



Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan

Regulation 18 Consultation Document

February 2026



**WELWYN
HATFIELD**



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**Our
Local
Plan.**

SECTION 1
Introduction



What is a Local Plan?

The Local Plan is the statutory framework that guides how land is used and developed across Welwyn Hatfield Borough. It sets out the strategy, policies and proposals for delivering homes, jobs, infrastructure, and environmental protection over the plan period to 2043. The Local Plan ensures that development takes place in the right locations, supports sustainable communities, and responds to the needs of current and future residents.

Once adopted, the Local Plan forms the basis for determining planning applications and directing investment. It must be consistent with national planning policy, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and is shaped by public consultation, engagement with stakeholders, and a robust evidence base. The Plan must also meet the legal requirements for plan-making, including the Duty to Cooperate with neighbouring authorities and prescribed bodies.

The Local Plan is subject to Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment), which assesses the social, economic and environmental effects

of the Plan and its reasonable alternatives. This helps ensure that the Plan promotes sustainable development and minimises adverse impacts.

The Local Plan must be kept up to date and reviewed at least every five years.

What is Regulation 18?

This consultation is being carried out under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Regulation 18 is the first formal stage in preparing a new Local Plan. At this stage, the Council is seeking views on:

- **the issues the Plan should address**
- **the emerging vision and strategic objectives**
- **the proposed policy approaches**
- **potential site allocations and reasonable alternatives**

Feedback received at Regulation 18 will help shape the next version of the Plan, which will be published for further consultation under Regulation 19 later on in 2026 before being submitted for independent examination.



What is the Development Plan?

The Development Plan is a collection of planning documents that together form the legal basis for determining planning applications. In Welwyn Hatfield, this includes:

- **The Local Plan (prepared by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council)**
- **Neighbourhood Plans (prepared by Parish Councils, or local community groups, where applicable)**
- **The Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan (prepared by Hertfordshire County Council)**
- **The Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan (prepared by Hertfordshire County Council)**

Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by parish or town councils and designated community groups. Once adopted, they form part of the

Development Plan and carry statutory weight in decision-making. Neighbourhood Plans can set out local policies on the use and development of land, including identifying sites for housing, protecting local green spaces, and supporting community facilities.

In Welwyn Hatfield, designated neighbourhood planning areas include Northaw and Cuffley and Welwyn. The Local Plan provides the strategic framework within which Neighbourhood Plans must operate.

Waste and Minerals Local Plan

Hertfordshire County Council is responsible for planning for waste and minerals. The Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan and Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan set out policies for managing waste, safeguarding mineral resources, and identifying suitable locations for related development. The Local Plan for Welwyn Hatfield must be consistent with these plans, and planning decisions must take their policies into account where relevant.



SECTION 1
Have Your Say

How to Navigate this Plan and Comment

This Local Plan is structured into three main sections:

Section 1 – Introduction, Vision and Strategic Objectives

This section explains what the Local Plan is, how it is prepared, and how you can comment. It also sets out the draft Vision for the Borough to 2043 and the strategic objectives that will guide the Plan. We are seeking your views on the Vision and objectives.

Section 2 – Strategic and Development Management Policies

This section contains the policies that will guide growth and development across the Borough. These cover a wide range of topics including housing, employment, town centres, climate change, transport, infrastructure, heritage, and the natural environment. These policies are supported by a comprehensive evidence base published alongside the Plan. We welcome your comments on all policies.

Section 3 – Site Allocations

This section identifies the sites the Council considers suitable for new development to meet housing and employment needs to 2043. It includes existing allocations that remain developable, new potential allocations, and a schedule of reasonable alternative sites. We are seeking your views on these sites and any alternatives.

How to Comment

You can comment on any part of the Local Plan. Comments must be received by the 26th March 2026 and can be emailed to localplanconsultation@welhat.gov.uk, or submitted via our Common Place engagement portal – welwynhatfieldlocalplan.commonplace.is

Full details of how to respond, including the consultation period and methods for submitting comments, are provided on the Council's website and in the consultation materials.

Stages of Local Plan Preparation

When the Local Plan is being prepared, it goes through several stages from its inception, pulling together evidence to support decision-making, through to the adoption of the Local Plan, at which point the policies can be applied to manage change effectively (Fig. 1.1). The consultation at regulation 18 stage involves members of the public, the development industry, infrastructure organisations and other stakeholders that have an interest in the area.

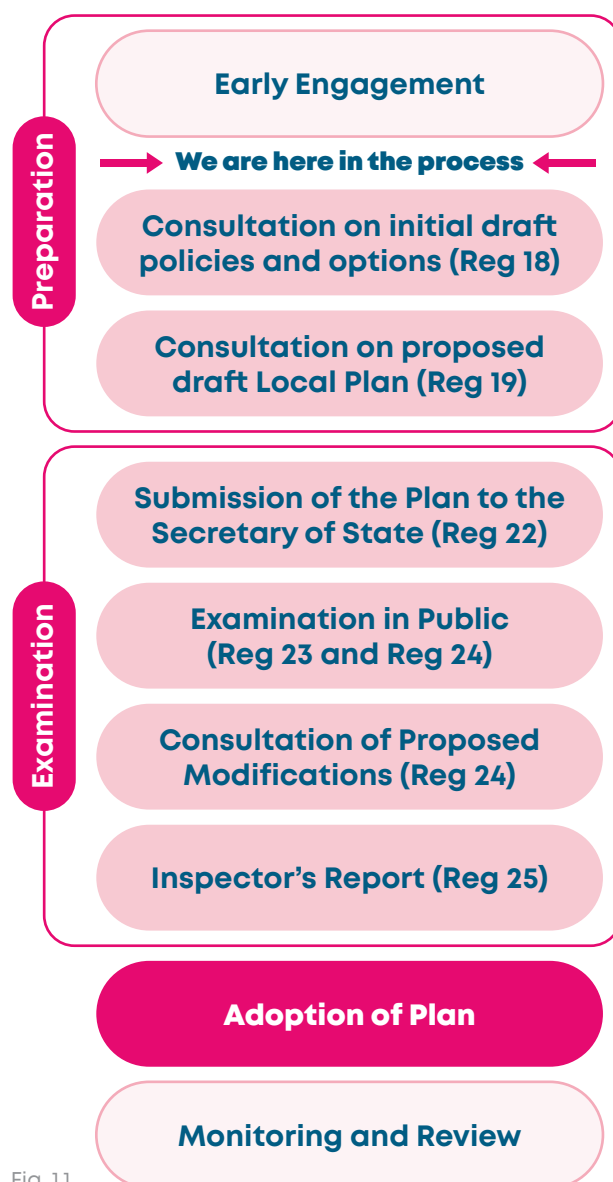


Fig. 1.1

A Local Plan must be kept up to date and reviewed at least every five years.

Picture of the Borough

Brief picture of Welwyn Hatfield

Welwyn Hatfield is located centrally within Hertfordshire and covers an area of approximately 130 square kilometres. The borough is bordered by Hertsmeire to the south, St Albans to the west, North Hertfordshire to the north, and East Hertfordshire and Broxbourne to the east. The borough also has a short border with the London Borough of Enfield to the south. Around three-quarters of the borough is designated as part of the Metropolitan Green Belt.

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. Both towns have a wide range of retail and services serving both the towns themselves and the wider local area, as well as employment areas with some large businesses and national headquarters. Hatfield is also home to the two main campuses of the University of Hertfordshire, giving the town a notable student population and character. The main campus of the Royal Veterinary College is also located within the borough, south of Brookmans Park and Oaklands College has a campus in Welwyn Garden City.

The population of Welwyn Hatfield at the 2021 Census was 119,900 persons and there are approximately 48,600 homes in the borough¹. House prices are 10.9 times median annual earnings² which is above both the national and regional averages and means that home ownership is unreachable for many households.

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, Peterborough and Cambridge. 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, as well as connecting with the M25 just south of the borough boundary. In addition, the A414 passes east-west through Welwyn Hatfield and is a key cross county route connecting with other districts within Hertfordshire.

Despite having a strong local economy, the borough's good transport links mean that there are high levels of both inward and outward commuting and Welwyn Hatfield is a key workplace destination for residents of neighbouring districts (notably Stevenage, St Albans, East Herts, North Herts, Luton and Central Bedfordshire). 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.

The borough's physical geography is defined by a number of watercourses, predominantly running across the borough from north-west to south-east. The River Lea and River Mimram are the most significant, running towards the Thames in East London. With the exception of Welwyn, most settlements in the borough are on higher ground. The Cuffley Brook and its tributaries form another relatively deep valley between Cuffley and Goffs Oak within Broxbourne to the east, and meet the Lea in Enfield. The Mimms Brook and River Colne drain the south-west corner of the borough and run south west through Watford to Staines-upon-Thames in Surrey.

Welwyn Hatfield has a diverse range of green infrastructure and environmental assets including 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.

Both Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City are of historical importance as New Towns and Welwyn Garden City is also historically important as the world's second Garden City. The borough has a number of historical assets, including listed buildings, conservation areas, ancient monuments and registered parks & gardens, and areas of archaeological interest.

¹ 2021 Census, Office for National Statistics (ONS).

² Ratio of median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings, five year average 2020-2024, Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Welwyn Hatfield Borough





**Our
Local
Plan.**

SECTION 1

Challenges and Opportunities

Key Challenges and Opportunities for Welwyn Hatfield

Our Local Plan looks ahead over a 19 year period to 2043 (15 from anticipated adoption by 2028), during which Welwyn Hatfield will experience significant change. While there are challenges to address, there are also important opportunities arising from new development, investment, and the transition towards Net Zero. The following themes highlight the key considerations that will shape the Borough's future.

Living

- Welwyn Hatfield's population has risen in recent decades with growth outpacing most other areas within Hertfordshire. This growth is expected to continue over the plan period with the population projected to reach just under 139,800 persons by 2043, an increase of 9.7% from the start of the plan in 2024³. This will place increasing pressure on housing, services and infrastructure.
- House prices are well above national and regional averages and housing affordability is a continuing issue. With house prices 10.9 times median annual earnings⁴ home ownership is inaccessible for many households and there is a need for more affordable housing.
- Housing delivery will need to meet the recognised needs of all groups in the community and ensure that the right types of homes are provided in the right locations. With the 75+ age groups expected to grow the fastest, sufficient provision of suitable homes and care facilities will be needed. Sufficient family sized housing to meet the identified need will also need to be planned for, with one and two bed flats having accounted for the majority of new homes built in recent years.
- New homes and neighbourhoods must be of high quality, minimise environmental impact, and be designed to adapt to climate change, including extreme weather, overheating, and flood risk.

- Improving physical and mental health is a key element of quality of life. The most deprived communities are more likely to experience poorer health than those in more affluent areas. Promoting active and healthy lifestyles and providing access to the natural environment and green spaces for all the community will help improve health and well-being.
- Cultural and community facilities play a vital role in supporting healthy, inclusive and connected communities. Libraries, community centres, youth facilities, sports venues, arts and cultural spaces all contribute to wellbeing, social cohesion and local identity. As the population grows, there will be a need to protect, enhance and, where necessary, expand these facilities to ensure that all residents have access to the services and opportunities they need. New development should contribute to the provision of community infrastructure and help create places where people can meet, participate and thrive.

Working

- Encouraging inward investment will be important to support growth in the local economy and jobs for an increasing population. Ensuring that employment land is available, attractive and fit for modern business needs will be a key challenge.
- Welwyn Hatfield is home to several major employers and national headquarters, as well as higher education institutions including the University of Hertfordshire. Strengthening collaboration between education providers and employers can help develop a skilled workforce, support innovation, and retain graduates within the Borough.
- Welwyn Hatfield has high levels of both in and out commuting, though overall there is a net inflow of workers⁵ and the borough is a key workplace destination for residents of neighbouring districts (notably Stevenage, St Albans, East Herts, North Herts, Luton and Central Bedfordshire). This creates opportunities for economic growth but also places pressure on transport networks and local services.

³ 2022-based subnational population projections, Office for National Statistics (ONS).

⁴ Ratio of median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings, five-year average 2020-2024, Office for National Statistics (ONS).

⁵ 2021 Census, ONS via NOMIS, Origin-destination Workplace data.

- The Borough has significant potential to support innovation and high value economic growth. The presence of the University of Hertfordshire, major employers and research intensive sectors provides a strong foundation for developing knowledge based industries, supporting start ups and fostering collaboration between academia and business. There is an opportunity to strengthen the Borough's role as a centre for research, innovation and advanced technologies, helping to raise productivity, attract investment and create high skilled jobs. Ensuring that employment land, digital infrastructure and transport connections support these sectors will be critical to realising this potential.
- Whilst below the national average, retail vacancy in Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield town centres has increased in recent years and the role of the town centres is changing - with an increasing shift towards leisure and recreation. Supporting diversification, improving the public realm, and encouraging mixed-use development will be important to ensure that town centres remain vibrant and resilient.

Environment

- The Council's Transition to Net Zero Strategy sets out a pathway to reduce emissions. New development will need to support this transition by integrating renewable and low carbon energy solutions, reducing energy demand, and being resilient to the impacts of climate change.
- The Borough's towns and villages are tightly constrained by the Green Belt, and opportunities for development within existing urban areas are limited. Meeting identified housing and employment needs will require careful consideration of sustainable locations with good access to services, facilities and public transport, helping to reduce the need to travel and supporting the move towards Net Zero.
- Welwyn Hatfield is within an area of serious water stress⁶ (with demand for water exceeding the amount available). Where water resources are being or are likely to be exploited to a degree which may result in pressure on the environment or water supplies both now and in future this will need to be managed through water efficiency, infrastructure investment and partnership working with water companies and the Environment Agency.
- Managing flood risk is a growing challenge as the impacts of climate change become more pronounced. Parts of the Borough are vulnerable to surface water flooding, river flooding and sewer capacity constraints. New development will need to incorporate sustainable drainage systems, avoid areas at highest risk, and contribute to wider flood resilience measures.
- Water quality is also a key consideration. Growth will increase pressure on wastewater treatment infrastructure and could affect sensitive river catchments.
- Protecting and enhancing biodiversity is a key priority. The Borough contains a rich network of habitats, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves, Wildlife Sites, woodlands, rivers and open spaces. The Council manages over 30,000 trees as well as allotments, micro orchards and other green assets. New development should contribute to biodiversity net gain and strengthen ecological networks.

Movement and Infrastructure

- Growth will need to be supported by timely and coordinated investment in infrastructure, including education, healthcare, utilities, transport, digital connectivity and green infrastructure. The Council works closely with infrastructure providers to ensure that new development is supported by the facilities and services it requires. Developers will be expected to contribute to the provision and enhancement of infrastructure arising from their proposal
- Transport is the largest source of emissions in Welwyn Hatfield⁷. Reducing car dependency and encouraging a shift towards public transport, walking and cycling will be essential to support Net Zero ambitions,

⁶ Water Stressed Areas – 2021 Classification, Environment Agency.

⁷ UK Local Authority and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, 2022, DESNZ.

reduce congestion and improve air quality. The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan identifies opportunities to improve safety, accessibility and connectivity for active travel.

- High quality digital infrastructure is increasingly essential for economic growth, education, and everyday life. The Borough's businesses, institutions and residents rely on fast, reliable broadband and mobile connectivity to support home working, online services, digital learning and modern business operations. Ensuring that new development is supported by high speed broadband and 5G coverage will be important to maintain competitiveness, attract investment and enable flexible working patterns. Improving digital connectivity in rural areas and smaller settlements will also help reduce inequalities and support inclusive growth.

Meeting the Borough's Housing Needs

A central role of the new Local Plan is to plan positively for the borough's future housing needs. Using the Government's standard method, the minimum housing need for the area is calculated as 840 homes per year. Across the proposed plan period (1 April 2024 to 31 March 2043), this equates to a requirement for 15,960 new homes. Existing planning permissions and unbuilt allocations are expected to deliver around 10,000 of these homes.

A Ten Year Approach to Allocations

National policy requires Local Plans to set out a strategy for meeting development needs over at least 15 years. However, it does not require councils to allocate specific sites for the entire period where this cannot be justified or shown to be deliverable. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) instead expects plans to identify:

- **specific, deliverable sites for years 1–5**
- **developable sites or broad locations for years 6–10**
- **and, where possible, for years 11–15**

Reflecting this guidance, the Draft Local Plan proposes to allocate sites for the first 10 years of the plan period, supported by broad

indications of how longer term needs could be met. This approach is shaped by several key considerations.

Ensuring Deliverability and Soundness

Focusing allocations on the first ten years allows the plan to be grounded in robust, up to date evidence. It ensures that only sites which are genuinely deliverable or developable – taking account of viability, infrastructure capacity, environmental constraints and landowner intentions—are relied upon. This avoids dependence on speculative long term sites.

Responding to Governance Changes

The Government has indicated its intention to create a new unitary authority in Hertfordshire by April 2028. This would bring strategic planning responsibilities together across a wider geography. National Local Government Association guidance confirms that new unitary authorities are expected to prepare a Local Plan covering their whole area. In parallel, the North East and Central Hertfordshire Growth Study provides a shared strategic evidence base that will inform future cross boundary planning.

Planning for Longer Term Growth

In light of these anticipated governance changes, it is appropriate for strategic growth beyond year ten of the plan period to be considered at the scale of the future unitary authority. This will enable long term development to be planned in a coordinated way, aligned with infrastructure delivery, environmental considerations and wider regional priorities.



**Our
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Plan.**

SECTION 1

Visions and Objectives



Vision for Welwyn Hatfield to 2043

Our draft vision sets out the Council's aspirations for how Welwyn Hatfield will grow and change between now and 2043. It responds to the outcomes of early community engagement, key local challenges, opportunities, and national planning policy.



A strong local economy

To achieve a thriving, prosperous borough and promote wellbeing, we will support job creation and protect and enhance employment areas, attracting new investment opportunities, including in innovation and green industries. We will support local living by strengthening links between housing, jobs and skills. Growth will be complimented by digital, social, physical infrastructure that reduces inequalities and creates opportunities for all.



Distinctive and vibrant centres

Welwyn Garden City will continue to evolve as a modern garden city, offering a diversified retail and cultural experience, while Hatfield will grow as a dynamic university town and innovation hub, with a vibrant community feel. These centres will drive economic vitality and opportunity, supporting the borough's ambition to be thriving and inclusive.



Climate resilience and environmental stewardship

We will lead the transition to a net zero borough by 2050, delivering energy-efficient development, renewable energy, and nature-recovery. Our growth will be climate-resilient, with investment in green and blue infrastructure, sustainable transport, and flood mitigation. We will protect and enhance our chalk streams, woodlands and valued biodiversity.



Sustainable and well-designed growth

Neighbourhoods will be green, walkable, and well-connected, promoting active lifestyles and social interaction. High-quality homes, community facilities, and access to nature, culture and services will underpin health and wellbeing, ensuring that every resident benefits from inclusive growth.



Healthy, walkable and connected neighbourhoods

New development will be carefully managed to provide affordable homes, exemplifying sustainable place making and making best use of brownfield land whilst protecting the Green belt from inappropriate development. New development will be well designed and respect and respond to the distinctive character of our towns and villages. Places will be created with an identity which reflects healthy living, inclusivity, cohesion, and resilience.

By 2043, Welwyn Hatfield will be a thriving, inclusive and climate resilient Borough – delivering placemaking that puts the health, happiness and wellbeing of our residents at its heart.





Strategic objectives

Our strategic objectives set out how we will deliver the vision for Welwyn Hatfield to 2043. They guide the direction of the Local Plan, ensuring that development is sustainable, inclusive, and supported by the right infrastructure at the right time. These objectives respond to the council's Corporate Plan priorities, delivering homes to be proud of, enabling an economy that works for all, taking action on climate change, and creating opportunities for our diverse communities.



People and places

Homes for all

AIM: To meet the borough's housing needs through a balanced mix of high-quality, affordable and sustainable homes. To do this we will:

- **Deliver a range of housing types and tenures, including affordable, social, specialist and student housing.**
- **Support self- and custom-build opportunities and innovative, well designed housing models to meet demand.**
- **Ensure all homes are well-designed, energy-efficient, and adaptable to changing needs.**
- **Focus housing delivery in well-connected, sustainable locations, including brownfield and strategic sites.**

These objectives help deliver on our **Homes to be proud of** priority by delivering high-quality, affordable and adaptable housing, and will ensure the right mix of homes to meet local needs. Community engagement highlighted the need for a wide range of housing, from first-time buyer homes and student accommodation to family housing and homes for older people. There was strong support for affordable and council housing, with high standards of design and energy efficiency. These objectives reflect the NPPF's core aim of delivering a sufficient supply of homes.

Distribution of growth and the Green Belt

AIM: To make efficient use of land whilst safeguarding the borough's Green Belt from inappropriate development, ensuring growth is directed to the most sustainable locations. To achieve this, we will:

- **Direct development in order of priority to:**
 - Previously developed land in urban and accessible locations.
 - Previously developed Grey Belt land in sustainable locations that no longer serves Green Belt purposes.
 - Sustainable locations at the edge of existing settlements identified as Grey Belt land that no longer serves Green Belt purposes.
 - Other sustainable locations within the Green Belt where exception circumstances have been demonstrated.
- Optimise site capacity through good design and appropriate density.
- Enhance the Green Belt through biodiversity, landscape and recreational improvements.

These objectives focus on balancing growth whilst also protecting our Green Belt. Growth will be carefully managed, directed first to brownfield land and sustainable locations. They respond to the challenges raised during engagement, including protecting the Green Belt, reusing brownfield land, and conserving the borough's distinctive character. They also respond directly to the NPPF's requirement to promote sustainable patterns of development and protect the Green Belt, where it is not identified as Grey Belt.

Healthy, liveable places

AIM: To create inclusive, well-designed neighbourhoods that support health, wellbeing and community life. To do this we will:

- **Deliver new communities that exemplify placemaking and sustainable living including walkable access to shops, services and green space.**
- Promote higher-density development in appropriate locations to support local services and sustainable transport.
- Protect and enhance the valued character of towns, villages and designated historic assets.
- Design places that are well connected, inclusive and safe to use for all, designing out crime, and that support mental and physical wellbeing.
- Support an increase in access to green space, recreation, sport and leisure opportunities.
- Improve air quality and reduce pollution across the borough.

These objectives are about creating places where communities can flourish, and will realise well-designed, safe and inclusive neighbourhoods that support healthier lives. Community engagement emphasised the value of safe, inclusive neighbourhoods that promote health and wellbeing, access to green spaces, good air quality, and reduced pollution. The objectives also respond to the NPPF's aim of delivering well-designed, beautiful and safe places and promoting healthy and inclusive communities. Taken together, they place people and placemaking at the heart of sustainable growth.





Economy and infrastructure

Infrastructure that keeps pace with growth

AIM: To ensure timely delivery of infrastructure to support new and existing communities. To do this we will:

- **Work with providers to deliver new and improved transport, education, healthcare and utilities.**
- **Plan for long-term investment in physical, digital and social infrastructure across the borough.**
- **Deliver green and blue infrastructure that supports climate resilience, health and biodiversity.**
- **Support renewable energy generation in appropriate locations.**

These objectives will ensure that essential infrastructure, schools, healthcare, utilities and transport keep pace with growth and helps deliver on our **Run an effective council** priority by planning and investing wisely in infrastructure. Community engagement highlighted the importance of ensuring that infrastructure is in place before new housing is delivered, including medical facilities, schools, transport and utilities. These objectives also deliver on NPPF requirements to ensure the timely provision of infrastructure.

Strong local economy

AIM: To support sustainable economic growth, job creation and lifelong learning. To do this we will:

- **Protect and enhance key employment areas and attract new investment, including in the green economy.**
- **Provide space for innovation, enterprise and key sectors such as life sciences, logistics and creative industries.**
- **Strengthen links between housing, jobs and skills to support local living and opportunities for all.**
- **Expand education, training and skills opportunities in partnership with providers and employers.**

These objectives will help us build a thriving economy, and by enabling investment in jobs, skills and infrastructure, we are delivering on our **Enable an economy that delivers for everyone** priority by supporting local businesses, jobs and skill creation. Community engagement highlighted support for sustaining and promoting employment opportunities by protecting key employment areas, supporting local businesses and start-ups, and linking employers with education providers to build skills and create opportunities for all. These objectives deliver on NPPF requirements to build a strong, competitive economy.

Better connections

AIM: To improve sustainable transport and digital access. To do this we will:

- **Provide inclusive travel choices through walking, cycling and public transport.**
- **Connect new and existing neighbourhoods to jobs, services and town centres.**
- **Support sustainable freight and logistics solutions.**
- **Expand digital infrastructure for business, education and community use, including in rural areas.**

These objectives focus on ensuring we improve digital and transport connections, and will aid in our **Action on Climate Change** priority by promoting sustainable transport and renewable energy. Community engagement highlighted a need for better transport connections, prioritising public transport and active travel to reduce congestion and car dependency, alongside safe parking and movement. These objectives also deliver on NPPF requirements to support high-quality communication infrastructure and sustainable transport modes, ensuring new development is supported by effective connections and services. This approach helps to create the conditions for long-term prosperity and resilience in Welwyn Hatfield.



Environment and climate

Climate and environment

AIM: To conserve and enhance Welwyn Hatfield's environment and work towards achieving net zero by 2050. To achieve this we will:

- **Deliver low-carbon, energy-efficient development and support renewable energy generation.**
- **Strengthen and expand green and blue infrastructure, including delivering nature recovery.**
- **Protect and improve rivers and chalk streams, and promote sustainable water use.**
- **Enable infrastructure for EV charging, sustainable drainage and climate adaptation.**
- **Promote active and sustainable transport to reduce car dependency.**
- **Design resilient places that adapt to climate impacts, prioritising nature based solutions.**
- **Support circular economy principles, resource efficiency, retrofitting and waste reduction.**

These objectives will help protect and enhance our countryside and natural environment, while tackling climate change and planning for a net zero future. This supports our **Action on Climate Change** priority by committing to reduce emissions and adapt to climate impacts, and our **Together** priority by safeguarding and enhancing the environment for current and future communities. Community engagement told us about the importance of protecting wildlife and supporting nature recovery, enhancing biodiversity, greening the urban environment, and improving access to the natural environment. Addressing climate change was seen as essential, with support for sustainable homes including adaptation to overheating, renewable energy, and flood resilience. These local views reinforce the borough's commitment to sustainability and resilience.

They also reflect national policy to conserve and enhance the natural environment, heritage and biodiversity and to support the transition to a low-carbon future. Together, they ensure that growth in Welwyn Hatfield is planned in line with the national commitment to sustainable development and climate resilience.





SECTION 2

Introduction

Foreword

This section sets out the Council's proposed strategic and development management policies, which together provide the framework for guiding growth, shaping places, and ensuring that development across the borough is delivered in a sustainable and well managed way. The policies are presented in draft form for the purposes of Regulation 18 consultation, and we are seeking views on their clarity, effectiveness, and overall approach. All feedback received during the consultation will be carefully considered, and the policies will be refined and amended as appropriate before the next stage of the Local Plan.



**Our
Local
Plan.**

SECTION 2

Spatial Strategy, Settlement Hierarchy and the Green Belt

Chapter 1: Sustainable Development, Spatial Strategy and Neighbourhood Planning

Sustainable Development

The planning system plays a central role in shaping places that are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. National Policy and Guidance establish a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development, recognising it as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Embedding this principle within the Local Plan is essential to ensuring that growth in Welwyn Hatfield is well designed, inclusive, resilient and aligned with the long term interests of the borough and its communities.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that sustainable development is fully integrated into both the strategic direction of the Local Plan and the future determination of planning applications. It provides a framework through which proposals can demonstrate how they contribute positively to the Local Plan vision, the strategic objectives for good growth, and the wider priorities that support a thriving, healthy and environmentally responsible borough. By applying this policy, the Council will take a proactive and constructive approach to decision making, enabling development that delivers high quality homes, supports economic vitality, enhances the natural and historic environment, and responds effectively to the challenges of climate change.

SP 1: Sustainable Development

- A.** The Council will take a positive approach to the determination of planning applications that help deliver on the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan vision and objectives and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in National Policy and Guidance.

