors still influence the way Hatfield operates as a town, although the long term stewardship is now in the hands of a range of parties rather than a single entity. Over the last 20 years Hatfield has had to overcome, adapt and change as a result of a various challenges but despite the investment and the success of regenerating the Hatfield Aerodrome site there is still a negative image of the town. One of the fundamental issues affecting this is the quality of Hatfield town centre but there are also a range other challenges and opportunities that have a role in shaping the future success of Hatfield.
- Hatfield has a growing population and a need for more homes, it also has a particular demographic due to the large student population as a result of the significant growth of the university.
  - There is weak east/west connectivity, with the railway line and the A1(M) forming physical barriers.
  - Much of the town is low density which leads to an inefficient use of land and a lack of public transport patronage.
  - The town is multi-centred with a number of strong independent retail/business/education hubs but these are not necessarily co-ordinated or working together as part of a linked hierarchy.
  - Much of the social housing stock is ageing at a similar rate

## Hatfield

- Edge of town retailing (Galleria and Oldings Corner) has had an impact on the retail strength of the town centre.
- Old Hatfield and the investment that has taken place at the rail station creates a strong gateway into the town.
- The town has a strong green network and history which attracts visitors.
- Further investment is being planned and supported by a wide range of stakeholders.

**15.6** The Council has developed a vision for the future of Hatfield which has informed its spatial strategy for the town. This vision is supported by a range of objectives which focus on particular issues for Hatfield, but they form part of a wider overall strategy for the town to maintain and enhance its role, among other things:

- As a town with an identity and legacy it can be proud of
- As a main centre for employment in the borough
- As a centre for shopping - with a stronger town centre, the Galleria and network of neighbourhood centres working together.
- As a centre for community services and facilities, including sport, culture, arts and heritage
- As a regionally important centre for higher education
- To provide for new and improved housing to offer the full range of the housing ladder, including affordable housing.

### Vision for Hatfield

#### 'Shaping the future of Hatfield through better integration'

By 2032 a more positive image of Hatfield will have been created. The town's strengths as a sub regional destination for employment and higher education will be complemented with investment in its town centre and neighbourhood centres, alongside new housing, and excellent community and leisure facilities. The development of a new neighbourhood north of Hatfield will have been planned with the necessary supporting infrastructure. Sustainable transport and public realm improvements between key locations across the town will provide better east/west accessibility and a network of well connected urban centres. New green infrastructure will be established providing a habitat for wildlife and opportunities for access to natural open space. Together these actions will have created a well designed, well connected, well balanced, distinctive and multi centred town which retains its 'New Town' pioneering and entrepreneurial spirit.

### Objectives for Hatfield

**15.7** As well as the borough wide objectives, a set of local objectives have been developed for Hatfield. The Council is part of a wider group of key stakeholders who have come together to develop a strategy for the town's renewal. The Hatfield Renewal Partnership<sup>(74)</sup> has worked pro-actively with the local community to develop a strategic framework for the renewal of Hatfield to guide the ongoing transformation of the town

74 The Hatfield Renewal Partnership Project Board members include Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield Town Council, Oaklands College, Gascoyne Cecil Estates, Hertfordshire County Council, Arlington Business Parks and Better Leisure.

for the next 15 years and beyond. This framework is iterative with the Local Plan and will help drive activity and investment in Hatfield by providing both a strategic context for renewal as well as identifying a portfolio of more specific initiatives and projects intended for implementation over the short, medium and longer term. The framework identifies five key themes which set a range of renewal objectives, these have been considered in developing the Local Plan objectives for Hatfield.

- **Hatfield Objective 1:** To secure the regeneration of Hatfield town centre and High View neighbourhood centre to strengthen their roles as part of the town's retail, leisure and community service provision.
- **Hatfield Objective 2:** To deliver sustainable movement measures and improved navigation around the town to connect the town's key hubs including the town centre, the university, the business park, the Galleria, Old Hatfield and the railway station as well as ensuring the integration of newly planned neighbourhoods.
- **Hatfield Objective 3:** Improve the identity of the town through public realm improvements, place making, signage, public art and facilitate cultural activities. Recognise the role that the town's heritage with Hatfield House, Old Hatfield, its aviation history and new town legacy as a driver for community and physical regeneration.
- **Hatfield Objective 4:** Deliver a mix of housing types and tenures and integrate new housing growth in sustainable locations to the benefit of the town as a whole. Balance the accommodation needs of students with the needs of the resident community
- **Hatfield Objective 5:** Maintain appropriate access to Ellenbrook Country Park during any mineral extraction as part of the Green Corridor, and work in partnership with St Albans District Council and Hertfordshire County Council to restore full access to the Park once mineral extraction is complete, to support healthy living.
- **Hatfield Objective 6:** Support the provision of new community infrastructure through investment and regeneration of Hatfield town centre and the delivery of a new neighbourhood.
- **Hatfield Objective 7:** Maximise the benefits of the University of Hertfordshire and promote an environment for business and enterprise.

## Hatfield Town Centre

**15.8** Hatfield town centre lies at the heart of Hatfield and provides important shopping and community facilities for Hatfield as well as supporting the borough's two markets. The town centre was built following the town's designation as a New Town and was largely completed by the 1960s - it is typical of its era, with a car-free pedestrian precinct at its heart. In terms of land uses, the town centre comprises a large Asda anchor store on the western side and a mixed use retail area on the eastern side based around a central street with two public squares (White Lion Square and Market Square) located to the north and south respectively. Parking is provided by surface level car parks and a multi storey car park within the town centre boundary with the long term parking is located on the periphery of the town centre.

**15.9** The town centre has experienced decline, has areas of ageing infrastructure and is in need of regeneration. Previous approaches to regeneration have included comprehensive and phased development, but in previous instances the Council was unable to achieve its full aspirations due to scheme viability issues. In more recent years, good progress has been made in bringing forward a number of projects but the

## Hatfield

regeneration of the town centre remains a priority for the Council and further redevelopment is required to provide new shopping, community and leisure facilities for Hatfield.

### Vision for Hatfield Town Centre

To secure the regeneration of Hatfield town centre and create a vibrant and successful centre which meets the community's needs for retail, leisure and community service provision. To work with partners to create a town centre which realises its potential as a sustainable, attractive, safe, clean and lively place for those who wish to shop, work, reside or relax in it.

**15.10** The strategy to deliver this vision is set out in the policy below.

**15.11** As is set out earlier in the Plan, the Council is part of the Hatfield Renewal Partnership. One of the aims of the partnership is to develop a long term strategy for the future of Hatfield town centre. Public consultation has highlighted that residents feel strongly that the town centre should remain a focal point for the community. Following an analysis of the physical limitations and commercial challenges facing the town centre, it is considered that - whilst retail will retain an important role for the centre - opportunities should be taken to add new uses and improve linkages to the wider town in the medium term. This will help to add to the attractiveness and vibrancy of the centre. The strategy for Hatfield town centre therefore focuses on strengthening its role by:

- Delivering short term improvements, whilst supporting and promoting the regeneration and redevelopment of key areas of opportunity that lie within the town centre to improve the centre's vitality and viability.
- Supporting new uses and developments in the town centre, including community, business and leisure uses, with associated public realm improvements to raise the profile of the centre, making it a more attractive and safe place to visit and spend time.
- Promoting new housing within the town centre to both improve the environment and create a sense of place, whilst adding to activity, footfall and the sense of security in the town centre.
- Re-providing surface car parking with decked/multi-storey options to make a more efficient use of space.
- Supporting other transport related improvements to improve the connectivity of the town centre to the wider area.

### Hatfield Town Centre Strategy

**15.12** The Council's focus is to lead and promote the regeneration of the town centre. The strategy to deliver the Vision is set out in the policy on the following page.

## Policy SP 20

### Hatfield Town Centre Strategy

The Council will promote the co-ordinated regeneration of Hatfield town centre and will support development within the town centre boundary that; makes a positive contribution to improving the town centre's viability and vitality, helps to create a comfortable, safe, attractive and accessible shopping environment, and improves both the overall mix of land uses in the centre and its connectivity to adjoining areas. This will be achieved, in accordance with the Strategy Diagram in Figure 13 below, through the following objectives:

- Securing new shopping opportunities in the town centre, in order to enhance the variety and quality of retail provision. The main opportunity for this is the mixed use development site at 1-9 Town Centre (HS36)
- Encouraging a balanced mix and diversity of uses in the town centre including retail, leisure, community uses, offices and housing.
- Supporting existing and new communities.
- Enhancing the quality of the environment and public realm.
- Improving access for pedestrians and cyclists within and to the town centre.
- Enhancing and better integrating public transport within the town centre, and by developing sustainable transport links with The Galleria and the railway station.
- Ensuring an appropriate supply of attractive, convenient and safe car parking that is managed for the needs of shoppers, visitors and businesses alike and considering options for either multi-storey or decked parking.
- Ensuring provision for the town centre markets and other events.
- Promoting a safe and secure environment.
- Supporting the long term management and maintenance of the town centre.

All new development within Hatfield town centre will be required to contribute positively to this strategy and to the regeneration of the town centre. To achieve this, applications for larger scale development (over 1,000sqm floorspace) will be required to:

- i. demonstrate how the proposal will support the delivery of the town centre strategy;
- ii. demonstrate how the proposal has been informed by the current, emerging and future context of the site and surrounding area;
- iii. ensure that the proposal is not detrimental to the successful current or future implementation of other nearby sites or their ability to meet the town centre vision or objectives.

Applications across multiple sites must be supported by a masterplan to demonstrate the acceptability of an individual scheme and that a comprehensive approach has been taken to their redevelopment.





## Justification

- 15.13** There is a clear need and strong community demand for the redevelopment and regeneration of Hatfield town centre. The Council has reviewed and updated the strategy for the town centre to the period to 2032. This strategy meets takes into account the findings of the Welwyn Hatfield Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment (2016) and allocates land to meet the scale and type of retail development needed in Hatfield town centre. The strategy also sets out the core objectives which development in the town centre will need to consider if it is to make a positive contribution to improving its vitality and viability.
- 15.14** The town centre comprises several distinct areas - a central retail area focused around the pedestrianised White Lion Square and the main high street through to Asda, an external ring road, and on its edge, areas of mixed residential, community and leisure uses that provide a transitional zone to the wider residential neighbourhoods (The Common, Lemsford Road and Link Drive as well as the three subways surrounding and connecting the town centre). Collectively these areas work together to provide the broad range of uses and services which define the centre's role. The town centre Core Retail Zone identifies the core of the town centre, the main role of which is for shopping, as well as those areas that include food and drink, service, office and residential uses that support the retail function. This area is the preferred location for retail uses as well as supporting uses that can enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre. The boundaries of the town centre boundary and the Core Retail Zone are defined on the Policies Map.
- 15.15** New retail floorspace will be provided in the town centre in accordance with the requirements set out in Policy SP 5 - Quantity and Location of Retail Development.

## Implementation

- 15.16** To deliver the development for the short to mid term retail growth needs, the Council will bring forward site HS36 at 1-9 Town Centre for retail led, mixed use development. The Council will also support further redevelopment within the Core Shopping Area.
- 15.17** To further strengthen the town centre the Council will consider the redevelopment of land on the periphery of the town centre (currently used for leisure or surface level parking) for predominantly residential development but will seek to ensure that public car parking, leisure and community facilitates are affected, these uses are reprovided where they are needed to support the vitality and viability of the town centre.

## Development in the Core Retail Zone

### Policy SADM 22

#### Development within Hatfield Town Centre Core Retail Zone

Land within the Core Retail Zone, as shown on the Policies Map is identified as an opportunity area for high density mixed use development. Planning permission will be granted for schemes comprising retail, office, community, leisure, parking and residential uses in accordance with the town centre strategy and Policy SADM 4, provided that they support the regeneration of Hatfield town centre and its vitality and viability.



## Hatfield

Land at 1 Town Centre and 3-9 Town Centre as shown on the Policies Map (Site HS36) is allocated for high density, mixed use development comprising approximately 1200 square metres E(a) and/or E(b) uses and including 66 dwellings to meet the requirement for retail floorspace in the town centre identified in the plan.

Applications for land at 1 Town Centre and 3-9 Town Centre will be required to address the following design and land use principles:

- i. Uses located on the ground floor will be in E(a) and/or E(b) use.
- ii. The creation of a high quality landmark building to address the Wellfield Road and Queensway frontages and to terminate the key vista along the Old St Albans Road from Asda to improve the legibility of the town centre.
- iii. At ground floor level, development on this site will become primary retail frontage following the relevant criteria set out in Policy SADM 4.

Applications for development elsewhere in the Core Retail Zone will be required to address the following design and land use principles:

- i. Landmark buildings should be created in prominent locations and to terminate key vistas to improve the legibility of the town centre.
- ii. Access to uses at first floor and above should be via entrances from the street.
- iii. Multi-storey or decked car parking arrangements should be considered.
- iv. Blank frontages should be minimised and development proposals should provide for a more outward looking town centre (service yards should be concealed and development over such areas considered).
- v. Opportunities should be taken to enhance the immediate physical environment to improve the character and quality of the town centre.
- vi. Opportunities should be taken to improve the public realm and its functionality by ensuring a consistent and coordinated treatment of materials and street furniture and substantially improving key pedestrian routes within the town centre.
- vii. Opportunities should be taken to improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity to the wider network and to respond to natural connections and design lines.
- viii. Opportunities should be taken to improve public transport connections and where feasible to provide a bus interchange facility.

Proposals for development at a height above four storeys will be considered in relation to the criteria on tall buildings set out in policy SP9 High Quality Design.

### Justification

**15.18** The Council continues to support the ongoing regeneration of the town centre, but is keen to ensure that deliverability is prioritised given its previous experiences. As a result the Council is promoting a multi-layered approach to gradually strengthen and re-establish the town centre over the short term, followed by more modest medium term redevelopment that will physically enhance and further reinforce the town centre. Together it is anticipated that this will provide a stronger economic basis to achieve the delivery of any longer term redevelopment opportunities for the town centre.

**15.19** Previous regeneration works in the town centre have been pursued by the Council and a large scale redevelopment of the town centre was proposed from which a first phase of development has now been delivered (including 7 retail units, 19 residential

units and an upgrade to the public realm along the high street). In addition, the Council was able to secure an off site affordable housing scheme providing 84 residential units on land north of Hatfield swim centre.

- 15.20** To facilitate the regeneration of the town centre, the Council made use of its powers of compulsory purchase<sup>(75)</sup> and is now a major land owner in the eastern end of the town centre. In 2014, the Council took the decision to refurbish and rejuvenate the retail and residential properties in its portfolio within White Lion Square. Together with a strong lettings strategy and a supported town centre management, the Council has begun to see a positive change in the town centre environment. As a next step it is considered that the development site HS36 at 1-9 Town Centre should be the focus for a second phase of retail based, mixed use redevelopment to be led by the Council. This is a key site located on the eastern end of the town centre which does not currently function well and is of a layout that perpetuates the inward looking nature of the town centre. It is considered that the redevelopment of this area would enable key issues relating to design, connectivity and layout improvements. Because this is a key site in the Core Retail Zone, it is expected that, once developed, this site will provide primary retail frontage. Accordingly, development at ground floor level on this site will need to conform to the relevant part of Policy SADM 4 – Development in Designated Centres.
- 15.21** In order to sustain a variety of uses and to improve the vitality and viability of the town centre it is recognised that an increase in the density of development would be required and that a greater massing and scale of development is needed. In considering proposals for new landmark buildings, their impact on heritage assets will need to be taken into account. The Council also wishes to encourage proposals for the redevelopment or refurbishment of other areas of land elsewhere in the Core Retail Zone. Whilst the focus is on retail led redevelopment, it is recognised that there are other land uses which will support and strengthen the role of the town centre will also be acceptable. In addition, it is considered that any further development elsewhere in the Core Retail Zone should be of a built form that not only relates to those parts of the original town centre that remain but also complements other new development taking place and through variances in height and scale creates focal points, vistas and gateways to the town centre thereby improving its overall townscape.

## The Common and Queensway Opportunity Areas

### Policy SADM 23

#### Acceptable uses outside the Core Retail Zone - The Common and Queensway Opportunity Areas

Within Hatfield Town Centre outside the Core Retail Zone the Council will allow proposals for changes of use or development for office, hotel, residential, leisure, community or education uses provided that the proposal would:

- i. Support the regeneration of Hatfield town centre and its vitality and viability;
- ii. Not harm the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential areas;

## Hatfield

- iii. Be properly integrated into the retail core of the town centre, including the provision of good pedestrian linkages; and
- iv. Provide adequate highway access and servicing arrangements and would not be detrimental to the highway network including highway safety.

### The Common Opportunity Area

Proposals for new civic, cultural, community or leisure facilities or to modernise, extend or re-provide the existing facilities will be supported. Proposals which result in the loss of such facilities will only be permitted if up to date evidence shows that there is no longer a need for the facility or the existing facility can be satisfactorily relocated within the development proposals or replaced by a facility of equivalent or better quality in an appropriate alternative location.

### Queensway Opportunity Area

Proposals for new community facilities or to modernise, extend or re-provide the existing facilities will be supported. Proposals which result in the loss of community facilities will only be permitted if up to date evidence shows that there is no longer a need for the facility or the existing facility can be satisfactorily relocated within the development proposals or replaced by a facility of equivalent or better quality in an appropriate alternative location.

Where the site currently provides car parking which serves the needs of the town centre as a whole, this must be replaced within the development proposals or in an appropriate alternative location.

### Justification

- 15.22** The area on the northern side of the Common contains a variety of offices, residential, education, surgeries and community buildings. This mix of uses functions well in this location and helps to reinforce the vitality and viability of the town centre by enabling linked trips. The Council wishes to see this area retained for business, civic and community uses. Accordingly, should any of the existing land uses become redundant the Council will allow a change of use or redevelopment for a mix of uses for office, hotel, leisure, cultural, community, education and residential uses.
- 15.23** To the south of the town centre there is a group of areas which provide a complementary role. Located on the southern side of Queensway there is a large area of Urban Open Land as well as Link Drive car park which provides long stay parking to the town centre and the Hatfield skate park. Within this sub area there are also a range of community buildings such as the William Cecil Memorial Hall and Gracemead House. These areas are connected to the Core Retail Zone via a pedestrian crossing on Queensway and through the Woods Avenue underpass. These uses are important for the future vitality and viability of the town centre and function well on the edge of the town centre. This area also provides a key link through to Hatfield rail station and to Breaks Manor Youth and Community Centre. Queensway itself is however, a difficult vehicular barrier separating the Primary Retail Core from this wider town centre area. This in turn creates poor legibility for pedestrians or cyclists wanting to access the town centre via the train station. Within the lifetime of the plan, it is recognised that these areas of land may well come forward for redevelopment and it will be important to ensure that the function of this sub area is retained and enhanced.

## Lemsford Road Opportunity Area

### Policy SADM 24

#### Acceptable uses outside the Core Retail Zone - Lemsford Road Opportunity Area

Within Hatfield Town Centre, on the western side of Lemsford Road outside the Core Retail Zone (as shown on the Policies Map) the Council will allow proposals for changes of use or development for retail, office, hotel, residential, leisure or community uses provided that the proposal would:

- i. Support the regeneration of Hatfield town centre and its vitality and viability;
- ii. Maintain and enhance the strategic link between the town centre and the Galleria;
- iii. Not harm the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential areas;
- iv. Be properly integrated into the retail core of the town centre, including the provision of good pedestrian linkages; and
- v. Provide adequate highway access and servicing arrangements and would not be detrimental to the highway network including highway safety.

Proposals for new leisure facilities or to modernise, extend or re-provide the existing facilities will be supported. Proposals which result in the loss of the Swim Centre will only be permitted if up to date evidence shows that there is no longer a need for the facility or the existing facility can be satisfactorily relocated within the development proposals or replaced by a facility of equivalent or better quality in an appropriate alternative location.

Where the site currently provides car parking which serves the needs of the town centre as a whole, this must be replaced within the development proposals or in an appropriate alternative location.