Welwyn Hatfield Objectives for good growth:

- **People and Places:** To make efficient use of land to create inclusive, healthy, well-designed neighbourhoods, whilst safeguarding the borough's Green Belt from inappropriate development, ensuring growth is directed to the most sustainable locations
 - **Economy and Infrastructure:** To revitalise our town centres and local shopping hubs, for retail, culture and leisure; enable job creation and opportunities for businesses to grow; and provide the necessary supporting infrastructure for growth
 - **Environment and Climate:** To conserve and enhance Welwyn Hatfield's historic and natural environment and work towards achieving net zero.
- B.** Development proposals should demonstrate through their Planning Statement how they help contribute to the delivery of the objectives for good growth and the following relevant priorities to deliver on the Local Plan vision and objectives:
- a)** Deliver high quality and sustainable homes to meet the needs of all our communities, that are affordable, safe and well designed
 - b)** Create environments that support healthy, active and inclusive lifestyles.
 - c)** Improve accessibility across the borough and beyond, reducing car dependency and supporting digital inclusion.
 - d)** Revitalise Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield as thriving, mixed-use centres, and support the vitality of neighbourhood and village centres.
 - e)** Support sustainable economic growth, job creation and lifelong learning.
 - f)** Ensure the timely delivery of infrastructure needed for new and existing communities.
 - g)** Contribute towards achieving net zero and ensure development is

resilient to the impacts of climate change.

- h)** Protect and enhance the borough's valued landscapes, biodiversity and historic environment.
- c.** 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:
 - a)** The strategic objectives and priorities for good growth of this plan,
 - b)** Whether there are specific policies in National Policy and Guidance that protect areas or assets of particular importance¹, which provide a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - c)** 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 and Guidance when taken as a whole.

out clear objectives for good growth that reflect these challenges and articulate the outcomes the Council seeks to achieve. Embedding these objectives within the decision making process ensures that development proposals are assessed not only on their individual merits but also on their contribution to the wider spatial strategy.

This policy therefore requires applicants to demonstrate, through their Planning Statement, how their proposals support the delivery of the Local Plan vision and the objectives for good growth. This includes showing how development will make efficient use of land, promote healthy and inclusive communities, improve accessibility and connectivity, support economic vitality, and contribute to the borough's transition to net zero. By doing so, the policy ensures that growth is directed to the most sustainable locations, that the character and quality of the borough's environment is protected and enhanced, and that new development is resilient to the impacts of climate change.

The policy also clarifies how decisions will be made where relevant policies are absent or out of date. In such circumstances, the Council will apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development, granting permission unless the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or where specific national policies indicate that development should be restricted. This approach provides clarity and consistency for applicants while ensuring that development continues to support the borough's strategic objectives.

Supporting Text

Sustainable development is the guiding principle of the planning system and underpins the approach taken throughout the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan. National Policy and Guidance require local planning authorities to apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, ensuring that decisions proactively support growth that is socially inclusive, environmentally responsible and economically productive. This policy provides the mechanism through which that presumption is applied locally, ensuring that development proposals contribute positively to the borough's long term vision.

Welwyn Hatfield faces a number of strategic challenges, including the need to deliver high quality homes, support a diverse and resilient economy, enhance the borough's natural and historic environment, and respond effectively to the climate emergency. The Local Plan sets

Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy

The spatial strategy seeks to promote a sustainable pattern of development, meeting the housing, economic and other development needs of the borough by directing growth and investment towards the borough's most sustainable locations, enabling people to live and work in locations where they have good opportunities to access local job opportunities, shops, healthcare, sport and leisure activities, and other services and facilities, by a genuine choice of travel modes.

¹ As specified in the NPPF.

The settlement hierarchy places all the boroughs settlements into tiers, reflecting their relative levels of sustainability and propensity to accommodate future growth.

The Council is seeking views on this approach as part of the Regulation 18 consultation.

SP2: Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy

- A.** The main focus for future housing and economic growth and key service provision will be channelled towards the most sustainable locations in the borough which are considered to be Tier 1 and Tier 2 settlements, or where locations can be made sustainable, limiting the need to travel by providing good accessibility to a range of homes, job opportunities, key services and facilities, by a genuine choice of travel modes including by walking, cycling, and public transport.

- B.** Consistent with the settlement hierarchy:

Tier One – Urban Areas

- Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield will be the primary focus for housing, economic growth and service provision in the borough, reinforcing their roles as the borough's main centres for economic activity, encouraging investment and regeneration, especially in town centre locations that are well served by passenger transport and where active travel is most likely to occur.

Tier Two – Urban Areas

- The large villages of Brookmans Park, Cuffley, Welham Green and Welwyn plus Little Heath will be the secondary focus for housing, economic growth and service provision in the borough, reinforcing their roles as mainly residential areas with more limited economic activity, good access

to day-to-day local services and facilities, and a choice of travel modes.

Tier Three – Urban Areas

- For Digswell, Oaklands and Mardley Heath, and Woolmer Green, levels of growth should be compatible with the more limited range of job opportunities, local shops, services and other facilities, and choice of travel modes in these locations.

Tier Four – Green Belt

- Within the borough's Green Belt villages of Essendon, Lemsford, Newgate Street and Northaw limited levels of growth will take place where this is compatible with Green Belt policy. Any new minor housing or economic development² should help maintain or enhance the vitality of these rural communities, especially where this will support local services and facilities and be located within the existing built-up area of the relevant village.

Tier Five – Green Belt

- Settlements and other rural areas which are all located within the Green Belt, are not generally considered to be sustainable locations, and only minor housing or economic development² will take place where this is compatible with Green Belt policy.
- C.** Provision will be made for at least 15,960 homes new homes by 2043 through a mix of site allocations, commitments, windfall sites, and supporting other residential led schemes in accordance with the settlement hierarchy. The focus will be on providing the right mix of homes to meet the needs of the population, with a strategic aim of between 25-50% affordable homes.
- D.** New homes and commercial development will be supported by the co-ordinated and timely provision of physical, social, green and digital infrastructure.

² Minor housing or economic development, as defined in the Glossary.

- E.** Existing and new infrastructure will be optimised by taking opportunities to cluster services locally, providing flexible space, and improving inclusive access and use to better meet the needs of the population
- F.** Welwyn Hatfield urban open land and valuable natural habitats will be safeguarded and enhanced, optimising their inclusive use and enjoyment for all.
- G.** The strategic demand for employment uses will be met through the safeguarding, intensification and renewal of designated industrial and employment land, and the allocation of additional sites for employment uses.
- H.** The Council will monitor the implementation of the Spatial Strategy through its Authority Monitoring Report and will review the strategy if delivery falls significantly below expectations or if new evidence indicates a need for change.

Settlement Hierarchy

Tier One – Urban Areas:

Welwyn Garden City, Hatfield

Description and role:

Towns with large populations. Both have town centres, a network of neighbourhood centres, and other retail destinations. The borough's primary locations for housing, business units, large supermarkets and comparison retailing, secondary, further / higher education, healthcare, sport and leisure, entertainment and other facilities. As well as serving the populations of each town, they act as service centres for other smaller settlements. Both towns have good accessibility to the primary route network and are served by regular rail and bus services.

Tier Two – Urban Areas:

Brookmans Park, Cuffley, Welham Green, Welwyn, Little Heath

Description and role: Large villages with significantly smaller populations than the

towns. Secondary locations for housing and business units in the borough. Each has a village centre catering for the day-to-day convenience needs of local communities. Each has at least primary school provision and is served by a range of local services and facilities. These villages have good accessibility to the road network and are served by rail and/or regular bus services.

Tier Three – Urban Areas:

Digswell, Oaklands and Mardley Heath, Woolmer Green

Description and role: Smaller villages with (generally) smaller populations and less business units than the tier two villages. Each village has a primary school, but local communities are served by a more limited range of services and facilities than the tier two villages. Digswell is served by a rail station, and the other three villages have regular bus services.

Tier Four – Green Belt:

Essendon, Lemsford, Newgate Street and Northaw

Description and role: These small Green Belt villages are typically residential in character, with small populations. Each is served by a primary school, but otherwise, local communities are served by a very limited range of local services and facilities. None are directly served by rail services. Bus services are generally infrequent with most journeys being car-based.

Tier Five – Green Belt:

Ayot St Lawrence, Ayot St Peter, Ayot Green, Bell Bar, Burnham Green (part of), Bullens Green, Mill Green, Stanborough, Swanley Bar, Water End, Wild Hill, Woodside.

Description and role: These small settlements are located within the Green Belt. No or limited services and facilities within the settlements. Local populations look towards larger settlements for their day-to-day and wider service needs. Some are located closer to other villages or towns than others. None are directly served by rail services. Bus services are generally either non-existent or infrequent with most journeys being car-based.

Supporting Text

The Spatial Strategy sets out how growth will be planned and managed across Welwyn Hatfield over the plan period, ensuring that development is delivered in a coordinated, sustainable and locally responsive way. A key component of the strategy is meeting the borough's identified housing need. Provision will be made for at least 15,960 new homes by 2043 through a balanced mix of site allocations, existing commitments, windfall development, and a positive plan led approach to permitting residential led schemes that accord with the settlement hierarchy. This approach ensures that growth is directed to the most sustainable locations while maintaining flexibility to respond to changing circumstances. The strategy places strong emphasis on delivering the right mix of homes to meet the needs of current and future residents, including a strategic aim of securing between 25–50% affordable housing across the plan period.

The emerging spatial strategy aims to:

- Direct growth to locations with the greatest access to jobs, services, public transport and active travel networks.
- Reduce the need to travel and support a shift towards sustainable modes of transport.
- Strengthen the role of existing centres by focusing development where it can support local shops, services and community facilities.
- Make best use of existing infrastructure and planned investment.
- Protect the borough's rural character and Green Belt by ensuring development is proportionate to the role and function of each settlement.

This approach reflects national planning policy, which encourages sustainable patterns of development and the efficient use of land.

New homes and commercial development must be supported by the timely and coordinated delivery of the infrastructure required to create healthy, well-connected and resilient communities. This includes physical infrastructure such as transport and utilities, social infrastructure such as schools and healthcare, green infrastructure including open spaces and nature networks, and digital infrastructure that supports modern living and working. The strategy promotes an integrated approach to infrastructure planning to ensure that growth is properly supported and that impacts are managed effectively.

To make best use of existing assets, the strategy encourages the optimisation of both new and existing infrastructure. This includes taking opportunities to cluster services locally, designing flexible and adaptable spaces, and improving inclusive access so that facilities can be used effectively by all parts of the community. This approach supports more efficient service delivery, reduces the need to travel, and helps create vibrant, accessible neighbourhoods.

Welwyn Hatfield's urban open land, green spaces and valuable natural habitats form an essential part of the borough's character and environmental quality. The Spatial Strategy safeguards these assets and seeks opportunities for enhancement, ensuring they continue to provide ecological, recreational and health benefits. The inclusive use and enjoyment of these spaces is a key priority, supporting wellbeing and contributing to the borough's wider green and blue infrastructure network.

Meeting the borough's economic needs is also central to the Spatial Strategy. Strategic demand for employment uses will be met through the safeguarding, intensification and renewal of designated industrial and employment land, alongside the allocation of additional sites where required. This ensures that Welwyn Hatfield can continue to support a diverse and resilient economy, provide high quality jobs, and respond to changing business needs over the plan period.

The Settlement Hierarchy

The settlement hierarchy categorises settlements according to their size, accessibility, and the range of services and facilities they provide. It forms the basis for determining the most appropriate scale and distribution of future development.

The hierarchy is structured into five tiers, with Tier One representing the most sustainable locations for growth and Tier Five representing the least sustainable.

Tier One: Urban Areas – Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield

Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield are the borough's largest and most accessible settlements. They contain the widest range of employment opportunities, retail destinations, education and health facilities, and leisure provision. Both towns benefit from strong public transport connections, including rail services to

London and north to Letchworth and Stevenage, and have good access to the strategic road network.

At this stage, the Council considers that these towns should continue to be the primary focus for future housing, economic development and service provision. Concentrating growth here can:

- Support town centre regeneration.
- Enable higher density development in accessible locations.
- Reduce reliance on the private car.
- Strengthen their role as service centres for surrounding communities.

The Council welcomes views on the scale and form of growth appropriate for these locations.

Tier Two: Urban Areas – Large Villages

Brookmans Park, Cuffley, Welham Green, Welwyn and Little Heath function as secondary service centres. They provide a good range of day-to-day services, including primary schools, local shops, community facilities and public transport connections. These towns and villages are predominantly residential but have the capacity to support modest levels of growth that reinforce their vitality.

The Council is proposing to reclassify Little Heath from a Tier Three to a Tier Two settlement, reflecting its functional relationship with Potters Bar and its accessibility to a wider range of services and facilities.

Growth in Tier Two settlements is expected to:

- Support the viability of local centres.
- Provide a mix of housing to meet local needs.
- Maintain and enhance sustainable travel opportunities.

The Council is seeking feedback on the proposed reclassification and the level of growth appropriate for these villages.

Tier Three: Urban Areas – Smaller Villages

Digswell, Oaklands and Mardley Heath, and Woolmer Green have more limited services and facilities than Tier Two villages. While they can accommodate some development, this should be proportionate to their smaller size and more constrained accessibility.

Development in these locations should:

- Support local facilities where appropriate.
- Reflect their more limited employment and service base.
- Avoid generating unsustainable travel patterns.
- Respect the character and setting of the villages.

The Council invites comments on the scale of development that may be suitable in these settlements.

Tier Four: Green Belt Villages

Essendon, Lemsford, Newgate Street and Northaw are small rural villages washed over by the Green Belt. They have very limited services and facilities and are not well served by public transport. Development opportunities are therefore tightly constrained.

Only limited infill or small scale development compatible with Green Belt policy is likely to be appropriate, particularly where it:

- Helps maintain the vitality of the rural community.
- Supports local services such as primary schools or village halls.
- Is located within the existing built up area.

The Council is seeking views on how best to support the long term sustainability of these rural communities.

Tier Five: Small Green Belt Settlements

The smallest settlements—such as Ayot St Lawrence, Ayot St Peter, Bell Bar, Mill Green, Water End and others—have little or no local services and are heavily dependent on larger settlements for day-to-day needs. Public transport provision is minimal or absent, and most journeys are car based.

These locations are not considered sustainable for significant growth. Only minor development consistent with Green Belt policy is likely to be appropriate, typically relating to:

- Rural enterprise.
- Re use of existing buildings.
- Very small scale infill where appropriate.

The Council welcomes views on the role of these settlements and how best to manage change within them.

Welwyn Hatfield Green Corridor

Green Infrastructure is vital for nature recovery, environmental resilience and delivery of access and recreational opportunities to support the health and wellbeing of communities. The creation of a 'Green Corridor' running east to west across the borough will help deliver the Plan's spatial vision by helping to sustainably enable the amount of development proposed within the Plan. It will help delivery of the Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), improve access to green space and recreation in line with national standards³ and help maintain a sense of separation between urban locations.

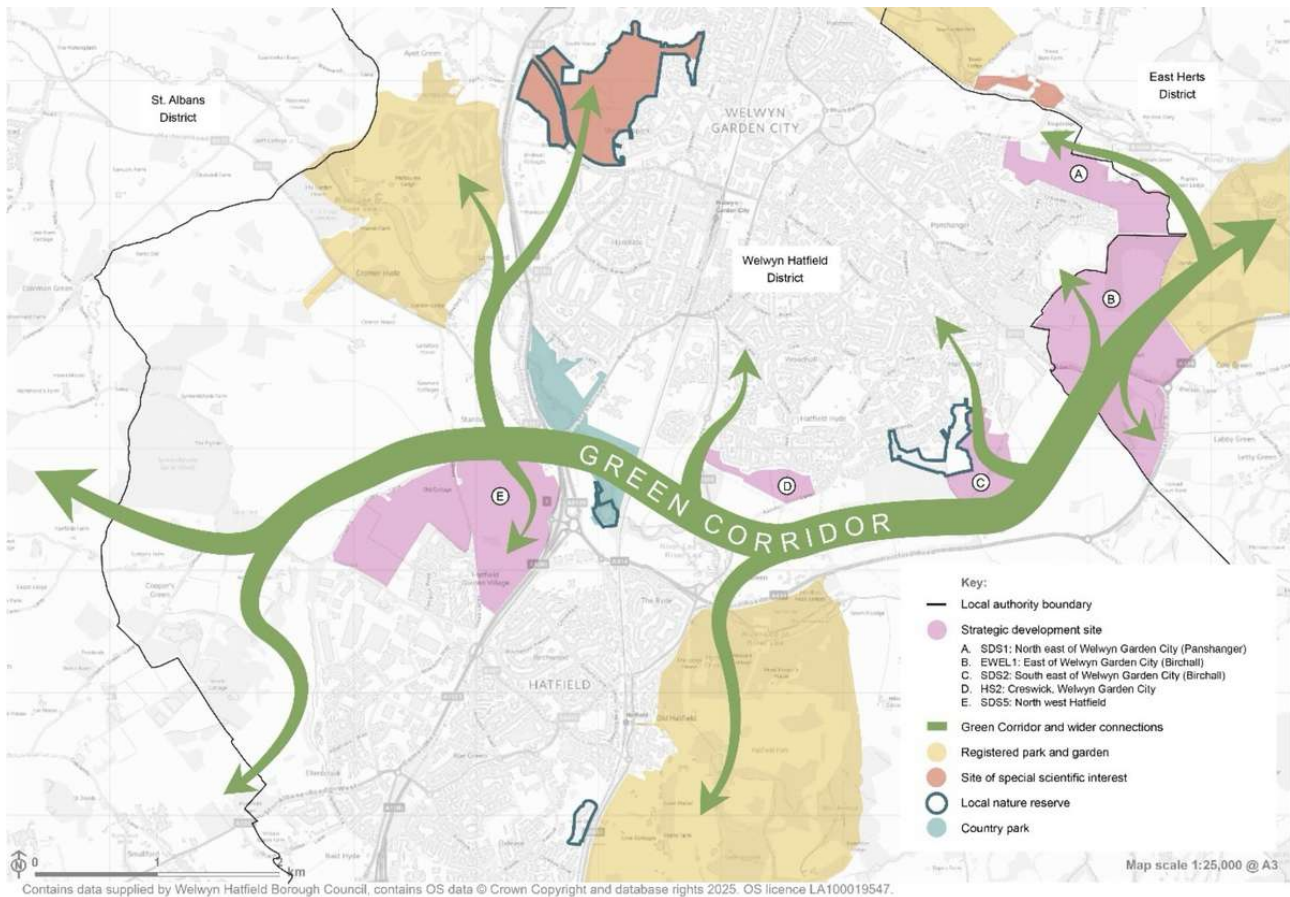
SP 3: Welwyn Hatfield Green Corridor

A. The Council will work with partners, developers, and adjoining authorities to deliver a strategic Green Corridor running east–west across the borough between Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield (**see Map 1 on the following page**) that:

- a)** Connects and enhances existing green infrastructure, ecological assets, and public rights of way to create a multifunctional community resource;
- b)** Maintains a sense of separation between Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield, consistent with the Green Belt's purpose of preventing coalescence;
- c)** Improves access to open space and green/blue infrastructure in line with national standards and contributes to health and wellbeing;
- d)** Provides new and enhanced green spaces, wildlife habitats, circular leisure routes, play and sport facilities, and off-road active travel connections;

- e)** Secures and provides restoration and enhancement of mineral extraction sites for biodiversity and recreation following extraction;
 - f)** Supports biodiversity net gain, climate resilience, nature-based solutions to improve water management and the objectives of the Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) or any successor strategy; and
 - g)** Protects and enhances the landscape character and cultural heritage of the area.
- B.** Proposals for the development and delivery of the Green Corridor are outlined in the Green Corridor Study and will be detailed in the emerging Green Corridor Supplementary Planning Document and should be incorporated into the masterplanning of strategic sites. Development within or adjacent to the Green Corridor must:
- a)** Enhance connectivity and avoid harm to existing ecological assets, green or blue infrastructure, and public rights of way;
 - b)** Facilitate and support the delivery of opportunities and projects identified in the Green Corridor SPD;
 - c)** Ensure the long-term management and maintenance of green/blue infrastructure and other projects delivered within the Green Corridor;
- C.** Development that would jeopardise the delivery of the Green Corridor will not be permitted.

³ Natural England Green Infrastructure Standards for England 2023 and Natural England's Accessible Green Space Standard 2024 Accessible Greenspace Standard – <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/AccessibleGreenspaceStandard.aspx> – or any subsequent standards.



Map 1 Welwyn Hatfield Green Corridor

Supporting Text

In line with the proposals detailed in map 1 the Green Corridor will provide new strategic connections to Ellenbrook Country Park, Symondshyde Great Wood and Heartwood Forest in the West, through Stanborough Park, the Commons Wood Nature Reserve, and Moneyhole Lane Park, and connect to Panshanger Park, the River Mimram and Lea Valley in the east.

Part of the Green Corridor is subject to an application for minerals extraction. Subject to the granting of planning permission, the Council will work with Hertfordshire County Council (as mineral planning authority), St Albans District Council, and the Ellenbrook Trust to maintain safe public access to Ellenbrook Country Park during any mineral extraction and to secure its restoration and enhancement for biodiversity and recreation following any extraction.

A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will be produced to guide delivery of the Green Corridor, which all applications for development within or adjoining the Corridor must have regard to.

Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood planning is a distinct tier of the planning system designed to empower communities to influence the development and growth of their local areas. Under the Localism Act 2011, local parish and town councils have been given the authority to lead neighbourhood planning initiatives within their communities. In areas where no parish or town council exists, a neighbourhood forum may be established to take on this role. Additionally, in predominantly commercial areas, neighbourhood planning can be led by a business neighbourhood forum, enabling local businesses to shape the future of their environment.

SP 4: Neighbourhood Plans

- A.** The Council will support Neighbourhood Plans where they demonstrate that they:
 - a)** Contribute positively to the delivery of the Local Plan's Vision, Objectives, and Spatial Strategy; and
 - b)** Are in general conformity with the Strategic Policies of this Plan.
- B.** Neighbourhood Plans must be underpinned by proportionate, robust, and locally relevant evidence. Qualifying bodies are encouraged to use existing evidence prepared by the Council and other relevant sources. The Council will support neighbourhood planning groups by sharing relevant data and technical information.
- C.** Neighbourhood Plans should reflect the aspirations of the local community and promote high-quality, locally distinctive development. Plans should demonstrate inclusive engagement and respond to the character, heritage, and environmental assets of the area.
- D.** The Council will support qualifying bodies throughout the neighbourhood planning process, including:
 - a)** Providing guidance on policy conformity and evidence requirements;
 - b)** Sharing relevant data and mapping resources;
 - c)** Facilitating engagement with statutory consultees;
 - d)** Supporting plan preparation, examination, and referendum stages.

Supporting Text

Neighbourhood plans are not intended to prevent development; rather, they provide a proactive framework for shaping the future of an area. These plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan, be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and be underpinned by robust evidence. They must demonstrate how they contribute to sustainable development. The preparation of a Sustainability Appraisal can support this by illustrating how the plan promotes environmental, social, and economic sustainability. In certain cases—depending on the scale and nature of the proposals—a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) may also be required.

Before a neighbourhood plan can be formally “made,” it must undergo independent examination and be approved through a local referendum, ensuring it reflects the aspirations of the wider community.

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 allocate sites for development. Neighbourhood Plans should focus on local rather than strategic planning matters.

Once “made”, Neighbourhood Plans form part of the development plan and are used in determining planning applications.

Chapter 2: The Green Belt

Introduction

Welwyn Hatfield is located within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The borough's two towns of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield, and the eight smaller urban settlements of Brookmans Park, Cuffley, Welham Green, Welwyn, Digswell, Little Heath, Oaklands and Mardley Heath, and Woolmer Green are all 'inset' within (excluded from) the Green Belt. The inner boundaries of the Green Belt around these settlements are defined on the Policies Map. Located within the Green Belt are a number of smaller villages and settlements, as well as large areas of countryside.

SP 5: The Green Belt

- A.** The borough's Green Belt boundaries are defined on the Policies Map and will only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified through the review and update of the Local Plan having regard to their intended permanence in the long term and the need to promote sustainable patterns of development.
- B.** Opportunities to enhance the beneficial use of land in the Green Belt to provide access, for outdoor sport and recreation, to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity, or to improve damaged and derelict land will be supported in principle, where proposals are otherwise consistent with Green Belt policy.

Supporting Text

The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. The five purposes of Green Belt policy are to:

- a)** check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b)** prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c)** assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d)** preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e)** assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Once established, Green Belt boundaries will only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified through the preparation or updating of the plan.

The Government attaches great importance to the protection of the Green Belt. Within the Green Belt inappropriate development will only be permitted in 'very special circumstances' where the substantial harm to the Green Belt and its openness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

There are a number of exceptions to inappropriate development set out in national planning policy⁴, including development of some 'grey belt' land where it meets the relevant definition and criteria.

DMP 1: Development in the Green Belt

- A.** Planning applications for development within the Green Belt as defined on the Policies Map, will be determined in line with prevailing national planning policy and guidance.
- B.** Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless the proposal:
 - a)** Falls within one of exceptions listed in national planning policy to inappropriate development;
 - b)** Demonstrates that it meets the definition of grey belt and the

⁴ The National Planning Policy Framework.

associated criteria set out in national planning policy and guidance, including the golden rules; or

- c) Demonstrates that very special circumstances exist and the harm to the Green Belt is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Openness

- C. Where an assessment of the impact on the openness of the Green Belt is required, the following factors will be taken into account (but are not limited to):

- a) The visual impact of the proposal, including views into and out of the site;
- b) The spatial impact of the proposal (volume, height, footprint);
- c) The duration of the development and its remediability; and
- d) The degree of activity likely to be generated, such as traffic generation.

Purposes

- D. Where an assessment of the impact on the purposes of the Green Belt is required, the following factors will be taken into account:

- a) Whether the site lies within a parcel of land which makes a strong, moderate or weak/no contribution to one or more purposes of the Green Belt; and
- b) Whether the scale, form or use of development or activity would compromise that/those purpose(s).

Grey Belt

- E. Where land is identified as grey belt land, proposals will be determined in accordance with national planning policy and guidance on grey belt, including:
 - a) If the site is previously developed and/or does not strongly contribute to purposes (a), (b), or (d) of the Green Belt;

- b) If the development would not fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt;
- c) There is a demonstrable unmet need for the proposed development.
- d) The site is in a sustainable location; and
- e) The proposal meets the Golden Rules, including enhanced affordable housing, green space and infrastructure provision.

DMP 2: Exceptions to Inappropriate Development in the Green Belt

- A. Where a proposal is being considered as an exception to inappropriate development in the Green Belt as defined by national planning policy and guidance, the following considerations will apply.

Extensions or Alterations to Buildings

- 1. To demonstrate that an extension or alteration is not a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building, applicants must provide:
 - a) A quantitative assessment including (but not limited to) the increase in the footprint, floorspace, volume and/or above ground external dimensions (height/width); and
 - b) A qualitative assessment of the design elements including (but not limited to) the scale, bulk, height and massing with regards to the relationship to the original building and the elevation to which it relates.

- The original building is as defined in the Glossary of this Plan⁵.
- The cumulative impact of any existing or approved additions will be included in the above assessment.
- The volume and footprint of any existing authorised 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.

Replacement Buildings

2. To demonstrate that a building (in the same use) is not materially larger than the one it replaces, applicants must provide:
 - a) A quantitative assessment including (but not limited to) the footprint, floorspace, volume and/or above ground external dimensions (height/width) of the existing and proposed buildings;
 - b) A qualitative assessment of the design elements including (but not limited to) the scale, bulk, height and massing; and
 - c) The siting of the replacement building.
- Conditions to remove permitted development rights⁶ may be imposed where it is considered necessary to protect the openness of the Green Belt.

Limited infilling in villages

3. Limited infill development, will be permitted in villages within the Green Belt provided:

- a) It does not extend the existing 'built up' area of the village into the open countryside; and
 - b) It is minor development⁷.
- Limited infilling in villages does not include the extension or alteration of buildings.

Re-use of buildings and material changes in the use of land

4. In assessing the re-use of buildings in the Green Belt:
 - a) A full structural survey will be required to demonstrate that buildings are capable of conversion without major alterations or rebuilding.
- Any new curtilages resulting from the re-use of buildings or material changes in the use of the land should be clearly defined and limited in size to preserve the openness of the Green Belt.
- Conditions to remove permitted development rights⁸ may be imposed where it is considered necessary to protect the openness of the Green Belt.