### Justification

**15.24** The Lemsford Road sub area is outside of the Core Retail Zone and includes the uses located on the western side of Lemsford Road, namely Hatfield Swim Centre and the Forum car park which provides both long and short stay parking to the town centre. It is recognised that these uses complement the town centre and that this sub area provides a key link through to the Fiddlebridge Lane employment area and on to both the Alban Way and the Galleria whilst also acting as a buffer between the retail core and the wider residential area. Within the lifetime of the plan, it is recognised that these areas of land may well come forward for redevelopment and it will be important to ensure that the function of this sub area is retained and enhanced.

### High View Neighbourhood Shopping Centre

**15.25** The Council is promoting and leading the regeneration of High View Neighbourhood Shopping Centre, which serves the Oxlease and South Hatfield neighbourhoods.



## Hatfield

### Policy SADM 25

#### High View Neighbourhood Shopping Centre - HS37

Land at High View, as shown on the Policies Map is allocated for mixed use development comprising residential, retail, service and community uses. Development should be carried out in accordance with the High View Supplementary Planning Document which gives detailed guidance on matters such as quantity and type of development, layout, design, heritage, public realm, access and movement as well as sustainability issues.

The Council will support the delivery of new play facilities to serve the site within UOL193, which is outside but adjacent to the allocated area of the site.

#### Justification

**15.26** Allocated site HS37 is a large neighbourhood centre located in South Hatfield. It is one of nine neighbourhood centres under Council ownership, and is included in the council's rolling programme of investment. The centre suffers from several problems including ageing buildings and public open space, inadequate and poorly designed service areas, inflexible retail units and coupled with changes in shopping habits this has resulted in a decline of the area. The Council is committed to the regeneration and redevelopment of High View, and considers that the site is also suitable for new housing provision as part of a mixed use scheme including housing, retailing, services and community facilities. The 2011 High View Supplementary Planning Document outlines the Council's vision for the future of the area and sets out the masterplan to guide the sustainable redevelopment of the centre. This policy is in conformity with borough wide objective 11 to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the borough's neighbourhood, and local Hatfield Objective 1. This approach is also in line with Policy SP 5 in the Centres, Services and Facilities chapter.

## University of Hertfordshire

**15.27** The purpose of this policy is to guide the future development and management of the University of Hertfordshire.

### Policy SP 21

#### University of Hertfordshire

The Council will seek to maximise the economic development and community benefits associated with the presence of the University of Hertfordshire in terms of the provision of employment opportunities, investment in the local area, the provision of shared cultural and sports facilities and in enhancing the skills of the population, but will seek to minimise its impact on the surrounding area.

The Council will support proposals for the enhancement of the University's teaching and learning environment and of its campus facilities subject to the following key principles:

- Proposals being consistent with a Masterplan which has been agreed by the Council, working with the University and other key stakeholders, which satisfactorily addresses

the impact on the surrounding area in terms of traffic, noise, pollution, car parking and visual appearance;

- Working with the University to develop and implement the approved travel plans and parking strategies to improve the situation on the local road network;
- Concentrating new student accommodation on campus wherever possible;
- Maintain links between the University, local businesses and the community sector, in terms of economic development, information sharing and learning programmes, to ensure that the University continues to contribute to the local economy and social inclusion in the borough.

## Justification

- 15.28** The University is a major employer in the area as well as a provider of sports and cultural facilities to which the local community has access. Its continued role in providing a valuable educational service as well as an economic benefit to the local area is essential for the future prosperity of Welwyn Hatfield.
- 15.29** However, along with the positive aspects of the University being located in the borough, there are also some issues which have arisen from its expansion. In particular the presence of a large number of students has led to a significant increase in the number of family homes being converted to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and an increasing pressure on parking which has had a detrimental impact on the visual appearance and character of certain areas. The issue of Houses in Multiple Occupation is addressed in Policy SP 7 Housing Type and Mix and through a Supplementary Planning Document.
- 15.30** Changes taking place within higher education and the wider economy mean that the University has developed a masterplan, referred to as the 2020 Estates Vision. The Council has approved the use of 2020 Estates Vision (and associated documents) as a material planning consideration to be taken into account in the determination of future planning applications.
- 15.31** This policy is consistent with borough wide objectives 3, 12 and 13 as well as local Hatfield Objectives 4 and 7 which seeks to maximise the benefits of the University, whilst balancing the accommodation needs of students with the needs of other residents.

## Implementation

- 15.32** To better manage the growth and concentration of HMOs, the Council has made an Article 4 Direction which covers the whole of Hatfield and consequently planning permission is now required to turn a dwelling house into an HMO for three to six occupants. The Council has also produced the Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD to provide guidance on the criteria for assessing planning applications.

# Hatfield

## New Dwellings in Hatfield

### Policy SADM 26

#### New dwellings in Hatfield

In accordance with Policies SP 2 and SP 3, the following sites are allocated for development in Hatfield.

#### Strategic sites

Site	Location	Proposed uses	Dwelling capacity	Delivery within plan period
SDS5	North West Hatfield	Residential-led mixed use	1,750	0-15 years

#### Other key sites

Site	Location	Proposed uses	Dwelling capacity	Delivery within plan period
HS36	1-9 Town Centre	Retail-led mixed use	71	0-5 years
HS37	High View	Residential-led mixed use	140	0-5 years
HS9	Land at Onslow St Audreys School, Howe Dell	Residential	86 net	0-5 years
HS10	Garages at Hollyfield	Residential	8	0-5 years
HS11	Land at South Way	Residential	120 (+ 2FE Primary School)	0-10 years
HS13	Land to the rear of Filbert Close	Residential	39	0-5 years
HS14	L Kahn Manufacturing site, Wellfield Road	Residential	62	6-10 years
HS38	Meridian House	Residential	11	0-5 years
HS42	College Lane (North)	Residential	115	6-10 years
HS41	Minster Close	Residential	91	0-5 years
HS39	Link Drive	Residential	80	0-5 years
HS40	Lemsford Road (Site H)	Residential	32	0-5 years

Development of SDS5 will be subject to the provisions set out within policy SP 22 below in addition to other relevant Local Plan policies.

Proposals for the allocated sites will need to have regard to the site-specific considerations set out in the table below in addition to other relevant planning policy, planning objectives and other material considerations.

## Justification

**15.33** In line with the Settlement Strategy, sites have been allocated in the Plan to deliver around 2,500 new dwellings in and around Hatfield. Each site has a number of considerations that need to be taken into account including those set out in the table below.

**Table 10 - Site-specific considerations: Hatfield**

Site	Site specific considerations
HS36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mitigate noise from the adjacent Queensway/Wellfield Road and surrounding town centre uses</li> <li>As a mixed-use site, the design of development needs to mitigate potential noise and odour conflicts</li> <li>Potential for contaminated land which would require remediation</li> <li>The scale of the proposed development should respect the setting of Hatfield House</li> <li>Potential need for a bat assessment to determine presence and potential impacts</li> <li>Whilst the site is not in a designated Area of Archaeological Interest, there is still need for archaeological caution as the site is situated on the medieval route from Hertford to St Albans</li> </ul>
HS37	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to High View Supplementary Planning Document</li> <li>Development should be appropriately designed to respect the setting of the grade II listed Church of St John the Evangelist</li> </ul>
HS9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Howe Dell is the preferred means of access to the site</li> <li>Waste water infrastructure upgrades</li> <li>Potential need for air and noise pollution assessments and mitigation due to nearby sewage pumping station</li> <li>Potential for contaminated land which would require remediation</li> <li>Noise from the adjacent East Coast Main Line railway</li> <li>Potential protected species on the site, notably bats which are known to have been present on the site</li> <li>Mitigate any potential heritage impacts on Hatfield House Historic Park and Garden or on Old Hatfield conservation area and its setting</li> <li>Equivalent or better replacement playing field provision should be made off-site, or alternatively, mitigation could be undertaken in the form of new and/or enhanced sports facilities that would be available for community use on the adjoining Onslow St Audrey school site if it can be demonstrated that the needs for the sports facilities clearly outweigh the loss of the playing fields.</li> </ul>
HS10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential for contaminated land which would require remediation</li> <li>Mitigate potential noise pollution from South Way</li> </ul>
HS11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>South Way road junction to access the site will require significant upgrades</li> <li>Mitigate impact on adjacent wildlife site and site ecology</li> <li>Mitigate air and noise pollution from the A1(M) and South Way</li> <li>Mitigation potential impact on Water End SSSI</li> <li>Easement for public rights of way</li> <li>Waste water infrastructure upgrades</li> <li>Provision of land for a new 2FE Primary School site and playing field</li> <li>Access to be provided through the housing allocation from South Way</li> <li>A master-plan led approach to landscaping the site should be followed, including the protection of existing trees/hedgerows where possible. Tree planting along the western site boundary, outside but adjoining the southern site boundary and also along the ridgeline to the south, should be included.</li> </ul>

## Hatfield

Site	Site specific considerations
HS13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mitigate noise pollution from adjacent hotel and nearby A1001 and A1(M)</li> <li>Mitigate ecological impacts, considering the wildlife potential of the site</li> </ul>
HS14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potential need for junction improvements on Wellfield Road to facilitate increased traffic flow</li> <li>Mitigate noise pollution from Wellfield Road</li> <li>Potential for contaminated land which would require mitigation</li> <li>Waste water infrastructure upgrades</li> <li>Potential need for a bat assessment to determine presence and potential impacts</li> </ul>
HS38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A noise survey and report may be required at planning application stage due to proximity to Town Centre uses.</li> </ul>
HS39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noise and air quality survey and report may be required (proximity to Queensway)</li> <li>Heritage Impact Assessment may be required (proximity of Hatfield House)</li> </ul>
HS40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heritage Impact Assessment may be required (proximity of Hatfield House)</li> <li>Site located within Ground Source Protection Zone</li> <li>Noise survey and report may be required (proximity to swimming pool plant equipment)</li> </ul>
HS41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mitigate noise pollution from Bishops Rise. A noise report may be required at planning application stage</li> <li>Potential for nesting birds/roosting bats in trees / reptiles in pond to the north</li> <li>Site located within Ground Source Protection Zone</li> </ul>
HS42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An air quality survey and report may be required (proximity to A1(M))</li> <li>An acoustic buffer and single aspect (habitable rooms) design may be required</li> <li>Preliminary Ecological Survey and report may be required (potential for nesting birds/roosting bats in trees / reptiles in rough vegetation)</li> <li>Site located within Ground Source Protection Zone and Surface Water flood risk affects part of the site</li> <li>Wastewater infrastructure upgrades likely to be required</li> </ul>

### Strategic Development Site in Hatfield

**15.34** This policy allocates land north west of Hatfield for development in accordance with the growth and settlement strategy of the Plan.

#### Policy SP 22

##### North West Hatfield - SDS5

Land at north west Hatfield is allocated for development in this Local Plan to accommodate approximately 1,750 new homes over the plan period.

A masterplan setting out the quantum and distribution of land uses, access, sustainable design and layout principles will be agreed by the Council, working with the landowners and other key stakeholders. The Masterplan, which will be informed by the Strategy Diagram in Figure 14 below, will form the basis of a Supplementary Planning Document which will provide further guidance on site specific matters. Any application for development should be preceded by and consistent with the masterplan.

The site will be planned comprehensively to create a new sustainable neighbourhood incorporating principles of high quality design.

In accordance with the relevant policies of this Local Plan the site will provide:

- A wide mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, including a minimum of 25% of all units as affordable housing unless it can be robustly demonstrated that such a proportion would not be viable; housing for older people; and serviced plots of land to contribute towards meeting evidenced demand for self-build and custom housebuilding;
- Gypsy and Traveller provision sufficient to accommodate a total of 15 pitches (with 4 of these pitches off-site at site HS33/GTLAA08);
- A neighbourhood centre in an accessible location to meet the day-to-day retail needs of new residents;
- An employment area in a visible and accessible location in accordance with an up-to-date assessment of need;
- Community facilities, including healthcare and leisure facilities;
- A new secondary school site of up to 8 forms of entry (with expansion potential to 10 FE) and associated playing facilities east of Green Lanes. The site will be made available early in the build period;
- Provision of 3 forms of entry at primary school level, in the form of new schools within SDS5 and /or linked to the secondary school as an 'all through school' and/or in the form of an expansion of Green Lanes primary school. All schools should provide for the dual use of facilities for community purposes;
- Sustainable transport measures including the improvement of pedestrian links, cycle paths, passenger transport and community transport initiatives;
- Suitable access arrangements and any necessary wider strategic and local highway mitigation measures, including to address impacts on Coopers Green Lane, Green Lanes, the A1001 and locations at or around Junction 4 of the A1(M). Off-site highway works required in connection with the development of this site will require a new or improved cycle/pedestrian footbridge or underpass facilities above or below the A1(M).
- Formal and informal open spaces for leisure and recreation, including play areas, sports fields, allotments and community orchards. Spaces will contribute to wider ecological networks including a strategic green infrastructure corridor from St Albans through to Hertford. As such, spaces should:
  - be accessible to both new and existing communities;
  - provide north-south and east-west connections, providing upgraded routes for walkers and cyclists;
  - provide safe routes for wildlife, protecting and enhancing wildlife assets;
  - balance the needs of recreation and nature, providing suitable animal habitats and undisturbed areas.



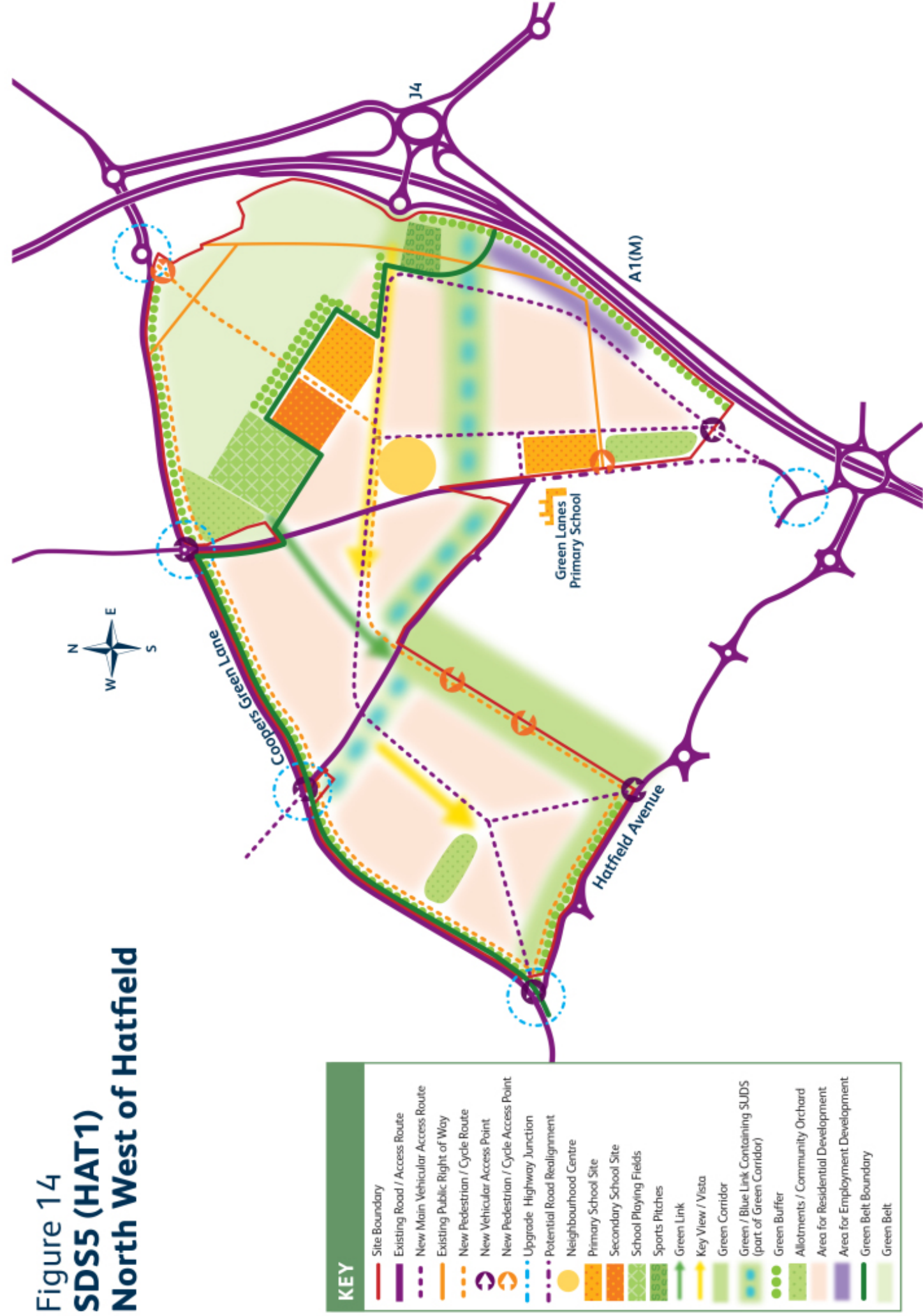
## Hatfield

- Conservation and, where appropriate, enhancement of heritage assets and their settings, in particular the setting of Old Cottage, through careful masterplanning and appropriate mitigation measures, having regard to the findings of the Heritage Impact Assessment;
- Landscaping and planting;
- Necessary new utilities infrastructure, in particular upgrades to the local sewerage network and electricity supply network, also including integrated communications infrastructure to facilitate home-working; and
- Sustainable drainage and provision for flood mitigation.

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

The developer must demonstrate the extent of the mineral that may be present and the likelihood of prior extraction in an environmentally acceptable way has been fully considered. As a minimum, an assessment of the depth and quality of mineral, together with an appraisal of the consequential viability for prior extraction without prejudicing the delivery of housing within the plan period should be provided.

**Figure 14**  
**SDS5 (HAT1)**  
**North West of Hatfield**



## Hatfield

### Justification

- 15.35** The allocation at Strategic Development Site SDS5 is the largest in the Local Plan. This allocation makes it possible to develop a sustainable community with associated neighbourhood shopping, employment and community facilities. In addition to new primary school capacity, SDS5 will provide a site for a new secondary school to serve the new populations of SDS5 as well as other parts of Hatfield. The secondary school site, with its associated playing fields, and a wider area of green space, will occupy the majority of the part of the site east of Green Lanes, providing a buffer area to the A1(M) and limiting any effects of coalescence between SDS5 and the settlements of Stanborough and Welwyn Garden City. Significant green infrastructure associated with SDS5 will contribute to the wider green corridor proposed in Policy SP 12 of this Plan.
- 15.36** It is important to prevent the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral resources (which is a requirement of national policy and the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan) whilst ensuring that the site can be developed for housing during the plan period. It is for this reason that the developer is being required to consider, as a minimum, the opportunistic use of some minerals for development within the site needs to have been considered.
- 15.37** Given the size of the housing allocations at SDS5, significant traffic growth is forecast to occur on the local and principal road networks in the vicinity of the site by the end of the Plan period. Sustainable transport options are therefore key to the satisfactory development of the sites, as part of a comprehensive package which will also include road improvements along Coopers Green Lane, at Stanborough, and around Junction 4 of the A1(M). Significant upgrades to sewerage and other utility infrastructure will also be required. This policy supports the spatial vision and borough-wide objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 12.

## Woolmer Green

**16.1** Woolmer Green is located to the very north of the borough, between the settlements of Oaklands and Mardley Heath and Knebworth (in North Hertfordshire district). There is no railway station in Woolmer Green; however one is located in Knebworth less than a mile away. The village is served by a primary school, pubs, playing fields, a community hall, a church, and a small employment area Employment Area, EA10. The 2011 Census estimated the population of Woolmer Green at 1,400; 1.2% of the borough total.

### Planning objectives for Woolmer Green

**16.2** When considering development proposals in Woolmer Green, the Council will take the following local objectives into account, alongside the borough wide objectives:

- Ensure sufficient infrastructure capacity, including primary school provision and wastewater capacity, in parallel with the development process to support sustainable growth.
- Protect playgrounds, the community and village halls, allotments, ponds, playing fields and woodlands.
- Maintain the provision of employment land to protect and enhance the vitality and viability of Woolmer Green as a working village.
- Maintain housing choice.
- Maintain and, where possible, enhance the character of Woolmer Green ensuring all development is well-designed and sympathetic to its local setting.
- Support the provision of a community orchard.

### Site Allocations in Woolmer Green

**16.3** The site allocated for development in Woolmer Green is set out in Policy SADM 27 below.

#### Policy SADM 27

##### Woolmer Green

In accordance with policies SP 2 and SP 3 the following site is allocated for development in Woolmer Green:

Site	Location	Use	Dwelling Capacity	Delivery within plan period
HS15	Land east of London Road	Residential	150	0-10 years
HS43	51-53 London Road	Residential	34	6-10 years

Proposals for the allocated site will need to have regard to the site-specific considerations set out in the table below in addition to other relevant planning policy, planning objectives and other material considerations.

## Woolmer Green

**Table 11 - Site-specific considerations: Woolmer Green**

Site	Site-specific considerations
HS15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieving satisfactory visibility splays</li> <li>• Landscape buffer along northern boundary, to offset the impact of the development on the wider landscape and help define the Green Belt boundary</li> <li>• Landscape buffer to the east to protect setting of adjacent listed building</li> <li>• Heritage Impact Assessment at planning application stage</li> <li>• Provision of substantial woodland planting to the north of the development site in order to define a long term robust Green Belt boundary and to protect the Green Belt's open character, as well as providing screening to existing employment buildings between the site and London Road.</li> <li>• Provision of a vehicular access between this site and site HS43 to ensure good quality connectivity and permeability in line with SADM 3 'Sustainable Transport for All'</li> <li>• Archaeological field evaluation may be required and appropriate conditions imposed subject to findings</li> </ul>
HS43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of a vehicular access between this site and site HS15 to ensure good quality connectivity and permeability in line with SADM 3 'Sustainable Transport for All'</li> <li>• A contaminated land survey would be required at planning application stage</li> <li>• Noise survey and report required at planning application stage (proximity to B197)</li> <li>• Preliminary Roost Assessment required at planning application stage, given the proximity to known bat roosts</li> </ul>

### Justification

**16.4** In order to provide for housing growth, sites that are key to the delivery of the growth strategy set out in Policy SP 2 have been allocated in the Plan. Woolmer Green is a small excluded village and consistent with Policy SP 3, a site has been allocated to allow for a limited amount of development compatible with the settlement's place within the hierarchy. An allowance has also been made for a small shop (farm/convenience shop) and ancillary café to help improve the range of facilities in the village. This policy will be taken into account in the determination of planning applications. It supports the spatial vision and borough-wide objectives 1, 2, 4, 7 and 11.

## Oaklands & Mardley Heath

**17.1** Oaklands & Mardley Heath is a large village astride the B197 between Woolmer Green and Welwyn in the north of the borough. The settlement takes part of its name from Mardley Heath, which is a large woodland to the north of the settlement. It is a predominately low density residential area with large houses and gardens, of differing architectural styles. Large parts of the village can only be accessed by private roads which are often unmade, with differing land gradients which contribute to its informal character. The village has access to a small range of services, facilities and public transport. The 2011 Census estimated the population of Oaklands & Mardley Heath at 3,000; 2.7% of the borough total.

### Planning objectives for Oaklands & Mardley Heath

**17.2** When considering development proposals in Oaklands & Mardley Heath, the Council will take the following local objectives into account alongside the borough-wide objectives:

- Protect and maintain the character of Oaklands & Mardley Heath.
- Identify and secure solutions to deliver necessary infrastructure improvements, in parallel with the development process to support sustainable growth.
- Protect facilities and services which provide an important community function and support the adaptation of existing facilities where community benefits can be enhanced.
- Widen housing choice, delivering a range of housing types, sizes and tenures to help meet housing needs and demand.
- Work with the Parish Council to help implement priorities identified in any Neighbourhood Plan.

### Site Allocations in Oaklands and Mardley Heath

**17.3** The sites allocated for development in Oaklands and Mardley Heath are set out in Policy SADM 28 below.

#### Policy SADM 28

##### Oaklands & Mardley Heath

In accordance with policies SP 2 and SP 3, the sites below are allocated for development within Oaklands & Mardley Heath:

Site	Location	Use	Dwelling Capacity	Delivery within plan period
HS16	Land at 2 Great North Road and to the rear of 2-12a Great North Road	Residential	25	0-10 years
HS32 (GTLAA04)	Four Oaks, Great North Road	Gypsy and Traveller site	6 pitch extension	0-5 years

Proposals for the allocated sites will need to have regard to the site-specific considerations set out in the table below in addition to other relevant planning policy, planning objectives and other material considerations.



## Oaklands & Mardley Heath

**Table 12 - Site-specific considerations: Oaklands & Mardley Heath**

Site	Site-specific considerations
HS16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both sites should be brought forward together as a comprehensive development</li> <li>• Multiple land owners with an interest in the site (OMH5) will need to work jointly to bring the site forward, alongside OMH8.</li> <li>• Mitigate air and noise pollution from the A1(M) and B197. Noise and air quality reports required at planning application stage</li> <li>• Retain and protect northern wooded area</li> </ul>
HS32 (GTLAA04)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mitigate air and noise pollution from A1(M) and B197</li> </ul>

### Justification

**17.4** In order to provide for housing growth, sites that are key to the delivery of the growth strategy set out in Policy SP 2 have been allocated in the Plan. Oaklands & Mardley Heath is a small excluded village and, consistent with Policy SP 3, SADM 28 allocates sites for development in Oaklands & Mardley Heath to allow for a limited amount of development compatible with the growth and settlement strategy of the Local Plan. SADM 28 supports the spatial vision and borough-wide objectives 1, 2, 4, 7 and 11. The sites have been allocated on the Policies Map. This policy and associated table will be taken into account in the determination of planning applications. It is anticipated that they could all be delivered within the first 10 years of the plan period.

- 18.1** Welwyn is a large excluded village in the northern half of the borough. It is an ancient settlement built round a ford at a bend of the River Mimram, and in Roman times it was on the major road between St Albans and Colchester - an excavated bathhouse to a Roman villa can now be seen in a vault under the A1(M). The village has a varied architectural style, with a historical core and some more modern outskirts. The historical core of Welwyn is a Conservation Area and there are a significant number of listed buildings within the village. The 2011 Census estimated the population of Welwyn at 3,500; 3.2% of the borough total.
- 18.2** The village is bounded by the A1(M) motorway to the east with direct access at Junction 6. There is no railway station in Welwyn; the nearest station is Welwyn North, which is located in the village of Digswell around a mile away to the east of the A1(M). Welwyn has frequent bus services linking to a number of towns. The village centre has a good range of shops, some offices and other services and facilities. A school planning area covers the villages of Welwyn, Digswell, Oaklands & Mardley Heath and Woolmer Green. Each village has its own primary school. The nearest secondary school to Welwyn village is in Welwyn Garden City.

### Planning Objectives for Welwyn

- 18.3** When considering development proposals in Welwyn, the council will take the following local objectives into account, alongside the borough-wide objectives:
- Conserve and enhance the historic environment, ensuring that development is well designed, affording appropriate weight to the importance of designated heritage assets.
  - Ensure sufficient infrastructure capacity, including primary school provision, in parallel with the development process to support sustainable growth.
  - Ensure that development does not have a significant adverse effect on the operation of Junction 6 of the A1(M).
  - Work with the Parish Council to help take forward priorities identified in Neighbourhood Plans.
  - Deliver a range of housing types, sizes and tenures to help meet housing needs and demand.
  - Maintain the vitality and viability of the village centre.
  - Retain off-street parking facilities in the village centre and support the provision of bus services and cycleways between villages to maintain and enhance accessibility to the village.

## Welwyn

### Site Allocations in Welwyn

18.4 Sites allocated for development in Welwyn are set out policy SADM 29 below.

#### Policy SADM 29

##### Welwyn

In accordance with policies SP 2 and SP 3 the sites below are allocated for development in Welwyn:

Site	Location	Use	Dwelling Capacity	Delivery within plan period
HS18	The Vineyards	Residential	30	0-5 years
HS19	Sandyhurst	Residential	30	0-5 years
HS20	School Lane	Residential	9	0-5 years

Proposals for the allocated sites will need to have regard to the site-specific considerations set out in the table below in addition to other relevant planning policy, planning objectives and other material considerations.

**Table 13 - Site-specific considerations: Welwyn**

Site	Site-specific considerations
HS18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achievement of sufficient visibility splays in each direction.</li> <li>SuDs for surface run-off from access roads, car parking and amenity areas with the requisite number of treatment stages to prevent the pollution of groundwater.</li> <li>Appropriate design, layout and mitigation measures to deliver satisfactory internal and external noise levels and healthy residential environments.</li> <li>Opportunity to retain and protect trees. Compensatory planting if trees are lost as a result of development</li> <li>Phase 1 ecological survey and (possibly) a reptile survey. Ecological compensation may be required</li> <li>Provide a tree screen within the site along the western and northern boundaries adjoining the Local Nature Reserve, designed to protect its ecological value, and provide a robust and defensible Green Belt boundary</li> </ul>
HS19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SuDs for surface run-off from access roads, car parking and amenity areas with the requisite number of treatment stages to prevent the pollution of groundwater.</li> <li>Proximity to A1(M) - Air quality survey and report required.</li> <li>Appropriate design, layout and mitigation measures to achieve satisfactory internal and external noise levels and healthy residential environments.</li> <li>Opportunity to retain and protect trees. Compensatory planting if trees are lost as a result of development.</li> <li>Habitat potential. Phase 1 ecological survey and (possibly) a reptile survey. Ecological compensation may be required.</li> </ul>
HS20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visibility currently sub-standard - enhanced splays will be required.</li> <li>SuDS for surface run-off from access roads, car parking and amenity areas with the requisite number of treatment stages to prevent the pollution of groundwater.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sequential approach to layout and the use of SuDS to suitably manage surface water flood risk to, within and from the site.</li> <li>• Pockets of trees are a landscape feature and may provide habitats for birds. Phase 1 habitats survey required.</li> <li>• Opportunity to retain and protect trees. Compensatory planting if trees are lost as a result of development.</li> <li>• Archaeological field evaluation may be required and appropriate consideration subject to findings.</li> <li>• Enhance the hedgerows along the north and north western boundaries with tree planting within the site to provide a robust and defensible Green Belt boundary and screen from wider views.</li> </ul>
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## Justification

**18.5** In order to provide for housing growth, sites that are key to the delivery of the growth strategy set out in Policy SP 2 have been allocated in the Plan. Welwyn is a large excluded village and consistent with Policy SP 3, sites have been allocated to allow for a limited amount of development compatible with the settlement's place within the hierarchy. The policy allocates sites for development in Welwyn in accordance with the growth and settlement strategy of the Plan. It supports the spatial vision and borough-wide objectives 1, 2, 4, 7 and 11. The sites have been allocated on the Policies Map. It is anticipated that they could all be delivered within the first 5 years of the plan period.

## Digswell

**19.1** Digswell is a small village to the north of Welwyn Garden City on the opposite side of the Mimram Valley. The residential areas are typically low density with larger houses and gardens. Welwyn North railway station is located within the village, which is on the East Coast Main Line with direct links to London, Cambridge and Peterborough. The village is largely residential but does contain a small number of shops, a pub, a village hall, a church and a primary school. The 2011 Census estimated the population of Digswell at 1,600; 1.5% of the borough total.

### Planning objectives for Digswell

**19.2** When considering development proposals in Digswell, the Council will take the following local objectives into account, alongside the borough-wide objectives:

- Review and continue to use the Digswell Character Appraisal in decision making.
- Maintain the character and widen the choice of housing available in Digswell.
- Preserve the setting of the Grade II\* listed Digswell Viaduct.

**19.3** There are no sites allocated for development in Digswell.

### Justification

**19.4** Whilst the village of Digswell is excluded from the Green Belt, no suitable opportunities have been identified for housing or other growth. No sites have therefore been allocated for development.

## Welham Green

**20.1** Welham Green is a large village to the south of Hatfield. The village has a varied character of older and newer housing and a relatively large and established employment area. The village has access to a wide range of services, facilities and public transport including access to rail services along the East Coast Main Line and Great Northern Route, and access to the A1000 to the east. Hatfield House Park and Garden is a significant area of woodland and historic parkland that lies immediately to east of the village. The 2011 Census estimated the population of Welham Green at 2,800; 2.5% of the borough total.

### Planning objectives for Welham Green

**20.2** When considering development proposals in Welham Green, the Council will take the following local objectives into account alongside the borough-wide objectives:

- Ensure sufficient infrastructure capacity, including primary school provision and wastewater capacity, in parallel with the development process to support sustainable growth.
- Maintain a supply of employment land to provide local job opportunities.
- Work with the Parish Councils to help take forward priorities identified in Neighbourhood Plans.
- Widen housing choice, delivering a range of housing types, sizes and tenures to help meet housing needs and demand.
- Maintain the vitality and viability of the village centre.

### Site Allocations in Welham Green

**20.3** Sites allocated for development in Welham Green are set out in SADM 30 below.

#### Policy SADM 30

##### Welham Green

In accordance with Policies SP 2 and SP 3, the following sites are allocated for development within Welham Green:

Site	Location	Use	Dwelling/floorspace capacity	Delivery within plan period
HS35 (GTLAA01)	Foxes Lane, Dixons Hill Road	Gypsy and Traveller	12 pitches	0-5 years
SDS7	Marshmoor	Class E(g) and Residential	Approximately 40,500sqm of Class E(g) employment floorspace and around 100 dwellings	0-10 years
HS44/45	Land at Welham Manor and west of Station Road	Residential	84	0-5 years
HS46	Land at Dixons Hill Road	Residential	120	6-10 years



## Welham Green

Development of site SDS7 will be subject to the provisions set out within Policy SP 23 in addition to other relevant planning policy, planning objectives and other material considerations.

Proposals for site HS35 will need to have regard to the site-specific considerations set out in the table below in addition to other relevant planning policy, planning objectives and other material considerations.

**Table 14 - Site-specific considerations: Welham Green**

Site	Site-specific considerations
HS35 (GTLAA01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flood Risk Assessment will be required to assess the risk of surface water flooding and fluvial flood risk from the adjacent ordinary watercourse</li> <li>Mitigate noise pollution from the railway</li> <li>Secure any necessary upgrades to waste water infrastructure</li> </ul>
SDS7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refer to Policy SP 23</li> </ul>
HS44/HS45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both sites should be brought forward together as a comprehensive development</li> <li>Primary access from Station Road, Secondary access (pedestrians/cyclists and emergency vehicles) from Welham Manor</li> <li>Heritage Statement/Impact Assessment is required (proximity of Listed Building)</li> <li>Sensitive treatment of boundary either site of access from Station Road will be required to protect amenity of adjoining residents</li> <li>Retain and protect trees, particularly along the site's southern and western boundaries, together with additional planting to create a robust and defensible Green Belt boundary and to mitigate any impact on the openness of the Green Belt</li> <li>Sites lie within an SSSI impact risk zone. Development will trigger a Natural England consultation at planning application stage</li> </ul>
HS46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site lies within an SSSI impact risk zone. Development will trigger a Natural England consultation at planning application stage</li> <li>Provision of planting within the western and northern boundaries of the site to create a robust and defensible Green Belt boundary and to create a landscaped buffer to the adjoining wildlife site</li> </ul>

### Justification

**20.4** Welham Green is a large excluded village and consistent with Policies SP 2 and SP 3, policy SADM 30 allocates sites to allow for a limited amount of development compatible with the settlement's place within the hierarchy. This policy and Table 14 will be taken into account in the determination of planning applications. It supports the spatial vision and borough-wide objectives 1, 2, 4, 7 and 11.

**20.5** Strategic Development Site SDS7 will be key to the delivery of the growth strategy, in particular, the site is expected to deliver a significant amount of employment floorspace. Policy SP 23 for the Marshmoor Policy Area supports economic prosperity, inward investment and will help create a range of jobs, consistent with Policy SP 8.

- 20.6** Site HS35 (GTLAA01) is an extension to an existing Gypsy and Traveller site. The provision of 12 additional pitches (taking the overall number of pitches to 15) will be key to the delivery of the target set out in Policy SP 7 and the growth and settlement strategy set out in policies SP 2 and SP 3. It is expected to be delivered within the first 5 years of the plan period.

## Marshmoor Policy Area

- 20.7** Policy SP 23 guides development at one of the borough's strategic sites, which is key to the delivery of the growth strategy of the Plan.

### Policy SP 23

#### Marshmoor Policy Area - SDS7 and wider area

A Supplementary Planning Document for the Marshmoor Policy Area, informed by the Strategy Diagram in Figure 15 below, will be prepared to guide development of SDS7 and other land within the wider Marshmoor Policy Area, which are both defined on the Policies Map. The final quantum and phasing of development within SDS7 will be set out within the Supplementary Planning Document.

Site SDS7 is allocated for a mixed use development comprising 40,500sqm of Class E(g) employment floorspace and 100 no dwellings (Class C3) providing affordable accommodation for those employed on the site. It is intended that this site will primarily be for employment and that the accommodation will form part of the offer of the site to business users, helping them to attract skilled employees and thereby assisting in bringing jobs to this site at an early date. To ensure that this link is retained, the accommodation requirement will be secured through a planning condition or a legal agreement. Once completed, all new Class E(g) development on SDS7 will be afforded the same policy protection as that provided by Policy SADM10.

Development proposals within site SDS7 and the Marshmoor Policy Area will be expected to be consistent with the Supplementary Planning Document, and as a minimum will also be required to comply with the provisions and guidelines set out below:

#### Access and movement

- i. The primary vehicular access into SDS7 should be taken from the Dixons Hill Road/A1000 roundabout;
- ii. A new secondary vehicular access, or the intensification of an existing access, onto the A1000 to serve SDS7 will only be supported if there is a demonstrable need to facilitate development of SDS7 and any access proposals comply with the Council's movement and highways policies;
- iii. Proportionate provision or contribution toward improvements, in line with the Welwyn Hatfield Infrastructure Delivery Plan, must be made for:
  - a. Accessibility and movement throughout the Marshmoor Policy Area;
  - b. Connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists between the Marshmoor Policy Area and Welham Green Railway Station and village centre, as well as other origins and destinations in the wider area that have a demonstrable relationship with

## Welham Green

- the proposal, such as other town and neighbourhood centres, local primary schools and educational establishments; and
- c. Rail and bus transport accessibility of the Marshmoor Policy Area and to support wider sustainable travel initiatives, including improved bus stop facilities and support for bus services that serve the Marshmoor Policy Area.

### Heritage, Landscape, Ecology and Design

- iv. A Heritage Impact Assessment may be required for development proposals, depending on their location, scale and relationship to Hatfield House and Hatfield House Historic Park and Garden. Impact Assessments should inform the siting, layout, scale and overall design of development so that substantial harm to heritage assets is avoided, any less than substantial harm is minimised, and opportunities to improve the setting of those heritage assets are implemented;
- v. Proposals will be required to adopt a high quality landscape-led approach to design, with significant planting of tree and shrub species that maintain and enhance a verdant setting across the Marshmoor Policy Area and enhance biodiversity;
- vi. Proposals will be expected to retain a substantial set back of buildings from the A1000 in order to help mitigate heritage impacts and noise and air pollution;
- vii. Proposals on land within close proximity to the A1000 will be required to incorporate high quality and extensive tree planting within those areas closest to the A1000 in order to help mitigate heritage impacts, improve the setting of Hatfield House Park and Garden, create and improve the general appearance of a countryside setting, and maintain the perceived separation between the Marshmoor Area and Hatfield when travelling along the A1000;
- viii. The design of the main vehicular access into SDS7, boundary treatments along the northern side of Dixons Hill Road, and the scale of built development and its relationship with the Dixons Hill Road frontage should create a verdant and spacious gateway and route into and out of Welham Green that also reflects the open countryside context to the south and east of Dixons Hill Road;
- ix. Building heights should be restricted to minimise heritage impacts, and in general should be lower in the eastern and far northern areas of the site;
- x. Boundaries to existing residential development are appropriately designed and landscaped to protect the amenity of those residents, particularly where the proposed development adjacent to them will be for employment uses;
- xi. The siting and design of development, including the use of landscaping and buffers, should support the mitigation of air and noise pollution arising from the railway and A1000 in order to minimise the need for mechanical ventilation within buildings; and
- xii. Proposals should provide appropriate protection, and where possible enhancement, of identified wildlife sites and critical environmental assets that would be affected, notably Millwards Park and the Marshmoor Lane Grassland Strip Wildlife Sites and Water End SSSI.