Supporting Text

DMP1: Development in the Green Belt outlines the general approach to development within the Green Belt. DMP2: Exceptions to Inappropriate Development in the Green Belt sets out supplementary criteria for considering the exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

When reviewing remediability, any provisions to return land to its original state or to an equivalent (or improved) state of openness will be taken into account.

⁵ A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.

⁶ Set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

⁷ As defined in the Glossary of this Plan, minor development is the provision of dwellinghouses where (a) the number of dwellinghouses to be provided is less than 10; or (b) the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of less than 0.5 hectares and it is not known whether the development falls within (a). The provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is less than 1,000 square metres, or development carried out on a site having an area of less than 1 hectare.

⁸ Set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

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 an increase in excess of 50% of the original building will 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.

The National Planning Policy Framework and national Planning Practice Guidance on the Green Belt (or any relevant successors) will be a material consideration in decision making.



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SECTION 2

Climate Change and Flood Risk

Chapter 3: Climate Change and Flood Risk

Introduction

Human activity of burning fossil fuels is the main cause of climate change, and it is the unprecedented speed of change that is most alarming. The speed of change is increased due to positive feedback loops, which amplify the effects of climate change. For instance, permafrost is melting at faster rates due to the rising global temperature, which is releasing large stores of methane (an even more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide) into the atmosphere which further exacerbates global temperature rise.

To slow down this speed of change, we need to reduce emissions to limit the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and enhance the natural environment (to capture and store carbon dioxide). The planning system plays an important role in reducing carbon emissions, delivering sustainable communities and helping ensure that communities are as ready as possible for the impacts of climate change.

We also need to start adapting to the changing climate, because firstly, at a more local level we are already experiencing impacts of climate change in the form of wildfires, flooding, heatwaves and droughts and secondly, because the effects of climate change will be experienced for many years to come due to the time lag between what we do and when we feel it and the long lifespan of greenhouse gases. Building resilience and adapting to the impacts of climate change will play a crucial role in planning decisions, to ensure a sustainable future for our community.

SP 6: Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change

- A.** In line with the Council's aim to be a net zero borough by 2050, the policies in this chapter recognise and contribute to the importance of mitigating and

adapting to climate change, and seek to reduce carbon emissions as far as possible. Proposals that incorporate climate change reduction, mitigation and adaptation principles in their design and proposed implementation will be supported (subject to all other policies of the plan), most notably through the following:

Mitigating the effects of climate change

- a)** Prioritising the location of new development on previously developed land;
- b)** Locating development in areas which minimises the need to travel and maximises the ability to make journeys by sustainable modes of transport;
- c)** Minimising greenhouse gas and particulate emissions throughout the lifetime of the development, including construction, embodied and operational emissions;
- d)** Improving on Target Emission Rates to reduce CO2 emissions;
- e)** Maximising opportunities from energy and heat generation from low and zero carbon technologies;
- f)** Designing buildings to encourage positive passive solar gain, cooling and ventilation whilst mitigating overheating to reduce energy demand; and
- g)** Supporting retrofitting schemes to existing building stock to improve energy and water efficiency

Adapting to the impacts of climate change

- h)** Recognising the plan area's changing climate over the plan period and ensuring new development has considered, and can adapt to, climate change;
- i)** Utilising green and blue infrastructure to tackle urban heat island effects, reduce overheating and flood risk, and improve air quality;
- j)** Assessing flood risk appropriately by taking into account the effects of a changing climate; and

- k)** Utilising water efficiency, capture and recycling measures to reduce the potential for drought and water shortages.

Sustainability Statement

- B.** To demonstrate how development proposals have incorporated the above principles, all planning applications for major development will be required to submit a Sustainability Statement. Applications will also be required to demonstrate how they have conformed with Development Management policies relating to Climate Change and Sustainability.

Supporting Text

Consistent with national planning policy and guidance, this plan takes a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change by supporting appropriate measures to ensure the future health and resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts.

In July 2019, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council declared a climate emergency and set itself the target of being net zero by 2030⁹. The Council has also committed to supporting, encouraging and engaging with residents, communities, businesses and other partners to reduce carbon emissions with the aim to be Net Zero as a borough by 2050. In 2024, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council also adopted a Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which sought to encourage developers to produce more sustainable and lower carbon developments. This Local Plan puts those measures onto an even stronger footing and requires development to do more to mitigate the threat of climate change.

DMP 3: Energy Efficiency and Net Zero Design

- A.** All development proposals are expected to reduce energy demand and carbon emissions through their design by implementing the following energy hierarchy:
 - a)** Using less energy by considering the building fabric and design, site orientation and layout, soft landscaping and energy efficient lighting;
 - b)** Supplying and using energy efficiently by maximising energy efficient ventilation and heating systems, and using local energy resources (including secondary heat) where appropriate; and
 - c)** Using renewable and low carbon energy.
- B.** Development proposals should plan for the following passive design measures demonstrate how energy demand and carbon emissions have been minimised as far as possible:
 - a)** The layout and orientation of the site;
 - b)** The massing of buildings and structures;
 - c)** The location of surrounding buildings and objects, including the planting of trees and vegetation for shading;
 - d)** The use of materials;
 - e)** The location and design of fenestration;
 - f)** Internal room layout;
 - g)** Roof/eaves overhang; and
 - h)** The use of internal and external shutters
- C.** Development involving the creation of new dwellings and/or commercial

⁹ one.welhat.gov.uk/environment/climate-change/2

floorspace should improve on the relevant Target Emission Rate (TER) for the building's proposed use(s) in terms of a percentage uplift.

- D.** Proposals that involve the reuse of existing buildings should seek to reduce energy demand and carbon emissions. Improvements made to the existing building in an energy efficiency context should be done in accordance with the energy hierarchy, and should be demonstrated by providing an improvement on a pre-retrofit baseline.
- E.** 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.

Supporting Text

Consistent with national planning policy, the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change should be considered in preparing and assessing planning applications, taking into account the full range of potential climate change impacts.

Significant weight will be given in decision-taking to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic, and to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and a proposal's contribution to a net zero future.

This will be achieved by seeking to reduce the energy consumption and emissions of a building from an early stage of design, taking into account a new and/or existing building's construction and design, heating systems, energy generation systems, passive design principles.

DMP 4: Construction Waste and Whole Life Cycle

Construction Waste

- A.** To help minimise the impact of new development on the environment, the Council will seek to ensure that development reduces waste through the construction process and reduce embodied carbon emissions throughout the whole life cycle of a development.
- B.** Major development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they reduce construction waste through the re-use and recycling of materials, and how any practices utilised reflect the national waste hierarchy:
 - Prevention
 - Preparing for re-use
 - Recycling
 - Recovery
 - Disposal
- C.** As part of an application, applicants should also set out how their proposals are in accordance with the adopted Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan (or any successor development plan document).

Whole Life Cycle

- D.** Major development proposals and proposals involving the demolition of an existing building(s) of 100sqm or more will be required to submit a whole life cycle carbon assessment, submitted as part of the Sustainability Statement, using an industry recognised whole life carbon assessment methodology. The assessment should also demonstrate actions taken to reduce whole life cycle carbon.
- E.** Proposals which demonstrate the use of low embodied carbon materials will be supported where it is appropriate and consistent with national and local planning policies.

- F.** Major development proposals should achieve the following embodied carbon targets for building life cycle stages A1-A5:
 - a)** Major residential proposals – 500kgCO₂e/m²
 - b)** Major non-residential proposals – 600kgCO₂e/m²
- G.** Where it is not viable to meet these embodied carbon targets, proposals will be required to provide justification within the Sustainability Statement.

Supporting Text

The issue of climate change has meant that the built environment industry has sought to further reduce operational emissions through design and construction. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government have implemented higher standards for energy efficiency and emissions through Building Regulations, with further improved energy efficiency standards to be introduced in the future. Other voluntary standards also exist in the built environment to recognise and promote sustainability, which has a high focus on reducing operational emissions.

However, it is important to recognise that whilst reducing operational emissions in the built environment is vital, there is a significant amount of emissions associated through the whole lifespan of a building. Crucially, there are also practices and standards which allows the built environment to assess and reduce the amount of whole life cycle emissions.

There are also emissions associated with construction waste and ‘beyond the life’ stages of a building. The construction industry is notorious for sending waste to landfill and not reusing or reutilising materials well, and in some cases building materials going straight to waste without ever being used.

This policy is focused solely on the waste produced by construction and the emissions produced by the whole life cycle of development.

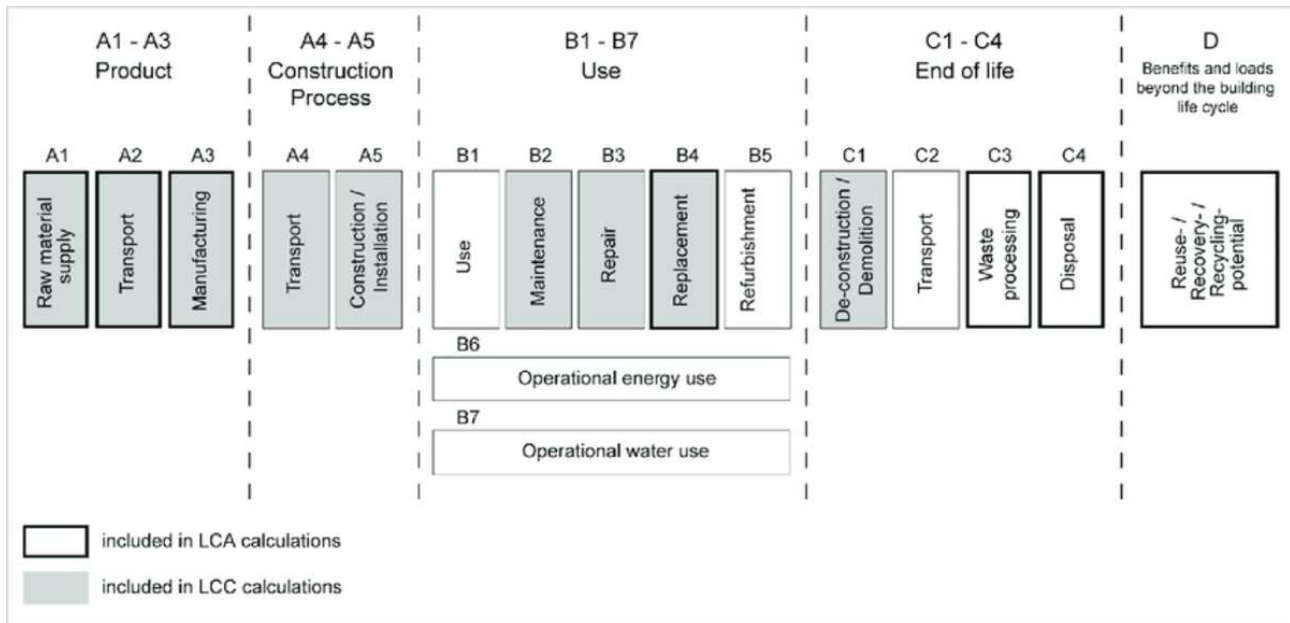
There is no standard definition of “embodied carbon” in planning legislation or national planning policy. However, it is generally

understood to mean the carbon emissions associated with constructing a building, as opposed to the operational carbon associated with using the building which is the carbon emissions associated with a development during use. The embodied carbon and operational carbon together form part of the building’s whole of life carbon emissions. Depending on the scope of the assessment, emissions can also be considered for emissions associated with taking a building down at the end of its life.

Embodied Carbon Targets

The embodied carbon targets mentioned in the draft policy are derived from the LETI Embodied Carbon Primer document. The targets are listed as a ‘2020 target’, which is a 40% reduction over baseline. The baseline is derived from the RICS professional statement ‘whole life carbon assessment for the built environment’, which details the baseline specifications of embodied carbon for materials used in construction and for what purpose they are used in construction.

A1-A5 comes from BS EN 15978:2011, which states life cycle stages in construction. A1-A5 relates to the product and construction processes, in this context meaning the carbon emitted from every aspect of these processes.



DMP 5: Water Efficiency in New Developments

Water Consumption

- A.** All newly constructed dwellings are required to achieve an estimated water consumption not exceeding 110 litres per person per day (p/p/p/d). This requirement will be secured through the use of a planning condition.
- B.** Positive weight will be given to proposals that demonstrate an estimated water consumption of lower than 110 litres p/p/p/d.
- C.** Non-residential development with a floorspace of 1,000 square metres that incorporate water conservation measures to help meet the DMP target of BREEAM 'Excellent' will be supported, where they comply with the other policies in this plan.
- D.** Proposals for major development will be required to set out the estimated water consumption in the Sustainability Statement.

Water Capture and Reuse

- E.** Positive weight will also be given to proposals that incorporate rainwater harvesting and water reuse through greywater harvesting for non-potable uses to reduce demand on mains water supply. The inclusion of such measures within proposals should be set out in the Sustainability Statement.

Supporting Text

The Environment Agency undertakes a water stress assessment for each water company area, having regard to current and future water usage and climate change scenarios¹⁰. Areas of serious water stress are where water resources are being, or are likely to be, exploited to a degree which may result in pressure on the environment or water supplies both now and in future. Welwyn Hatfield is located within a water company area of serious water stress.

The policy requirement not to exceed 110 litres per person per day is equivalent to the Building Regulations Part G optional requirement, which must be secured by a planning condition in order to be complied with through the Building Regulations.

¹⁰ Environment Agency - Water stressed areas – final classification 2021 (1 July 2021)

DMP 6: Managing Air Quality

- A.** Prevailing air quality, including any Air Quality Management Areas, 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.
- B.** 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.
- C.** An Air Quality Assessment that demonstrates how prevailing air quality and potential impacts have been considered and how air quality will be kept to an acceptable standard through avoidance and mitigation will be required for any development proposals which are:
 - a)** Likely, due to the nature of the proposal, to give rise to significant air pollution,
 - b)** Within an Air Quality Management Area,
 - c)** Within 50 metres of a major road or heavily trafficked route;
 - d)** Within proximity to a source of air pollution which could present a significant risk to human health, and/or
 - e)** Particularly sensitive to air pollution due to their nature, such as schools, health care establishments or housing for older people.
- D.** 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.

Supporting Text

National policy requires that development should not contribute to, or be put at unacceptable risk from, pollution in its various forms, and that it should where possible help to improve local environmental conditions. In addition, national policy requires that planning should help to achieve healthy places. As such it is important that potential environmental impacts, both from proposed development and to future occupiers, are properly considered as part of the planning process to ensure that future development provides as healthy and safe an environment as possible.

Issues to be considered include air quality, pollution from light and noise, contaminated land and land instability, including the effects of historic chalk mining in some areas of the borough.

DMP 7: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

- A.** In order to reduce carbon emissions, applicants will be expected to consider and maximise opportunities for the use of renewable and low carbon technologies. Through the submission of the Sustainability Statement, major development proposals should demonstrate how the following matters have been addressed as part of their development proposals:
 - a)** Energy supply – how the proposal has sought to utilise on-site and/or local renewable and low carbon energy generation;
 - b)** Energy demand – how the proposal has sought to utilise on-site and/or local low carbon technologies for heating and, where applicable, ventilation; and
 - c)** Energy response – how the proposal has sought to relieve peak energy demand through energy supply, storage and management, including battery energy storage systems and smart meters

- B.** All new dwellings will be expected to have solar PV panels installed as a functional requirement on flat roofs and pitched roofs with a southerly, south-easterly, south-westerly, easterly or westerly aspect.
- C.** New construction dwellings are required to use no fossil fuels onsite for the dwelling's space heating and hot water demands. All heating and hot water demand is expected to be provided by low carbon alternatives such as heat pumps or direct electric heating.

Renewable Energy and Energy Storage Developments

- D.** Proposals for renewable energy sites and associated infrastructure including battery energy storage systems (BESS) will be supported where the impact is, or can be made, acceptable. Proposals will be assessed against the following factors, and local & national planning policy, to determine whether they are suitable and whether any impacts can be mitigated and sufficiently outweighed by the benefits associated with the proposed development:
 - a)** Current grid capacity;
 - b)** Proximity to existing grid connections (for proposals connecting to existing grid infrastructure)
 - c)** Proximity to end users (for localised energy proposals)
- E.** Ground-mounted solar farms utilising previously developed land will be encouraged, especially if it can be demonstrated that the subject land is unsuitable for uses where there is an identified need for in the plan area.
- F.** Planning conditions will be used to ensure that installations at ground-mounted solar farms are removed when no longer in use to ensure the land is restored to its previous use.

Supporting Text

Renewable energy – at any scale – is seen as a positive way of contributing towards meeting energy demands, whilst ensuring energy is also produced cleanly compared to traditional methods of energy generation using fossil fuels, therefore reducing greenhouse gas emissions and slowing down climate change. The cost of many renewable energy technologies has also fallen in recent years, promoting their attractiveness and viability.

The scale of renewable energy varies greatly. There are options to install solar panels domestically (either on existing buildings or standalone) and commercially, such as on larger commercial buildings which have larger areas to mount renewable energy technology. Larger scale renewable energy projects – such as solar farms – are also increasing in popularity, and can make significant contributions to energy production in their location (depending on size).

Whilst Local Plans are not required to deliver a quota of renewable energy development, Local Planning Authorities are responsible for renewable and low carbon energy development of 50 megawatts or less installed capacity. National Planning Policy and Guidance also states that to help increase the use and supply of renewable energy, plans should provide a positive strategy for these energy sources that maximises potential suitable development while addressing adverse impacts.

The policy aims to guide development proposals for both on existing buildings and solar farms, contributing to renewable energy generation in the borough throughout the plan period and therefore helping to tackle climate change. The second part of this policy is not to designate specific areas within the plan area for renewable energy development, but instead list criteria to be adhered to which promotes renewable energy development in appropriate locations, taking into account the requirements of the technology and cumulative impacts.

The Future Homes Standard, due to come into effect in 2025, has previously been consulted on by the government in 2019 and 2020, with a consultation on detailed specification in late 2023/early 2024. The latter consultation sought views on whether to require solar panels for new homes. The new 2024 government stated in

October 2024 that they want solar panels on as many new homes as possible¹¹. Additionally, one expected result of the Future Homes Standard is for all new homes built with no fossil fuel boilers.

To achieve the Strategic Policy of this Chapter and the Council's ambition to be net-zero carbon by 2050, and to align with the likelihood of solar panels being required in new homes in the future, this DM Policy expects newly built dwellings to have solar photovoltaic panels installed as a functional requirement. The expected future requirement for new homes to be fossil fuel free will also result in the vast majority of dwellings will be utilising electricity for space heating and hot water rather than gas, which means that producing electricity on-site will reduce the dependency on grid electricity which may be exacerbated by all-electricity fuelled dwellings.

It is widely acknowledged that the azimuth (orientation) and tilt of the PV panel have a direct impact on the level of energy generation a solar PV panel creates. The energy generation also varies more due to these factors depending on the time of year; a north facing solar PV panel (180 azimuth) are around 55% as efficient as south facing ones (0 azimuth), however they can be even less efficient in winter months. Therefore, solar PV panels should be installed within a west-south-east orientation to improve electricity generation.

DMP 8: Managing the Impacts of Development

A. Development proposals must be designed to protect the amenity of occupiers, both current and those in the future including in new developments. In line with “agent of change” principles, new development should not curtail or limit the activities of legitimate and established users in the area.

Noise and Vibration

- B.** 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 or for proposals that are considered to be sensitive to, or may be subject to, noise and/or vibration. Proposals that would result in or be subject to noise pollution and/or vibration will be assessed against the following:
- a)** Noise that results in a significant adverse impact on human health or the natural environment will not be permitted.
 - b)** Noise that results in an adverse impact 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.
 - c)** Noise that is 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, and the benefits of the development outweigh the harm.
 - d)** Good acoustic design principles should be integrated into all developments where noise is a factor. Façade noise mitigation should not be solely relied upon.
 - e)** The requirement of specific noise mitigation is likely to require verification testing via condition prior to first occupation or first commercial use.
 - f)** Developments subjected to noise from commercial operations that are already established, and that are likely to give rise to adverse noise

¹¹ <https://mhclgmedia.blog.gov.uk/2024/10/24/reporting-on-the-future-homes-standard-and-solar-panels/>

impacts, should not solely rely upon closed windows and façade noise mitigation.

Light Pollution

- C.** 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:
 - a)** The lighting scheme is the minimum required for security and operational purposes;
 - b)** Glare and light spillage are minimised;
 - c)** The amenity of residential areas is not adversely affected;
 - d)** Assessment will require the submission of vertical and horizontal lux diagrams to show light spill and coverage.
 - e)** The visual character of historic buildings and conservation areas are not adversely affected;
 - f)** There would be no dazzling or distraction of drivers or other highway users using the highway network including the active travel network;
 - g)** There would be no unacceptable adverse impact on the character or openness of the countryside and the green belt; and
 - h)** There would be no unacceptable adverse effects on species, habitats or the wider natural environment.
- D.** Proposals for developments which may be affected by existing light installations will need to demonstrate that the proposed development will not be unacceptably affected by the existing installations. When this scenario occurs, mitigation verification will be required prior to development occupation via use of planning conditions. If any such impacts cannot be mitigated to an appropriate level, the proposal should be refused.

Contaminated Land

- E.** 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.

Land Instability

- F.** Planning applications for proposals on land which may be subject to, or at risk of, land instability must be accompanied by an appropriate assessment and any risks must be minimised or mitigated to an acceptable level. A site risk assessment and site investigation will be required which include the following:
 - a)** A preliminary risk assessment and desktop study to establish all previous site uses and potential contamination risks.
 - b)** A site investigation and appraisal assessing risk to all receptors that may be affected, including those off site. This should include an assessment of the potential risks to: human health, property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, pests, woodland and service lines and pipes, adjoining land, ground waters and surface waters, ecological systems, archaeological sites and ancient monuments.
 - c)** A remediation strategy detailing all options and measures that will be taken to remediate the site.
 - d)** Once remediation is implemented, a verification report to demonstrate the effectiveness of the remediation measures and works undertaken prior to first occupation.

Overhead Power Cables

- G.** Any proposals for built development underneath or immediately adjacent

to such cables must provide an appropriate buffer, though some uses such as landscaping may be appropriate in these locations. For any development within 50m of such cables, or 200m in the case of wind turbines, blasting, tunnelling or minerals extraction, the infrastructure provider should be consulted.

Supporting Text

National policy requires that development should not contribute to, or be put at unacceptable risk from, pollution in its various forms, and that it should where possible help to improve local environmental conditions. In addition, national policy requires that planning should help to achieve healthy places. As such it is important that potential environmental impacts, both from proposed development and to future occupiers, are properly considered as part of the planning process to ensure that future development provides as healthy and safe an environment as possible.

Where there is potential for development to cause, or be affected by, particular impacts, these should be properly assessed through the planning process and mitigated where necessary. As a result, developers and applicants should be fully aware of potential risks from or to their proposed developments

Issues to be considered include air quality, pollution from light and noise, contaminated land and land instability, including the effects of historic chalk mining in some areas of the borough. The presence of overhead power cables can present an impact on amenity of a local area and a safety risk to users in their vicinity. Appropriate buffer zones must be maintained.

DMP 9a: Heat Risk and Mitigation

- A.** In order to minimise the risk of adverse health impacts and achieve thermal comfort, proposals should reduce the risk of excessive heat generation / overheating, as far as possible by:

- a)** minimising internal heat generation through energy efficient design;
 - b)** reducing the amount of unwanted heat and solar gain entering a building through orientation, shading, fenestration, insulation and green roofs and walls;
 - c)** considering the layout and aspect of internal spaces to promote greater thermal comfort;
 - d)** selecting appropriate materials to reduce heat entering the building and cooling where possible; and
 - e)** appropriate natural ventilation, minimising the need for mechanical ventilation for cooling purposes where possible.
- B.** Major development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how heat risk and overheating has been taken into account via the Sustainability Statement.

Supporting Text

Climate Change and the rising temperatures present a risk of excessive heat and overheating. Very high temperatures can result in a range of health impacts, not just affecting more vulnerable people or those with existing health conditions, including heat related illnesses, hospital admissions or even death. Whilst air conditioning can create cooler and more comfortable environments, it further contributes to energy demand and emissions.

The internal layout of a house can have a significant impact on the likelihood of heat gains causing a drop in thermal comfort. Rooms should be located around a building to minimise the effect of heat gains on the occupants. For example, locating bedrooms in cooler parts of the property such as the north and east sides of a house where over-shading tends to be greatest offer the best locations for achieving minimum solar gains. In addition, rooms which typically produce more heat due to their usage i.e. kitchens should be considered, as these rooms often have long periods of occupancy and heat generating appliances. The ground floor also tends to be cooler than upper floors as ground temperatures underneath are more stable

than air temperature, heat naturally rising, and upper floors tend to be less shaded by other buildings and trees.

It is important that this risk is properly considered at the design stage of a development project, and that design and mitigation measures are used to minimise and mitigate this issue as far as possible. This policy takes a proactive approach consistent with the aims of national planning policy.

DMP 9b: Carbon Offsetting

A. Major development proposals will be expected to offset the increased carbon production if they do not meet the policy requirements for Target Emissions Rates, solar panels on new dwellings and embodied carbon targets. This should be done in the following order:

- a)** By delivering measures that achieve or reduce the residual requirement off-site and within the borough;
- b)** If the energy efficiency and carbon reduction requirements cannot be met by on-site and/or off-site, a contribution to the Council's Carbon Offset Fund will be required to be made.

B. Any carbon offsets will be secured by legal agreements.

Supporting Text

Carbon offsetting contribution is often expressed as a price of carbon multiplied by the carbon gap (in this case, the carbon gap is the expected kgCO_2/m^2 minus the provided) multiplied by a predefined period of time.

It is easier to understand and set targets for DER/BER in policy as the TER is already set in terms of kgCO_2/m^2 per year. Embodied carbon figures are similarly expressed as kgCO_2/m^2 , meaning a target can be understood and set. However, the solar PV requirement is not expressed as kgCO_2/m^2 but rather a requirement to provide such technology.

Solar PV generation is also considered in the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) calculations to determine the Dwelling Emissions Rate or Building Emissions Rate i.e. any electricity generation is set as an offset of energy used/fuel cost/ CO_2 emissions due to the electricity generated rather than used.

Therefore, to better understand the carbon gap between policy requirement and what is proposed to be delivered on development schemes, the carbon offsetting policy considers the policy requirements for Target Emissions Rates and embodied carbon targets.

Whilst energy efficiency standards are typically governed by Building Regulations, the Plan's Climate Change policies set requirements which seek to further reduce carbon emissions across the lifetime of the development and better mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. However, there may be circumstances where these requirements cannot be met. In these instances, a development will be required to provide compensation to offset the expected carbon emission reductions that are not met on-site.

The carbon offsetting contributions will be based on a monetary value per tonne of carbon dioxide emitted.

DMP 10: Flood Risk and Mitigation

A. 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:

- 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 be met by on-site and/or off-site, a contribution to the Council's Carbon Offset Fund will be required to be made.

- B.** 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.

- C.** 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.

- D.** 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.

Supporting Text

National policy (the NPPF) requires local planning authorities to ensure that development is directed away from areas at highest flood risk and that it does not increase flood risk elsewhere. Climate change projections indicate rising peak river flows, more intense rainfall events, and increased surface water flooding. Local Plans must therefore adopt a proactive, precautionary approach to managing flood risk.

The Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) identifies areas vulnerable to fluvial, surface water, groundwater, and sewer flooding. It also highlights the importance of safeguarding natural floodplains, overland flow routes, and watercourses as critical infrastructure for managing flood risk. Policy DMP10 translates these findings into development management requirements.

Requiring Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs) ensures that development proposals fully understand site specific risks and incorporate appropriate mitigation. This aligns with the NPPF, which mandates FRAs for development in Flood Zones 2 and 3, sites over 1 hectare, and locations with critical drainage problems.

Natural floodplains and flow paths provide essential flood storage and conveyance. Their loss or obstruction can increase flood risk both on site and downstream. The SFRA identifies several areas where historic development has constricted flow routes, exacerbating flood events. Maintaining and enhancing these features ensures no net loss of flood storage,

supports natural flood management, and reduces reliance on engineered solutions.