### Flood Risk and Drainage

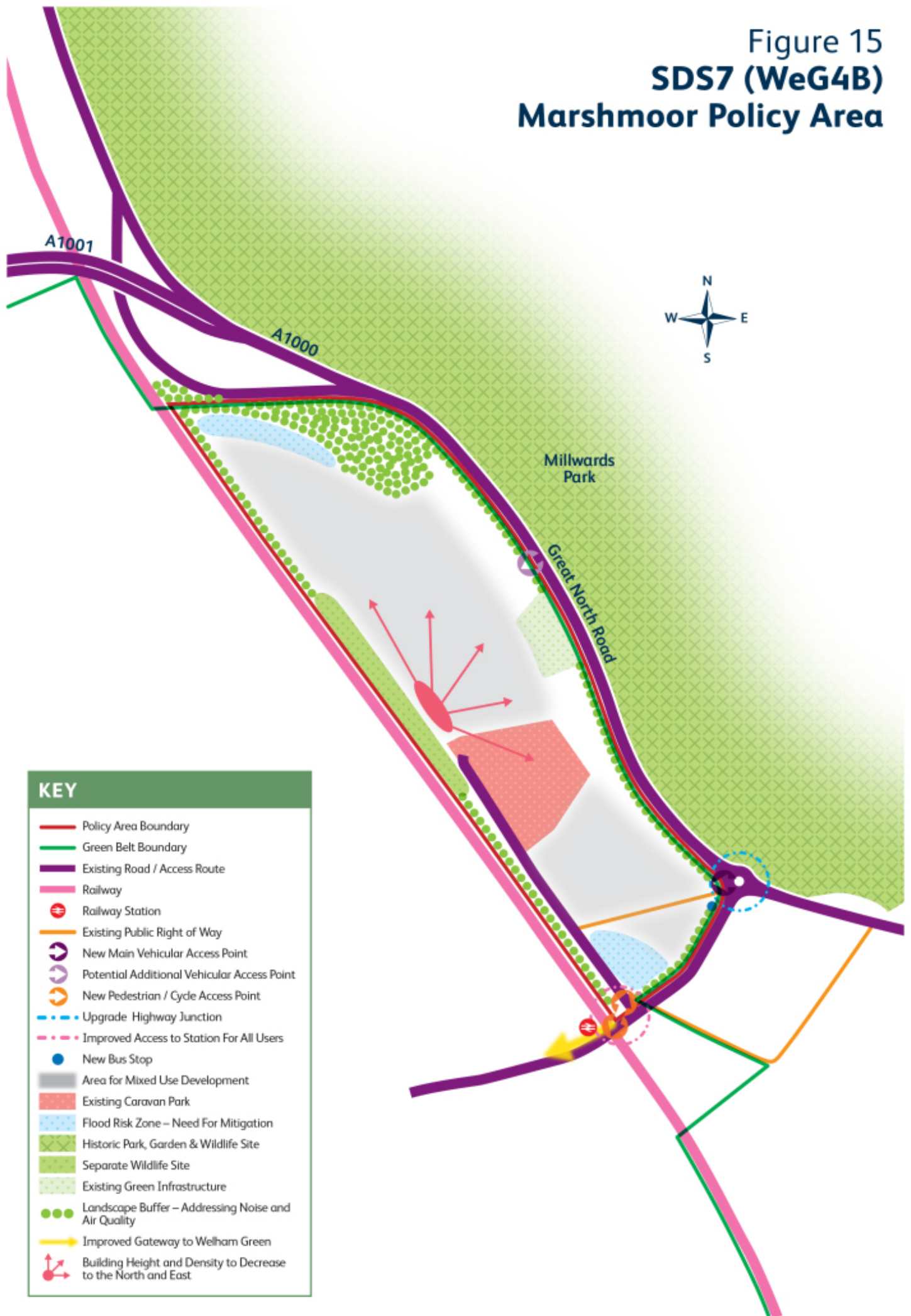
- xiii. A more detailed understanding of flood risk associated with SDS7 will need to be established via a Flood Risk Assessment, informed by detailed hydraulic models where necessary, that takes account of all sources of flood risk, in particular fluvial flood risk from ordinary watercourses and surface water flood risk. Any Flood Risk Assessment should be informed by the Council's latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 report and Level 2 assessment of the Marshmoor Area. The

- recommendations and guidance set out in the Level 2 assessment for the Marshmoor Area should be considered and addressed in full;
- xiv. The use of Sustainable Drainage Systems should be prioritised to manage surface water runoff and flood risk;
  - xv. A sequential approach to layout within SDS7 should be adopted so that built development is confined to Flood Zone 1 and avoids areas identified as being at high risk of surface water flooding, taking account of the vulnerability of the proposed uses and mitigation afforded by the Sustainable Drainage System;
  - xvi. Flood risk management solutions, including Sustainable Drainage Systems, within the site should seek to reduce flood risk to third party land and the wider area wherever possible; and
  - xvii. Necessary new utilities infrastructure, in particular upgrades to the local sewerage network, are provided.

### Justification

- 20.8** This policy will be taken into account in the determination of planning applications. It supports the spatial vision and borough-wide objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 11.
- 20.9** SDS7 will deliver a mixed use development comprising 4.1 hectares of employment uses (Class E(g)) together with a limited amount of residential development. The Council's preference is for E(g)(ii) employment development related to life sciences and research. Proposals for other uses within Class E(g), in particular E(g)(iii), would need to give particular regard to protecting the amenity of existing residential occupiers within the Marshmoor Policy Area, in terms of the the design of development and operational impacts such as air quality, noise and traffic generation. The Council would in particular welcome residential development that would support and be occupied by those employed on the site within the life sciences and research industry.

Figure 15  
**SDS7 (WeG4B)**  
**Marshmoor Policy Area**





**20.10** The Marshmoor Policy Area primarily covers SDS7 but also takes in a wider area beyond the allocation which has also been released from the Green Belt. A key characteristic of this wider area is large residential and commercial plots which run along the Great North Road. These plots, once removed from the Green Belt, have a greater potential for change than previously possible which may result in them becoming more intensively developed over time. This raises the possibility of incremental change to the wider setting of the Hatfield House Historic and Park and Garden and wildlife site. As such, a policy approach to this wider area has been adopted in order to ensure development of these plots other land in the policy area will improve the setting of the Hatfield House Historic Park and Garden and avoid or mitigate wider landscape and ecological impacts, principally through the siting and design of built development and the quality of landscaping proposals.

**20.11** Therefore, the delivery of SDS7 will need to address the specific issues set out in SP 23 alongside other material considerations in order to bring forward successful development on SDS7 and to ensure development in the wider area is acceptable. These are primarily:

- Access and connectivity: The land east of the railway line does not have a network public rights of way or usable footpaths or cycle paths which development of the site could make use of. Therefore, key to the success of any development proposals within the Marshmoor Policy Area, and in particular SDS7, will be the creation of routes through the Marshmoor Policy Area for those wishing to travel without the use of a motor vehicle throughout the site and into Welham Green. At present, connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists and wheelchair users between Marshmoor and Welham Green west of the railway line is poor due to the lack of appropriate crossing points and suitable routes.
- Heritage and landscape: This Grade I registered park and garden lies immediately to the east of SDS7 and the Marshmoor area. Development of SDS7 and other development in the Marshmoor area will be expected to improve this part of the setting of the heritage asset and at least mitigate any adverse impacts upon its significance .
- Flood risk: At present, the northern and southern parts of the Marshmoor Policy Area and SDS7 in particular are prone to surface and fluvial flood risk with the considerable potential to affect the siting and design of development. Flood risk will be expected to be key consideration in the layout and design of proposals, and where possible any flood risk mitigation measures should seek to improve flood risk within and beyond the policy area if possible.

**20.12** SP 23 also provide a basic framework for the Marshmoor Policy Area SPD which will also guide development in the wider area.

### Implementation

**20.13** Site SDS7 will be delivered in accordance with Policy SP 23 which sets out a more detailed policy framework for this strategic site. In accordance with Policy SP 23, development at SDS7 will be further guided by a Supplementary Planning Document, which will be prepared for the Marshmoor Policy Area. It is anticipated that site SDS7 could be delivered within the first 10 years of the plan period.



## Brookmans Park

**21.1** Brookmans Park is large excluded village in the south of the borough adjacent to the Great North Road (now the A1000) between Welham Green and Little Heath. The area has relatively formal, regular street layouts with predominately large detached housing at low densities. It has a village centre located at the very western end of the village. The village has access to a wide range of services, facilities and public transport, and the Royal Veterinary College's Hawkshead Campus is also located close to the village to the west. The 2011 Census estimated the population of Brookmans Park at 3,600; 3.2% of the borough total.

### Planning objectives for Brookmans Park

**21.2** When considering development proposals in Brookmans Park, the Council will take the following local objectives into account alongside the borough-wide objectives set out elsewhere in the Local Plan:

- Identify and deliver necessary infrastructure improvements, in particular primary school provision and wastewater capacity, in parallel with the development process to support sustainable growth.
- Improve the choice of housing with a range of types, sizes and tenures, including smaller affordable homes for young people, smaller homes for older residents and specialist accommodation such as a care home or sheltered housing.
- Maintain the vitality and viability of the village centre.

### Site Allocations in Brookmans Park

**21.3** Sites allocated for development in Brookmans Park are set out in SADM 31 below.

#### Policy SADM 31

##### Brookmans Park

In accordance with policies SP 2 and SP 3, the following sites are allocated for development within Brookmans Park.

Site	Location	Use	Dwelling Capacity	Delivery within plan period
HS21	Land west of Golf Club Road	Residential	14	0-5 years
HS22	Land west of Brookmans Park Railway Station	Residential	428 (+ 2FE Primary School)	0-10 years
HS23	Land east of Golf Club Road	Residential	10	0-10 years

Development of HS22 will only be allowed to proceed once:

- Provision of the necessary additional primary school capacity to support this level of growth has been demonstrated and secured; and
- A technical solution for a new pedestrian and cyclist bridge over the railway has been agreed, and necessary legal and financial provisions to deliver it put in place.

Proposals for the allocated sites will need to have regard to the site-specific considerations set out in the table below in addition to other relevant planning policy, planning objectives and other material considerations.

**Table 15 - Site-specific considerations: Brookmans Park**

Site	Site-specific considerations
HS21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain and protect trees and woodland</li> <li>Enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety and reduce vehicle speeds on Golf Course Road and at the St George's Wood Road junction</li> </ul>
HS22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Realignment of Station Road will be required to provide safe access to the site</li> <li>Provide green infrastructure corridors along the Ray Brook and adjacent to Brick Kiln Wood, with at least a minimum 15m buffer to Brick Kiln Wood and preferably wider to avoid and mitigate any harm to the ecology of the ancient woodland</li> <li>Adopt a flood risk sequential approach to site layout and incorporate SuDs to address surface water flood risk to, within and from the site</li> <li>Mitigate noise pollution from the railway</li> <li>Secure any necessary upgrades to waste water infrastructure</li> <li>Avoid and mitigate any potential impact on Water End SSSI</li> <li>A landscaped screening bund to the north of the southern boundary to screen the site from Hawkshead Road and the public footpaths to its north</li> <li>Provision of land for a new 2FE Primary School site and playing field</li> <li>Off-site highway works required in connection with the development of this site will require a new or improved cycle/pedestrian footbridge over the railway line</li> </ul>
HS23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure any necessary upgrades to waste water infrastructure</li> <li>Retain and protect TPO tree and other notable trees of value</li> <li>Enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety and reduce vehicle speeds on Golf Course Road and at the St George's Wood Road junction</li> <li>Enhance the hedge along the northern boundary of the site to provide a robust and defensible Green Belt boundary</li> </ul>

**21.4** In line with advice from the Highway and Fire and Rescue Authorities, there will be a single point of access for site HS22. A secondary access using Bradmore Lane will be resisted as it would need to be widened and upgraded which would change its rural character.

**21.5** The combined dwelling capacity estimate of 24 across sites HS21 and HS23 reflects the constrained nature of Golf Club Road, which would serve both developments and the need to ensure that the Highways Authority is satisfied that site access and the highway network can safely support development, the deliverability of either site is not compromised, and other considerations such as primary school capacity, design and ecology are taken into account.

### Justification

**21.6** In order to provide for housing growth, sites that are key to the delivery of the growth strategy set out in Policy SP 2 have been allocated in the Plan. Brookmans Park is a large excluded village and consistent with Policies SP 2 and SP 3, Policy SADM 31 allocates sites to allow for a limited amount of development compatible with the settlement's place within the hierarchy. This policy and associated table will be taken into account in the determination of planning applications. It supports the spatial vision and borough-wide objectives 1, 2, 4, 7 and 11.

## Brookmans Park

### Implementation

**21.7** The sites have been allocated on the Policies Map. It is anticipated that all allocated sites could all be delivered within the first 10 years of the plan period.

**22.1** Little Heath effectively forms a northern extension of the town of Potters Bar, located to the south of the borough in the administrative area of Hertsmere. The area is characterised by relatively formal, regular street layouts with detached housing at low densities. There is a primary school, a parish hall and a pub in Little Heath; however it is well served by adjacent Potters Bar for other facilities such as shops, a railway station and secondary schools. The 2011 Census estimated the population of Little Heath at just under 1,000; 0.9% of the borough total.

### Planning objectives for Little Heath

- 22.2** When considering development in Little Heath, the borough council will take the following local objectives into account, alongside the borough-wide objectives:
- Ensure sufficient infrastructure capacity, including primary school provision and wastewater capacity, in parallel with the development process to support sustainable growth
  - To promote the provision of community facilities and services.
  - To provide better walking facilities between Little Heath and Brookmans Park (A1000 Great North Road)

### Site Allocations in Little Heath

**22.3** Sites allocated for development in Little Heath are set out in Policy SADM 32 below.

#### Policy SADM 32

##### Little Heath

In accordance with policies SP 2 and SP 3 the following sites are allocated for development in Little Heath:

Site	Location	Use	Number of dwellings	Delivery within plan period
HS25	Land north of Hawkshead Road	Residential	35	0-10 years
HS47	Videne and Studlands, Hawkshead Road	Residential	63	0-5 years

Proposals for the allocated sites will need to have regard to the site-specific considerations set out in the table below in addition to other relevant planning policy, planning objectives and other material considerations.

## Little Heath

**Table 16 - Site-specific considerations: Little Heath**

Site	Site-specific considerations
HS25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The southern wooded boundary and Hawkshead Road should be retained, and woodland management used to enhance ecology</li> <li>• Retaining and enhancing the landscape buffer along Hawkshead Road will help to preserve local ecology and mitigate the impact of development on the Grade II Listed Osborne House</li> <li>• Provide a substantial tree buffer along the northern boundary of the site to provide a robust and defensible long term Green Belt boundary.</li> </ul>
HS47	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the need to achieve a satisfactory access both sites should be brought forward on a comprehensive basis</li> <li>• A Heritage Statement/Impact Assessment will be required (proximity to Grade II Listed Osborne House)</li> <li>• Mitigate any harm to the setting of Osborne House</li> <li>• A preliminary Ecological Assessment will be required (potential for nesting birds/roosting bats and reptiles in rough vegetation)</li> <li>• A noise survey will be required at planning application stage</li> <li>• Retention and protection of existing trees, particularly along the green belt boundary and Hawkshead Road. Additional planting as necessary to create a strong and robust Green Belt boundary, and to minimise the impact on the openness of the Green Belt</li> </ul>

### Justification

**22.4** In order to provide for housing growth, sites that are key to the delivery of the growth strategy set out in Policy SP 2 have been allocated in the Plan. Little Heath is a small excluded settlement and consistent with Policy SP 3, two sites have been allocated to allow for a limited amount of development compatible with the settlement's place within the hierarchy.

**23.1** Cuffley is situated in the south east of the borough, between Potters Bar in Hertsmere borough and Cheshunt in Broxbourne borough. Cuffley is the largest of the borough's villages, but it has relatively poor connections to the rest of Welwyn Hatfield. The 2011 Census estimated the population of Cuffley at 4,300; 3.9% of the borough total. The railway station is served by the Hertford Loop Line which goes north via Hertford to Stevenage and south via Enfield into London. Cuffley has a mainly formal street layout with predominately large houses at low densities. Cuffley has a large village centre with a good range of shops and other facilities and also has an allocated employment area and a primary school. Northaw and Cuffley Parish Council has prepared a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish area.

### Planning objectives for Cuffley

**23.2** When considering development proposals in Cuffley, the borough council will take the following local objectives into account, alongside the borough wide objectives:

- Identify and secure solutions to deliver the necessary infrastructure improvements, in particular primary school provision and wastewater capacity, in parallel with the development process to support sustainable growth.
- Work with the Parish Council to help take forward priorities identified in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- To protect local community facilities.
- Manage the volume of vehicles through the village.
- Maintain the supply of employment land to provide local job opportunities.
- Deliver a range of housing types, sizes and tenures to help meet housing need and demand, such as sheltered housing for older people and starter homes for young people.
- Provide high quality, well designed housing which reflects local character.
- Sustain and where possible, improve the vitality and viability of the village centre.

### Site Allocations in Cuffley

**23.3** Sites allocated for development in Cuffley are set out in Policy SADM 33 below.

#### Policy SADM 33

##### Cuffley

In accordance with SP 2 and SP 3 the following sites are allocated for development within Cuffley.

Site	Location	Use	Number of dwellings	Delivery within plan period
HS26	36 The Ridgeway and land to the rear	Residential	6	0-5 years
HS27	Land at The Meadway	Residential	60	0-5 years
HS28	Land south of Northaw Road East	Residential	121	0-5 years
HS29	Land north of Northaw Road East	Residential	73	0-5 years
HS30	Wells Farm, Northaw Road East	Residential	75	0-5 years



## Cuffley

Proposals for the allocated sites will need to have regard to the site-specific considerations set out in the table below in addition to other relevant planning policy, planning objectives and other material considerations.

**Table 17 - Site specific considerations: Cuffley**

Site	Site-specific considerations
HS26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Semi-rural context and character means a low density would be appropriate in this location.</li> <li>• Creation of a buffer between the site and the adjacent wildlife site and ancient woodland to the north-east.</li> <li>• Nesting birds and reptiles are likely to be present on the site. A Phase 1 Habitat Survey will be necessary to assess the site's ecological value.</li> <li>• To minimise impacts on the ancient woodland, there should be caution over human influences such as lighting.</li> </ul>
HS27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nature conservation measures to include a buffer to Cuffley Brook and the ecosite</li> <li>• Avoid and mitigate any potential impact on Northaw Great Wood and Wormley Hoddesdonpark Wood SSSIs</li> <li>• Mitigate noise pollution from the railway</li> <li>• A contaminated land survey and report would be required, and if necessary suitable remediation carried out</li> <li>• Provision of a substantial tree screen outside but adjoining the eastern HS27 boundary of the site to create a robust and defensible Green Belt boundary</li> <li>• Retain and strengthen the tree screen along the Cuffley Brook to include at least an 8m riparian buffer and to mitigate the impact on the open Green Belt beyond</li> <li>• As appropriate, contribute to highway improvement proposals within and around Cuffley, and as required improvements to the junction of the Meadway with Station Road</li> </ul>
HS28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities to create nature conservation buffer with railway bank and southern woody boundary. Reptile survey may be required at planning application stage.</li> <li>• Overhead HV power lines (National Grid) will require an easement corridor either side</li> <li>• Due to the potential for development in Cuffley to be subject to overland flow, a specific flood risk assessment of the site will be required at planning application stage, and SUDs design would need to take specific account of topography of the area to manage overland flows.</li> <li>• Avoid and mitigate any potential impact on Northaw Great Wood and Wormley Hoddesdonpark Wood SSSIs</li> <li>• Mitigate noise pollution from the railway</li> <li>• A master-plan led approach to new planting along the south-western boundary of the site to ensure the creation of a robust and defensible Green Belt boundary, incorporating existing tree belt/hedgerows where possible</li> <li>• As appropriate, contribute to highway improvement proposals within and around Cuffley</li> </ul>
HS29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid and mitigate any potential impact on Northaw Great Wood and Wormley Hoddesdonpark Wood SSSIs</li> <li>• Potential for habitat creation and wildlife corridors should be explored as part of any planning application</li> <li>• Need for pre-application investigations due to the proximity of Area of Archaeological Significance, with recording and preservation if required</li> <li>• A specific flood risk assessment of the site would be required at planning application stage and SUDs design would need to take specific account of topography to manage overland flows.</li> <li>• Need for a Traffic Assessment</li> <li>• Pedestrian crossing facilities would be required in the vicinity of the site</li> </ul>

Site	Site-specific considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provision of a substantial tree screen adjoining the western boundary to create a robust and defensible Green Belt boundary</li> <li>● As appropriate, contribute to highway improvement proposals within and around Cuffley</li> </ul>
HS30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Need for pre-application investigations due to the proximity of Area of Archaeological Significance, with recording and preservation if required</li> <li>● Avoid and mitigate any potential impact on Northaw Great Wood and Wormley Hoddesdonpark Wood SSSIs</li> <li>● A contaminated land survey and report would be required, and if necessary suitable remediation carried out</li> <li>● A specific flood risk assessment of the site would be required at planning application stage.</li> <li>● SuDs design would need to take specific account of topography of the area to manage overland flows.</li> <li>● Provision of a substantial tree screen adjoining the western boundary to create a robust and defensible Green Belt boundary</li> <li>● As appropriate, contribute to highway improvement proposals within and around Cuffley</li> </ul>

## Justification

- 23.4** In order to provide for housing growth, sites that are key to the delivery of the growth strategy set out in Policy SP 2 have been allocated in accordance with the growth and settlement strategy of the Plan. Cuffley is a large excluded village and consistent with Policy SP 3, sites have been allocated to allow for a limited amount of development compatible with the settlement's place within the hierarchy.

## Rural Areas

### Rural Development

- 24.1** The rural parts of the borough make up the majority of its land area, and lie within the Green Belt. The 2011 Census estimated the population of the borough's rural areas at 5,500; around 5.0% of the borough total. The majority of this population live in the small villages washed over by the Green Belt. As well as large areas of open countryside, the rural areas contain a number of rural enterprises, educational establishments, small villages and hamlets and areas of sporadic ribbon development. Areas close to towns and villages provide opportunities for access to the countryside for recreation. The purpose of this policy is to support the economy of the rural areas whilst also recognising the importance of affording protection to the borough's critical environmental assets.

#### Policy SP 24

##### Rural Areas

In the rural areas the Council will support diverse and sustainable farming and other countryside-based enterprises and activities which contribute to rural economies and meet the principles of sustainable development. Limited infill development and the re-use or conversion of existing buildings will be supported where these are compatible with their Green Belt location, the settlement strategy and the protection of critical assets.

The Council will support the retention of local facilities and the provision of new facilities and infrastructure which are important to the social and economic well-being of rural communities.

### Justification

- 24.2** This policy contributes towards the borough's spatial vision and borough-wide objective 10 and is consistent with the settlement hierarchy. The Local Plan directs the majority of development towards the towns and larger villages that are excluded from the Green Belt as these are the most sustainable locations for development. Outside of these excluded settlements, however, there is a need to ensure the rural areas remain economically and socially viable in a manner which does not impact on the openness of the Green Belt or the purposes of including land within the Green Belt, or damage critical assets. Policy SP 7 also makes provision for Rural Exception Sites, which are small scale affordable housing sites in or adjoining Green Belt villages where this addresses an identified local need.

### Implementation

- 24.3** Proposals for development in the Green Belt will be assessed against the criteria set out in Policy SADM 34. Major Developed Sites within the Green Belt are designated on the Policies Map.

## Development within the Green Belt

### Policy SADM 34

#### Development within the Green Belt

Within the Green Belt as defined on the Policies Map planning permission will be granted for development in accordance with national policy and other policies in this plan subject to the following criteria.

#### Openness and purposes of the Green Belt

Proposals for the re-use of buildings, appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and development on previously developed sites will need to demonstrate that they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. In assessing the impact of the proposal the Council will take into account:

- i. Whether the site lies within a parcel of land which makes a significant or partial contribution to one or more purposes of the Green Belt;
- ii. Whether the scale of development or activity would compromise that purpose;
- iii. The level of impact on both the physical and visual openness of the Green Belt.

#### Extensions and Alterations to Existing Buildings

Applicants will need to demonstrate that extensions and alterations to a building would not result, either individually or cumulatively, in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building<sup>(76)</sup>, in terms of bulk, scale, height or massing. Account will be taken of the extent to which the extension and/or alteration would be consistent with the general pattern of development and character of the area and its prominence within the landscape.

#### Replacement Buildings

Replacement buildings will be permitted provided that the new building is not materially larger than the one it replaces in terms of its footprint, height and external volume and is in the same use. In assessing the impact of the proposal the Council will take into account:

- i. The location of the replacement building and its prominence within the landscape;
- ii. The extent to which the proposed development is consistent with the general pattern of development and character of the area

Consideration will be given to the removal of permitted development rights where considered necessary to protect the openness of the Green Belt.

76 Original is a building as it existed on 1st July 1948 or as originally built after 1st July 1948. Where an existing building has replaced an original building any increase in size over the original building will be taken into account in assessing cumulative impact

## Rural Areas

### Major Developed Sites

Four Major Developed Sites have been designated and comprise substantial areas of previously developed land in the Green Belt. They are

- New Barnfield Resources Centre, Hatfield
- Queenswood School Brookmans Park
- The Royal Veterinary College, North Mymms and
- Monks Walk and Knightsfield School, Welwyn Garden City

Their boundaries have been defined on the Policies Map and identify the extent of the area within which limited infill development or replacement buildings could occur. Proposals would need to comply with the criteria set out above and other than minor development, should come forward in the context of a Masterplan which has been agreed by the Council.

### Change of Use

Proposals for change of use will need to demonstrate that they are consistent with both the settlement and rural areas strategies as well as the principles of sustainable development set out in the Local Plan. Existing buildings must be of permanent and substantial construction and capable of conversion without the need for substantial demolition and rebuilding.

Where a change of use of land is proposed applicants will need to demonstrate that the proposal would preserve the openness of the Green Belt and minimise any impact on the landscape.

### Infill Development

Limited infill development will be permitted in villages within the Green Belt provided:

- i. It is within a continuous built up frontage;
- ii. It does not extend the existing 'built up' area of the village into the open countryside;
- iii. It would not result in the loss of a view or vista which makes a significant contribution to the character of the settlement; and
- iv. It is small scale and would not result in the provision of more than four dwellings (net)

### Agricultural and Forestry Dwellings

Both permanent and temporary residential accommodation will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there is a functional need for on-site accommodation and there is no other suitable accommodation on site or in the surrounding area.

## Justification

- 24.4** The NPPF places great significance upon the protection of the Green Belt from inappropriate development, and sets out a number of provisions to direct planning decisions for a wide range of development proposals within the Green Belt. SADM 34 reflects these provisions and where necessary provides supplementary criteria to aid applicants and the decision maker. The policy supports the spatial vision of the Local Plan and borough wide objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 10.

### **Agricultural and Forestry dwellings**

- 24.5** New agricultural and forestry dwellings will only be permitted where it is essential for rural workers to live at or in the immediate vicinity of their workplace and there is no existing accommodation available locally. Whether such accommodation is essential will depend on the needs of the enterprise concerned. Where proposals are acceptable planning conditions will be used to secure occupational use to secure its intended use in perpetuity.

### **Previously developed sites, and facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and cemeteries**

- 24.6** Development resulting in limited infilling of a previously developed site would be expected to remain within the outer envelope of the existing building or group of buildings that are to be retained, and should not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt or the purposes of including land within it than the existing development.
- 24.7** Ancillary buildings for use in conjunction with outdoor sports, recreational and cemetery use will need to demonstrate that the building is limited in scale to that which is essential to the main use and that circumstances dictate that it would not be practical to re-use or adapt any existing buildings on the site. Buildings should be located and designed to minimise their visual impact on the openness of the Green Belt. Cemeteries should be well located in relation to the road network and public transport facilities. Other types of burial sites such as for woodland and green burials may also be acceptable. Facilities associated with equestrian use, such as stables and ménages, should be located a suitable distance from residential accommodation.

### **Extension, alteration and replacement of buildings in the Green Belt**

- 24.8** It is acceptable, in principle, for dwellings within the Green Belt to be extended or replaced to meet the changing needs and circumstances of occupiers, where they are related to domestic needs or the needs of rural businesses. The acceptability of any proposed extension or replacement will be related to the size of the original building and is not dependent on the size of the plot or the general size of existing buildings.
- 24.9** In the case of extensions to residential dwellings these will need to avoid being disproportionate to the size of the original dwelling. Applications will be refused where the extension would either by itself or taken together with extant permissions and previous extensions make the extension(s) disproportionate to the original building. The appearance of any extensions on the character or appearance of the area will also be a significant factor in determining whether a proposal is acceptable.
- 24.10** In determining what would constitute a disproportionate extension to a building, a quantitative and qualitative assessment will be undertaken. In quantitative terms, proposals that would result in the footprint, volume and/or above ground external dimensions (height, width) of a building being 50% greater than the original building would generally be refused. However each case will be assessed on its own merits as there may be circumstances in which a particular proposal for an extension in excess of 50% may be proportionate and acceptable. Conversely circumstances may dictate that an extension would need to be significantly less than 50% greater than the original dwelling in order to be considered proportionate and acceptable in planning terms. Any increase in footprint, volume and/or external dimensions will also be considered



## Rural Areas

as part of a qualitative assessment of the design elements relating to scale, bulk and massing within the context of the site. This will determine the acceptability of any extension in relation to the size of the original dwelling including the impacts on the elevation to which it relates, its relationship to the original building, its location in the site and the wider context.

- 24.11** The volume and footprint of existing buildings to be demolished within the site may be offset against increases in volume and footprint taking into account their size, permanence, design and proximity to the building to be extended or replaced. Other existing structures within the site due to be demolished may be combined to 'offset' the increase. For example, a proposal for a replacement house may include an integral garage following demolition of an existing detached garage. In this case, the volume and footprint of the existing garage could be combined with that of the main house before establishing to what extent it could be enlarged.
- 24.12** Proposals to erect, extend or replace an incidental building within 5 metres of the main building will be treated as an extension to the main building. The extension or replacement of an incidental building sited more than 5 metres from the main building will be subject to the same criteria for assessment as for extension or replacement to the original building. Proposals for new free-standing incidental buildings sited more than 5 metres from the main building will be considered against the policy for new buildings in the Green Belt, not as extensions to existing buildings due to the separation between the built structures and the resulting lack of proximity.

### Limited infilling within villages

- 24.13** The borough contains villages which are 'washed over' by the Green Belt. In general, these villages are characterised by a linear pattern of built development being concentrated on and along the main road routes through the village, rather than a more uniform concentric built development spreading out from a village centre. Some of these have a dense pattern of built development along road frontages whereas others have generous spaces and gaps between buildings within the frontage. Some of the villages excluded from the green belt also have relatively dense built development, comparable to that within the excluded village, that immediately adjoins them.
- 24.14** For the purposes of SADM 34, limited infill development is defined as development within an otherwise substantially built up road frontage within the built up area of a village, for example filling a narrow gap between buildings or the redevelopment of an existing property and plot that are capable of taking a limited number of modest sized dwellings.

### Re-use of buildings and land

- 24.15** Support will be given for commercial reuses of buildings which benefit the rural economy. Any intensification in the use of a site should not be substantial and be kept to a minimum commensurate with its Green Belt location. Any new curtilages should be clearly defined and kept to a minimum.
- 24.16** A full structural survey will be required to demonstrate that buildings are capable of conversion without major alterations or rebuilding.

## Site allocations within the Rural Area

**24.17** In accordance with SP 2 and SP 3 the following sites are allocated for development within the borough's Rural Areas.

### Policy SADM 35

#### Site allocations within the Rural Areas

Site	Location	Use	Number of pitches	Delivery within plan period
HS33 (GTLAA08)	Barbaraville, Mill Green	Gypsy and Traveller site	4	0-10 years

Proposals for the allocated sites will need to have regard to the site-specific considerations set out in the table below in addition to other relevant planning policy, planning objectives and other material considerations.

**Table 18 - Site specific considerations: allocations within the Rural Area**

Site	Site-specific considerations
HS33 (GTLAA08)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access via the existing site will need to be fully investigated, as this may affect an existing pitch. If an existing pitch is affected/lost, a suitable replacement pitch will need to be provided onsite.</li> <li>An ordinary watercourse runs through the site - Flood Risk Assessment will be required.</li> <li>Mitigation measures such as SuDs may be required.</li> <li>Ground needs levelling given presence of mounds and bunds.</li> <li>Contaminated land survey may be required at planning application stage, with suitable remediation if necessary.</li> <li>Noise and air quality report at planning application stage given proximity to A414 and sewage treatment works.</li> <li>Potential for nesting birds and possibly reptiles - Stage 1 habitat survey may required at planning application stage.</li> <li>Four pitches on HS33 form an off-site contribution to the pitch requirement associated with site SDS5 - a total of 15 pitches are required for SDS5, four off-site and 11 within the wider SDS5 area</li> </ul>

### Justification

**24.18** In order to provide for housing growth, sites that are key to the delivery of the growth strategy set out in Policy SP 2 have been allocated in the Plan. National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites allows for sites to be inset within the Green Belt and this has been considered necessary due to the shortage of suitable sites elsewhere in the borough and in light of the currently assessed need for additional pitches. The sites have been allocated on the Policies Map. It is anticipated that they could all be delivered within the plan period. This policy will be taken into account in the determination of planning applications. It supports the spatial vision and borough-wide objectives 1 and 7.

## Neighbourhood Planning

- 25.1** Neighbourhood planning is a new tier of planning aimed at empowering communities to shape the development and growth of their local area. Local parish or town councils have been empowered by the Localism Act 2011 to lead neighbourhood planning in their communities. In areas without a parish or town council, new neighbourhood forums will be able to take the lead. In areas which are predominately commercial, a neighbourhood forum can be led by a business neighbourhood forum.
- 25.2** A neighbourhood plan can establish a vision for an area, include general planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood and they can allocate sites for development. They should be about local rather than strategic issues. If adopted, they will together with the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan, form part of the overall development plan for the borough and will be used in the determination of planning applications in that area.
- 25.3** Neighbourhood plans are not about preventing development, but are about positively planning for the future of an area. They must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan, consistent with the NPPF, be based on robust evidence, and demonstrate how they contribute to achieving sustainable development. A Sustainability Appraisal may be a useful way of doing this, and in some cases a Strategic Environmental Assessment may be required. Plans will be subject to an independent examination and referendum, before being formally adopted.

### Policy SP 25

#### Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood Plans should:

- Demonstrate how they contribute to the strategic objectives of the Local Plan and are in general conformity with its strategic policies;
- Clearly set out how they will promote sustainable development in accordance with the principles set out in Policy SP 1;
- Demonstrate how they have had regard to information on local need for new homes, jobs and facilities for their plan area, and the proportionate distribution of growth, as set out in Policy SP3.

#### Justification

- 25.4** This policy is consistent with both the Council's vision and the borough's Community Strategy for sustainable communities. It supports the spatial vision of the Local Plan and borough wide objectives 1 to 12.

#### Implementation

- 25.5** The process of making a neighbourhood plan is only the beginning. It will require support and continued work to deliver its vision and objectives. The implementation of Neighbourhood Plans will require Town/parish councils or neighbourhood/business forums to deliver the projects set out in the Neighbourhood Plan by working with the wider community and key stakeholders including Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council,

## Neighbourhood Planning

Hertfordshire County Council and other Local Authorities, developers, landowners, service providers, utility companies and local businesses to ensure the successful implementation of their Neighbourhood Plan.

# Implementation and Monitoring

# Implementation and Monitoring

## Local Plan Policies

- 26.1** This Local Plan is set out in sections focusing on different topics and geographical areas of the borough, however it is important to recognise that the Plan also needs to be viewed as a coherent whole and that its purpose is to deliver the spatial vision and strategic objectives set out in Chapter 3 of the document.
- 26.2** The delivery of the strategic objectives is a theme which runs throughout the Plan. The means of implementation of the strategic policies is set out in each section of the Plan - this includes the site allocation and development management policies.
- 26.3** The effectiveness of the policies in this Plan will be kept under review through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The Monitoring section at the end of this Chapter provides further detail about the monitoring targets and process.
- 26.4** Under the current planning system, methods of implementation generally fall under one of several headings:
- Application of the site allocations and development management (SADM) policies of the Local Plan;
  - Supplementary Planning Documents providing guidance and advice;
  - Other policies working alongside the Local Plan (for example Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Transport Plan);
  - Partnership working including public and private investment.
- 26.5** In this section of the document the aim is to draw together the various implementation strands and to focus on the themes of partnership working and flexibility which will be of key importance in delivering the objectives and spatial vision of the Plan.
- 26.6** In addition to the operation of the site allocations and development management policies of this Plan, the strategic housing or mixed-use allocations at SDS1 to 7 will be brought forward through a masterplanning process involving joint working with the landowners and other authorities or agencies as applicable in each case. The agreed masterplans may be adopted informally or as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).

## Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

- 26.7** The Council already has three adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) which will guide development at key regeneration locations within the Borough. These are the Broadwater Road West SPD (2008) which sets a framework for the mixed use redevelopment of the former Shredded Wheat site close to Welwyn Garden City town centre, the High View SPD (2010) which sets out proposals for the redevelopment of this large neighbourhood centre in southern Hatfield, and the Welwyn Garden City Town Centre North SPD (2015) which addresses the future of a key town centre site originally allocated in the 2005 District Plan for retail and residential development.
- 26.8** The Council also has a number of other adopted SPDs and guidance documents, covering a variety of specific topics:



## Implementation and Monitoring

- 26.9** The Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD (2012) provides a set of criteria for determining planning applications for changes of use to provide houses in multiple occupation. This document is one of a number of measures being taken to address housing and environmental issues in Hatfield particularly.
- 26.10** The Planning Obligations SPD (2012) sets out the Council's approach in seeking and entering into planning obligations for a range of purposes, and the level of contributions sought towards mitigating the environmental and social impacts of new development. The document recognises that a review of the Council's approach will be necessary to reflect the impact of the pooling restrictions contained in the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations (2010) on planning obligation payments. The Council's Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule was published in spring 2017 and was consulted upon in May - June 2017. The consultation informed the production of the Draft Charging Schedule (DCS), which was subject to an eight week public consultation running from September - November 2020. Although Welwyn Hatfield's CIL has not progressed as originally envisaged, the Council still intends to move to an adopted charging schedule as soon as possible. Once CIL has been adopted the Planning Obligations SPD will be updated.
- 26.11** The Council also has in place Supplementary Planning Guidance on parking standards (2004) and Supplementary Design Guidance (2005), both introduced in conjunction with the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan (2005). Both of these documents require review in due course in order to bring them up to date with current best practice on design and sustainable development, but will continue to be used to inform decisions on planning applications until such review takes place. The Council has published the Welwyn Garden City Town Centre Shopfront and Advertisement Design Guide to assist town centre businesses in the interpretation of the 2005 Supplementary Design Guidance.
- 26.12** The development management process itself is clearly a principal means of implementing the objectives contained in this Local Plan, and the SADM policies in the Plan will provide a detailed development plan basis for determining planning applications. The broader development management process encompasses pre-application discussions, Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) and the use of tools such as design review and sustainability checklists, as well as the determination of applications. The Council will also use special legislative tools (such as Article 4 directions and Local Development Orders) where justified by exceptional circumstances.