Surface water flooding is a major risk identified in the SFRA, particularly due to impermeable surfaces and intense rainfall. SuDS function best when integrated into site layout from the outset, allowing multifunctional spaces such as swales, basins, and green corridors to be incorporated efficiently. The national non-statutory technical standards ensure SuDS are designed to manage peak flows, volumes, and water quality effectively. Aligning with these standards ensures consistency and technical robustness.

Where feasible, reducing runoff below greenfield rates helps alleviate cumulative downstream flooding, especially in areas already experiencing surface water issues.

Multiple treatment stages (e.g., filter strips, wetlands, permeable paving) reduce pollutants entering watercourses or groundwater, supporting Water Framework Directive objectives.

Combined sewer systems are often at or near capacity. Reducing inflows helps prevent sewer flooding and pollution incidents.

Where SuDS extend beyond individual plots – such as communal basins, swales, or green corridors – clear arrangements for long term maintenance are essential. Without this, systems can degrade, leading to increased flood risk and costly remediation. Requiring developers to demonstrate maintenance arrangements ensures resilience and reduces future burdens on the Council or residents.

Source control measures (e.g., rain gardens, water butts, permeable paving) reduce runoff at the point of rainfall, lowering pressure on downstream drainage systems. The cumulative loss of permeable surfaces across urban areas is a major contributor to surface water flooding. Resisting their removal without compensatory measures helps maintain local flood resilience.



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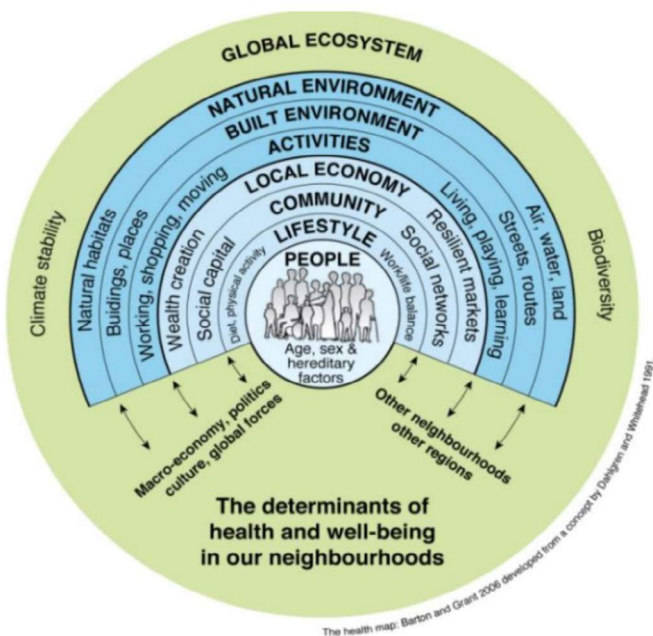
SECTION 2

A Healthy Community

Chapter 4: A Healthy Community

Introduction

Health can be defined as ‘a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity’¹². The environment and conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age can act as a wider determinant of health, playing a part in influencing our health and wellbeing, as shown in the diagram below¹³. This influence can have either a positive or negative impact on health, and can sometimes result in health inequalities, which are ‘avoidable, unfair and systematic differences in health between different groups of people’¹⁴.



The Council will ensure that all development contributes to creating healthy, inclusive, safe and sustainable environments. Development proposals must demonstrate how they support improved health outcomes, reduce health inequalities, and embed the Healthy Placemaking Principles set out in the Hertfordshire Healthy and Safe Places Framework.

SP 7: Healthy Environments

- A. Development will be supported where it can demonstrate that it:
- a) Prioritises walking, wheeling and cycling through safe, direct, attractive and accessible routes.
 - b) Integrates effectively with public transport networks and reduces reliance on private vehicles.
 - c) Creates well designed, distinctive and connected neighbourhoods where everyday needs are within walking distance.
 - d) Provides inclusive, welcoming and safe public spaces that encourage social interaction and community cohesion.
 - e) Ensures timely and equitable access to health, education, cultural, social care and community facilities proportionate to the scale and type of development.
 - f) Delivers high quality, multifunctional green and blue infrastructure that promotes physical activity, mental wellbeing, biodiversity and climate resilience.
 - g) Maximises urban greening, tree canopy cover and nature based solutions.
 - h) Provides homes that are safe, secure, well ventilated, energy efficient, adaptable, and designed to minimise risks from noise, pollution, damp, cold and overheating or other environmental hazards.
 - i) Supports access to good quality employment, training and skills development opportunities.
 - j) Incorporates Secured by Design principles to reduce crime and the fear of crime.

¹² World Health Organization (2026). Frequently Asked Questions. Retrieved February 4, 2026, from www.who.int/about/who-we-are/frequently-asked-questions

¹³ Barton, H., & Grant, M. (2006). A health map for the local human habitat. *The Journal for the Royal Society for the Promotion of Health*, 126(6), 252-253; developed from a concept by Whitehead and Dahlgren (1991).

¹⁴ The King's Fund (2025). What are Health Inequalities?. Retrieved February 4, 2026, from www.kingsfund.org.uk/insight-and-analysis/long-reads/what-are-health-inequalities.

- k) Supports local food growing, including community gardens, allotments and edible landscapes.

Health Impact Assessments

- B. All relevant development proposals must undertake a Health Impact Assessment in accordance with DMP 12: Health Impact Assessments.

Partnership Working

- C. The Council will work proactively with developers, health partners, community organisations, infrastructure providers and the Hertfordshire Strategic Authority to ensure that health promoting features are viable, deliverable and aligned with long term service planning.

Design Codes and Masterplans

- D. Design Codes, Masterplans and Spatial Frameworks must embed the Healthy Placemaking Principles from the outset and demonstrate how health, wellbeing, safety and inclusivity have informed the development vision, structure, layout and design.

Supporting Text

National planning policy¹⁵ sets out that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the delivery of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development includes pursuing a social objective to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities and to support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.

Health outcomes are shaped far more by the places people live, work and spend time in than by healthcare services alone. National evidence shows that social, economic and environmental conditions account for around 60% of health outcomes. Poor-quality housing, car-dependent neighbourhoods, lack of green space, air pollution, and limited access to services all contribute to preventable illness. Planning therefore plays a critical role in creating the conditions for good health.

The Hertfordshire Healthy and Safe Places Framework identifies seven Healthy Placemaking Principles and three cross-cutting themes (Health Equity, Inclusivity and Sustainability). This policy embeds these principles into the Local Plan to ensure a consistent, evidence-based approach across Hertfordshire.

The Framework also identifies Health Action Areas where health inequalities are most acute. Requiring HIAs in these locations ensures development responds to local needs and contributes to reducing disparities.

HIAs are a key tool for ensuring that health considerations are embedded early in the planning process. They help identify both positive and negative health impacts and ensure that mitigation and enhancement measures are integrated into the design and delivery of development.

Embedding health principles at the earliest stages of design ensures that development is shaped around walkability, access to services, green infrastructure and community cohesion. This approach supports the creation of distinctive, inclusive and sustainable neighbourhoods.

Delivering healthy places requires collaboration between planning authorities, health providers, developers, community organisations and infrastructure partners. This policy supports a coordinated approach to ensure that health-promoting features are viable, deliverable and aligned with long-term service planning.

This policy seeks to embed health and wellbeing into the spatial planning of the borough, reduce health inequalities, and ensure that all communities have access to environments that support healthy lifestyles. It will be delivered through the application of relevant policies in this Plan, supported by Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) where appropriate, and monitored through indicators set out in the Authority Monitoring Report.

¹⁵ Based on NPPF 2024; para 8b).

SP 8: Community Services and Facilities

- A.** The Council will make sure that communities can easily access a range of community services and facilities. To support the long term sustainability and vitality of our communities, we will:
- a)** Plan positively for the provision of community services and facilities in line with national policy (NPPF), local infrastructure delivery plans, and community strategies.
 - b)** Refuse the loss of valued community facilities, recognising their role in supporting social cohesion and wellbeing. Detailed criteria for assessing proposals involving loss or change of use are set out in the Development Management Policy: 11 Provision and Loss of Community Services and Facilities.
 - c)** Promote strategic and accessible locations for facilities that serve wider catchments, such as town centres and transport hubs.
 - d)** Support the enhancement and modernisation of existing facilities to meet changing community needs and ensure continued viability.
 - e)** Encourage multifunctional use of buildings and co-location of services, particularly in education, health and community centres, to maximise efficiency and accessibility. Where appropriate, shared use arrangements should be formalised through Community Use Agreements, as referenced in the DMP.
 - f)** Require new development to contribute to the provision of community services and facilities, either on-site or through enhancement of nearby facilities, in

accordance with the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and relevant planning obligations mechanisms (e.g. Section 106, CIL). For major developments, provision should be made early in the implementation process.

- B.** Additionally, the Council will work collaboratively with developers, service providers, the voluntary sector and statutory organisations to:
- a)** Identify areas of need and opportunities for provision or enhancement of facilities.
 - b)** Facilitate the delivery of new or upgraded facilities in accessible locations.
 - c)** Explore opportunities to open up private or restricted-access facilities for wider community use.
 - d)** Support the development of sports and leisure hubs that serve borough-wide or sub-regional needs.

Supporting Text

To meet both existing and future community needs, planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision of social, recreational and cultural facilities and services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments; support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being; guard against the loss of valued facilities and services; ensure existing facilities and services are able to develop and modernise; and ensure an integrated approach to the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services¹⁶.

Community services and facilities form part of the social infrastructure that supports the needs of the population. They can help to improve the quality of life of residents, promote integration and minimise social exclusion, support healthy lifestyles and wellbeing, and improve the sustainability of towns, neighbourhoods and villages as places to live.

¹⁶ NPPF 2024, para 98.

They include a range of public, private, community and voluntary services and need to be appropriate to people's needs, affordable and accessible. Public halls, local shops, public houses, post offices, doctors' surgeries, dentists and places of worship are all examples of facilities which are often an essential part of the social and economic life of communities.

Some facilities serving day-to-day needs should be provided close by, at neighbourhood or village level, whereas others, such as art galleries and theatres, may be more appropriate at local level or borough wide level, or in strategic locations such as town centres.

They can also form important social spaces, providing a place to meet, hold social, cultural and educational activities for all ages and a place for people to get involved in community life revolving around shared interests.

This can be especially important for young children, the elderly and disabled people and the accessibility of these facilities is of vast importance for those who do not have easy access to private or public transport. They can provide, particularly in villages, important local services and be at the centre of many group activities and facilitate social interactions. The loss of facilities and services can therefore profoundly damage the character of a community.

The importance of community services and facilities is reflected in national planning policy which requires that strategic policies set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places and make sufficient provision for community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure)¹⁷.

Where appropriate, some buildings and space can also support multi-functional use, for example, education facilities, community centres or places of worship can be used for a range of community/social activities outside their usual hours of operation.

Community services and facilities include the following (although this is not necessarily an exhaustive list):

Public Services

Community centres and village halls

Healthcare facilities; including hospitals, doctors' surgeries and dentists

Educational facilities; including early years, post-16 and adult education

Pharmacies

Post offices

Recycling centres

Cemeteries and crematoriums

Places of worship

Emergency services

Criminal justice facilities

Leisure and Culture

Private health and fitness clubs

Libraries

Allotments

Parks and playgrounds

Sport and recreational facilities

Cultural facilities; including arts provision, museums, concert venues and theatres

Commercial leisure; including cinemas, pubs and restaurants

Spaces for informal activity; including places to hang out

¹⁷ NPPF 2024, para 20 c).

DMP 11: Provision and Loss of Community Services and Facilities

Provision of Community Facilities

- A.** The Council will support the provision of new community services and facilities in accordance with appropriate standards¹⁸ where:
- a)** They are located in accessible and sustainable locations which are convenient to the communities they serve and accessible by a range of sustainable transport modes, including walking, cycling and public transport.
 - b)** They are designed to be inclusive, accessible, flexible and sited to maximise shared use of the facility.
 - c)** They meet identified need and are in accordance with relevant infrastructure delivery plans or community strategies.
- B.** Where developments result in additional need for community services or facilities, contributions will be required towards enhancing existing facilities or providing or contributing towards new facilities either on site or off site, in accordance with the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- C.** The Council will encourage the use of community facilities/buildings by multiple users and Community Use Agreements will be sought where appropriate.

Loss or Change of Use of Community Facilities

- D.** Planning permission will only be granted for proposals involving the loss or change of use of community services or facilities where:

- a)** It can be clearly demonstrated through robust evidence, that there is no reasonable prospect of continued or alternative recreational, leisure or community use and no current or future demand arising within a realistic timescale¹⁹;
 - b)** 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 in a suitable, accessible location; or
 - c)** 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.
- E.** Demand should be assessed according to:
- The nature and function of the existing community service or facility;
 - Local demographic and community needs;
 - Consultation with relevant service providers, community groups, and Parish Councils.
- F.** Proposals involving the loss of facilities must comply with the Marketing requirements set out in the Appendix B to this Plan.

Supporting Text

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.

¹⁸ Depending on the community service or facility, appropriate standards include but are not limited to national standards, standards recommended by statutory consultees or other relevant bodies, and local standards including the Planning Obligations SPD.

¹⁹ Timescales will be dependent on the community service or facility (see Appendix).

Where there are existing services and facilities, as far as possible, the policy aims for these to be retained and where possible enhanced. For new developments, provision of community services and facilities is to be included either on site or by enhancing existing facilities in nearby neighbourhoods or town centres at an early stage in the implementation process.

Community services and facilities can play an important part in enhancing the sustainability of places and improving the health, social and cultural well-being of communities. This policy sets out the criteria for assessing planning applications relating to new provision and seeks to protect against the loss of valued 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 considered main town centre uses²⁰ 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.

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.

Some buildings and spaces such as education facilities, community centres or places of worship can support multi-functional use. For example, schools often have sports facilities and halls that are used by the community out of hours. As such they can be important providers of community facilities and are especially suited to multiple use. These multiple uses can be set out through a Community Use Agreement. If a proposal concerns the loss of a building or space that provides these community facilities, the provisions of this DM policy will apply to ensure that, as far as possible, there is no loss to the local community.

DMP 12: Health Impact Assessments

- A.** All development proposals should maximise health benefits and reduce health inequalities by identifying and addressing potential impacts on health and wellbeing. A proportionate Health Impact Assessment (HIA) will be required in the following circumstances to demonstrate that health considerations have been fully integrated into the design, delivery and use of the development:
 - a)** All major development located within identified Health Action Areas²¹ or areas of health inequality;
 - b)** Proposals for 100 or more dwellings;
 - c)** Developments subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)²²;
 - d)** Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP); or
 - e)** Development that is likely to have significant levels of public use such as education, leisure, and health and social care facilities.
- B.** Screening for a HIA may be requested by the Local Planning Authority for other development proposals which have the potential to have a significant impact on health and wellbeing, including cumulative impacts or impacts on vulnerable groups.
- C.** Health Impact Assessments and screening should be carried out in accordance with the methodology set out in the Hertfordshire Healthy and Safe Places Framework, or its subsequent replacement. All HIAs must:
 - a)** Respond to local health needs identified in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA);
 - b)** Identify the potential positive, neutral and negative impacts on

²⁰ A definition is included in the Glossary of this Plan.

²¹ As identified in the Hertfordshire Healthy and Safe Places Framework or its subsequent replacement

²² As set out in The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended), or its subsequent replacement.

health and wellbeing on the local population and consider these impacts on different population groups; and

- c) Demonstrate how the scheme has responded to the impacts identified in the HIA by maximising any positive impacts or avoiding and/or suitably mitigating any negative impacts.
- D. Where proposals would have an unacceptable impact on health or wellbeing, planning permission will be refused.

Supporting Text

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is defined as ‘A combination of procedures, methods and tools by which a policy, programme or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population, and the distribution of those effects within the population’²³.

An Environmental Impact Assessment (as required under the EIA Regulations 2017²⁴) is a process by which the environmental impacts of a project are considered and assessed. This includes some consideration of the environmental impacts on human health, such as environmental hazards or air and water quality.

A Health Impact Assessment allows for consideration of the impacts of a project on a broader definition of health and wellbeing, including the wider determinants of health and the impact on existing health inequalities.

Impacts on health can be positive or negative. Undertaking a HIA early in the development process can identify these health impacts, which can then be used to help shape the project to optimise health benefits and avoid adverse impacts on health being identified later in the planning process.

Hertfordshire County Council has produced a position statement on Health Impact Assessments (HIA) which sets out when an HIA should be undertaken, whether a rapid assessment (for simpler proposals) or in-depth assessment (for larger or more complex proposals) should be carried out, and includes

links to guidance documents/toolkits to ensure an appropriate method is used.

To help achieve the strategic aims for health within the plan area and mitigate against any adverse impacts on health, a HIA should be carried out in the circumstances identified in this policy and the results used to inform and shape development proposals.

DMP 13: Hot Food Takeaways

- A. Proposals for a hot food takeaway will only be supported where:
 - a) It is not located within 400m of a school entrance unless the location is within a designated town, village or neighbourhood centre as shown on the draft policies map; and
 - b) It would not result in more than two hot food takeaway units being located immediately opposite or adjacent to each other, by maintaining a separation between them of at least two non-hot food takeaway units; and
 - c) It would not cause harm to the character and amenity of the area; and
 - d) It would not replace the last convenience shop or public house in a village, or the last convenience shop in a neighbourhood centre.
- B. Details must be provided setting out what measures will be taken to reduce litter associated with such uses and conditions may be imposed to manage this.
- C. Applications for food and drink uses where home delivery of food is proposed must include a Delivery and Servicing Plan to demonstrate adequate provision and providing details of the scale of operation, delivery collection points, locations for parking of delivery vehicles/bikes and hours of operation, and provision of waiting and/or comfort facilities for associated delivery drivers.

²³ World Health Organisation, Definitions of HIA, 2018.

²⁴ The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended).

Supporting Text

Applications for hot food takeaways must be accompanied with sufficient information to assess the potential impacts arising from the proposed use including managing litter and any associated anti-social behaviour. To ensure there is no unacceptable impact from litter on the amenity of the area conditions may be imposed to require installation of litter bins, commitments to undertake litter picking and advisory signage. This approach is supported through National Planning Policy Guidance on Healthy and Safe Communities.

The over concentration of certain uses can have harmful impacts on the vitality of town centres and high streets, the amenity of residents and communities, and the health and well-being of the local population.

Restrictions are necessary due to the adverse impacts on health and wellbeing, and vitality and viability of centres that these uses can cause.

DMP 14: Open Spaces and Urban Open Land

- A.** Areas of Urban Open Land are designated on the Draft Policies Map. Proposals for development within designated Urban Open Land will only be granted where they would:
- a)** Assist or enhance in the maintenance or reinforcement of their function as essential open areas;
 - b)** Be of a scale and nature which would not compromise the value of the Urban Open Land or use of the open space as defined in terms of the designation criteria;
 - c)** Not result in the loss or net reduction in size of any playing pitches or community recreation facilities, unless in accordance with Policy (DMP 11: Provision and Loss of Community Services and Facilities); or

- d)** Be educational development associated with the evidenced need for additional school places or facilities where it can be demonstrated that:
 - i.** the impact on the Urban Open Land has been reduced to the minimum possible
 - ii.** the provisions of criterion c) of the policy have been met.
- B.** New areas of open space created during the plan period must meet Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework Accessible Greenspace Standards²⁵ and will be given the same level of protection as land designated as Urban Open Land on the Draft Policies Map.

Supporting Text

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 Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield. One of the types of designated open space in the plan area is Urban Open Land.

Areas designated as Urban Open Land²⁶ are shown on the Policies Map. These are areas of open land in urban areas which are considered to be of such significance that they are not to be developed other than for minor ancillary facilities. These areas perform a key built environment function in addition to any recreational, ecological, landscape or other amenity they provide, and are also part of the borough's green infrastructure.

To be designated as UOL, one or more of the following criteria has been met:

- i.** The land is vital to the form and character of the built-up area;
- ii.** The land, in whole or part, provides an important visual and physical break within the built-up area;
- iii.** The land contributes, in whole or part, to a wider green chain or open corridor;

²⁵ <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/AccessibleGreenspaceStandard.aspx>, or any subsequent standards.

²⁶ As defined in the Glossary.

- 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;
- v.** The land, in whole or part, is of notable wildlife significance;
- vi.** The land is already identified by the County Council as Common Land;
- vii.** The land is used as a formal space for active recreation.

Existing areas of UOL are to be protected, and not developed other than for minor ancillary facilities. New areas of open space created during the plan period that meet the criteria in this policy will be afforded the same level of protection as land designated as Urban Open Land on the Draft Policies Map.



SECTION 2

Sustainable Travel

Chapter 5: Sustainable Travel

Introduction

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.

- b)** Provide safe, inclusive, and accessible infrastructure for all users, including children, older people, and those with disabilities.
- c)** Integrate transport planning with land use to minimise journey lengths and support local centres.
- d)** Include appropriate infrastructure to support electric vehicles and mobility hubs where relevant.
- e)** Be assessed using the Active Travel England Planning Toolkit and contribute to Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs).

SP 9: Sustainable Transport

- A.** The Council will work collaboratively with the County Council as the local highway authority, National Highways, Active Travel England, public transport operators, developers, and other relevant bodies to deliver a transport system that supports sustainable development, reduces carbon emissions, and improves accessibility and equity.
- B.** Development will be directed to locations that are, or can be made, sustainable through compact, mixed-use patterns that reduce the need to travel and support a genuine choice of transport modes. The Council will prioritise investment in active travel and public transport infrastructure in line with the transport user hierarchy set out in the Local Transport Plan, which places walking, wheeling, and cycling at the top.
- C.** All major development proposals must:
 - a)** Demonstrate how they contribute to reducing car dependency and increasing active and public transport mode share.

Supporting Text

Transport is a key contributor to the UK's carbon emissions. According to Government data, transport was responsible for 24% of total UK emissions in 2022. Of that figure, road transport was responsible for 89% of the total emissions from transport, and passenger cars and taxis for 53% of that²⁷. In Welwyn Hatfield, the proportion was even higher with transport being responsible for 36% of total emissions in 2022.

Whilst electric vehicles (EV's) will reduce, and eventually replace, the use of petrol and diesel powered vehicles, with potential benefits for air quality, there will continue to be significant numbers of vehicles on the roads, and simply replacing one fuel source with another will not reduce congestion, and EV's still have emissions of particulates.

Without careful planning, there is a danger that new developments can be dominated by the use of the private car to make most journeys. Poor design, which fails to plan for the needs of all users, including a lack of provision for walking and cycling and poor connectivity to key trip attractors can combine to make using means of travel by modes other than the car more difficult than they need be.

Making provision for the appropriate infrastructure to enable active and sustainable travel choices will enable people to travel by means other than the private car and assist those without a car to more easily access a full range of

²⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/transport-and-environment-statistics-2024/greenhouse-gas-emissions-from-transport-in-2022>

services and facilities such as work, education and shopping.

Policy 1 of Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) sets out a Transport User Hierarchy, which encourages greater and safer use of sustainable transport modes. It places the highest priority on reducing travel demand and the need to travel, followed by the transport needs of vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists, then passenger transport user needs.

SP 10: Future Sustainable Transport Routes

- A.** The Council will support the delivery of new active and sustainable transport schemes and the retention and improvement of existing transport infrastructure and networks.
- B.** The Council will work in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council, Active Travel England, transport providers, developers and other stakeholders facilitate the implementation of active and sustainable transport schemes that deliver maximum benefit for the Borough.
- C.** Development proposals will be supported where they:
 - a)** Contribute to the delivery of active and sustainable transport infrastructure;
 - b)** Safeguard land required for future transport schemes;
 - c)** Do not prejudice the implementation of identified transport improvements;
 - d)** Enhance connectivity, particularly in areas currently underserved by public transport.
- D.** In principle, the Council supports the delivery of active and sustainable transport schemes which include the following:
 - a)** Improvements to Walking and Cycle Infrastructure, particularly

those schemes identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP);

- b)** A network of Mobility Hubs, providing integrated transport options and facilities;
 - c)** Transport schemes identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP);
 - d)** Enhanced access to and from railway stations, enhanced facilities at railway stations and improved service provision from train operators; and
 - e)** Hertfordshire Essex Rapid Transit Scheme (HERT) including potential links to Welwyn Garden City.
- E.** The Council will seek developer contributions, where appropriate, to support the delivery of these schemes and support developments which help deliver, or contribute towards these schemes or aid their implementation.

Supporting Text

Parts of the Borough are currently well connected to the transport network, by road, rail and public transport and it is important that this continue. However, other parts of the borough are less well-connected, particularly in relation to public transport.

Transport provision is likely to change over the plan period with improvements to the active and sustainable transport network and investment in transport hubs.

The South Central Hertfordshire Growth and Transport Plan (GTP) has been developed as a supporting document to the Local Transport Plan. This is a strategic spatial transport plan developed by Hertfordshire County Council in partnership with key stakeholders, including the District/Borough councils, looking ahead at transport improvements required.

Hertfordshire County Council has an aspiration for the Hertfordshire Essex Rapid Transit network, a rapid transit link between Hemel Hempstead and Harlow which would serve Hatfield, potentially with a spur or link to Welwyn Garden City. Investment in these routes and the sustainable transport network will be supported in principle.

DMP 15: Impacts on the Highway Network and Safety

- A.** Development which will potentially generate significant movement and travel demand must be assessed comprehensively in terms of its impact on the transport network. Such proposals 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 or any successor document.
- B.** Transport Assessments or Statements should demonstrate journeys generated for different modes of travel and whether existing infrastructure and services can accommodate this demand. They should also propose measures to reduce the need to travel, minimise vehicular movements by encouraging and facilitating journeys by more active and sustainable modes, and maximise the safety of all users in line with Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP) and the Transport User Hierarchy the strategy sets out.
- C.** All necessary infrastructure works and traffic management measures should be identified in line with the requirements of the above documents or any successor documents.
- D.** Development proposals will be permitted provided:
 - a)** 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;
 - b)** Proposals prioritise connectivity through active and sustainable modes of transport.
 - c)** There would be no negative impacts on highway safety for all users;

- d)** They are designed to allow safe and suitable means of access to and from the site for all users; and
- e)** They provide satisfactory and suitable levels of parking, in accordance with the Council's parking standards, and taking into account the opportunities for public transport, cycling and walking.

Supporting Text

Developments will lead to increased demand for transport and movement. Whilst active and sustainable modes of transport should be prioritised, it is acknowledged that there will likely be some impact on the highways network, even if this can be minimised or mitigated. It is important that these impacts are properly assessed and understood when proposals are being considered, and that any severe impacts are avoided, and development proposals should be accompanied by an appropriate level of evidence on this issue.

DMP 16: Creating Attractive and Well Designed Active and Sustainable Transport Networks

- A.** New developments will be expected to encourage and facilitate active and sustainable travel through the provision of suitable accessible facilities for all users including safe cycle and walking routes, parking for cycles and provision for users with disabilities.
- B.** New routes should be designed in line with national or local design requirements and link with existing or proposed cycle paths and walking networks.
- C.** Secure waterproof storage and changing/shower facilities should be provided within developments where

appropriate. These details should be provided within the application and on plan, as appropriate.

- D.** The Council may provide further guidance on requirements for active and sustainable transport provision in a separate document.
- E.** Where appropriate, new developments will be expected to maintain, protect and enhance the Public Right of Way (PRoW) network. Opportunities to extend the network would be welcomed in principle and should be discussed and agreed with Hertfordshire County Council's Rights of Way team.
- F.** Subject to discussions with Hertfordshire County Council, new developments will also be expected to make provision for public transport use. The details of this will be subject to discussions with Hertfordshire County Council, transport operators or others, but may include new secure and sheltered bus stop provision, Real Time Passenger Information or assistance to secure services.
- G.** New developments will be expected to make suitable provision for access and manoeuvring for both servicing and emergency vehicles.

Supporting Text

It is important that as well as being as sustainable as possible, transport networks are also attractive as this will encourage usage, improve perceptions - including of safety – and help our communities function more effectively. In line with national policy, ensuring that transport is incorporated into proposals at as early a stage of the development process as possible will mean that it is an integral part of the proposals, and that residents and users of the development have opportunities to use a transport system designed with them in mind. It is important that both active and public transport needs are included into designs and that opportunities are taken to build on and connect to existing networks wherever possible.