### Other Policies Working Alongside the Local Plan

- 26.13** From an implementation perspective, the Local Plan is intended to work in an integrated way with other adopted policies and strategies, whether of the Council or of other relevant public bodies.
- 26.14** Hertfordshire County Council, as highway authority and public transport authority, is responsible for the Local Transport Plan (LTP). LTP3 covers the period 2011 to 2031 and outlines a programme of transport schemes and initiatives to be delivered over the short, medium and longer terms. The timing of delivery is largely dependent on the availability of funding. Since 2014, work by the county Council has been underway on delivering a new spatial Transport Vision for Hertfordshire to 2050. This was initiated in view of changes in the local and national planning and transport context since the

## Implementation and Monitoring

current LTP3 was adopted in 2011, and the absence of a new generation of major transport schemes, since those detailed in previous local transport plans are now being delivered.

- 26.15** The County Council's 'Vision Stage 2 Report' (2015) outlined a number of major transport interventions based around different transport approaches to accommodate growth to 2031 (the period covered by most local plans), and different spatial scenarios beyond 2031. This work was subject to stakeholder engagement in late 2015, to seek views on the work to date and steer further work. The Transport Vision and Strategy is detailed in the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) building on the work undertaken and feedback from stakeholders.
- 26.16** Other strategies prepared either by the Council or by a range of other bodies have a relationship to the implementation of the Local Plan. This is particularly the case in connection with growth, and the infrastructure required to provide for expanded populations in enlarged urban or village areas. Examples of such strategies prepared by or on behalf of the Council on its own, or in partnership with other Councils, include the Green Infrastructure Plan (2011) (see Section 12 of this Local Plan), the Welwyn Hatfield Sports Strategy (2012) and the Community Facilities Strategy (2012). Examples of strategies prepared principally by other infrastructure providers include the various health strategies published by NHS England and the Clinical Commissioning Groups, Policing Plans prepared by the Hertfordshire Police Authority and the Water Resources Management Plan published by Thames Water Utilities.
- 26.17** A full list of relevant strategies, plans and programmes by theme, and their relevance for growth planning in Welwyn Hatfield, is contained in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) published in draft alongside this Local Plan.

### Partnership Working

- 26.18** Whilst this Local Plan sets out key planning policies to be implemented by the Council principally acting as local planning authority, the vision and strategic objectives of the Plan cannot be delivered without partnership working with and between a range of public, private and voluntary sector bodies.
- 26.19** In terms of infrastructure delivery to support growth, the Council will continue to work directly with infrastructure providers in refining and developing the IDP and its associated infrastructure delivery schedule to ensure that necessary infrastructure of all types is in place to support planned growth. The Council will also work through the Welwyn Hatfield Alliance (LSP) on such issues as promoting community health and well-being and community inclusion.
- 26.20** The Council will work with the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), joining with neighbouring authorities where necessary to promote positive economic outcomes in Hertfordshire as a whole and in Welwyn Hatfield in particular. Engagement with the LEP will be through the Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Planning Partnership, comprising local member representation from across the Hertfordshire authorities, also through appropriate sub-groups of the LEP board. The LEP has established a Strategic Infrastructure Programme Board which could play a key role in prioritising funding for major infrastructure projects in Hertfordshire.

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- 26.21** The Council will continue to work with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to prioritise and bring forward schemes for new affordable housing and key regeneration projects, particularly in the two town centres. Projects will be reviewed in discussion with the HCA from time to time. Also in the field of housing, and consistent with the Council's Housing Strategy, the authority will continue to work in partnership with multi-agency service providers and the local Gypsy and Traveller community to review accommodation needs.
- 26.22** The future of the town centres of both Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield is a vital element addressed in the Local Plan. The Welwyn Garden City Town Centre Partnership has been established, comprising representatives of business, residents, police and the Council and has an important part to play around issues of environmental improvement, community safety and marketing of the town centre. The Partnership is currently seeking to set up a Business Improvement District (BID) for Welwyn Garden City town centre. For Hatfield, the Council works with the Hatfield Town Team on a range of environmental, community and safety objectives and maintains a physical presence at the Hatfield Hub in a former town centre shop unit.
- 26.23** The Hatfield 2030+ project referred to elsewhere in this Plan is a key piece of work involving the Council, the Town Council, the County Council and other partners from the fields of business, housing and education provision locally in identifying projects to promote the renewal and regeneration of Hatfield. Stages 1 and 2 of this work have been completed and have led to the production of a strategic renewal framework. Stage 3, encompassing the work on detailed projects, is underway during the second half of 2016. The Hertfordshire LEP is playing an important role in part-funding this work, which will inform and where appropriate be integrated with the implementation of this Local Plan.
- 26.24** In seeking to provide new community and sports facilities the Council will work with partners including commercial providers, Better Leisure, Gosling Sports, Town and Parish Councils, sports clubs, Sport England, the YMCA, residents' groups, local religious groups, the InterFaith Group, NHS England, the University of Hertfordshire and Hertfordshire County Council.

## Monitoring

### Local Plan Monitoring

- 26.25** The effectiveness of the policies in this Local Plan will be monitored through the AMR, against a variety of indicators and targets (see below). Flexibility in the implementation of the policies in the Local Plan will be required in order to deal with the wider changes that will inevitably occur during its lifetime to 2036, making monitoring a crucial part of the Plan's implementation. Some examples of these potential wider changes include:
- Changes to national planning legislation, policy and advice with which the Local Plan is expected to remain consistent;
  - The decisions of other organisations, for example East Herts Council continues to support development east of Welwyn Garden City which is being masterplanned in conjunction with development sites in this Plan;
  - Economic downturns, which may restrict developers' ability to provide affordable housing or important contributions towards infrastructure and may even prevent some sites from being able to come forward for development at all. Economic

## Implementation and Monitoring

downturns could also affect the Council's ability to progress key regeneration projects such as Hatfield Town Centre;

- Changes in the availability of public funding, which may restrict the delivery of supporting infrastructure or again could prevent some sites from being able to come forward for development at all;
- Technological change, such as changes in building methods or the continuing advance of online retail which has significant spatial implications for town centres and development needs.

**26.26** The Council can respond to these challenges in various ways. In negotiating with developers on financial viability, the Council will employ accepted financial appraisal techniques (such as its bespoke version of the Three Dragons Toolkit) and commission its own specialist advice to assess the viability of proposed schemes on particular sites. In the case of retail provision, it is conceivable that new evidence will be required during the plan period as the Council's consultants currently consider it very difficult to project retail floorspace needs more than 10 years into the future. In the case of land for housing, Chapter 5 of the Plan sets out more detail on how the Council will respond to different rates of housing development in Welwyn Hatfield. The outcomes of the 2021 Census will also be crucial as part of this, in confirming the actual extent to which population has increased within the borough and whether the Plan's provisions for housing growth are sufficient.

**26.27** The Council, in engaging with its partners and the local community, can respond to issues identified through monitoring in a number of ways. It may be necessary to collect further evidence or commission new technical work first - for example an updated Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, or new Economy Study. This may result in the need to prepare new policy documents and planning guidance, or potentially to respond with other tools such as Article 4 Directions to limit the types of development that are possible without planning permission. In exceptional cases where these 'softer' responses would not be sufficient, it may also become necessary to carry out an early full review of the Local Plan.

### Sustainability Appraisal Monitoring

**26.28** Planning authorities are also required to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the Local Plan. The Sustainability Appraisal to this Plan has considered the foreseeable adverse environmental impacts of its plans and policies, and put forward suggested means of mitigation to lessen those impacts. Monitoring allows any unforeseen significantly adverse environmental impacts to be identified at an early stage as they occur, enabling them to be rectified accordingly.

**26.29** The Sustainability Appraisal recommends a number of indicators by which the environmental impacts of the Local Plan can be monitored. These are primarily contextual indicators. Many of the proposed indicators are already included in the Annual Monitoring Report - whilst some are considered to represent an excessive level of detail and/or would be very challenging to monitor effectively, others have been included as indicators below. Table 20 below indicates the Sustainability Objective appraisal to which each indicator relates, where relevant.

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### The Annual Monitoring Report

- 26.30** Monitoring is undertaken in a variety of ways and on an ongoing basis, but the main output of the monitoring process is the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), also known as an Authority Monitoring Report. Each AMR covers the financial year from 1 April to 31 March, and is generally published in the following December. The AMR follows the same chapter structure as the topic specific policies of this Plan and has three main purposes - acting as a record of the development that has taken place over the year, setting out projections and expectations for the future development of the borough, and reflecting on whether the development that has and will take place meets the Council's aspirations (notably those in the Local Plan) or is having an unforeseen environmental impact (against the Sustainability Appraisal). The AMR does this through a number of indicators, allowing progress to be tracked from year to year.
- 26.31** The Plan contains Strategic Policies (SPs) as well as Site Allocation and Development Management (SADM) Policies. The AMR will monitor how frequently each of these policies is used when determining planning applications, and when the Council's decisions on planning applications are appealed (Indicators LP1 and LP2). Over time this is able to show whether policies become relatively more or less effective, although caution is required when looking at less frequently used policies as some only apply to a single site and are not necessarily expected to be used often.
- 26.32** Many of the Plan's policies (primarily the SPs) effectively set out a 'framework' within which other policies sit, and others set out the Council's intention and requirements on a certain issue (such as those SADM policies with a primarily Development Management focus). However; others set out specific proposals, targets or thresholds which development should achieve. The AMR will include indicators for each of these policies, and in most cases monitor against targets either set out in the policies or derived from them.
- 26.33** In addition, the AMR contains a number of contextual indicators - for example borough population (Indicator BP1) and borough health (Indicator BP4). These do not directly relate to Local Plan policies, but are just as crucial in indicating how the borough's people and places are performing. They are also essential because they are contextual and most relate to issues outside the Council's direct control, these indicators will not have targets.
- 26.34** Table 19 below lists all of the policies in the Plan and whether or not they have a corresponding indicator in the AMR - in cases where they do, the table also sets out what that target is. The subsequent Table 20 then lists all of the AMR's indicators. It should be noted that the contextual indicators listed could be subject to a degree of change over the plan period, as most rely on data provided by third parties.

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**Table 19 - Local Plan Policies, Indicators and Targets**

Local Plan Policy	Policy Name	AMR Indicator	AMR Target
SP 1	Delivering Sustainable Development	HO3	<p><b>Before adoption:</b> 95% of new homes (gross) on previously developed land</p> <p><b>After adoption:</b> 38% of new homes (gross) on previously developed land</p> <p><b>Whole plan period:</b> 55% of new homes (gross) on previously developed land</p>
		EC2	<b>Whole plan period:</b> 60% of new employment floorspace (gross) on previously developed land
SP 2	Targets for Growth	CS1	<p><b>2016/17 to 2025/26:</b> 12,500sqm (net) of new retail floorspace.</p> <p><b>2016/17 to 2025/26:</b> 15-20% of new town centre comparison floorspace to be food and drink use classes.</p> <p>This will be kept under review, reflecting long term uncertainties of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on retail and town centres.</p>
		HO1	<b>Whole plan period:</b> Delivery of 15,200 new homes (net)
		HO6	<b>Ongoing:</b> Maintain a sufficient supply of development sites to cover a five year period, against the targets in Indicator HO1
		EC1	<b>Whole plan period:</b> 55,000sqm (net) of new employment floorspace
		EC4	<b>Ongoing:</b> Maintain a sufficient supply of development sites to meet the target in Indicator EC1
SP 3	Settlement Strategy	None	N/A
SADM 1	Windfall Development	HO2	<b>2026/27 – 2035/36:</b> Delivery of at least 139 new homes (net) as windfall per annum, total of 1,390 new homes (net) as windfall
SP 4	Transport and Travel	None	N/A
SADM 2	Highway Network and Safety	None	N/A
SADM 3	Sustainable Travel for All	None	N/A
SP 5	Quantity and Location of Retail Development	Monitored as part of Policy SP 2 (Growth) above.	
SADM 4	Development in Designated Centres	CS2	<p><b>Whole plan period:</b> No new comparison retail floorspace approved outside designated retail centres</p> <p><b>Ongoing:</b> Retention of at least 70% of Class E retail uses considered appropriate in town centres (by length) within town centre primary frontages</p>



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Local Plan Policy	Policy Name	AMR Indicator	AMR Target
			<p><b>Ongoing:</b> Retention of at least 30% of Class E retail uses considered appropriate in town centres (by length) within town centre secondary frontages</p> <p><b>Ongoing:</b> Retention of at least 50% of Class E retail uses considered appropriate in town centres (by number of units) within neighbourhood and village centres</p>
SADM 6	Shopfronts, Adverts and Signage	None	N/A
SP 6	Community Services and Facilities	CS7	<b>Whole plan period:</b> Net gain in community and leisure facility floorspace
SADM 7	New Community Services and Facilities and Losses of Facilities	None	N/A
SADM 8	Cemetery Extension at Southway	None	N/A
SP 7	Type and Mix of Housing	HO4	There is no specific target for the size and type of new dwellings.
		HO8	<p><b>Whole plan period:</b> At least 20% of all new homes (net) to be affordable</p> <p><b>After adoption:</b> Approximate 40% 1-bed, 25% 2-bed, 25% 3-bed and 10% 4-bed breakdown in size of new affordable homes</p>
		HO9	<p><b>Whole plan period:</b> Delivery of at least 200 new care home bedrooms</p> <p><b>Whole plan period:</b> At least 6% of all new homes (net) to be specifically restricted to occupation by older people</p> <p><b>After adoption:</b> At least 20% of all new homes (net) on sites of 5 or more dwellings to meet standards for accessible and adaptable dwellings</p>
		HO10	There is no specific target for numbers of people on the self-build register.
		HO11	There is no specific target for the monitoring of HMOs.
		HO12	<b>Whole plan period:</b> Delivery of at least 61 new pitches for the Gypsy and Traveller Community
SADM 9	Loss of Residential	None	N/A
SP 8	The Local Economy	Part monitored as part of Policy SP 2 (Growth) above	
		EC3	<b>After adoption:</b> No further loss of employment land to non-employment uses
SADM 10	Employment Development	None	N/A
SP 9	Place-Making and High Quality Design	HO5	There is no specific target for new dwelling density.
SADM 11	Amenity and Layout	None	N/A
SADM 12	Parking, Servicing and Refuse	EN12	There is no specific target for compliance with guideline parking standards.

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Local Plan Policy	Policy Name	AMR Indicator	AMR Target
SP 10	Sustainable Design and Construction	None	N/A
SADM 13	Sustainability Requirements	EN7	<p>There is no specific target for renewable energy generation in major new developments.</p> <p><b>After adoption:</b> All new non-residential development with floorspace of 1,000sqm or more to meet BREEAM 'Excellent' standard</p> <p><b>After adoption:</b> All new homes to achieve estimated water consumption of less than 110 litres per person, per day</p>
SADM 14	Flood Risk and Surface Water Management	None	N/A
SP 11	Protection and Enhancement of Critical Environment Assets	None	N/A
SADM 15	Heritage	EN1	<p><b>Ongoing:</b> No losses of protected heritage assets</p> <p><b>Ongoing:</b> No increase in the number of protected heritage assets 'at risk'</p>
SADM 16	Ecology and Landscape	EN2	<p><b>Ongoing:</b> No losses of protected natural assets</p> <p><b>Ongoing:</b> No worsening in the condition of protected natural assets</p>
SADM 17	Urban Open Land	EN4	<b>After adoption:</b> No development on designated Urban Open Land
SADM 18	Environmental Pollution	None	N/A
SP 12	Strategic Green Infrastructure	None	N/A
SP 13	Infrastructure Delivery	IN1	<b>Ongoing:</b> Contributions to supporting infrastructure in line with the Planning Obligations SPD
		IN2	<b>After adoption:</b> Delivery of the infrastructure projects set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, once published.
SP 14	New Schools	None	N/A
SP 15	The Historic Environment of Welwyn Garden City	None	N/A
SP 16	Welwyn Garden City Town Centre	None	N/A
SADM 19	Town Centre North Development Site	HS7	<p><b>After adoption:</b> Delivery of development which incorporates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 6,000sqm (net) new retail floorspace</li> <li>● At least 100 (net) new homes</li> <li>● A design which preserves and enhances Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area</li> <li>● No net loss of car parking</li> <li>● The rationalisation of Bridge Road East, including the removal of the current roundabout</li> <li>● New surface-level pedestrian crossings</li> </ul>

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Local Plan Policy	Policy Name	AMR Indicator	AMR Target
SADM 20	Welwyn Garden City Town Centre – The Campus, Parkway and Church Road	None	N/A
SADM 21	Housing Allocations in WGC	None	Monitored along with Policy SP 2.
SP 17	Mixed-Use Development Site at Broadwater Road West	SDS3 (Pea102, Pea02b and Pea02c)	<p><b>Whole plan period:</b> Delivery of development in accordance with the principles in the Broadwater Road West SPD, but to now incorporate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 1,863 new homes across Pea102, Pea02b and Pea02c</li> <li>• At least 5,800sqm (net) new Class E(g) employment floorspace</li> <li>• No more than 600sqm new convenience retail floorspace</li> <li>• A new hotel</li> <li>• A new GP surgery</li> <li>• New community use floorspace</li> <li>• 0.8ha of new urban space per 1,000 estimated residents</li> <li>• No significant loss to any of the heritage assets on the site, nor harm to their character and setting</li> <li>• Generation of at least 10% of the site's energy need through renewable sources</li> <li>• Improvements to public realm and traffic calming along Broadwater Road</li> <li>• Improvements to bus services serving the site</li> <li>• Improvements to the footbridge between the site and the town centre</li> <li>• Delivery of additional off-site primary school capacity to support development</li> </ul>
SP 18	North East of Welwyn Garden City	SDS1	<p><b>After adoption:</b> Delivery of development which incorporates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 870 new homes</li> <li>• A proportion of new homes being self build plots</li> <li>• 12 new Gypsy and Traveller pitches</li> <li>• A new convenience shop at an accessible location within the site</li> <li>• A new two form entry primary school and playing fields for dual use by the community</li> <li>• Sustainable transport measures to support development</li> <li>• Highway mitigation measures to support development</li> <li>• Necessary utilities improvements to support development</li> <li>• New formal and informal open space including play areas, sports pitches, allotments, community gardens and rights of way as part of the proposed Green Corridor</li> <li>• The creation of a structural landscaping area on the northern edge of the site to minimise visual impact</li> <li>• Habitat mitigation, protection and enhancement as part of the proposed Green Corridor - with the delivery of specific improvements adjacent to Hens Lane</li> <li>• A design which protects and enhances nearby heritage and natural assets, in particular Panshanger Historic Park and Garden and Tewinbury SSSI</li> </ul>

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Local Plan Policy	Policy Name	AMR Indicator	AMR Target
SP 19	South East of Welwyn Garden City	SDS2	<p><b>After adoption:</b> Delivery of development which within the boundary of Welwyn Hatfield* incorporates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 600 new homes</li> <li>• A proportion of new homes being self build plots</li> <li>• 11 new Gypsy and Traveller pitches</li> <li>• A new Small Neighbourhood Centre at an accessible location within the site</li> <li>• A new two form entry primary school and playing fields for dual use by the community</li> <li>• Sustainable transport measures to support development</li> <li>• Highway mitigation measures to support development, including on the A414 towards Hertford, B195 and A1(M)</li> <li>• Necessary utilities improvements to support development</li> <li>• A substantial area of new formal and informal open space as part of the masterplanning of the site including play areas, sports pitches, allotments, community gardens and rights of way as part of the proposed Green Corridor</li> <li>• Habitat mitigation, protection and enhancement as part of the proposed Green Corridor</li> <li>• A design which protects and enhances nearby heritage assets, in particular the Grade II listed Holwell Hyde Farmhouse, Panshanger Historic Park and Garden, and Hatfield Historic Park and Garden</li> </ul> <p>*A further 1,350 homes, a secondary school, a primary school, a neighbourhood centre and other supporting infrastructure will be delivered following adoption of the East Herts District Plan.</p>
SP 20	Hatfield Town Centre Strategy	None	N/A
SADM 22	Development within Hatfield Town Centre Core Retail Zone	HS36	<p><b>After adoption:</b> Delivery of development which incorporates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,200sqm (net) new E(a) and/or E(b) floorspace</li> <li>• At least 71 (net) new homes</li> <li>• Improvements to the public realm and accessibility of the eastern end of Hatfield Town Centre</li> <li>• A design which ensures a neutral impact on the historic character of Old Hatfield, Hatfield House and Hatfield Historic Park and Garden to the east</li> </ul>
SADM 23	Acceptable Uses outside the Core Retail Zone (The Common/Queensway)	None	N/A
SADM 24	Acceptable Uses outside the Core Retail Zone (Lemsford Road)	None	N/A
SADM 25	High View Neighbourhood Centre	HS37	<p><b>After adoption:</b> Delivery of development which incorporates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The re-provision of at least an equivalent amount of retail floorspace to that which currently exists within the centre</li> <li>• At least 140 (net) new homes</li> <li>• The delivery of a new health centre, combining existing local GP surgery, dentist and pharmacy provision</li> <li>• A design that improves the visibility of the shops and facilities at High View, better integrating them into the surrounding area</li> <li>• Improved public realm, including a new play area adjacent to St Johns Church</li> </ul>

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Local Plan Policy	Policy Name	AMR Indicator	AMR Target
SP 21	University of Hertfordshire	None	N/A
SADM 26	Housing Allocations in Hatfield	None	Monitored along with Policy SP 2.
SP 22	North West Hatfield	SDS5	<p><b>After adoption:</b> Delivery of development which incorporates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 1,750 new homes</li> <li>• A proportion of new homes being self build plots</li> <li>• 15 new Gypsy and Traveller pitches, with 4 (net) delivered off-site at HS33 (GTLAA08)</li> <li>• An employment area in an accessible location</li> <li>• A new Small Neighbourhood Centre at an accessible location within the site</li> <li>• A new secondary school and playing fields for dual use by the community</li> <li>• Provision for three forms of entry at primary school level,</li> <li>• A new health centre</li> <li>• Sustainable transport measures to support development</li> <li>• Highway mitigation measures to support development, specifically around Coopers Green Lane, Green Lanes, the A1001 and around J4 of the A1(M)</li> <li>• Necessary utilities improvements to support development</li> <li>• New formal and informal open space including play areas, sports pitches, allotments, community gardens and rights of way as part of the proposed Green Corridor</li> </ul>
SADM 27	Housing Allocations in Woolmer Green	None	Monitored along with Policy SP 2.
SADM 28	Housing Allocations in Oaklands & Mardley Heath	None	Monitored along with Policy SP 2.
SADM 29	Housing Allocations in Welwyn	None	Monitored along with Policy SP 2.
SADM 30	Housing Allocations in Welham Green	None	Monitored along with Policy SP 2.
SP 23	Marshmoor Policy Area	SDS7	<p><b>After adoption:</b> Delivery of development in accordance with a Supplementary Planning Document which will be prepared for the Marshmoor area. This will incorporate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The delivery of a major new employment area for class E(g) uses (currently envisaged to be 40,500sqm of new employment floorspace)</li> <li>• The delivery of 100 new class C3 dwellings</li> <li>• The provision of non-vehicular routes through the site, and to Welham Green Railway Station</li> <li>• Contributions towards other sustainable transport and accessibility measures to support development</li> <li>• Development to a high quality design which protects and enhances the historic character of Hatfield House and Hatfield Historic Park and Garden to the east</li> <li>• A net increase in the proportion of the site with tree cover and planting</li> <li>• A sequential approach to built development, such that it remains confined to Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk)</li> </ul>

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Local Plan Policy	Policy Name	AMR Indicator	AMR Target
SADM 31	Housing Allocations in Brookmans Park	None	Monitored along with Policy SP 2.
SADM 32	Housing Allocations in Little Heath	None	Monitored along with Policy SP 2.
SADM 33	Housing Allocations in Cuffley	None	Monitored along with Policy SP 2.
SP 25	Rural Development	None	N/A
SADM 34	Development within the Green Belt	None	N/A
SADM 35	Gypsy and Traveller Sites in Rural Areas	None	Monitored along with Policy SP 2.
SP 26	Neighbourhood Planning	None	N/A



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**Table 20 - AMR Chapters and Indicators**

Indicator Number	Indicator Name	Indicator Type	Relevant Local Plan Policy	Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objective
<b>Chapter 1: The Borough and its people</b>				
BP1	Borough population	Contextual	N/A	None specific
BP2	Number of deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs)	Contextual	N/A	1.1, 6.2
BP3	Recorded incidences of crime	Contextual	N/A	2.1
BP4	Health profile and life expectancy	Contextual	N/A	1.1, 1.2
<b>Chapter 2: Planning for the future</b>				
No indicators in this chapter				
<b>Chapter 3: Monitoring of Local Plan Policies</b>				
LP1	Policies used in planning application refusals	Local Plan	All	None specific
LP2	Planning applications allowed on appeal	Local Plan	All	None specific
<b>Chapter 4: Centres, Services and Facilities</b>				
CS1	Changes in retail floorspace	Local Plan	SP 2 and SP 5	6.3, 6.4
CS2	New comparison retail floorspace outside of designated centres	Local Plan	SADM 5	6.3
CS3	Proportion of E(a) shops by centre	Local Plan	SADM 4	6.3
CS4	Proportion of vacant retail floorspace	Contextual	N/A	6.3
CS5	Number of evening economy premises	Contextual	N/A	6.3
CS6	Town centre footfall	Contextual	N/A	6.3
CS7	Changes in leisure and community facility floorspace	Local Plan	SP 6	6.3
<b>Chapter 5: Type and Mix of Housing</b>				
HO1	New dwellings and progress against housing target	Local Plan	SP 2	5.1
HO2	Proportion of new dwellings on allocated sites	Local Plan	SADM 1	None specific
HO3	Proportion of new dwellings on previously developed land	Local Plan	SP 1	4.10
HO4	Size and type of new dwellings	Local Plan	SP 7	5.1
HO5	New dwelling density	Local Plan	SP 9	5.1
HO6	Housing trajectory/5 year housing land supply	Local Plan	SP 2	5.1
HO7	House prices and housing affordability	Contextual	N/A	5.1
HO8	New affordable housing	Local Plan	SP 7	5.1
HO9	New specialist needs housing	Local Plan	SP 7	5.1
HO10	Numbers of people of the self-build register	Local Plan	SP 7	5.1
HO11	Numbers of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)	Local Plan	SP 7 (And HMO SPD)	5.1
HO12	New homes for the Gypsy and Traveller Community	Local Plan	SP 7	5.1
HO13	Unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller sites	Contextual	N/A	5.1

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Indicator Number	Indicator Name	Indicator Type	Relevant Local Plan Policy	Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objective
<b>Chapter 6: The Economy</b>				
EC1	New employment floorspace and progress against employment floorspace target	Local Plan	SP 2	6.1, 6.4
EC2	Proportion of new employment floorspace on previously developed land	Local Plan	SP 1	4.10
EC3	Loss of employment land to non-employment uses	Local Plan	SP 8	6.1
EC4	Employment floorspace availability	Local Plan	SP 2	6.1
EC5	Number of enterprises	Contextual	N/A	6.1
EC6	Jobs and job density	Contextual	N/A	6.1, 6.2
EC7	Average earnings	Contextual	N/A	6.1
EC8	Unemployment	Contextual	N/A	6.1
EC9	Educational attainment and skills	Contextual	N/A	6.6
<b>Chapter 7: Environmental Assets</b>				
EN1	Changes to protected historic assets	Local Plan	SADM 15	4.5
EN2	Changes to protected natural assets	Local Plan	SADM 16	4.6
EN3	New development in the green belt	Contextual	N/A	4.4
EN4	Amount of Urban Open Land	Local Plan	SADM 17	4.4, 4.6
EN5	Changes to the public rights of way network	Contextual	N/A	4.4, 4.6
EN6	Open space with a Green Flag Award	Contextual	N/A	4.4, 4.6
EN7	Sustainable design and construction	Local Plan	SADM 13	4.1, 4.7
EN8	CO2 emissions per capita	Contextual	N/A	4.1, 4.2
EN9	Amount of borough within Flood Zones 2&3	Contextual	N/A	2.2
EN10	Number of flood events	Contextual	N/A	2.2
EN11	Planning applications granted contrary to Environment Agency advice	Contextual	N/A	2.2
EN12	New development complying with parking standards	Local Plan	SADM 12 (And Parking Standards SPG)	None specific
EN13	New development accessibility by public transport	Contextual	N/A	4.2
EN14	Number of bus services per bus route mile	Contextual	N/A	4.2
<b>Chapter 8: Infrastructure</b>				
IN1	Section 106 funds collected and held	Local Plan	SP 13 (And Planning Obligations SPD)	6.6
IN2	Delivery of new infrastructure	Local Plan	SP 13 (And Infrastructure Delivery Plan)	None specific

## Implementation and Monitoring

Indicator Number	Indicator Name	Indicator Type	Relevant Local Plan Policy	Relevant Sustainability Appraisal Objective
<b>Chapter 9: Site-Specific Monitoring</b>				
SDS1	Delivery of development North East of Welwyn Garden City	Local Plan	SP 18	None specific
SDS2	Delivery of development South East of Welwyn Garden City	Local Plan	SP 19	None specific
SDS3/4	Delivery of development at Broadwater Road West, Welwyn Garden City	Local Plan	SP 17 (And Broadwater Road West SPD)	None specific
SDS5	Delivery of development North West of Hatfield	Local Plan	SP 22	None specific
SDS7	Delivery of development at Marshmoor, Welham Green	Local Plan	SP 23	None specific
HS7	Delivery of the Town Centre North scheme in Welwyn Garden City Town Centre	Local Plan	SADM 19 (And Welwyn Garden City Town Centre North SPD)	None specific
HS36	Delivery of the 1-9 Town Centre scheme in Hatfield Town Centre	Local Plan	SADM 22	None specific
HS37	Delivery of the High View Neighbourhood Centre scheme in Hatfield	Local Plan	SADM 25 (And High View SPD)	None specific

# Appendices

# Housing and Employment Floorspace Trajectories

Figure 16 Housing Trajectory

Supply Source	Plan period actual/estimated housing delivery by year																Total plan period
	Pre-adoption		Years 1-5					Years 6-10					Years 11-13				
	2016/17 - 2021/22	2022/23	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
Completions (16/17-21/22)	2,731	112	113	353	288												2,731
Commitments																	867
Windfall			3	5		139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	139	1,390
Small Sites																	16
WGC4/4a (SDS1) - North east of WGC				150	150	162	150	140	120								872
WGC5 (SDS2) - South east of WGC				100	100	150	150	100	100								600
Pea02b (SDS3) - Broadwater Road West (N), WGC		208		100	226	226	235	138	135								1,403
Pea02c (SDS3) - Broadwater Road West (SW) - Pall Mall, WGC																95	171
Pea102 (SDS3) - Bio Park, Broadwater Rd, WGC					144	145											289
WGC1 (HS2) - Creswick, WGC					70	90	90	90									340
Pea08 (HS3) - 80 Bridge Road East, WGC								16	16								32
Hall03 (HS4) - Ratcliff Tail Lift Site, WGC			11														58
Holl19 (HS5) - Hyde Valley House, Hyde Valley, WGC			13														13
Han01 (HS6) - Land at Gosling Sports Park, WGC																50	100
Han40 (HS7) - WGC Town Centre North, WGC																33	100
Pea24 (HS8) - St Michaels House, Holwell Road, WGC																34	100
Han40a (HS12) - Town Centre North-Campus East, WGC				50	100	100										11	22
Pea104 (HS31) - YMCA, 90 Peartree Lane, WGC			29														250
Hol03 (HS34) - Neighbourhood Centre, Hollybush Lane, WGC																16	16
Hat1 (SDS5) - North West Hatfield, Hatfield					100	150	150	200	200	200	200	150	150	150	100	1,750	71
Hat100b (HS36) - 1-9 Town Centre, Hatfield			71														71
HW100 (HS37) - High view (Hilltop) SPD Site, Hatfield		120	20														140
HE80 (HS8) - Land at Onslow St Audrey's School, Hatfield			43	43													86
HS31 (HS10) - Garages at Hollyfield, Hatfield			8														8
Hat11 (HS11) - Land at Southway, Hatfield				40	40	40											120
HS91 (HS13) - Land S of Filbert Close, Hatfield			39														39
HE23 (HS14) - L. Kahn Manufacturing, Wellfield Road, Hatfield																31	62
HC11 (HS38) - Meridian House, The Common, Hatfield				11													11
HE17 (HS39) - Link Drive (Site F), Hatfield				80													80
HC08 (HS40) - Lamsford Road (Site H), Hatfield								16	16								32
HSW52 (HS41) - Minster Close, Hatfield			91														91
HSW94 (HS42) - College Lane, Hatfield															30	40	115

# Housing and Employment Floorspace Trajectories

Supply Source	Plan period actual/estimated housing delivery by year														Total plan period		
	Pre-adoption		Years 1-5					Years 6-10					Years 11-13				
	2016/17 - 2021/22	2022/23	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		13	
WG1 (HS15) - Land east of London Road, Woolmer Gr					30	60	60	60									150
WE100 (HS43) - 51-53 London Road, Woolmer Gr								34									34
OMH6 (HS16) - 2 Great North Road, O&MH								5									5
OMH5 (HS17) - Land rear of 2a-12 Great North Road, O&MH								20									20
GTLA04 (HS32) - Four Oaks, Gt North Rd, O&MH				6													6
WE11 (HS18) - The Vineyards, Welwyn					30												30
WE4 (HS19) - Sandhurst, The Bypass, Welwyn				37													37
WE3 (HS20) - School Lane, Welwyn					9												9
WE6 (SDS7) - Marshmoor, Wel Green						50	50	50									100
GTLA01 (HS35) - Foxes Lane, Dixons Hill Rd, Wel Green				12													12
WE1 (HS44) - 51 Welham Manor, Wel Green					16												16
WE63a (HS45) - Land south of Wel Manor, Wel Green				24		44											68
WE10 (HS46) - Dixons Hill Road, Wel Green							60	60									120
BRP13 (HS21) - Land west of Golf Club Rd, Brookmans Park					14												14
BRP14 (HS23) - Land east of Golf Club Road, Brookmans Park				10													10
BRP40a (HS22) - Land West of Brookmans Park Station								85	85	85	85	85					428
LHe1 (HS25) - Land N of Hawkshead Rd, Little Heath				17		18											35
LHe45 (HS47) - Part of Studlands/Wisene, Little Heath				16		47											63
No02 (HS26) - 36 The Ridgeway and land to the rear, Cuffley				6													6
Cuf1 (HS27) - Land at The Meadow, Cuffley					20	40											60
Cuf6 (HS28) - Land south of Northaw Road East, Cuffley				35	46	40											121
Cuf12 (HS30) - Land North of Northaw Road East				18		55											73
Cuf7 (HS30) - Wells Farm, Northaw Road East				14	61												75
GTLA08 (HS33) - Barbraville, Hertford Road nr. Mill Green					4												4
<b>Total Supply</b>	<b>2,731</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>1,071</b>	<b>1,584</b>	<b>1,423</b>	<b>1,060</b>	<b>981</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>13,400</b>	
	<b>2,731</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>5,638</b>	<b>6,373</b>	<b>7,796</b>	<b>8,856</b>	<b>9,837</b>	<b>10,817</b>	<b>11,505</b>	<b>12,080</b>	<b>12,561</b>	<b>12,817</b>	<b>13,161</b>	<b>13,400</b>			
<b>Cumulative Supply</b>	2,731	3,218	3,718	4,789	6,373	7,796	8,856	9,837	10,817	11,505	12,080	12,561	12,817	13,161	13,400		
<b>Target by Year</b>							760										
<b>Cumulative Requirement</b>	4,560	5,320	6,080	6,840	7,600	8,360	9,120	9,880	10,640	11,400	12,160	12,920	13,680	14,440	15,200		
<b>Performance against plan period requirement</b>	-1,828	-2,102	-2,362	-2,051	-1,227	-695	-264	-43	177	105	-8	-35	-618	-1,279	-1,800		



# A Housing and Employment Floorspace Trajectories

## Notes on Housing Trajectory:

The footnotes to Table 2 (Distribution of Housing Growth) within Chapter 6 also apply to the full housing trajectory here. The phasing assumptions are best estimates, and are derived from both the information on availability and deliverability provided by landowners, and the conclusions on development constraints reached in the Council's Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA).

**Table 21 Plan period estimated employment floorspace delivery**

Plan period estimated employment floorspace delivery (m <sup>2</sup> )		
Supply source		Plan period Net Total
<b>Total Net Completions 2016-23</b>		9,866
<b>Small sites with planning permission</b> (less than 5,000 m <sup>2</sup> floorspace change) at 1 April 2023		-245
<b>Large sites with planning permission at 1 Apr 2023</b>	SDS3/Pea02b - Broadwater Road West (North)	5,600
	Hatfield Business Park - Plots 5600	4,662
	Tewin Road Gasholders	6,000
<b>Vacant Sites</b>	EMP10 expansion	520
<b>Local Plan Allocations - Urban (without permission)</b>	SDS3/Pea02c - Broadwater Road West (South West)	1,750
	HS4 - Ratcliff Tail Lift Site, Bessemer Road (loss included in completions)	0
	HS14 - L Kahn Manufacturing	-4,410
	SDS3/Pea 102 - Bio Park, Broadwater Road	-11,071
<b>Local Plan Allocations - Green Belt</b>	SDS5 - North West Hatfield	13,900
	SDS7 - Marshmoor	40,500
<b>Estimated office-to-resi loss (Windfall) 2026/27 - 2035/36</b>		-12,600
<b>Total Supply 2016/17- 2035/36</b>		<b>54,472</b>

## Notes on Employment Floorspace Trajectory:

The development of new Class E(g) and B floorspace is more vulnerable to changing economic cycles, and is now rarely undertaken speculatively in Welwyn Hatfield. This makes its delivery more difficult to estimate than housing, therefore the trajectory does not break down delivery by plan period or year.

# Housing and Employment Floorspace Trajectories

Figures for the loss of employment floorspace from windfall office-to-residential conversions are derived from the estimated gain of 21 dwellings per annum from 2026/27 from this use. This is multiplied by 60m<sup>2</sup> per new dwelling to give a total floorspace loss figure.

## Glossary

**Accessible and adaptable dwellings:** Where a new dwelling makes reasonable provision for most people to access the dwelling and incorporates features that make it potentially suitable for occupants, including older people, those with reduced mobility and some wheelchair users as set out in the Building Regulations Part M4(2).

**Affordable housing:** Includes social rented, affordable rented and immediate housing, provided to households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should:

- Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a low enough cost for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.
- Include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

**Affordable intermediate housing:** Homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above, e.g. shared ownership.

**Affordable rented housing:** Is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. It is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).

**Affordable social rented housing:** Is usually owned by local authorities or private registered providers, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime.