DMP 17: Parking Standards

Car Parking Standards

- A.** A minimum of 10% of all parking spaces for leisure, commercial and flatted developments without allocated parking bays must be accessible, disabled bays.
- B.** Within town centres and within 800m of a train station with frequent services, minimal parking or car free developments will be supported where the needs for disabled spaces have been met on site.
- C.** The Council will support the maximum provision of electric charging points, with a minimum of 1 per three spaces in communal car parks
- D.** Provision of electric charging points should be incorporated into the design of all residential housing to meet the needs of the maximum parking spaces provided
- E.** The following maximum standards should apply for residential developments:
 - a.** 1 bed dwellings – up to 1 space
 - b.** 2 bed dwellings – up to 2 spaces
 - c.** 3+ bed dwellings – up to 3 spaces
 - d.** HMO (C4 Use Class) – 0.5 spaces per tenancy unit
- F.** The following maximum standards should apply for Class E (commercial, business and services) developments:
 - a.** Up to 500m² floorspace – 1 space per 30m² (GIA)
 - b.** Over 500m² – 1 space per 15m² (GIA)
- G.** The following maximum standards should apply for Class B2 (General Industry) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) developments:
 - a.** 1 car space per 50m² for B2, and 1 space per 75m² for B8 (GIA)
 - b.** 1 lorry space per 500m² for B2 or as otherwise agreed with HCC Highways (GIA)
 - c.** 1 lorry space per 75m² for B8 or as otherwise agreed with HCC Highways (GIA)

- H.** Residential Institutions (Use Class C2/ C2a) developments:
 - a.** Residential home / hostel with care staff working on premises (includes elderly persons homes and nursing homes) – 1 space per 5 bedspaces
 - b.** Student halls of residence – minimal parking to meet disabled requirements where the site is in an accessible location, with a maximum elsewhere of 1 space per 10 students
- I.** For other uses including leisure, hotels and visitor accommodation, and larger scale event venues, car parking spaces and space for coaches must be justified through a transport assessment

Cycle Parking Standards

- A.** All cycle parking for residents or employees (excluding storage within private residential houses) the cycle parking must be:
 - a.** Covered, secure, lit and accessible
 - b.** Have step free access
 - b.** Be Sheffield stands or two-tier racks meeting LTN 1/20
 - d.** Have at least 20% cargo bike friendly spaces
 - e.** Have provision for electric charging (Passive at minimum)
- B.** All cycle parking for visitors must be:
 - a.** Located close to main entrances and be well lit and overlooked
 - b.** Sheffield stands
 - c.** Weather protected
 - d.** Not obstruct pedestrian desire lines
- C.** The following minimum cycle parking requirements must be met for residential developments:
 - a.** Flatted schemes– 1 space per bedroom, plus 1 space per 40 dwellings for visitor cycle parking
 - b.** Houses – space for 2 bikes per dwelling not within the front garden unless in a secure, well designed cycle storage shed
- D.** The following minimum cycle parking requirements must be met for commercial developments

- a.** Office: 1 space per 100sqm for workers, and 1 space per 500sqm for visitors (GIA)
- b.** Retail: 1 space per 500sqm for workers, and 1 space per 125sqm for visitors (GIA)
- c.** Food and Drink: 1 space per 500sqm for workers, and 1 space per 125sqm for visitors d(GIA)
- d.** Industrial and Warehousing: 1 space per 500sqm for workers and 1 space per 1,000sqm for visitors
- e.** Education: Primary schools 1 per 10 staff and 1 per 20 pupils, Secondary Schools 1 per 10 staff and 1 per 8 pupils, Higher Education 1 per 10 staff and 1 per 4 pupils
- f.** Health facilities: 1 per 10 staff and 11 per 20sqm of public floor area

Supporting Text

Appropriate car parking provision plays a role in supporting inclusive access, and ensuring that development contributes to the Council's wider objectives for sustainable transport, climate change mitigation, and high-quality place-making. The National Planning Policy Framework encourages local planning authorities to set parking standards that reflect local circumstances, including accessibility by public transport, the type and mix of development, and the need to promote walking, cycling and public transport.

The Council's approach is based on a shift from minimum to maximum parking standards, reflecting the need to reduce reliance on the private car, support modal shift, and ensure that land is used efficiently. Maximum standards also help to avoid over-provision of parking, which can undermine the viability of sustainable transport modes and contribute to congestion and carbon emissions.

In highly accessible locations, including town centres and areas within walking distance of railway stations with frequent services, the Council will support car-free or low-car developments, provided that essential disabled parking is delivered on site. This reflects the strong availability of sustainable transport options and the opportunity to reduce unnecessary car trips.

Provision for disabled users is a key priority. A minimum of 10% accessible parking ensures that new development meets the needs of all users and aligns with inclusive design principles and the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty.

The transition to electric vehicles is a central component of national and local decarbonisation strategies. The Council therefore requires the integration of electric vehicle charging infrastructure into all new development, with a particular emphasis on communal parking areas and residential schemes. This ensures that new development is future-proofed and supports the shift to low-emission transport.

The parking standards for residential, commercial, industrial and institutional uses have been informed by local evidence on car ownership, and the operational needs of different land uses. They provide a clear and consistent framework for applicants while allowing flexibility where justified through a Transport Assessment or Travel Plan.

For uses with highly variable parking demand—such as leisure, hotels, visitor accommodation and large-scale event venues—parking provision must be justified on a case-by-case basis. This ensures that provision is tailored to the specific operational characteristics of the proposal and avoids unnecessary land take.

Cycle parking plays a vital role in enabling more journeys to be made by bicycle and in supporting a shift toward sustainable and active travel. Providing safe, secure and convenient cycle parking at both residential and non residential developments helps reduce reliance on the private car, supports healthier lifestyles, and contributes to wider objectives around decarbonisation, air quality and place making.

National policy emphasises the need to promote walking, cycling and public transport as genuine alternatives to the car. The National Planning Policy Framework highlights the importance of planning for high quality cycling infrastructure, while Local Transport Notes such as LTN 1/20²⁸ set out clear expectations for accessible, inclusive and attractive cycle provision. Ensuring that new development includes appropriate levels of cycle parking is a fundamental component of this approach.

These standards provide a framework for the level of cycle parking required across different types of development. They reflect the Council's wider transport and climate objectives. The standards are designed to be ambitious enough to support long term mode shift, while remaining proportionate and deliverable across a range of development types and densities.

Cycle parking must be designed and located so that it is easy and attractive to use. Long stay parking for residents, staff and regular users should be secure, covered, well lit and step free, with sufficient space for non standard cycles such as cargo bikes, adapted cycles and tricycles. Short stay parking for visitors should be located close to main entrances, be clearly visible, and provide convenient access without obstructing pedestrian movement. All cycle parking should be designed in accordance with LTN 1/20 or any successor guidance.

The Council may require higher levels of provision where justified by local circumstances, such as proximity to high quality cycle routes, public transport interchanges, schools, or town centres. Travel plans, transport assessments and site specific design considerations may also indicate the need for additional cycle parking beyond the minimum standards.

DMP 18: Car Clubs

- A.** The Council will positively consider proposals where a car club scheme is promoted as part of a development, in order to reduce the need for car parking spaces or to help meet sustainable travel objectives.
- B.** Where provided, dedicated car club parking spaces should be in an accessible and visible location within the development, clearly labelled as such, and will be expected to include electric vehicle charging points.
- C.** The Council may secure any such obligations through a legal agreement and will monitor this to ensure that obligations continue to be delivered over time.

²⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120>

Supporting Text

Car clubs provide an opportunity for residents and others to have access to a car without the cost and practical issues associated with owning one. The Council will, in principle, be supportive of car clubs in new developments, particularly in larger developments in areas where they may also be attractive to existing residents. They may also provide an opportunity for high density development in certain locations as few dedicated parking spaces need to be provided. However, it is important that if such schemes are proposed or set up that they are properly planned and managed, and that vehicles are in a location which is accessible for residents.



SECTION 2

Homes

Chapter 6: Homes

Introduction

Providing new homes to meet housing need is a fundamental role of the Local Plan. The policies in this chapter seek to ensure that a range of housing options are provided, including in terms of tenure, size, type, and to meet the needs of groups in the community with specific housing requirements including (but not limited to) older people, people with disabilities, students, travellers and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

SP 11: Housing Requirements and Delivery

- A.** To meet housing need, at least 15,960 net additional homes will be delivered in Welwyn Hatfield between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2043 (equivalent to 840 per year).
- B.** Proposals for residential development that contribute positively towards meeting local housing needs will be supported where they accord with the policies in this Local Plan and are consistent with the principles of sustainable development.
- C.** Site allocations for housing are set out in the site allocations chapter and the Policies map.
- D.** 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.
- E.** In addition to the overall housing target, a net increase of around 324 bedspaces to assist in meeting the accommodation needs of those who need specialist (Use Class C2) nursing care will be supported in the borough's towns and excluded villages.

Supporting Text

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that:

'To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning practice guidance'.

The Council's Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (2026) sets out local housing need for Welwyn Hatfield of 840 dwellings per annum (dpa). Applying this to the plan period 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2043, total minimum housing need amounts to 15,960 homes over the 19 years. The Housing and Economic Needs Assessment also provides an assessment of the type and mix of housing required over the plan period.

Sources of housing supply will include:

- Site allocations (including allocations which have been carried forward from the Welwyn Hatfield 2016-36 Local Plan and new proposed allocations);
- Completions since the start of the plan period at 1 April 2024 and existing commitments (sites with outstanding planning permission);
- A windfall allowance – as it is not possible to identify all housing sites which will come forward over the plan period an allowance for windfall will be made, having regard to the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends.

In addition to the housing target, the Council will also support an increase in specialist nursing care provision to help meet the specific accommodation needs of those who are not able to live independently.

SP12: Affordable Housing Requirements

- A.** To help create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, a proportion of all new homes built within the plan-area should contribute towards meeting the need for affordable housing.

- B.** The provision of affordable housing will be sought on major residential, including major mixed-use with residential, development proposals involving 10 or more dwellings (gross), or where the number of dwellings is not yet known, on sites of 0.5 hectares or more.
- C.** Subject to viability, the level of affordable housing required²⁹ is applied as a percentage of the overall level of housing proposed within any relevant development proposal. The number of dwellings will be rounded to the nearest whole number³⁰.
- Hatfield (urban area) – affordable housing requirement of 25%
 - Welwyn Garden City (urban area) – affordable housing requirement of 30%
 - Brookmans Park, Cuffley, Digswell, Little Heath, Oaklands and Mardley Heath Welham Green, Welwyn, Woolmer Green (urban area) – affordable housing requirement of 35%.
- D.** Where development takes place on land situated in the Green Belt, (or has been released from the Green Belt through this Local Plan), the 'Golden Rules' set out in national planning policy³¹ and practice guidance apply³², and at least 50% of all new homes should be affordable.
- E.** At least 50% of the affordable housing should be provided for Social Rent, with the remaining 50% being split between Affordable Rent (30%) and affordable routes to home ownership (20%), or as otherwise varied and agreed with the local planning authority.

- F.** To help meet the varied needs of different household groups and household sizes, proposals will be expected to provide a mix of dwelling sizes and types. Development proposals should not generally involve a single size or type of dwelling.
- G.** Any variation from the level of affordable housing requirements set out in this policy, must be robustly justified by evidence that demonstrates that an alternative approach is required to ensure that a development is viable.
- H.** The affordable housing requirement will be expected to be met on site unless exceptionally, off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu (and of a broadly equivalent value), can be robustly justified and the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.
- I.** These policy requirements apply to all Use Class C3 housing developments, including sheltered or extra care schemes where these are considered to meet the definition of Use Class C3.

Supporting Text

Affordable housing, as defined in national planning policy, means housing for sale or rent for those whose needs are not met by the market, including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership, (such as shared ownership). Consistent with national planning policy, where a need is identified, strategic policies should make sufficient provision for affordable housing, including the levels and types of affordable housing required.

²⁹ The affordable requirement as it relates to Build to Rent is set out in a separate policy.

³⁰ For example, 25.5 will be round up to 26, whereas 25.4 will be rounded down to 25.

³¹ National Planning Policy Framework December 2024 (or its successor/s).

³² Viability – GOV.UK (or its successor/s). Site specific viability assessment should not be undertaken or taken into account for the purpose of reducing developer contributions, including affordable housing where the Golden Rules apply.

The need for affordable housing

There is a significant need for affordable housing within the plan-area over the plan-period. To help address this significant need through the Local Plan, the affordable housing policy requirements are applied in the context of likely delivery, (as a proportion of mixed market and affordable housing developments, considering the probable percentage of affordable housing to be delivered by viable market-led developments). The policy includes a spatial variation in affordable housing requirements.

Affordable housing need by tenure

Evidence indicates that there is a pressing need for Social Rented and Affordable Rented housing. In addition, affordable routes to home ownership, (Shared Ownership and Rent to Buy products), have been identified as having a role locally to assist some households with an affordable housing need.

Shared Ownership is likely to be suitable for households with more marginal affordability as it has the advantage of a lower deposit and subsidised rent. Lower-than-market 'Buy-to-Rent' is aimed at supporting households to save for a deposit for an eventual shared ownership or market property. The need for these products has been balanced against the acute need for Social and Affordable Rented housing

The evidence indicates that provision at the higher Social Rent level (50%) would enable more households to afford their own housing costs. Where 50% Social Rent is provided, the remaining tenure split is indicated at 30% for Affordable Rent and 20% for affordable routes to home ownership (Shared Ownership / Rent to Buy).

At a lower Social Rent level of 20%, households would likely require financial assistance towards their housing costs, and the remaining tenure split is indicated at 60% for Affordable Rent and 20% for affordable routes to home ownership (Shared Ownership / Rent to Buy).

Flexibility may be required depending on site-specific circumstances, but wherever possible, proposals will be expected to provide a proportion of affordable housing at the higher Social Rented tenure level (50%). This Social Rent

tenure requirement is subject to viability, and would not preclude schemes that are mainly, or entirely, for Social Rent from coming forward.

The size and type of affordable dwelling

There is also a need for a mix of affordable dwellings to be provided to help meet the varied housing needs of different groups and different household sizes.

A high proportion of households in Welwyn Hatfield have dependent children, and high levels of growth are forecast in households of an age at which they are more likely to have children. There is some evidence of over-crowding, and notwithstanding the housing needs of single person households, e.g. arising due to homelessness, one-bedroom properties offer limited flexibility to changing household circumstances over time. In terms the most acute needs, there is an affordable housing requirement for larger homes and a substantial need for family sized housing, particularly families with two children. Two-bedroom homes are likely to help meet the housing needs of some smaller families, particularly lone parents.

The following tables provide an indication of the affordable housing need by size of dwelling, by number of bedrooms.

Flexibility will be applied depending on the overall size of a scheme and its ability to viably deliver a mix of dwelling sizes, and where over the course of the plan period updated evidence suggests a different mix may be indicated.

Table: Affordable housing by size of dwelling/ number of bedrooms (Social and Affordable Rent)

	1-Bed	2-Bed	3-Bed	4-Bed
Age under 65	25%	30%	35%	10%
Age 65 +	40%	60%	0%	0%

Table: Affordable housing by size of dwelling/ number of bedrooms (affordable routes to home ownership)

	1-Bed	2-Bed	3-Bed	4-Bed
Mix	15%	45%	30%	10%

³³ Welwyn Hatfield Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (2026).

³⁴ Welwyn Hatfield Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (2026).

To contribute towards creating mixed, sustainable communities and help meet the varied housing needs of different groups and household sizes, including households with dependent children and older people, a mix of affordable housing sizes (by number of bedrooms), and types, (houses, flats, and / or bungalows), should be provided.

Proposals should not generally seek to simply deliver a single type or size of affordable dwelling, unless otherwise justified and should demonstrate how the mix proposed has had regard to the Council's latest evidence.

Viability and other relevant matters to the application of policy

Where a development proposal does not seek to meet the policy requirements for the relevant level of affordable housing provision, the type of tenure, or the mix of dwelling sizes to be provided, the Council will require the applicant to submit an 'open book' viability assessment, showing clear workings which objectively test the ability of a development project to meet its costs (including the cost of any planning obligations), while ensuring an appropriate and competitive return. The Council will appoint an independent valuer to review viability appraisals submitted as part of a planning application. All initial appraisals and any subsequent reappraisals will be undertaken at the applicant's expense.

For the purposes of policy application, where a smaller site forms part of a larger overall scheme which is capable of being developed, the affordable housing requirements will be applied on a cumulative basis.

For clarification, the policy requirements apply to Use Class C3 housing developments only. They do not apply to Use Class C2 developments where the primary use is the provision of residential accommodation for people in need of care (other than a use within C3), or a nursing home.

To support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, the affordable housing requirement due may be reduced by a proportionate amount. Affordable housing contributions may however be required for any increase in floorspace. This

does not apply to vacant buildings which have been abandoned, or to major development on land within or released from the Green Belt, for which the 'Golden Rules' requirements set out in national policy should apply. The process for determining if and how a Vacant Building Credit applies is set out in national planning policy and practice guidance²⁵.

DMP 19: Affordable Housing – S106 review mechanism

- A.** Where a viability assessment submitted at the planning stage undertaken in accordance with national planning policy and practice guidance demonstrates particular circumstances that justify non-compliance with the local plan's strategic affordable housing policy requirements, a review mechanism will be required to reassess viability over the lifetime of the delivery of the project in order to determine if the strategic affordable housing contributions could be delivered in compliance with, or more in compliance with, the full policy requirement.
- B.** The trigger point/s for review will be set at appropriate stages of development linked to implementation and/or occupation.
- C.** The review mechanism will be secured and set out in a planning obligation.

Supporting Text

The Local Plan's strategic affordable housing policy sets out the affordable housing contributions expected from development.

It is for an applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the planning application stage³⁶. All viability assessments should reflect the recommended approach in national planning policy and practice guidance, including standardised inputs, and should be

³⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-obligations>

³⁶ Examples of such circumstances are set out in Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 10-007-20190509. Revision date: 09 05 2019, of national Planning Practice Guidance on Viability: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/viability>

made publicly available. The weight given to such an assessment is a matter for the decision-making authority, taking into account all relevant material considerations.

Where the local planning authority agrees that particular circumstances have been demonstrated, which mean that the strategic affordable housing policy requirements cannot be met at the planning application stage, a review mechanism to reassess viability over the lifetime of the delivery of the project will be required to ensure compliance with the strategic policy and optimal public benefits through economic cycles.

The trigger points for such a review will be agreed between the applicant and the local planning authority in light of the circumstances of the scheme. On very large schemes where delivery is likely to take place over a considerable number of years, more than one trigger point for review may be appropriate.

DMP 20: Housing Mix by Size and Type

- A.** To help create and support sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, development proposals should ensure that the proposed mix of dwelling sizes and types contributes towards meeting the varied housing needs of different households.
- B.** Proposals should demonstrate how the proposed mix has had regard to the Council's most up to date evidence and should generally not seek to deliver a single type or size of dwelling, unless otherwise justified and considered appropriate by the planning authority due to the overall size of the scheme, the nature of the site and character of the area.
- C.** Applications should include a schedule which lists the proposed dwelling units by size (the number of bedrooms), type (e.g. flats/house/bungalows).

Supporting Text

It is important that a range of housing sizes and types are made available to meet the varying housing needs and market demands of different groups, including single persons, couples, families with children, and older people.

Local evidence³⁷ provides the basis for a recommended mix of dwellings by size, with analysis also suggesting how the provision of 2-bedroom homes could be split between flats and houses (including bungalows), and by tenure.

The following table provides an indication of the recommended mix by size of dwelling for market housing, (the indicated mix by dwelling size for affordable housing is set out alongside the affordable housing policy).

Table: Market housing by size of dwelling/number of bedrooms

	1-Bed	2-Bed	3-Bed	4-Bed
Mix	5%	30%	40%	25%

New development will be expected to provide for a range of dwelling sizes and types. Matters such as the overall size of a scheme, the nature of a site and the character of the area, will be taken into account in applying this policy, together with any updated evidence over the course of the plan period that suggests a different mix may be indicated.

DMP 21: Protecting the Existing Housing Stock

- A.** Proposals resulting in a loss of dwellings including self-contained houses or flats, permanent dwellings located on mobile home parks, and houses in multiple occupation will be refused unless the home/s proposed to be lost would be replaced with new self-

³⁷ Welwyn Hatfield Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (2026).

contained homes at an equivalent or higher density with the re-provision of at least the equivalent level of overall floorspace, or where one of the following criteria are met:

- a) The site is no longer suitable for residential use due to being adversely affected by significant environmental conditions (such as noise pollution or air quality) and there is no reasonable prospect that the impacts can be adequately mitigated against to create a healthy living environment;
- b) The development will enable existing sub-standard units to be enlarged or improved to meet minimum space³⁸ and amenity standards, or
- c) The social, economic or environmental benefits of the proposal would significantly outweigh a net loss to the borough's housing stock.

Supporting Text

Losses to the borough's housing stock can lead to additional development pressures elsewhere in the borough, even where losses occur on a piecemeal basis.

In order to make best use of the borough's existing resources and continue to meet the housing needs of the community, there will be a presumption against the loss of existing dwellings, subject to the exceptions set out in policy. The policy applies to all self-contained dwellings including houses and flats, permanent dwellings located on mobile home parks, as well as houses in multiple occupation.

DMP 22: Specialist Housing for Older and Vulnerable People

- A. Proposals for new specialist housing, such as sheltered or extra care, to help meet the varied needs of older and vulnerable people that allow people to live as independently as possible, will be supported where:
 - a) There is an identified need for the specific type of housing proposed, as set out in Council's latest Housing Needs Assessment³⁹;
 - b) The proposed development is located in an accessible location, close to local services and facilities, where residents have access to a genuine choice of transport modes including by public transport, and being located on a safe and level route;
 - c) It can be demonstrated that the scheme will provide high-quality accommodation consistent with relevant best practice guidance⁴⁰ as appropriate; and
 - d) The proposed accommodation has considered the needs of the intended occupiers and the type of facilities proposed, the level of independence promoted and the amount of management, supervision, support and/or care proposed is appropriate for the intended occupiers.
- B. In order to assist in meeting the identified need for housing for older and vulnerable people, large major site allocations will be expected to deliver a proportion of housing as specialist housing for older people.

³⁸ As set out in Nationally Described Space Standards.

³⁹ Applying the Extra care focus scenario (Housing and Economic Needs Assessment 2026, or as subsequently updated)

⁴⁰ https://www.housinglin.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Housing/Support_materials/Factsheets/Design-Principles-For-Extra-Care-Housing-3rdEdition.pdf (or any relevant successor document / other up to date appropriate best practice design guidance).

- C.** Where specialist housing is assessed as falling within Use Class C3, (dwelling houses – where the accommodation comprises self-contained homes), then the affordable housing policies of the plan will apply.

Specialist Nursing care home accommodation

- D.** In addition to the overall housing target, a net increase of around 324 nursing home bed spaces will be supported in the borough's towns and excluded villages and on major development sites, to help meet the accommodation needs of those requiring specialist nursing care (falling within Use Class C2), where:
- a)** The proposed development is located in an accessible location, close to local services and facilities, where residents have access to a genuine choice of transport modes including by public transport, and being located on a safe and level route; and
 - b)** It can be demonstrated that the scheme will provide high-quality accommodation designed to be consistent with relevant best practice guidance⁴¹ as appropriate.
- E.** Existing nursing home accommodation for older and vulnerable people will be protected. The Council will resist proposals involving the loss of such accommodation unless:
- a)** Adequate replacement accommodation is provided that results in improved standards and quality and meets the criteria in Part A of this policy; or
 - b)** It can be robustly demonstrated, through at least 12 months of active marketing at a realistic price and other evidence, that

the accommodation is no longer needed for the particular group or other relevant groups in need.

Supporting Text

National policy requires local planning authorities to plan for the housing needs of groups within the community, including older people and people with disabilities. Whilst many people will live in general housing that may be adapted to meet their specific needs, some will require more specialist housing, including with access to care.

Over the next 20 years, the population aged 75+ is expected to grow faster than any other age group⁴². Therefore, there is a need to provide sufficient suitable accommodation which enables older people to live independently, with the appropriate care and support available. Specialist housing options include a range of accommodation types to suit the varied and changing needs of older people, including:

- Age-restricted general market housing
- Retirement living or sheltered housing
- Extra care housing or housing-with-care.

A more specialist care environment may be required for people who are unable to live independently, including residential and nursing care which usually falls within Use Class C2 (residential institutions).

Other people including young people, people with physical disabilities or sensory needs, people with learning difficulties and other vulnerable people may also require specialist accommodation.

It should also be recognised that many people with specialist housing needs may wish to stay or move to general housing that is already suitable, such as bungalows, or homes which can be adapted to meet a change in their needs.

⁴¹ https://www.housinglin.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Housing/Support_materials/Factsheets/Design-Principles-For-Extra-Care-Housing-3rdEdition.pdf (or any relevant successor document / other up to date appropriate best practice design guidance).

⁴² ONS 2022-based subnational population projections (June 2025).

The County Council's supported accommodation strategy⁴³ aims to help more people maintain independence, with a shift towards increased provision for housing with care as an alternative to residential care. The strategy also includes accelerated growth in nursing care homes, including those providing dementia care.

The Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (2026) outlined⁴⁴ a clear need for additional specialist housing for older people, highlighting a particular need relative to supply for housing with care, in line with the county strategy. Over the plan period to 2043, and as part of the overall housing target, a need for 1,224 housing with support dwellings e.g. sheltered housing for general market (not affordable), and a need for 854 extra care dwellings was identified, across market and affordable tenures.

The assessment also sets out a need for 324 additional nursing care home bedspaces over the plan period. This target is in addition to the overall housing target, however provision of Use Class C2 accommodation can be counted towards the overall housing supply based on the amount of accommodation released in the housing market in line with planning practice guidance.

Where developments provide self-contained homes for occupation by individual households, these are more likely to fall within Use Class C3 rather than Use Class C2. However, some extra-care and housing-with-care developments may fall within Use Class C2 depending on factors such as the level of care and scale of communal facilities provided. The precise nature of a proposal will need to be considered on a scheme-by-scheme basis. The affordable housing policies of the plan will apply to schemes where the dwellings proposed are assessed as falling within Use Class C3.

Proposals for new specialist housing should be located in accessible locations, offering a genuine choice of transport modes including access to public transport as well as other services and facilities, including health services.

DMP 23: Residential Annexes

- A.** Applications for residential annexes will only be permitted where it has been clearly demonstrated that the extension to an existing dwelling is modest in size and subordinate in scale to the main dwelling.
- B.** The annex should be designed in such a way that it can function as an integrated part of the main dwelling, sharing a main entrance door and having access to shared facilities within the principal dwelling. Vehicular access and garden areas should be shared with no boundary demarcation or subdivision of garden areas that imply a functional separation.

Supporting Text

Residential annexes are a form of ancillary residential accommodation, which can offer people a degree of independence whilst remaining connected to a principal household, e.g. for elderly relatives or those with care or support needs, including those with disabilities.

Annexes should be designed, both functionally and physically, to be ancillary to the main dwelling. Occupants of an annex should share a main entrance door with the principal dwelling and have access to shared facilities, such as a living room and / or kitchen.

To prevent the creation of independent self-contained dwellings through severance or subdivision, a planning condition may be imposed at the grant of planning permission restricting occupancy and ensuring the annex remains ancillary to the main dwelling at all times.

⁴³ HCC Ten Year Supported Accommodation Strategy 2017-2027 <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/about-the-council/data-and-information/acs/accommodation-strategy-2017-27-nov-2018-final-for-publication.pdf>

⁴⁴ Applying the Extra care focus scenario.

DMP 24: Purpose Built Student Accommodation

- A.** Proposals for purpose-built student accommodation with shared facilities and student support / care to assist students in their daily lives will be supported where the development meets all the following criteria:
- a)** Is located in an area with good access to a range of facilities and services including shops by walking and public transport;
 - b)** Is of an acceptable quality meeting the needs of its occupants, including good sized rooms with adequate daylight, sunlight and functional living space;
 - c)** Provides high quality external amenity space, integrated communal facilities and services to meet the needs of the intended number of occupiers, with suitable arrangements for student support / care;
 - d)** A proportion of all student rooms proposed should be designed and built for independent use by wheelchair users. The remainder should include facilities that make them suitable for people who do not use a wheelchair, but may have mobility, sensory, dexterity or learning difficulties;
 - e)** Includes a management plan which demonstrates that the accommodation will be managed and maintained to ensure acceptable levels of amenity and access to facilities for its occupiers, and that the development will not unacceptably impact on neighbour amenity; and
 - f)** Will not lead to an over-concentration of single person accommodation within local communities or result in significant adverse impacts on the character of the local area.
- B.** Where provision is made on-campus, this should be in accordance with a

masterplan that has been approved by the planning authority.