**Archaeological interest:** Heritage assets with archaeological interest are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them. An interest will exist if a heritage asset holds, or potentially may hold, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

**Area of special restraint:** A designated area of land identified for future development needs but within which no development will be permitted until such time as a review of the Local Plan determines that the land is required for development.

**Best and most versatile agricultural land:** Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

**Biodiversity:** The range of biological variety in an environment as indicated by the presence of number of different species of plants and animals.

**Broad locations for growth:** Large areas of land which have been identified as locations for future housing and other growth needs.

**Brownfield land:** Previously developed land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.

**Charrette:** A planning workshop that brings together people from different disciplines and backgrounds such as residents, designers and land owners to explore design options for a particular area or site to produce a vision to shape future development in their local area.

**Community forest:** An area identified through the England Community Forest Programme. The main aims of the Community Forest are to protect and improve the landscape, increase access, recreation and art opportunities, protect areas of and for nature conservation, provide educational opportunities and encourage timber production, in and around urban areas.

**Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL):** A levy allowing local authorities to raise funds from owners or developers of land undertaking new building projects in their area for necessary infrastructure.

**Comparison shopping/ comparison goods:** Comparison shopping provides an opportunity to compare goods, on the basis of price and quality before making a purchase. This does not usually include food, but does include items such as clothing, electrical and household goods.

**Conservation area:** A defined area of special architectural or historic interest which has been deemed to be worthy of preservation or enhancement due to its special character or appearance, as defined in Sections 69 and 70 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

**Convenience shops/convenience goods:** Convenience shopping is for goods such as food that tend to be purchased regularly.

**Defensible space:** Areas in developments which are designed to create a sense of ownership and responsibility with good levels of natural surveillance helping to create safer places.

**Granny Annex:** An extension which remains internally connected to an existing dwelling to provide accommodation for a dependant elderly relative.

**Greenfield land:** Land in either urban or rural areas that has not previously been developed. Land may be in agricultural use or just left to nature.

**Green Belt:** An area of land which has been designated as 'Green Belt' with the aim of keeping land permanently open. The purpose of the Green Belt, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework, is to:

- Restrict urban sprawl
- Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
- Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
- Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns
- Assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

**Green Flag award:** A national award scheme for parks and green spaces in England and Wales. Awards are given on an annual basis where a set of high standards have been met.

**Green Infrastructure:** A network of high quality green spaces and other natural elements and inter-connecting links both urban and rural, including footpaths and bridleways. It often provides for multi-functional use for example as a habitat for wildlife, a source of recreation for people and assisting with pollution and flood control.

**Gross floor space:** The total floorspace of the building measured to the outside of all external walls including staircase, lobbies, porches and circulation space.

## Glossary

**Gypsies and Travellers:** Defined in national planning policy as *"Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such."*

**Gypsy and Traveller pitch/site:** A pitch is an area of land where a Gypsy or Traveller household can reside. A pitch may typically include sufficient space for a large trailer and touring caravan, a small amenity building, a small garden area and parking space. However this may vary depending on size of individual families, their particular needs and the extent to which facilities are shared. A site is an area of land comprising multiple pitches and, where appropriate, communal facilities.

**Habitat:** the location and specific environmental characteristics of sites where different species of plants and animals live.

**Hectare (Ha):** A measurement of an area equal to 10,000 square metres or 2.47 acres.

**Heritage assets:** A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest including conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites and buildings of local historic or architectural interest.

**Historic environment:** All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora. Those elements of the historic environment that hold significance are called heritage assets.

**Historic Parks and Gardens:** Appear on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest compiled by English Heritage. Registration does not provide statutory protection (unlike listing of buildings or designation of conservation areas), but it does mean that it is a material consideration in the determination of a planning application and as such special consideration has given to the landscape in the planning process.

**Intermediate Affordable Housing:** Housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market prices or rents including shared equity and shared ownership products, and intermediate rent but does not include affordable rented housing.

**Lifetime Home standards:** Are a set of sixteen criteria which together make a dwelling easier to use and adapt as a family's needs change over time.

**Listed building:** A building which has been identified by the Secretary of State as being of special architectural or historical interest and is entered in the Listed Building Schedules under S.1 of The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and as such are subject to special planning control. Listed Building Consent is required for alterations or demolitions. The buildings are classified in Grades to show their relative importance:

- Grade I - Buildings of exceptional interest (less than 5% of all listed buildings)
- Grade II\* - Buildings of special interest and of particular importance
- Grade II - Buildings of special interest

**Localism Act:** Introduces wide ranging changes to local government, housing and planning. Significantly for planning, the Act introduces powers to abolish regional planning, and introduces Neighbourhood Plans as part of the development plan.

**Local Green Space:** An area of green space that the community have identified through a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan as being demonstrably special because it holds a particular local significance. Development on such land will only be permitted in very special circumstances.

**Local Nature Reserves (LNRs):** Under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (as amended), local authorities have powers to establish Local Nature Reserves in consultation with Natural England. Such reserves are intended to provide significant opportunities for public involvement in nature conservation at a small-scale local level.

**Local Enterprise Partnership:** A body, designated by the Secretary of State, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area.

**Local Strategic Partnership (LSP):** A partnership that brings together organisations from the public, private, community and voluntary sector, with the aim of improving the social, environmental and economic well-being of its area. In Welwyn Hatfield the LSP is known as the Welwyn Hatfield Alliance. Hertfordshire Forward produces a county-wide sustainable community plan.

**Lower super output areas:** A small geographical area used for the collection and publication of neighbourhood statistics by National Statistics. Super output areas give an improved basis for comparison throughout the country because the units are more similar in size of population than, for example, electoral wards. There are 34,378 Lower Layer Super Output Areas in England and Wales.

**Market housing:** Private housing for rent or for sale, where the price is set in the open market.

**Neighbourhood centre:** A hub of shops and possibly other services and facilities which help to serve the day to day needs of a local community.

**Neighbourhood Plans:** The Localism Act introduced Neighbourhood Plans, which can be produced by Town/Parish Councils or where these do not exist, by a designated Neighbourhood Forum. Neighbourhood Plans must have regard to national planning policy and they must be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the local area (i.e. such as in a core strategy). Neighbourhood plans are subject to a referendum before they can be adopted.

**Net dwelling density:** Is calculated by including only those areas of a site which will be developed for housing and directly associated uses, including access roads within the site, private garden space, car parking areas, incidental open space and landscaping and children's play areas, where these are provided.

**New town:** A newly planned settlement. The first new towns were planned urban communities under the 1946 New Towns Act. Their main purpose was to reduce congestion in major cities through the creation of attractive urban towns that would provide local employment for their residents.

**Open space:** Areas of open land such as allotments, amenity green spaces, cemeteries, civic spaces, outdoor play provision for children and teenagers, green corridors, outdoor sports facilities, parks and gardens and natural/semi-natural green space.



## Glossary

**Previously developed land (PDL):** Land which is, or was, occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. The definition excludes:

- Land that is, or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings.
- Land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures.
- Land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and.
- Land that was previously developed but where the remains of a permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

**Primary and secondary frontages:** Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and other uses appropriate to a town centre.

**Right to Buy:** A scheme under which council tenants and other public sector tenants may apply to buy their homes at a discount.

**Rural exception sites:** Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection.

**Scheduled Ancient Monument:** A list of nationally important archaeological sites compiled and maintained by the Secretary of State under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

**Section 106 (S106):** Legal agreement under planning law to secure elements of development that cannot be otherwise secured by planning conditions.

**Special area of conservation (SACs):** These are designated under the EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats Directive) and are Nature Conservation Sites of European Importance. These areas are given special protection in UK law by the Habitats and Conservation of Species Regulations 2010

**Safeguarded land:** In order to ensure the protection of the Green Belt beyond the plan period, land may be safeguarded between the urban area and the Green Belt in order to meet longer-term development needs.

**Self Build and Custom House-building:** Where individuals (or associations of individuals) acquire a serviced plot of land to build a house to occupy as their sole or main residence.

**Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs):** These are notified by Natural England under the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). They comprise land of special interest because of its flora, fauna, geological or physiological features, but not managed as a reserve.

**Social rented housing:** Is generally low cost rented housing owned and managed by local authorities and registered social landlords.

**Starter Homes:** A new dwelling, which is available for purchase by qualifying first-time buyers only, which is sold at a discount of at least 20% of the market value and for less than the price cap, and is subject to any restrictions on sale or letting specified in regulations made by the Secretary of State.

**Travelling Showpeople:** Defined in national planning policy as *"Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above."*

**Urban Open Land:** Areas of open land in urban areas, which are considered to be of such significance that they must not be developed other than for minor ancillary facilities, that have been defined in the council's Open Space Survey and are to be protected from development. These areas have been identified as performing a key built environment function, in addition to any recreational, ecological, landscape or other amenity they provide. They are also an intrinsic part of the borough's green infrastructure.

**Urban sprawl:** The uncontrolled or unplanned extension of urban areas into the countryside.

**Use classes:** Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), a statutory document defining different categories of use of land and buildings for planning purposes.

**Vitality and viability of town/local centres:** Vitality is a measure of how busy a centre is. Viability is a measure of its economic health and its capacity to attract continuing investment.

**Wheelchair user dwellings:** Where a new dwelling makes reasonable provision for a wheelchair user to live in a dwelling and use any associated private outdoor space, parking and communal facilities that may be provided for the use of the occupants as set out in Building Regulations Part M4(3).

**Wildlife site:** Local sites identified by locally developed criteria which are the most important non-statutory sites for wildlife.

**Windfall housing site:** Sites which are not allocated in a policy document but become available for new housing.

# C Calculating the Percentage of Uses within Retail Frontages

## Introduction

Providing active frontage at ground floor level is key to maintaining vibrant and viable retail centres. Policy SADM 4 aims to achieve this by setting out criteria which will ensure that certain proportions of premises within different areas of the borough's town, large neighbourhood and large village centres remain in an E(a) retail use. The Policies Map defines rows of retail units called frontages for each of these centres, within which the existing proportion of non-retail uses will be a key factor in deciding whether to permit any new non-retail uses. The frontages within each centre are also listed below for clarity.

### Frontages in Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield Town Centres

Frontages within the borough's two town centres are measured by length, in metres. The percentage of the overall frontage that is within a certain use class is calculated by dividing the length of individual retail unit frontages for all of the premises within that use class, by the total length of the individual retail unit frontages for all of the premises within the frontage.

Frontages start and end adjacent to the active part of the first and last retail unit within a frontage, and include the active part of all ground floor uses within the frontage (except in specific cases where the entirety of a frontage is at first floor level). The 'active' part of an individual retail unit's frontage will generally be the part with large display windows and signage which provide visual interest and make passers-by aware of what is available inside. This would include parts of the frontage where windows are opaque but are covered in stickers with branding or information about the products or services on offer, but would exclude parts of the frontage which only have small or high-level windows. Blank walls (i.e. without any windows) would not be counted as active frontage, even where the walls have signage. Anything included in the overall designated frontage but which is not part of a retail unit (such as an access road) should also not count towards the calculations of overall frontage length.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Anchor Stores designated on the Policies Map and listed below do not form part of any of the Primary or Secondary Frontages.

All calculations should be based upon the existing lawful use of the properties and extant planning permissions. Where a property is in a mixed use or has ancillary uses within it, the predominant use of the property should count for the whole of that premises' frontage unless the mixed use or ancillary use very clearly has its own part of the frontage.

Within Welwyn Garden City Town Centre, the following are designated on the Policies Map as **Anchor Stores**:

- Waitrose, Bridge Road
- John Lewis, Bridge Road
- Former Debenhams, Stonehills
- Former M&S, Howard Centre (ground and first floors)
- Sainsburys, Church Road

Within Welwyn Garden City Town Centre, the following are designated on the Policies Map as a **Primary Frontage**:

- Howard Centre ground floor (including frontage also facing Howardsgate)
- Howard Centre first floor
- 7-13 Stonehills (odds - including frontage of 13 Stonehills also on Howard Centre approach)

## Calculating the Percentage of Uses within Retail Frontages

- 21-33 Stonehills (odds - including frontage of 21 Stonehills also on Howard Centre approach)
- 28-36 Stonehills (evens)
- 31-49 Howardsgate (odds - including frontage of 31 Howardsgate also on Wigmores North)
- 51-63 Howardsgate (odds - including frontage of 51 Howardsgate also on Stonehills)
- 52-66 Howardsgate (evens - including frontage of 52 Howardsgate also on Fretherne Road)
- 37-51 Fretherne Road (odds)
- 21-55 Wigmores North

Within Welwyn Garden City Town Centre, the following are designated on the Policies Map as a **Secondary Frontage**:

- 3-5 Stonehills (odds - including frontage of 5 Stonehills also on Osborn Way)
- 1-19 Howardsgate (odds - including frontage of 1 Howardsgate also on Parkway), and 22 Parkway
- 4-24 Howardsgate (evens - including frontage of 2 Howardsgate also on Parkway, and frontage of 24 Howardsgate also on Wigmores South)
- 30-50 Howardsgate (evens - including frontage of 30 Howardsgate also on Wigmores South, and frontage of 50 Howardsgate also on Fretherne Road)
- 2-46 Fretherne Road (evens - including frontage of 46 Fretherne Road also on Church Road)
- 8-22 Church Road (evens - including frontage of 22 Church Road also on Wigmores South)
- 4-17 Wigmores South
- 2-6 Church Road

Within Hatfield Town Centre, the following is designated on the Policies Map as an **Anchor Store**:

- Asda, Queensway

Within Hatfield Town Centre, the following are designated on the Policies Map as a **Primary Frontage**:

- 19-47 Town Centre (odds)
- 68-96 Town Centre (evens)
- 17c Town Centre and 1-21 The Arcade (odds)
- 17d Town Centre and 2-14 The Arcade (evens)

Within Hatfield Town Centre, the following are designated on the Policies Map as a **Secondary Frontage**:

- 11-17 Town Centre (odds)
- 24-36 White Lion Square (evens)
- 38-66 White Lion Square (evens)
- 1-35 Market Place (odds - ground floor)
- 2-34 Market Place (evens - first floor)
- 38-54 The Common (evens)

# C Calculating the Percentage of Uses within Retail Frontages

## Frontages in the Large Neighbourhood and Village Centres

Frontages within the borough's large neighbourhood and village centres are measured by the number of retail units. Whilst some centres' frontage may be split over several discrete areas (sub-frontages), the frontage for each centre should be measured as a whole. The percentage of the overall frontage that is within a certain use class is calculated by dividing the number of retail units within that use class throughout the centre's frontage (i.e. all sub-frontages) by the total number of retail units within the centre's frontage (i.e. all sub-frontages).

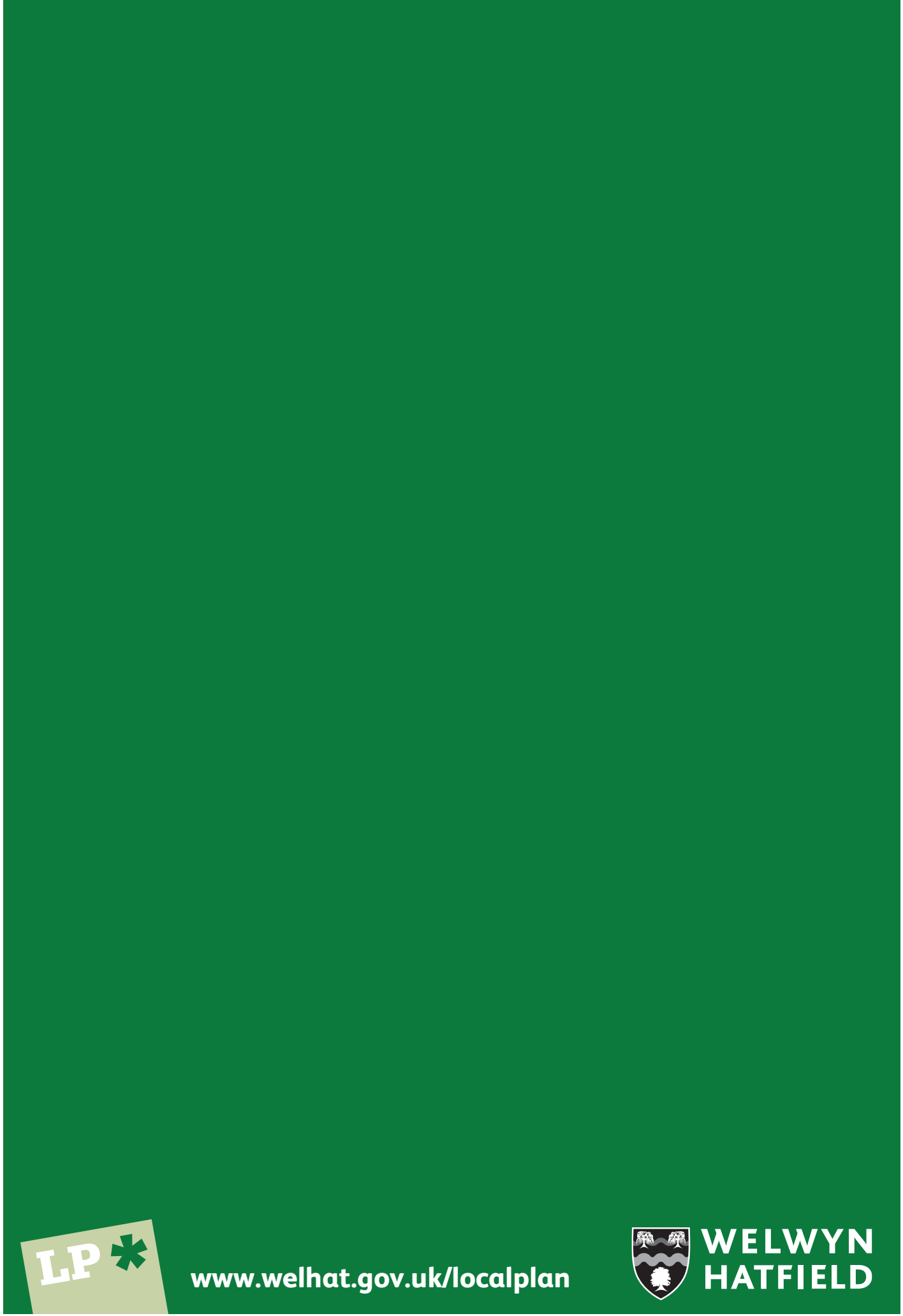
All calculations should be based upon the existing lawful use of the properties and extant planning permissions with the potential to be implemented. Where a property is in a mixed use or has ancillary uses within it, the predominant use of the property should count for the whole of that premises' frontage unless the mixed use or ancillary use very clearly has its own part of the frontage.

Within the large neighbourhood and village centres, the following are designated on the Policies Map as **Retail Frontage**:

- **Haldens Neighbourhood Centre:** 70-98 (evens) and Mayflower PH, Haldens
- **Moors Walk Neighbourhood Centre:** 61-81 (odds) and 115-121 (odds) Moors Walk
- **Woodhall Neighbourhood Centre:** 1-57 Cole Green Lane (odds)
- **Parkhouse Court Neighbourhood Centre:** 1-13 Parkhouse Court and 6-12 Harpsfield Broadway
- **Old Hatfield Neighbourhood Centre:** 1-12, 27-30 and 32-35 Salisbury Square; 3-9 The Broadway (odds)
- **High View Neighbourhood Centre:** 2-38 High View (evens); 91 Bishops Rise
- **Welwyn Village Centre:** 2-4 Codicote Road (odds); 1, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15 and 21 Church Street; 1-9 (odds), 15-29 (odds), 2-24 (evens) and 28-40 (evens) High Street; 2 Prospect Place
- **Welham Green Village Centre:** 1-59 Dellsome Lane (odds)
- **Brookmans Park Village Centre:** 1-57 (odds) and 'The Estate Office', Bradmore Green; 75-97 Blue Bridge Road (odds)
- **Cuffley Village Centre:** 1-1b, 2-26 (evens), 17-31 (odds) and 59 Station Road; 1-7 and 15 Maynard Place







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