- c.** The loss of student accommodation will be permitted where it is demonstrated that the accommodation no longer caters to current or future student needs, and is replaced with alternative residential accommodation typologies that meet other standards and requirements in this Plan.

Supporting Text

The University of Hertfordshire, the Royal Veterinary College and Oaklands College all are located within the plan-area and purpose-built student accommodation helps to meet an important housing need for the borough's student population.

Whilst some on campus provision is made both the University of Hertfordshire and the Royal Veterinary College, off-campus provision may also be delivered by private providers.

The provision of PBSA directly impacts the wider housing market as without it more students would be living in the general housing stock. Whilst there is significant demand for student accommodation within the plan area, the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment does not indicate a current need for additional purpose-built student accommodation serving the University of Hertfordshire but does recognise a need to serve the Royal Veterinary Collage site. Additional PBSA in the borough could also have a role in reducing reliance on HMOs and the private market housing stock.

It is important that all student accommodation is accessible to the institution it serves by walking, cycling or public transport and that the facilities are properly managed to ensure a good quality offering to students and to successfully integrate such development within the wider community.

DMP 25: Houses in Multiple Occupation

- A.** To maintain mixed, balanced, sustainable and inclusive communities, applications for Houses in Multiple Occupation will only be permitted where they would not create an over-concentration of such accommodation within local communities or result in significant adverse impacts on the character of the local area.
- B.** Over-concentration means where the proportion of houses in multiple occupation within a 50m radius of the application property already exceeds, or would exceed, 20% of the total number of dwellings.
- C.** To be acceptable, proposals for Houses in Multiple Occupation should also:
 - a)** Be located where there is a good level of accessibility to services and facilities by walking, cycling and public transport;
 - b)** Ensure that car parking provision of 0.5 spaces and cycle parking provision of 1 long term space per tenancy unit (taken to be the number of bedrooms) is provided within the curtilage of the site;
 - c)** Make sufficient provision within the curtilage of the site for the storage and collection of waste and recycling bins relevant to the number of intended residents which meet the Council's standards for refuse facilities. The bin storage area should be located away from, or otherwise suitably screened from, the public realm; and
 - d)** The layout and design provides for a good level of amenity to occupiers and is in accordance with the Council's House in Multiple Occupation Standards including relevant space standards⁴⁵.

- e)** The clear design intent is for the property to be used as an HMO rather than as bedsits or flats (e.g. there are no cooking and washing facilities in bedrooms).

Supporting Text

For the purposes of planning, a House in Multiple Occupation is defined as the use of a dwellinghouse by not more than six residents (Use Class C4). These usually have shared communal facilities and are occupied by unrelated individuals. Houses occupied in this way by more than six residents are treated as *sui generis* for planning purposes.

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. These are popular with students, and most of the borough's Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are located close to the University of Hertfordshire in Hatfield.

Welwyn Hatfield has a higher proportion of HMOs than national and Hertfordshire averages. High concentrations of HMOs can create unbalanced communities and have adverse impacts on the character of an area e.g., through noise and nuisance created by frequent levels of activity to and from such houses, poor siting and insufficient space for the storage and collection of waste and recycling receptacles, and the increased pressure for on-street parking space.

In January 2012 an Article 4 Direction⁴⁶ came into force in Hatfield, removing permitted development rights, meaning that planning permission is required for a change of use from Use Class C3 dwellings to Use Class C4.

The policy applies a 20% concentration level to enable the local planning authority to manage

⁴⁵ <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/landlords/apply-house-multiple-occupation-licence>

⁴⁶ <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/planning-policy/article-4-directions>

future changes in land use to ensure that the surrounding area is not adversely affected by new HMO development.

To assess the proportion of houses in multiple occupancy within the 50m radius, this will be measured from the centre of the application building. In this assessment, where less than half of a building, (rather than the garden), is within the 50m radius, the property will not be included. The Council will draw upon a range of information sources, including Council Tax records and licences for houses in multiple occupancy.

DMP 26: Build to Rent

- A.** To help meet the demand for private rented housing, add product diversity within the housing stock, and help increase tenants' choice, Build to Rent development will be permitted as part of a wider multi-tenure development or as a stand-alone scheme, where:
- a)** The development is located within, or close to, a town centre, close to a railway station, or as part of a large-scale urban extension.
 - b)** Subject to viability, at least 20% of the Build to Rent homes shall be made available for affordable private rent, (in perpetuity of the scheme).
 - c)** Where provided, the affordable private rented homes must be discounted by at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable), for the same or equivalent property, calculated when a discounted home is rented out, or when the tenancy is renewed.
 - d)** The affordable private rented homes should be distributed throughout the development and physically indistinguishable from the market rent homes in terms of quality and size.
 - e)** The affordable private rented and private market rented homes within

a development should be managed collectively by a single build to rent landlord⁴⁷.

- f)** Each individual dwelling must be self-contained and designed and constructed to meet Nationally Described Space Standards.
- g)** In granting planning permission, a planning condition will be applied requiring scheme operators to offer tenancies of 3 or more years to all tenants in the development⁴⁸.
- h)** The minimum covenant period for all Build to Rent proposals will be 15 years, which will be secured through a section 106 legal agreement. A clawback mechanism will apply in the event of units being sold out of the Build to Rent sector.
- i)** A management plan that commits to high standards in the ongoing management of Build to Rent properties and premises must be provided and secured through a section 106 agreement.

Supporting Text

Build to Rent is purpose-built housing⁴⁹, typically 100% rented out, and can form part of a wider multi-tenure development comprising flats or houses within the same site.

Schemes usually offer tenancies of 3 years or more and will typically be professionally managed stock in single ownership and management control.

Build to Rent can help meet the demand for private rented housing, adding product diversity within the housing stock, increasing tenants choice, retaining tenants for longer periods, providing longer term security and stability for those who wish to settle down within a community, and helping to increase housing supply and delivery rates, particularly on large, multiple phased sites alongside market sale and affordable housing.

⁴⁷ The involvement of a registered landlord is not required, and the local authority will not have nomination rights.

⁴⁸ Consistent with National Planning Practice Guidance on Build to Rent.

⁴⁹ Defined in the National Planning Policy Framework - Glossary.

Consistent with national planning policy and guidance on Build to Rent⁵⁰, affordable housing on Build to Rent schemes should be provided by default in the form of affordable private rent and along with the market rent Build to Rent homes, and should be under common management control by a single build to rent landlord⁵¹. A suitable benchmark for the level of affordable private rent homes to be provided (and maintained in perpetuity) in any build to rent scheme is generally 20%, and the affordable private rent should be set at a level that is at least 20% less than the private market rent (inclusive of service charges).

The local evidence base⁵² suggests that there may be interest in developing Build to Rent in Welwyn Hatfield in the future, noting high and increasing local rental prices, and that Build to Rent development may be important to maintaining rental housing supply. Potential delivery is indicated for town centre locations in Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City, and close to their rail stations, as well as within urban extension sites where there is potential for suburban Build to Rent development.

Eligibility for the affordable private rented homes will be determined with regard to local household income levels, related to local rent levels. The build to rent scheme operator will be required to produce an annual statement, confirming the approach to letting the affordable units, their ongoing status, and identifying how the scheme is meeting the overall affordable housing level required in the planning permission.

To ensure that Build to Rent schemes remain in the rental sector helping to provide a stable rental market and deliver long-term social and economic benefits, the Council will require a minimum covenant period of 15 years, secured through a Section 106 agreement. A clawback mechanism will apply if units are sold out of the Build to Rent sector before the end of the covenant period. This ensures that any loss of affordable housing is mitigated through financial contributions or replacement provision.

High-quality management is integral to the success of Build to Rent schemes. To ensure that Build to Rent schemes maintain high standards of service and contribute positively to

neighbourhoods over the long term, the Council will require a management plan to be submitted and secured through a Section 106 agreement.

This should include on-site management arrangements, maintenance and repairs protocols, tenant engagement and complaints procedures, and lettings and affordability commitments.

Where schemes are permitted, a section 106 agreement will also be used to set out the parameters for a range of matters including the apportionment of the homes across the development, and a marketing strategy setting out how their availability is to be publicised.

DMP 27: Development of Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- A.** All applications for new sites, or additional pitches, plots or caravans on existing sites will be considered within the context of the prevailing national planning policy and guidance and assessed against the following criteria:
 - a)** The identified need for sites, pitches or plots in the borough and the supply of deliverable sites, pitches or plots to meet this need;
 - b)** Sites should be sustainably located so that residents can access employment opportunities, healthcare, education, shops and other services and facilities by active travel modes or public transport;
 - c)** Favourable weight will be afforded to the use of previously developed land which is physically well-related to existing settlements in terms of proximity, infrastructure and accessibility;
 - d)** Sites must not be located where the significant adverse effect of local

⁵⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/build-to-rent>

⁵¹ The involvement of a registered landlord is not required and the local authority will not have nomination rights.

⁵² Welwyn Hatfield Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (2026).

environmental conditions, (such as noise pollution or poor air quality), would result in unhealthy living conditions, unless these impacts can be reasonably and adequately mitigated;

- e)** Given their highly vulnerable flood risk classification⁵³, caravans and mobile homes intended for permanent residential use should not be located in areas at risk of flooding unless a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates how flood risk will be managed now and over the development's lifetime;
- f)** The layout of all sites should allow for the provision of outdoor amenity space;
- g)** The provision of a safe and suitable access to and from the highway for all users, and sufficient space within the site for the parking and manoeuvring of caravans, trailers and emergency vehicles;
- h)** Where relevant, full details should be provided for the siting and appearance of any permanent amenity buildings and storage facilities to ensure they are appropriate in scale, design and materials;
- i)** Boundary treatments should avoid excessive use of high walls or fences that create visual or social separation. Proposals should promote integration with the wider community while respecting privacy and security;
- j)** Proposals must include soft landscaping to enhance the visual quality of the site and its surroundings, support biodiversity, and contribute to climate resilience; and
- k)** Sites located in rural areas should respect the scale of, and not dominate, the nearest settled community.

B. Proposals resulting in the loss of any authorised site, or a reduction in the number of authorised pitches, plots or caravans from an existing authorised site, will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- a)** The overall local need for sites, pitches or plots has been met; or
- b)** The site is adversely affected by significant environmental conditions (such as noise pollution or air quality) and there is no reasonable prospect that the impacts can be adequately mitigated against to create a healthy living environment; or
- c)** The social, economic or environmental benefits of the proposal would significantly outweigh the loss or reduction.

Supporting Text

Gypsies and travellers and travelling showpeople are part of our community and their housing needs addressed as part of the Local Plan.

Nationally reported data indicates that gypsies and travellers experience a range of inequalities. These include the likelihood of poorer educational attainment, lower levels of employment, a higher likelihood of bad or very bad health, worsening health related to age and being almost twice as likely to provide 50 or more hours of unpaid care per week, compared with the England and Wales population⁵⁴. At the time of the 2021 Census, just over a fifth of those who identified as Gypsy or Irish Traveller lived in caravans or other mobile or temporary structures, compared with 0.3% of the England and Wales population.

This policy will guide the consideration of proposals to meet the identified need for sites, pitches (or plots) within the plan-area in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community, having regard to matters such as the local environment and

⁵³ NPPF Annex 3 and NPPG 'Flood risk and coastal change', Table 2 (Flood risk vulnerability and flood zone 'incompatibility').

⁵⁴ Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 13 October 2023, ONS website, article, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/articles/gypsyoririshtravellerpopulationsenglandandwales/census2021>

accessibility to education, healthcare and employment infrastructure.

To make best use of existing resources and continue to meet the housing needs of the community, there will be a presumption against the loss of existing authorised sites, or a reduction in the number of existing authorised pitches, plots, or caravans, subject to the exceptions set out in policy.

National Planning Policy for Traveller Sites will be a material consideration in decision making. The local planning authority will have regard to this, and to the National Planning Policy Framework (and to any relevant successors), as well as to national planning guidance so far as relevant.

DMP 29: Accessible, Adaptable and Wheelchair User Housing

A. To provide for a range of housing that is designed to meet the varying needs of occupants with different needs, including for older and disabled people, proposals for residential development should ensure that wherever possible and viable:

- a)** All new dwellings are designed and built to the optional higher requirements of M4(2) of the Building Regulations for accessible and adaptable dwellings.
- b)** 5% of new market homes should be designed and built to meet the higher optional requirements of M4(3)(a) of the Building Regulations for wheelchair adaptable housing.
- c)** 10% of new affordable homes should be designed and built to meet the higher optional requirements of M4(3)(a) or M4(3)(b) of the Building Regulations for wheelchair adaptable and wheelchair accessible dwellings.

- B.** Any policy requirement for affordable homes to be built to M4(3)(b) wheelchair accessible standards will only be applied where there is an evidenced need on the local authority's Housing Register, and where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in those dwellings.
- C.** The policy requirement will be secured by way of a planning condition attached to a planning permission to allow the relevant Building Control body to check compliance against the relevant standards.
- D.** Site specific factors such as site topography, and other circumstances which may make a site less suitable for the delivery of M4(2) and M4(3) compliant dwellings, particularly where step-free access cannot be achieved, will be taken into account. Where step-free access is not viable to achieve, the higher optional requirements in Part M of the Building Regulations will not be applied.

Supporting Text

Many households require accessible or adaptable housing to lead dignified and independent lives. The Council's evidence⁵⁵ highlights a large scale of accessibility needs that are widespread across the community, while being particularly acute in older people. The projected increase in the number of older people and people with mobility problems, impaired mobility, and other disabilities supports the need to provide new homes to accessible and adaptable standards.

Where an identified need exists, planning policies can set out a proportion of new housing that should be delivered to the optional higher requirements of Part M of the Building Regulations⁵⁶. These can only apply where a condition is imposed on a new development as part of the process of granting planning permission. Where no condition is applied, dwellings only need to meet the Building Regulation requirements for M4(1) for visitable dwellings.

⁵⁵ The Council's Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (2026).

⁵⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-optional-technical-standards>

To help provide a range and choice of suitable housing, new housing will be required to be built to the optional requirements of the Building Regulations, wherever possible and viable.

M4(2) Category 2: Accessible and adaptable dwellings ensure that reasonable provision is made for people to gain access to, and use, a dwelling and its facilities, sufficient to meet the needs of occupants with differing needs, including some older and disabled people, and allows for the adaptation of the dwelling to meet the changing needs of occupants over time.

M4(3)(a) Category 3: Wheelchair adaptable dwellings include additional features to make reasonable provision for people to gain access to, and use, a dwelling and its facilities, sufficient to allow simple adaptation of the dwelling to meet the needs of occupants who use wheelchairs.

M4(3)(b) Category 3: Wheelchair accessible dwellings are constructed to be suitable for immediate occupation for a wheelchair user. In accordance with national planning guidance on optional technical standards, these standards should only be applied to dwellings where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that dwelling.

the identified housing needs of the local community;

- c)** The site is located within or immediately adjacent to the built-up area of an existing village; and
- d)** The proposed development will help enhance or maintain the vitality of the rural community, especially where this will support local services and facilities.

- B.** The planning authority will only consider permitting a small proportion of market housing where it has been clearly demonstrated through a detailed viability assessment that a rural exception site would not be viable without it, and that alternative approaches to securing site viability have been explored. The affordable housing must remain the predominant element of the scheme.
- C.** The affordable housing will be secured in perpetuity for occupation by households with a local connection to the parish area through the use of a planning obligation.

DMP 30: Rural Exception Sites for Affordable Housing

- A.** To promote sustainable development in rural areas, small⁵⁷ rural exceptions sites for affordable housing, on sites that would not normally be used for housing, may be permitted where:

- a)** The proposed development will contribute towards meeting an identified need for affordable housing within the rural area specifically for households with a strong local connection, robustly evidenced by an up-to-date rural housing needs survey;
- b)** The proposed tenure/s and mix of dwelling types and sizes will address

Supporting Text

The borough's rural areas are washed over by the Green Belt where there is a presumption against inappropriate development. However, national planning policy sets out a list of exceptions, which includes limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan, including policies for rural exceptions sites.

Rural exception sites are small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Such 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. National planning policy does not define what 'limited' or 'small' means. For the purposes of this policy, 'limited' / 'small' means 'minor' development, (as set out in the Glossary).

⁵⁷ Where (a) the number of dwellinghouses to be provided is less than 10; or (b) the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of less than 0.5 hectares and it is not known whether the development falls within (a).

Proposals for rural exception sites must be justified by robust evidence, demonstrated by an up-to-date rural affordable housing needs survey, which has been undertaken by an independent body or person such as a rural housing enabler in partnership with the relevant parish or town council(s) or neighbourhood planning body, and other relevant partners, and with the involvement of the local community.

The results of the needs survey must clearly demonstrate the need for new affordable homes to help households to live in a rural location where they are either currently resident or permanently employed within the relevant parish, or who were previously resident or are connected by close family within the relevant parish.

The presumption is that all dwellings on rural exception sites will be for affordable housing. Only where the local planning authority is satisfied, based on the evidence before it, that a rural exception site would not be viable if it were required to deliver only affordable housing, will it consider permitting a small proportion of market housing within the application site. The applicant must demonstrate that alternative approaches to securing viability, such as obtaining grant funding, have been explored and that the market housing component is essential for the delivery of the affordable housing.

The 50% 'Golden Rules' cap set out in national planning policy does not apply to rural exception sites⁵⁸.

DMP 31: Rural Workers Dwellings

Permanent rural workers dwellings

- A.** Planning permission for new permanent rural workers dwellings will only be granted where it has been clearly demonstrated that:
- a)** There is an essential need for one or more full-time rural worker/s to live at, or in close proximity to, their place of work to ensure the effective

operation of an agricultural, forestry, equestrian or other land-based rural enterprise;

- b)** There is an absence of suitable and available accommodation either within the application site or the wider business unit, or otherwise in nearby settlements to adequately address the need;
- c)** The opportunity to re-use existing buildings within the application site or within the wider business unit for rural workers dwellings has been fully explored or utilised and been demonstrated to be unsuitable;
- d)** The proposed new dwelling is of a scale that is necessary to support the rural business activity and respects the character of the rural setting; and
- e)** The rural enterprise is currently financially sound, has been established for at least three years, has been profitable for at least one of them, and has a clear prospect of remaining viable. A financial appraisal must be submitted to support this.

Temporary rural workers dwellings

- B.** For new rural enterprises, where the long-term need for a permanent dwelling is not yet established, planning permission may be granted for a temporary dwelling for a period not exceeding three years, subject to:
- a)** Compliance with criteria (a) to (e) above, as applicable.
 - b)** The submission of a robust business plan which demonstrates a reasonable prospect of an economically viable rural enterprise within the temporary period.
 - c)** The temporary dwelling being of a type and siting that minimises landscape impact and can be removed without lasting harm to the local environment.

⁵⁸ In accordance with para 157 and footnote 60 of the NPPF (December 2024).

Occupancy conditions

- C.** All rural workers dwellings permitted under this policy will be subject to a planning condition restricting occupancy to a person solely or mainly employed in agriculture, forestry, equestrian or other land-based rural enterprise.
- D.** Applications for the removal of an occupancy condition related to rural workers dwellings will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:
 - a)** There is no longer a need for the rural workers accommodation associated with the agricultural, forestry, equestrian or other land-based rural enterprise, or otherwise within the plan area that it could reasonably serve, and
 - b)** The rural workers dwelling has been actively marketed for a reasonable period (sustained over a period of at least 12 months), at a price which reflects the existence of the occupancy condition with no reasonable interest from eligible occupiers. Marketing evidence must include details of price, offers received, and advertising methods.

Supporting Text

The provision of rural workers dwellings within the Green Belt is not one of the specified exceptions to inappropriate development set out in national planning policy. Further, national planning policy also states that the development of isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided unless certain circumstances apply.

One of those circumstances is where there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside. Examples include where farm animals or agricultural processes require on-site attention 24-hours a day and where otherwise there would be a risk to human or animal health or from crime, or to deal quickly with emergencies that could cause serious loss of crops or products. Employment such as food packing or the need to accommodate seasonal

workers will generally not be sufficient to justify building isolated rural dwellings.

The policy requires evidence to be submitted to clearly demonstrate that there is a need for rural workers to live at or near their place of work, (which does not mean a personal or business preference), and that the rural enterprise is economically viable.

Where new rural workers dwellings are permitted, their occupancy will be restricted by condition to a person or persons currently employed, or last employed, in agriculture, forestry, equestrian or other land-based rural enterprises, or to their surviving dependants.

Proposals to remove an occupancy condition will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that no need remains for the accommodation for other rural workers.

For the purposes of this policy, a rural worker is someone who is employed in agriculture, forestry, equestrian or other land-based enterprises that can only reasonably operate within a rural location.

DMP 32: Self Build and Custom Housebuilding

- A.** On sites of 100 dwellings or more (gross), serviced plots equivalent to 2% of the total number of dwellings (rounded up to the nearest whole plot) should be provided as serviced dwelling plots to contribute towards meeting the evidenced demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in the borough.
- B.** Exceptions to this requirement will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated through clear and proportionate evidence, that the density and type of housing proposed are the most appropriate for the site (e.g. where development is predominately comprised of either flats or specialist housing), and where the delivery of self or custom build cannot practically be achieved as part of the overall scheme.
- C.** In addition, the provision of serviced plots of land for self-build and custom housebuilding will be supported on

other allocated sites or permitted windfall sites, including for single dwellings, where appropriate to the site and where this would not undermine the Council's ability to meet identified needs across the plan period.

- D.** Prior to the commencement of any self or custom build plots permitted, a Self-Build and Custom Build Compliance Statement must be submitted to demonstrate that the initial occupiers have had meaningful and primary input into the final design and layout of the proposed dwelling.
- E.** Serviced plots should be actively marketed in line with an agreed marketing strategy for a minimum of 12 months. The strategy must include targeted marketing to individuals and associations on the Council's register. Where, after 12 months of active marketing, plots remain unclaimed, the Council will consider alternative forms of provision or allow the plots to revert to general housing, subject to evidence of genuine marketing efforts.

Supporting Text

Self-build and custom housebuilding is where individuals, or groups of individuals, are involved in the design and build of their home, which is then occupied by those individuals. Both self-build and custom housebuilding require the initial owner of the home to have primary input into the final design and layout. This policy supports the delivery of such homes in accordance with the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended) and national planning policy and guidance.

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 borough to build houses which will be occupied as their sole or main residence. The Council's self-build and custom housebuilding register provides evidence on the level of demand for self and custom build plots in the borough. This was considered alongside other relevant sources of evidence in the Council's Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (2026). While the register provides an important indication of demand, the Council

also considers other relevant evidence, in line with national guidance, to understand the scale and nature of need.

The 2% requirement reflects the level of evidenced demand, the scale of development expected to come forward over the plan period, and the need to ensure that provision is proportionate and deliverable.

The total number of individuals and associations of individuals on the Council's self-build and custom housebuilding register, as well as the number of plots that have been granted permission, are reported each year in the Council's Annual Monitoring Report. Demand for serviced plots will be monitored to inform the implementation of this policy on allocated or windfall sites.

The marketing strategy should be agreed with the Council prior to the marketing period commencing. The plots should also be communicated to individuals and associations on the self-build register during/at the start the marketing period (via the Council).

DMP 33: Windfall Development

- A.** The development of a good mix of sites, including small and medium sized sites that can be built out quickly, can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of the area.
- B.** Accordingly, planning permission for residential development on windfall sites, (not allocated in this Plan), will be granted provided:
 - a)** The site is previously developed land, or a small-scale infill site within a defined settlement (town or village excluded from the Green Belt), consistent with the settlement hierarchy;
 - b)** The development is well-located with safe and convenient access to a range of services and facilities by sustainable travel modes, including walking, cycling, and public transport;

- c) Adequate infrastructure capacity exists, or can be provided, to support the scale of development, including transport, utilities, education, health, and community facilities;
 - d) The proposal would not undermine the delivery of allocated sites or the overall spatial strategy of the Plan;
 - e) The scale of development is proportionate to the role and function of the settlement within the settlement hierarchy;
 - f) The development accords with other relevant policies in this Plan, including those relating to design quality, environmental protection, and climate resilience.
- C.** Windfall proposals that deliver or enhance community facilities to meet identified local needs will be supported.

Supporting Text

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 specifically allocated for housing in the plan.

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.



SECTION 2
Economy

Chapter 7: Economy

Introduction

The Council will give significant weight to supporting economic growth and productivity, in accordance with the NPPF, and will ensure that designated employment areas remain a focus for high-quality, flexible and sustainable employment development.

SP 13: Employment Land Need

- A.** The Council will work positively with stakeholders and businesses to enables job creation, secures inward investment, and creates better employment destinations.
- B.** To meet the strategic demand for employment uses including 11.4 ha of land, or 57,200 sqm of floorspace for office and 42.7 ha of land, or 170,700 sqm of floorspace for Industrial and Warehousing, totalling 227,900sqm the Council will safeguard Designated Employment Land as set out on the Policies Map and in DMP 14 and support proposals for:
 - a)** the intensification of employment floorspace in designated employment areas
 - b)** an uplift in office floorspace within town centres, particularly in Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City
 - c)** the delivery of local scale light industrial and workspace uses on existing non-designated employment land, and where appropriate within town centres
 - d)** the regeneration of underutilised sites, prioritising an uplift in employment floorspace and jobs
- C.** The Council will support and promote flexible use of high-quality space for a range of different employment generating uses including proposals for affordable employment space; and:

- a)** support carbon reduction through refurbishment and retrofit of existing employment floorspace and inclusion of renewable energy installations
- b)** promote the development of green industries and jobs

Supporting Text

The Council's Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA) (2026) identifies a clear requirement for additional employment floorspace over the plan period to support a resilient, diverse, local economy. The Study concludes that to meet forecast demand arising from population and workforce growth, business expansion, and sectoral change, the borough requires 11.4 hectares of land (57,200 sqm) for office uses and 42.7 hectares (170,700 sqm) for industrial and warehousing uses, totalling 227,900 sqm of new employment floorspace. This need reflects both quantitative requirements and qualitative drivers, including the need to modernise the existing stock, respond to changing occupier expectations, and support the transition to a low carbon economy.

The borough's existing employment areas play a critical role in meeting this need. They accommodate a significant proportion of local jobs, provide a base for key sectors, and offer opportunities for intensification and renewal. Safeguarding Designated Employment Land is therefore essential to ensure that sufficient capacity is retained to meet long term economic needs and to avoid the incremental loss of employment land to higher value uses. Policy SP13 works alongside DMP14 to provide a clear framework for protecting these areas while enabling their evolution and uplift.

The Council recognises that economic growth will not be delivered solely through new land allocations. A substantial proportion of future employment floorspace can be achieved through intensification, redevelopment, and reconfiguration of existing sites. This includes opportunities to increase site densities, deliver multi storey industrial formats where appropriate, and support the renewal of ageing stock to meet modern operational and environmental standards. The policy therefore encourages proposals that optimise the use of land within designated employment areas and

bring forward underutilised or vacant sites for productive economic use.

Town centres — particularly Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City — have an important role in supporting office based employment. These locations benefit from strong public transport accessibility, proximity to services, and the potential for mixed use development that supports footfall and vitality. The policy therefore supports an uplift in office floorspace within town centres, recognising the need to provide modern, flexible, and high quality workspace that can accommodate a range of occupiers, including SMEs, start ups, and professional services.

Beyond designated employment areas, the borough contains a network of smaller sites and premises that provide valuable space for local businesses, light industrial activity, and emerging sectors. These locations often support lower cost and more flexible accommodation that is essential for business formation and growth. The policy therefore supports the delivery of local scale workspace on non designated employment land where this is compatible with surrounding uses and contributes to the borough's economic diversity.

The regeneration of underutilised sites is a key opportunity to deliver new jobs, modern floorspace, and improved environmental performance. Redevelopment can help address issues such as outdated buildings, inefficient layouts, and poor energy performance, while enabling the creation of high quality employment destinations that attract investment and support long term economic resilience.

The Council also recognises the importance of flexibility in responding to changing economic conditions, new technologies, and evolving business models. Supporting a range of employment generating uses — including affordable workspace, hybrid formats, and adaptable units — will help ensure that the borough's employment stock remains competitive and inclusive.

Delivering sustainable economic growth is central to the Local Plan's objectives. The policy therefore promotes the refurbishment and retrofit of existing employment floorspace to improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions, and support the transition to net zero. This includes the integration of renewable

energy technologies, improved building fabric, and low carbon heating systems. The policy also supports the growth of green industries and jobs, recognising their increasing importance to the national and local economy and their contribution to long term environmental and economic resilience.

SP 14: Designated Employment Areas and Floorspace

- A.** The following areas, as shown on the Policies Map, are designated as Employment Areas and will be safeguarded for Class E(g), B2 and B8 uses, and other employment generating activities:
1. Welwyn Garden City Employment Area
 2. Hatfield Business Park (including Bishop's Square)
 3. Burrowfield, Welwyn Garden City
 4. Great North Road (North and South) and Beaconsfield Road, Hatfield
 5. Fiddlebridge Lane, Hatfield
 6. Travellers Lane, Welham Green
 7. Sopers Road, Cuffley
 8. London Road, Woolmer Green
 9. Cole Green Lane, Welwyn Garden City
 10. Brookmans Park Transmitting Station
 11. The Melon Ground, Hatfield (E(g) uses only)
- B.** Significant weight will be given to proposals that support economic growth, productivity, innovation and the transition to a low carbon economy, in accordance with the NPPE.

Acceptable Uses

- C.** Within designated Employment Areas, planning permission will be granted for E(g), B2 and B8 uses, and other employment generating uses, including research and development,

training facilities, creative industries, green technology, data centres and similar activities, where they are compatible with neighbouring uses and do not undermine the function of the area as a focus for employment or undermine other policies in this Plan.

Intensification, Modernisation and Environmental Quality

D. The Council will support proposals that:

- a)** expand existing businesses;
- b)** redevelop or modernise premises;
- c)** intensify or make more efficient use of employment land, including through higher density formats or multistorey industrial/logistics buildings where appropriate;
- d)** improve digital, energy and transport infrastructure;
- e)** reduce environmental impacts through low carbon design, energy efficiency, sustainable transport measures and biodiversity enhancements;
- f)** provide a safe, attractive and high quality working environment.

Protection of Employment Land

E. The loss of land or floorspace in E(g), B2, B8 or other employment generating uses will be resisted unless it is demonstrated that:

- a)** Active, comprehensive and realistic marketing has been undertaken for a continuous period of at least three years, in accordance with Appendix B;
- b)** Marketing has been at a realistic price, through recognised commercial agents, and the site has been maintained in a condition suitable for occupation;
- c)** A full range of employment uses has been considered, including subdivision, reconfiguration or refurbishment; and
- d)** There is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for employment purposes during the plan period.

Proposals for Non-Employment Uses

- F.** Residential uses will not be permitted on designated employment land unless part of an employment led, mixed use scheme, and
 - a)** The marketing requirements in Part E have been satisfied and it is demonstrated that the site is not required to meet current or future employment needs;
 - b)** The proposal would not undermine the borough's overall employment land supply or the strategic function of the Employment Area;
 - c)** The proposed use is compatible with neighbouring uses and would not prejudice the continued operation or expansion of nearby employment activities or the future attractiveness of the area for a range of employment activities; and
 - d)** Where appropriate, mixed use schemes incorporate the maximum viable proportion of employment floorspace.

Other Uses in Employment Areas

- G.** Employment generating uses such as motor vehicle sales and hire, trade counters, builders' merchants, vehicle repair workshops, petrol filling stations, breweries including tap rooms and retail warehouses (excluding supermarkets) will be permitted within designated Employment Areas.
- H.** Ancillary services that support the working population — such as cafés, gyms or small scale convenience provision — may be acceptable where they:
 - a)** remain clearly ancillary to the primary employment function;
 - b)** do not cumulatively alter the character of the Employment Area.

Changes to Employment Land Boundaries

The Council has reviewed the boundaries of designated Employment Areas. As part

of this Local Plan, the following boundary changes have been made⁵⁹:

- Welwyn Garden City Employment Area: Remove land to the South of Bridge Road East between Peartree Lane and Ravenfield Road and the area south of Broad Court. This area has been converted via Permitted Development to Residential and no longer serves an employment role.
- Beaconsfield Road / Great North Road Employment Area: Boundary amended to exclude areas that have been redeveloped to residential uses, but retaining the two offices to the east of the railway line and the entire area of employment land to the west of the railway line (Beaconsfield Road). Boundary is further amended to include James Taylor House to the north of the existing boundary, on St Albans Road East and the Great North Business Centre to the east of Great North Road
- New Designated Employment Area: Melon Ground, Hatfield. The site plays a particular role in providing attractive commercial space for small businesses, with evidence of strong demand.

Supporting Text

The Council's evidence base says that employment will grow over the plan period and that this will need to identify new sites on which new employment can be delivered as part of the growth of the borough. As well as making provision for new employment, it is important that existing employment areas, which provide a significant quantity of the borough's current employment, are retained and opportunities for new investment are maximised.

The sites detailed in the policy have been comprehensively assessed as part of the evidence base to inform the plan and that evidence says that they should be safeguarded for continued employment use.

DM 34: Non-Designated Employment Land and Floorspace

- A.** On non-designated employment sites proposals for the redevelopment of employment floorspace will be supported where:
- a)** employment floorspace of equivalent or greater quantum is secured, including as part of a mixed-use development
 - b)** the proposal is informed by engagement with existing businesses to seek to retain them on site where desired by the business
 - c)** redevelopment will not compromise the function, access, servicing or operation of any remaining or neighbouring employment uses.
- B.** Proposals that result in a net loss of employment floorspace will be refused unless accompanied with evidence that demonstrates:
- a)** Active, comprehensive and realistic marketing has been undertaken for a continuous period of at least three years, in accordance with Appendix B;
 - b)** Marketing has been at a realistic price, through recognised commercial agents, and the site has been maintained in a condition suitable for occupation;
 - c)** Efforts have been made to accommodate employment floorspace as part of any redevelopment scheme and that provision of replacement employment space has been maximised.

Supporting Text

Non-designated employment sites are typically smaller areas containing a single premises or a small cluster of employment uses. They accommodate a wide range of small and medium sized businesses, including

⁵⁹ As justified by the Council's Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (2026).

garages, small industrial and workspace units, and motor repair services. These uses often play an important role in local communities by providing accessible services close to where people live. However, some non designated sites are poorly located or in need of renewal.

This policy approach ensures the borough can respond to changing economic circumstances while safeguarding its employment base. It provides a flexible framework that supports redevelopment opportunities while protecting essential employment functions. Requiring redevelopment proposals to deliver an equivalent or greater amount of employment floorspace helps maintain the borough's capacity to support business activity and local jobs. Mixed use schemes that incorporate employment floorspace can also contribute to more vibrant and sustainable places where people can live, work, and access services.

Proposals that would result in a net loss of employment floorspace will only be supported where clear and robust evidence demonstrates a lack of demand. It is also essential that redevelopment does not undermine the operation of remaining or neighbouring employment uses, ensuring that sites continue to function effectively and that existing businesses are not adversely affected.

Given the significant demand for employment floorspace identified in the Welwyn Hatfield HENA 2025, redevelopment schemes should maximise the amount of employment space delivered. Even where some net loss is justified, every reasonable opportunity should be taken to maintain or enhance the borough's overall employment capacity.

SP 15: Higher and Further Education

- A.** The Council will seek to maximise the economic, social and community benefit of the presence in the Borough of the University of Hertfordshire, Royal Veterinary College and Oaklands College and will support proposals for the enhancement of the teaching and learning environment, and of campus facilities for the three institutions subject to the following:

- a)** The proposals are consistent with an agreed masterplan or similar document which has been agreed with the Council; and
- b)** Links to and from the campuses focus on active and sustainable modes of transport, with the impact of traffic and parking on the road network properly considered and mitigated where necessary, including through provision of alternative travel choices; and
- c)** Student accommodation is concentrated on campus where possible; and
- d)** Links between the institutions, local business and the local community are maximised as far as possible to ensure that the Borough benefits from the presence of the institutions and from the significant student population; and
- e)** Where applicable, the proposals are in line with national and local Green Belt policy.

Supporting Text

The Borough is home to three providers of Higher and Further Education; the University of Hertfordshire who operate from two campuses in Hatfield, the Royal Veterinary College (RVC) who operate from a campus on Hawkshead Lane, just outside Brookmans Park, and Oaklands College who have a campus in Welwyn Garden City town centre with another campus just outside the Borough boundary near St Albans.

National policy says that local authorities should take a positive and proactive approach to meeting educational needs and give significant weight to the importance of public service infrastructure. The Council recognises that as well as having educational benefits, these institutions play a significant role in the local economy and are a major provider of jobs and economic activity locally.

As such it is important that the campuses provide a high quality environment for teaching and learning, and a high quality student experience, and that this provides wider benefits to the Borough. The ongoing

redevelopment and regeneration of these estates consistent with an agreed masterplan is therefore supported in principle. As well as the teaching and learning environment, this includes shared cultural and sporting facilities.

DMP 35: Micro and Start-Up Business and Flexible Workspace

- A.** The Council will support and encourage provision of appropriate space for micro, small and start-up businesses of all types across the Borough. Subject to the appropriateness of the particular uses in question, this may include provision of such space alongside new housing, within town centres, or as part of new or existing neighbourhood centres to enable residents to work close to home, provided there is no unduly harmful impact on local amenity.
- B.** In major developments which include a local centre or other similar community facilities, the Council will expect to see developers make provision for premises for micro, small and start up businesses as part of the development.

Supporting Text

Small businesses play a vitally important role in the economy of the Borough. Enabling an economy that works for everyone is an objective in the Council's Corporate Plan and increasing the number of businesses starting and growing in Hertfordshire is a strategic goal for the Hertfordshire Growth Board.

It is important that micro, small, and start-up businesses are supported where possible including through the provision of appropriate space from which to operate their business. The Council is supportive of efforts to develop small business space such as start-up units and shared workspace, including the redevelopment or sub-division of existing larger units.

DMP 36: Training and Skills Development

- A.** Development that provides training facilities or opportunities to improve the skills, qualifications and employability of the local workforce — particularly disadvantaged groups and young people not in education, employment or training — will be supported.
- B.** Proposals that address skills needs identified in the Hertfordshire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP⁶⁰) and the Council's Economic Strategy will be strongly supported. This includes training related to:
 - digital, IT and AI skills
 - life sciences and health and care
 - green construction, retrofit and environmental technologies
 - engineering and manufacturing
 - creative industries, media and film
 - professional and technical services
 - hospitality, tourism and other priority sectors identified in the LSIP
- C.** Major development will be required to prepare and implement an Employment and Skills Plan, proportionate to its scale and nature, to maximise local employment, apprenticeships, work placements and training opportunities during both construction and operation. Where onsite provision is not feasible, financial or in kind contributions may be sought to support offsite training initiatives aligned with LSIP priorities.
- D.** Training facilities will be supported in accessible locations, including designated employment areas, town centres, community hubs and in areas where sector clusters exist (such as life sciences, creative industries and digital technologies). Proposals that enable flexible, modular or innovative delivery models — including VR based training, short courses and employer led programmes — will be supported.

⁶⁰ <https://www.hertschamber.com/lisip>

- E.** Development that enables collaboration between employers, education providers, training organisations and public sector bodies — including co location of training facilities, shared workspaces, innovation hubs and sector specific centres of excellence — will be supported.
- F.** Contributions may be sought where development generates significant employment or construction activity, to support training programmes, facilities or initiatives that address skills gaps and priority sectors identified in the LSIP and the Council's Economic Strategy. Contributions will be proportionate and in accordance with national policy and the CIL Regulations.

Supporting Text

The Hertfordshire Growth Board identifies ensuring that all Hertfordshire residents are able to develop skills and improve job opportunities as one of its strategic goals. The creation of new training facilities will be supported, including on allocated employment areas. A skilled and adaptable workforce is essential to sustaining economic growth, improving productivity and ensuring that local residents can access the full range of employment opportunities created within the district. The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises the role of planning in supporting economic development, addressing barriers to growth and creating the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and innovate. Ensuring that residents have the right skills is a critical part of this.

The Hertfordshire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) identify significant skills gaps across a range of sectors, including digital and AI, life sciences, health and care, engineering and manufacturing, green construction and retrofit, and the creative industries. Employers consistently report difficulties in recruiting people with the technical, digital and practical skills required to support growth. At the same time, some groups — including young people not in education, employment or training, people with disabilities, and those returning to work — face barriers to accessing training and employment.

This policy seeks to ensure that development contributes positively to addressing these challenges by supporting the delivery of training facilities, encouraging employer-led skills initiatives, and securing Employment and Skills Plans for major development. This will help ensure that local people benefit from the employment opportunities created by new development and that businesses can access the skilled workforce they need.

The Hertfordshire LSIP provides a detailed assessment of current and future skills needs across the county. It identifies priority sectors where growth is expected to be strong and where skills shortages are most acute. These include digital and AI, life sciences, health and care, engineering and manufacturing, creative industries, and green construction and retrofit. The LSIP also highlights the importance of employability skills, modular training, and flexible delivery models such as VR-based training and short technical courses.

The Borough plays an important role within Hertfordshire's wider economic geography, including proximity to major life sciences clusters, creative industries hubs, and construction and logistics corridors. Ensuring that local residents can access training aligned with these sectors will support inclusive growth and help reduce inequalities in access to employment.

The construction and operation of major development also generate significant opportunities for apprenticeships, work placements and upskilling. Employment and Skills Plans provide a practical mechanism for securing these benefits and ensuring that they are delivered in a structured and measurable way.

The Council will work with employers, education providers, training organisations and public sector partners to identify skills needs and coordinate delivery. This includes supporting collaborative models such as shared training facilities, innovation hubs, sector-specific centres of excellence and employer-led programmes.

Where major development is proposed, the Council will require an Employment and Skills Plan to be prepared and implemented. These plans should set out how the development will maximise local employment, apprenticeships, work placements and training opportunities during both construction and operation. Where on-site provision is not feasible, financial or in-kind contributions may be sought to support

off-site training initiatives aligned with LSIP priorities.

Any contributions sought will be proportionate, directly related to the development and in accordance with national policy and the CIL Regulations.

DMP 37: Data Centres

A. Proposals for data centre development will be supported in designated employment areas, with priority given to sites that:

- a)** have existing or planned high-capacity electricity and water infrastructure; and
- b)** can demonstrate efficient and deliverable connections to utilities without requiring reinforcement that would unacceptably delay or constrain development elsewhere.

B. Proposals must not compromise the supply, quality, or availability of employment land required for other key economic sectors identified in the Local Plan or Economic Strategy.

C. Data centre development will not be permitted on residential site allocations.

D. Applications must be accompanied by a Sustainability and Environmental Impact Statement demonstrating how the development will:

- a)** minimise energy demand and maximise energy efficiency.
- b)** incorporate on-site renewable or low-carbon energy generation where feasible;
- c)** include infrastructure to enable the re-use of waste heat on-site or off-site, or demonstrate why this is not viable;
- d)** minimise potable water consumption and incorporate water-saving and recycling technologies;
- e)** avoid unacceptable noise, air quality, or microclimate impacts; and
- f)** incorporate climate-resilient design, including measures to address flood risk and extreme weather.

E. Applications must be supported by evidence, including from relevant utilities providers, demonstrating that:

- a)** the development can be connected to the electricity and water networks within required timescales;
- b)** the demands of the development can be met without unacceptable impacts on existing or planned development;
- c)** any necessary network reinforcement is deliverable and funded; and
- d)** the cumulative impact of multiple data centres on local and strategic infrastructure has been assessed.

F. Proposals must set out the approach to backup power systems, including emissions, noise, and fuel storage, and demonstrate that impacts can be acceptably mitigated.

G. Data centre development must be of high-quality design and incorporate:

- a)** appropriate building form, materials, and landscaping to reduce visual impact;
- b)** green infrastructure and boundary treatments that enhance local character;
- c)** noise mitigation for plant, cooling systems, and generators;
- d)** safe and efficient access for construction, servicing, and maintenance; and provision for active travel and sustainable staff access.

Supporting Text

Data Centres, which provide data storage, backup or processing power for much of the modern economy including for Artificial Intelligence (AI) are an area of the economy which has grown significantly in recent years and is likely to continue to grow significantly for the foreseeable future. They have been designated by Government as Critical National Infrastructure and are specifically identified in national planning policy as something which planning policy should pay particular regard to and help facilitate, including recognising any locational requirements.

It is a use which Welwyn Hatfield is likely to see continued interest in. However, concerns could arise around possible environmental impacts, in particular the supply, amount, and management of electricity and water in developments, so it is important that any such developments properly consider these and minimise their environmental impact as far as possible, whilst maximising the local economic impact.

The policy establishes a clear spatial approach that directs data centre development to designated employment areas, with priority given to locations that already benefit from, or are planned to receive, high capacity electricity and water infrastructure. This reflects the operational requirements of data centres and reduces the risk of delays or constraints arising from the need for significant network reinforcement. It also ensures that development is focused in areas where impacts can be managed effectively and where synergies with other employment uses can be maximised.

The policy places strong emphasis on environmental sustainability, reflecting the significant energy and water demands associated with data centre operation. Requiring a comprehensive Sustainability and Environmental Impact Statement ensures that proposals minimise energy and water consumption, incorporate renewable and low carbon technologies. The requirement to assess and, where feasible, implement heat re use opportunities supports wider decarbonisation objectives and can provide benefits to nearby developments or district heat networks.

Infrastructure capacity is a critical consideration for data centres. The policy therefore requires robust evidence from utilities providers to demonstrate that the development can be accommodated without unacceptable impacts on existing or planned growth. This includes consideration of cumulative impacts, which is increasingly important in areas experiencing multiple data centre proposals.

Design and amenity considerations are included to ensure that data centres contribute positively to their surroundings, mitigate visual and noise impacts, and provide safe and efficient access for staff, servicing, and maintenance. Although data centres typically generate low levels of traffic during operation, construction and servicing activity can be significant and must be managed appropriately.

DMP 38: A Prosperous Rural Economy

- A.** In order to sustain the rural economy, proposals that enable the sustainable growth and expansion of existing businesses and new small scale employment generating uses will be supported in principle where they are sustainably located and do not conflict with other policies of this Plan.
- B.** Applications for economic development proposals in rural areas should demonstrate how they will make a sustainable contribution to the rural economy by meeting one or more of the following criteria:
 - a)** Helping to maintain the economic viability of an existing agricultural or other land-based rural business through on-site diversification, where the business diversification would be ancillary to the overall activity of the holding;
 - b)** Supporting the sustainable growth and expansion of an existing business in a rural area;
 - c)** Enabling sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside;
 - d)** Making effective use of previously developed land, including the conversion of existing buildings, (excluding temporary buildings), where these are no longer required, and are unlikely to be required for the foreseeable future, in connection with the existing use; or
 - e)** Allowing for the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as small local shops⁶¹ or meeting places for the principal use of the local community, which can help sustain local communities and reduce the need to travel.

Opportunities to make a location more sustainable, e.g. by improving access on foot, by cycling or by public transport, should be secured wherever possible.

⁶¹ Selling goods, including food, to visiting members of the public, with a floorspace not exceeding 280 metres square.

Supporting Text

Welwyn Hatfield has a sizeable rural area, all of which is designated as Green Belt. A significant amount of the rural area is used for agriculture, helping to secure the nation's food security. But there are also other enterprises located in rural areas, which provide important employment opportunities and contribute to the local economy.

Diversification can sometimes help to maintain the economic viability of farms and other land-based rural businesses and the council wishes to be supportive of the economic need for business diversification, where appropriate to do so. For example, this may involve the conversion of redundant agricultural buildings, or the provision of small farm shops which enhance the vitality of rural areas and reduce the need to travel to larger settlements.

However, economic development within rural areas should be sensitive to its rural surroundings, and not have an unacceptable impact on local roads. Wherever possible opportunities for active travel should be secured.



SECTION 2

Town, Neighbourhood and Village Centres

Chapter 8: Town, Neighbourhood and Village Centres

Introduction

The borough's town, neighbourhood and village centres provide a focus for the community, offering shopping, leisure, employment, culture as well as other services. Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield town centres offer the largest concentration of shops, services and facilities, while the network of neighbourhood and village centres have a more local focus for day-to-day needs.

The Local Plan seeks to support the continued vitality and vibrancy of these centres, which provide an important role in the borough and to local communities. Focusing retail and leisure in the town, neighbourhood and village centres helps to ensure that services and facilities are available at the heart of communities, to as wide a range of people as possible, and contributing to reducing the need to travel.

In recent years the nature of town centres has changed significantly. Whilst traditional retail has declined, service and leisure uses such as restaurants, cafes, health and fitness have increased. In addition, other opportunities such as click and collect, which can contribute to footfall as customers visit centres to collect online orders, have emerged.

The changing nature of retail means that adaptation and diversification of town centres is even more important. To respond to these changes, the Local Plan aims to provide a flexible framework in order to ensure that centres remain vibrant and continue to meet the needs of people that use them.

Identified Retail and Leisure Floorspace Need

A Retail and Leisure Study (2025) was undertaken which included an assessment to consider the amount and type of retail floorspace required over the plan period. In the shorter term to 2034, the assessment projects a minimal capacity for additional convenience and comparison goods floorspace. While over the longer term to 2043, some capacity for comparison floorspace is projected at around 1,500 – 2,000 sq.m. In terms of food and beverage floorspace, a capacity of around 800 sq.m is identified to 2034, increasing to around 1,600 sq.m over the longer term to 2043.

Table: Retail Floorspace Capacity Projections (sq.m net)

Year	Convenience Goods	Comparison Goods	Food/ Beverage
2034	74 - 106	28 - 40	756
2039	147 - 210	637 - 909	1,174
2043	241 - 344	1,441 - 2,058	1,611

The potential for re-occupation of vacant floorspace has the capacity to support the identified need for retail floorspace⁶², particularly in the short to medium term. However, as some vacancy can be beneficial to support greater choice for new entrants, retail capacity requirements will be reviewed regularly.

Whilst the need for additional comparison goods floorspace and food and beverage floorspace increases slightly over the longer term between 2034 and 2043, the retail and leisure study recognises uncertainty in forecasting long-term retail trends and consumer behaviour and highlights that longer term forecasts should be treated with caution given the wide range of factors that can influence these forecasts. It is therefore considered more appropriate to re-assess the longer-term projected need for additional retail floorspace at the time of the next Local Plan review.

⁶² The Retail and Leisure Study, February 2025 estimated that there was approximately 6,500 sq.m of vacant floorspace in Welwyn Garden City town centre (paragraph 4.13) and up to 1,140 sq.m of vacant floorspace in Hatfield town centre (paragraph 4.68).

Draft SP 16: Vibrant Centres

- A.** The Council will support proposals for new developments or changes of use that fall within main town centre uses⁶³, provided that:
- a)** The development would contribute to the vitality and viability of that centre and local character and strengths.
 - b)** The scale, form, and design of the development are appropriate to the size, role, and function of the centre and its catchment area.
 - c)** The proposal creates, enhances, and actively manages public spaces to ensure they are welcoming, inclusive, accessible, and safe for all users.
 - d)** The development avoids overconcentration of uses that may have negative impacts on amenity or character and instead supports a strong local identity and sense of community.
 - e)** The proposal enhances and celebrates cultural assets and the historic environment, where relevant, in line with national and local heritage policies.
 - f)** The development provides active frontages, high-quality and attractive shopfronts, and contributes to a positive public realm.
 - g)** The proposal delivers or contributes to any identified physical, social, or green infrastructure necessary to support the development and the functioning of the centre.
- B.** The Council will support the efficient use of upper floors for commercial, community, or workspace uses where this contributes to the vitality and viability of the centre.
- C.** Proposals that optimise the use and adaptability of town centre spaces, including provision for meanwhile uses, nested uses, and ancillary activities, and that proactively bring vacant or underused spaces back into beneficial use, will be supported.

- D.** Opportunities for residential development above ground floor level within defined centres will be encouraged, where this does not undermine the vitality and viability of existing businesses or the functioning of the centre. Ground floor residential uses within defined centres will be resisted.
- E.** Any development that would harm the vitality and viability of a designated centre will be resisted, including where a proposal would result in the loss of a use or 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.

Supporting Text

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 the villages. Proposals in town, village and neighbourhood centres will be supported where they will contribute positively towards creating a vibrant centre, seek to increase footfall, provide a range and mixture of uses and/or provide important services to the community they serve.

The borough's town centres will remain the focus for shopping, entertainment, leisure and cultural activities. The Council will promote a range of activities in the town centres that cater for the whole community, create a balanced evening economy, and seek to increase footfall.

Draft SP 17: Town Centres First

- A.** The Council will seek to meet the following town centre use floorspace needs to 2043 within designated centres in the Welwyn Hatfield Retail Hierarchy (identified on the policies map and in Table 1 of the supporting text to this policy):
- Convenience goods retail 344 sqm gross

⁶³ As defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Annex 2: Glossary, but excluding retail warehouses as outlined and defined in chapter 7.

- Comparison goods 2,058 sqm gross
- Food/beverage uses 1,611 sqm gross

- B.** Main town centre uses must be directed to designated centres in the Retail Hierarchy first in accordance with the Sequential Test. Proposals must be of a function and distinctiveness appropriate to the size, role and function of the centre and its catchment. Accordingly, larger scale main town centre uses should be directed to Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield Town Centres first as part of a hierarchical site selection process.
- C.** If no sites can be found within designated centres in the Town Centre Network, or are not likely to become available, then appropriate edge-of-centre locations should be explored next.
- D.** Development proposing a main town centre use in out-of-centre locations will be refused unless:
- a)** provision has been made for these uses within a site allocation; or
 - b)** it is within existing out of town retail parks of Hatfield Galleria and Oldings Corner
- E.** To support expanded settlements, the Council will designate two new small neighbourhood and village centres, including convenience retail floorspace, to be provided in the new neighbourhood of:
- North West Hatfield (SDS5/Hat1)
 - South East Welwyn Garden City (SDS2/WGC5)
- F.** The Council will support the provision of a small neighbourhood and village centres in the new neighbourhood of Birchall Garden Suburb in East Hertfordshire.

capacity for comparison floorspace is projected at around 1,500 – 2,000 sq.m. In terms of food and beverage floorspace, a capacity of around 800 sq.m is identified to 2034, increasing to around 1,600 sq.m over the longer term to 2043.

The borough has a hierarchy of shopping and service centres, which broadly aligns with the settlement hierarchy. The largest concentration of shops and other town centre activities are in Welwyn Garden City town centre, followed by Hatfield town centre. There is then a network of large neighbourhood centres in the two towns and large village centres, followed by the smaller neighbourhood and village centres.

Centres at each level of the hierarchy perform different functions as set out in the table 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) and Oldings Corner, Hatfield (which currently offers a retail park). This provision is outside the retail hierarchy.

It is important that new retail development takes place in the right locations at an appropriate scale. Focusing retailing within 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. 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 the villages.

Proposals in town, village and neighbourhood centres will be supported where they will contribute positively towards creating a vibrant centre, seek to increase footfall, provide a range and mixture of uses and/or provide important services to the community they serve.

Focusing investment in the borough's existing centres, as well as centres serving new neighbourhoods, will help to promote their continued vitality 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.

Supporting Text

A Retail and Leisure Study (2025) was undertaken which included an assessment to consider the amount and type of retail floorspace required over the plan period. In the shorter term to 2034, the assessment projects a minimal capacity for additional convenience and comparison goods floorspace. While over the longer term to 2043,

Retail Hierarchy

Town Centre:

Welwyn Garden City, Hatfield

Functions: Welwyn Garden City Town Centre provides the borough's main cultural, community and civic facilities. It is the borough's main centre for comparison goods shopping (also serving a wider sub-regional catchment) and provides convenience shopping for the north of the borough.

Hatfield Town Centre provides convenience and comparison shopping for Hatfield, plus community and leisure facilities.

Large Neighbourhood and Village Centres:

Haldens, Moors Walk, and Woodhall (Welwyn Garden City); Old Hatfield, High View, and Parkhouse Court (Hatfield); Welwyn, Welham Green, Brookmans Park, and Cuffley

Functions: 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 may include community centres, GP surgeries and pubs – some centres also have post offices.

Small Neighbourhood and Village Centres:

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

Functions: 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. They generally have a convenience store or newsagent – whilst some also have facilities such as hairdressers and pubs, they otherwise have fewer services.

Individual Small Convenience Stores:

Various locations, including petrol filling stations

Functions: 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.

DMP 39: Town Centres Uses and Core Retail Zones

Core Retail Zones

- A.** Core Retail Zones (CRZ) are the primary focus for retail and other main town centre uses, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Proposals for major retail development outside these zones will only be permitted where they satisfy the sequential test, demonstrating that no suitable sites are available within or on the edge of the core retail zones.
- B.** New or replacement Class E(a) retail uses should be directed to the core retail zones of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield Town Centres.
- C.** Where necessary and justified, the Council may use planning conditions or obligations to restrict uses to:
 - Class E(a) retail,
 - Class E(b) food and drink,
 - Class E(c) professional services.
- D.** Where such restrictions are applied, any subsequent proposal to change to another main town centre use outside these sub-classes must demonstrate that there is no reasonable prospect of continued retail use. This must be evidenced by a robust and independent marketing exercise over a continuous 12-month period, reflecting local market conditions and including

appropriate pricing, advertising, and engagement with local agents.

Town Centre Uses

- E.** Outside the core retail zones but within town centres, a broader mix of main town centre uses will be supported where they enhance the vitality and viability of the centre. Appropriate uses include:
- Commercial, business and service uses within Class E;
 - Learning and non-residential institutions within Class F1.
- F.** Proposals that contribute to a balanced and vibrant evening economy will be supported, provided they:
- a)** Enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre;
 - b)** Do not result in unacceptable impacts on residential amenity.
- G.** Outdoor uses such as eating and drinking with outdoor seating, markets, and event spaces are encouraged and will be supported where they are appropriately designed and integrated into the public realm.

Upper Floors and Mixed Use

- H.** The efficient use of upper floors will be encouraged where it contributes to town centre vitality and does not undermine the core retail function. In addition to main town centre uses, the following uses will be considered appropriate at upper floor levels within core retail zones:
- Residential;
 - Commercial, business and service uses within Class E;
 - Learning and non-residential institutions within Class F1.
- I.** Where a proposal includes a mix of commercial and residential uses, it must provide:
- a)** Adequate and safe access arrangements for all occupiers;
 - b)** Separate and secure access for residential units that does

not negatively impact the street frontage.

- J.** Proposals affecting existing commercial units must ensure that any ancillary floorspace integral to business operations and viability is retained and not compromised.

Loss of Commercial Units

- K.** Within designated centres in the Town Centre Network and on identified high streets, the loss of units in Commercial, Business and Service Uses (Class E) will be resisted unless:
- a)** The unit has been actively and independently marketed for the full range of Class E uses for at least 12 months, with evidence demonstrating no realistic prospect of continued Class E use; and
 - b)** The proposed development provides an alternative main town centre use with a well-designed active frontage that complements the local character.

Town Centre Anchor Stores

- L.** Proposals resulting in the loss of all or a significant part of an anchor store will be resisted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the change will not harm the vitality, viability, or strategic role of the town centre.

Supporting Text

National Policy requires planning policies to define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, making clear the range of uses permitted in these locations.

Core retail zones have been defined for each of the town centres in the borough which contain the town centre shopping functions and supporting uses. Core retail zones are directly equivalent to primary shopping areas defined in government guidance, with retail development concentrated within these areas.

Both town centres contain large stores which anchor the rest of the retail offer, benefiting other shops in the centre (these are identified as

anchor stores). Because of the important role these stores play, the loss of their retail use is resisted. In considering 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 retail floorspace would have on the vitality or viability of the town centre.

The policies map indicates the boundaries of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield Town Centres, their core retail zones and anchor stores. Marketing requirements are detailed in the Appendix B to this Plan.

DMP 40: Neighbourhood and Village Centres

- A.** Development proposals within designated neighbourhood and village centres must support and enhance the vitality, viability, and diversity of these centres. This includes ensuring an appropriate mix of uses that meet day-to-day convenience needs of local communities, including retail, services, and community facilities.
- B.** Proposals for the loss of commercial, leisure and services uses to residential will be resisted.
- C.** Proposals will be supported where they:
 - a)** Maintain or enhance the vitality and viability of the centre, including footfall, diversity of uses, and local employment;
 - b)** Ensure that at least 50% of ground floor units within the centre remain in Class E(a) retail use, unless robust evidence demonstrates that alternative uses would better serve the community;
 - c)** Retain or provide active ground floor frontages, defined as frontages that are visually engaging and accessible to the public (e.g. shopfronts, cafés, services);
 - d)** Do not result in unacceptable harm to residential or local amenity, including noise, traffic, and visual impact;

- e)** Are of a scale, design, and character that reflects the centre's role, built form, and local distinctiveness.
- D.** New retail development within neighbourhood and village centres should not generally exceed 500 sq.m gross floorspace, unless it can be demonstrated that:
 - a)** The proposal would not undermine the role of nearby higher-order centres;
 - b)** The scale is appropriate to the centre's catchment and infrastructure;
 - c)** There is clear local need

Supporting Text

The Policies Map identifies the boundaries of the borough's neighbourhood and village centres, categorised as either large or small centres based on their scale, role, and range of uses. The neighbourhood and village centres 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.

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.

DMP 41: Out of Centre

- A.** 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:
 - a)** 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 in that location; or

- b)** Alternative convenience retail provision is available within an 800m walking distance (not straight line distance); or
 - c)** The replacement land use offers compelling benefits which outweigh the loss.
- B.** 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 a maximum of 280 sq.m gross.

Out-of-Centre Retail

- C.** 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 – as demonstrated by sequential tests.

Sequential Tests

- D.** To ensure long-term vitality and viability of the town centres, the Council will apply sequential tests to applications for main town centres uses⁶⁴ which are outside the designated retail centres.
- E.** If no suitable, viable and available sites exist in the identified centres (taking account of reasonable flexibility in the size, format and operational aspects of the proposal), then proposals for sites on the edge of those centres will be considered.
- F.** If no edge of centre sites are suitable, viable and available (again, requiring reasonable flexibility in size, format and operational aspects), out-of-centre sites will be considered.

- G.** It is not accepted that specific classes of goods cannot be sold from in-centre locations.
- H.** In accordance with national planning policy, when considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference will be given to accessible sites which are well connected to the town centres.

Impact Assessments

- I.** For proposals for retail and leisure developments outside the two town centres that exceed 500 sq.m gross floorspace, it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal will not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of existing town centres. For those proposals exceeding 300 sq.m gross floorspace, it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal will not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of existing neighbourhood and village centres.

Supporting Text

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. This has additional sustainability benefits, reducing the need to make avoidable trips (particularly by car) to other centres elsewhere.

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.

To ensure long-term vitality and viability of the town centres, the Council will apply sequential tests to applications for main town centres uses which are outside the designated retail centres.

⁶⁴ Main town centre uses as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Annex 2: Glossary, but excluding retail warehouses defined in chapter 7.

DMP 42: Advertisements and signage

- A.** The display of advertisements requiring express consent will be permitted if they meet all of the following criteria:
- a)** Proposals must be well-designed, appropriately scaled, and sensitively positioned to complement the character of the building and surrounding area. Proposals must not harm visual amenity or public safety;
 - b)** Signs should be integrated with existing architectural features such as fascias, pilasters, and window spacing, avoiding visual clutter or appearing discordant in the street;
 - c)** In Conservation Areas, on Listed Buildings, and in rural settings, advertisements must preserve or enhance local character. Projecting signs and illuminated displays will only be permitted where appropriate in design, scale and impact;
 - d)** Illuminated advertisements must:
 - use low-intensity lighting,
 - avoid glare or flashing elements,
 - be switched off outside business hours unless justified.
 - Internally illuminated signs will only be permitted in sensitive locations — such as conservation areas, listed buildings, and rural settings — where they do not harm the character or visual amenities of the area or the building;
 - e)** 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.

Supporting Text

Advertisements and signs are an integral part of the visual environment of retail centres and can contribute positively to their character and vibrancy. However, poorly designed or overly dominant signage can harm the appearance of individual buildings and the wider streetscape.

All advertisements and signs should be designed to complement the architectural style of the host building and reflect the character of the surrounding area. In Conservation Areas or where signage affects Listed Buildings, proposals must preserve or enhance the special historic or architectural interest of the building and its context. The Council supports well-considered, creative signage that adds to the appeal of retail centres without compromising their heritage or visual quality. This policy is informed by national guidance, including the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 and the National Planning Practice Guidance. It seeks to ensure that advertisements contribute positively to the built environment, safeguard heritage assets, and maintain public safety.

DMP 43: Shopfronts

- A.** Proposals for new or altered shopfronts will be permitted where:
- a)** The design harmonises with the character, scale, and materials of the existing building and surrounding street scene and is fully integrated into the overall building design.
 - b)** The design respects existing architectural features, proportions, and adjacent properties, with facias appropriately scaled, colours complementary, and the overall design avoiding visual dominance or discordance.
 - c)** Security measures are designed as an integral part of the shopfront, not added retrospectively. Internal shutters are preferred. Where internal shutters or alternative security measures are not feasible, external lattice or portcullis-style grilles may be considered if they are visually permeable and sensitively designed.

- d)** Where multiple units are combined, original divisions should be retained to preserve the rhythm and vertical emphasis of the street frontage.
 - e)** In Conservation Areas, shopfronts must reflect original detailing and proportions, including fascia depth, stall risers, glazing bars, and materials. Existing pilasters or columns should be retained.
 - f)** Proposals located within Welwyn Garden City Town Centre will also be required to adhere to the design principles in the Welwyn Garden City Guide to Shopfront and Advertising.
- B.** In Conservation Areas or where proposals affect Listed Buildings, applicants must demonstrate how the proposal preserves or enhances the special historic or architectural interest of the building and its setting. A Heritage Statement may be required in accordance with national guidance (Refer to DMP 54).

Supporting Text

Shopfronts play a vital role in shaping the character and appearance of our retail centres. In Welwyn Garden City town centre, many original traditional shopfronts remain and contribute significantly to the distinct local character of the WGC Conservation Area. The Council is committed to preserving these features, which are increasingly under threat from the enlargement of shops, replacement of frontages, and the introduction of modern designs.

The design of new or altered shopfronts should respect the architectural style of the existing building and the surrounding area. High-quality, innovative designs that enhance the vitality of the centre will be supported, provided they do not detract from the character of the building or neighbouring premises. In Conservation Areas or where shopfronts affect Listed Buildings, proposals must preserve or enhance the special historic or architectural interest of the building and its setting.



SECTION 2

Placemaking and High Quality Design

Chapter 9: Place Making and High Quality Design

Introduction

Design is about how places look, feel and function. It considers the relationship between buildings and the spaces around them, how they connect with their surroundings, and how people move through and use them.

High quality design is essential to creating places that support the well-being of people, nature, and communities, ensuring development is sustainable, inclusive, and attractive. This chapter outlines policies that aim to achieve this.

The policies in this chapter are informed by national planning policy and guidance, which identifies good design as a key aspect of sustainable development and requires planning policies and decisions to ensure that developments are visually attractive, function well, and are sympathetic to local character and identity. National Policy also draws on the National Design Guide, National Model Design Code, and other relevant documents, which set out principles for creating well-designed, contextually appropriate places that are resilient, accessible and enduring.

Achieving high-quality design includes a focus on the relationship between buildings and their surroundings, their connection to local character and nature, and their responsiveness to local identity. A key mechanism for delivering high-quality, well-designed places is the implementation of effective design guides and design codes, tailored to our local context. These guides or codes will provide clear and specific guidance on design quality for new development. This approach is directly supported by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, which places a significant responsibility on Local Planning Authorities to prepare and adopt design codes to ensure well-designed places are delivered.

Design also plays an important role in meeting wider objectives, including tackling climate change, making efficient use of land, enhancing biodiversity and creating safe, healthy and accessible spaces. This chapter of the Local Plan therefore supports a design-led approach that incorporates these priorities from the earliest

stages of the planning and development process.

Together, the policies in this chapter provide a consistent framework for decision-making, helping to ensure that new development in the plan area is well-considered, responsive to local character, and contributes to the creation of a high-quality built environment.

Figure 2 identifies the Ten Characteristics of well-designed places as identified in the National Design Guide 2021.

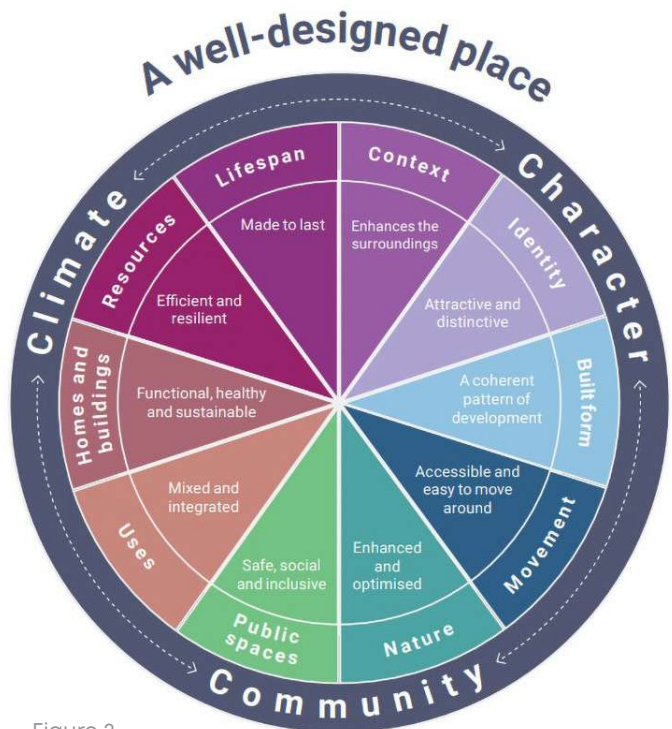


Figure 2

SP 18: Design Principles

- A. Proposals for new development will be required to show how they will deliver well-designed places and make a positive contribution to high quality design by demonstrating how they have responded to the following design principles:

Design Theme: Context

Meaning and Outcome: Provide a clear analysis and appraisal of the site and its surrounding built environment (including height, mass and scale of neighbouring

buildings) and landscape setting so that design is appropriate, responsive and enhances its location. Reference to local design codes and character assessments should be used where available.

Design Theme: Identity

Meaning and Outcome: Provide a clear vision or narrative to demonstrate how this has shaped the design of development to reinforce local character and identity, or to create a new innovative and distinctive sense of place.

Design Theme: Built Form

Meaning and Outcome: Developments should promote legibility, through the arrangement of and hierarchy of streets, spaces, and building types, ensuring they are coherent and navigable, with clear views, vistas, and functionality. Design elements including the scale, height, and massing of buildings, materials, landscaping, and landmarks should create welcoming and attractive environments.

Design Theme: Movement

Meaning and Outcome: Proposals must support sustainable and inclusive movement including delivering permeability throughout the site and be well connected to existing routes, maximising visual and functional integration with surrounding settlements or areas.

Design Theme: Nature

Meaning and Outcome: Proposals must show how landscaping has been at the forefront of the design process and has sought to maximise the integration of nature into development and where possible, link into the wider blue-green infrastructure network.

Design Theme: Public Spaces

Meaning and Outcome: Public spaces must be safe, accessible, inclusive, encourage social interaction and are able to be utilised by all in the community including those with disability, mobility

or sensory issues. Secured by Design principles should be adhered to.

Design Theme: Uses

Meaning and Outcome: Development must support the efficient and effective use of land with appropriate densities, scale, height and massing and integrated mix of uses to ensure places are vibrant and viable and able to support local facilities, including transport networks.

Design Theme: Homes and Buildings

Meaning and Outcome: Proposals must meet Nationally Described Space Standards as a minimum and create healthy buildings and places that are sustainable and encourage active lifestyles to improve overall well-being of residents and users, demonstrated through meeting Building for a Health Life standards.

Design Theme: Resources

Meaning and Outcome: Development must be energy efficient, support circular economy principles and embed environmental sustainability into the design and layout of development including measures to mitigate and reduce the impacts of climate change.

Design Theme: Lifespan

Meaning and Outcome: Proposals should demonstrate how places and spaces have been designed to be adaptable and flexible to accommodate the changing needs of users and technology. The use of high-quality materials finishes and landscaping that are robust, low-maintenance and durable should be secured to ensure the longevity of the development.

B. All major development proposals must be accompanied by site-specific design codes or masterplans demonstrating how the above design principles have been applied. Proposals may be subject to Design Review Panel input where appropriate.

Supporting Text

The Borough encompasses areas of varying and distinctive design quality, including historic towns and villages, landscape features and heritage assets. There are also areas where the local character has been eroded through past developments presenting opportunities to create new, distinctive, high quality places.

High quality design is at the heart of making places for people and nature. It concerns the function and connection of the urban form, built fabric, spaces, people, movement and nature. New development provides the opportunity to make a positive contribution to the plan area by delivering high quality design and well-functioning places that are attractive and well maintained. Places should be environmentally sustainable, connect physically and socially with the surrounding area and help to foster a sense of belonging and stewardship.

In accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (Schedule 7, Part 15F), Local Planning Authorities must include design requirements in their development plans. This section sets out those requirements for the Borough.

National planning policy and guidance also require new development to recognise local character and distinctiveness, take opportunities to improve the quality of an area and the way it functions, and to deliver well-designed, attractive, safe, inclusive and healthy places. The National Design Guide sets a clear framework which development proposals should follow and identifies ten characteristics of well-designed places which should be considered as part of any design process.

SP 19: Design Codes and Design Guidance

- A.** The Council will enable and support the preparation of Design codes for:
 - areas of significant change or growth;
 - large or complex development sites;
 - sensitive locations where design quality is critical (e.g. conservation areas, interfaces with the Green Belt, or settings of heritage assets).
- B.** Design codes will be prepared in partnership between the landowner/developer and Local Planning Authority in consultation with the local community.
- C.** All design codes must be underpinned by a robust analysis of local context, including:
 - analysis of local character and identity;
 - natural and built features;
 - heritage assets and cultural significance;
 - the relationship between spaces and movement between them.
- D.** Design codes must address the ten characteristics of well-designed places as set out in the National Model Design Code.
- E.** Design guidance will be produced and used by the council to address topic specific elements of design and set standards for certain types of development and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and will complement site-specific design codes where applicable.
- F.** Where no local design code or guidance exists, national documents including the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code will be used to inform planning decisions and ensure design quality alongside detailed policies within this Plan.

Supporting Text

Securing good design is a fundamental aim of the planning system. It is essential to creating well functioning places and improves quality of life. National Policy and Guidance states that clarity regarding design expectation and how they will be tested is essential for achieving this. A number of tools are available to help achieve delivery of good design including masterplans, design guides and design codes. Legislation National Policy and guidance requires Local Planning Authorities to prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code, which reflect local character and design preferences.

A design code is a concise set of illustrated and annotated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic, numeric and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or development framework and include an appraisal of local context. Design guides set out the key principles and standards for design of development and can be topic or area based. By specifying expectations for the design of buildings, spaces and places, the design code or guide can help to give developers greater clarity about what may be acceptable when seeking planning permission and offer greater certainty for communities. This policy sets out the approach to preparing and applying design codes and guidance to ensure that development across the borough is well-designed, locally responsive, and consistent with national design principles. It supports the delivery of high-quality places that reflect local character and promote sustainable, inclusive communities.

DMP 44: Character and Identity

- A.** New development must contribute positively to the character and identity of the local area. While innovation in design is encouraged, proposals must be informed by a proportionate analysis of local context and distinctiveness, ensuring that development integrates sensitively

into its surroundings, supports sustainable growth and makes efficient use of land.

- B.** Development proposals must demonstrate how they:
 - a)** Have been informed by a site's character and context so it relates well to its surroundings and local distinctiveness, including the built form, landscape and connectivity, so that it maintains or creates a sense of place.
 - b)** Respect established patterns of development, key routes, building forms (including siting, height, mass, scale, detailing and materials), and landscape settings to reflect the distinctive character of the area.
 - c)** Avoid generic, "anywhere" design that fails to relate to local character and identity.
 - d)** Support higher-density where appropriate, ensuring it responds positively to context and enhances local identity.
 - e)** Protect and enhance historic and natural assets, key views, and landscape settings that contribute to local character.
- C.** Proposals that fail to demonstrate a sensitive response to local character and identity will not be permitted.

Supporting Text

National planning policy and guidance promotes well-designed places that respond to local identity while supporting appropriate densities. This is reinforced in the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code, which emphasise the importance of context and character in shaping new development.

A strong sense of place is essential to maintaining or creating local character and identity, particularly in areas identified for growth. The plan area contains a mix of both planned and organic settlements, each town, village or neighbourhood having an established local character and identity that provide a context for new development.

Development that responds sensitively to local context and protects and enhances a sense of place, aids in the delivery of sustainable growth. The policy recognises that respecting character does not mean replicating it and encourages innovative design solutions that achieve appropriate densities without compromising local character and identity.

DMP 45: Public Realm

- A.** All areas of public realm should be designed so that they are attractive, accessible, inclusive, safe, connected and are easy to understand and maintain. Public spaces in new development should:
 - a)** Relate to their context and positively reinforce distinctive local character and identity through their materials, layout and design;
 - b)** Use appropriate building heights, building lines and active frontages to define the public realm and create comfortable and useable streets and spaces that are of suitable scale to their surroundings;
 - c)** Be permeable, inclusive and accessible to all, prioritising a pedestrian led movement hierarchy (including generous level footways that avoid street clutter);
 - d)** Retain and integrate existing natural features such as trees and hedgerows, and create attractive environments using soft landscaping, trees and shrubs, prioritising use of native climate resistant species;
 - e)** Be designed to facilitate urban greening and accommodate usable green infrastructure and integrated sustainable urban drainage systems wherever possible;
 - f)** Use appropriate street furniture to provide wayfinding and areas for rest, and encourage social interaction and informal play, whilst taking care to avoid unnecessary street clutter;

- g)** Provide safe environments, using active frontages, natural surveillance, sightlines, well located building entrances, and appropriate lighting that strikes a balance between issues of safety and security, and reducing light pollution; and
- h)** Be designed with long-term management and maintenance in mind, ensuring materials and layouts are durable, cost-effective, and adaptable to future needs.

Supporting Text

The public realm is a series of streets, squares, green spaces and other connected spaces that help to define the character of a place and how well it functions. The quality of the public realm impacts health, social and economic issues and can influence people's sense of place, security and belonging. A high quality public realm helps businesses and communities to prosper. The public realm encompasses both hard and soft landscaping including designated areas of Urban Open Land, which have a key role in supporting biodiversity and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

Streets and public spaces should be designed to accommodate the needs of all users, to be safe and comfortable, and flexible and adaptable to accommodate the changing needs of users over time. They should be well connected and promote social interaction and inclusion, so that people of all ages and abilities can mix and enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits of an attractive and active public realm.

National planning policy and guidance requires planning policies to promote public safety and security and the arrangement of streets, spaces and building types and materials to establish a strong sense of place by creating attractive, welcoming and distinctive places. Design of spaces should reflect the requirements of current national guidance including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code (or any subsequent documentation) which include reference to a hierarchy of well-located public spaces that are permeable, safe, inclusive and include tree and other planting.

The public realm plays an important role in shaping the distinct character and identity of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield New Town as well as the surrounding villages. Development proposals should recognise and reflect local character when designing areas of public realm.

DMP 46: Safe, Inclusive and Accessible Environments

A. New development should be designed to create safe, secure and fully accessible to all users, including those with disabilities and vulnerable groups. Safety, security and accessibility should be embedded into the design, layout and function of development proposals from the outset.

B. Proposals should demonstrate how they incorporate the following principles:

Crime prevention through design, including:

- Well-lit spaces with natural surveillance;
- Clear sightlines to avoid hidden areas that may foster criminal activity or antisocial behaviour.

Crowd safety and security, where relevant:

- For developments likely to attract large crowds in public placesⁱⁱ, appropriate and proportionate security measures should be included in the design of buildings and spaces;
- These may include managed access, protective barriers, and restrictions on vehicular access where appropriate.

Hazard Mitigation:

- Where development includes or is in close proximity to known hazards such as open water, railways, and

other potential hazards, the design should incorporate appropriate safety measures to mitigate risk.

Inclusive access and legibility:

- All spaces should be easy to navigate and accessible to all users;
 - Measures may include the provision of ramps, lifts, tactile paving, signage and accessible parking.
- C.** Development proposals should have regard to the provisions of Secured by Design or any subsequent publication. Where appropriate, applicants should engage with Crime Prevention Design Advisors or Architectural Liaison Officers.

Supporting Text

National Planning Policy and Guidance requires development to contribute to the creation of safe, healthy, and sustainable environments. The Equality Act 2010 emphasises the importance of inclusive design in meeting legal obligations. This policy promotes accessibility for all users, while also ensuring that the design and layout of buildings and spaces contribute positively to the well-being and safety of residents, workers, and visitors. By embedding safety and health considerations into the planning process, this policy supports the creation of inclusive and accessible communities that are resilient, secure, and conducive to long-term wellbeing.

New development proposals should demonstrate that they have been designed to create safe, inclusive, and accessible environments. This will include addressing public safety and promoting security for users through a range of measures, including suitable lighting, signage, sight lines, access and egress points, and barriers where appropriate. Development proposals should ensure adequate space is available to accommodate a suitable range of uses, for example, wider corridors, alleyways, and thoroughfares with appropriate surfacing contributing to a better sense of space and

ⁱⁱ 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.

ease of movement for all users, including those with pushchairs, luggage, or mobility aids, not just wheelchair users.

Measures to design out crime and the fear of crime, including counter terrorism measures (where appropriate), should be integral to development proposals and considered early in the design process, taking into account the principles contained in guidance such as the Secured by Design (SBD) Development Guides published by the Police or any successive documentation.

DMP 47: Efficient Use of Land

A. Development proposals must make effective and efficient use of land in a manner that responds to local context and supports the delivery of the Local Plan's spatial strategy, taking into account:

- a)** The need accommodate an appropriate mix of uses, including housing, employment and community facilities in line with identified needs;
- b)** The context of the site, including the prevailing local character, and any relevant constraints;
- c)** The opportunity for change or intensification in areas considered suitable for growth or regeneration;
- d)** The amenity of existing and future residents or other users of the site including access to open space, daylight/sunlight, privacy and noise mitigation;
- e)** The capacity of existing infrastructure or the need to accommodate supporting infrastructure; and
- f)** The importance of securing high quality, well-designed, attractive and healthy places.

Residential Density

B. Residential development should seek to optimise density in a way that reflects the site's location, accessibility,

and character. The following indicative density ranges will apply:

- **Low to Medium Density (30-50 dwellings per hectare (dph):** Suitable for suburban or edge of settlement locations with limited access to services and public transport
 - **Medium to High Density (50-120 dph)** Appropriate for locations where the site would be suitable for either a mix of dwelling types (houses / flats) or a predominantly flatted scheme and future residents will have good accessibility to public transport, services and facilities.
 - **Very high density (120+ dph):** Should be applied in locations that are suitable for a predominantly flatted scheme and are highly accessible to a range of services and facilities such as a town centre, a railway, bus or passenger transport interchange.
- C.** Departures from these ranges may be justified where supported by robust evidence, including site-specific design assessments, infrastructure capacity studies, and urban character analysis.

Supporting Text

Optimising the use of land supports sustainable development by enabling places to function effectively and support a range of uses and services.

Development proposals should seek to make efficient use of land taking into account a range of matters including the context of the site, the prevailing character of an area, the need to secure a high quality of design and maintaining amenity for residents and users.

National planning policy requires plans to use land efficiently, promoting a significant uplift in the average density of development in town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport unless it can be shown that there are strong reasons why this would be inappropriate. The use of minimum densities, which reflect accessibility, should also be considered for other parts of the plan area.

DMP 48: Tall Buildings

- A.** Tall buildings (defined as those exceeding 18 metres or 6 storeys in height) can play a positive role in shaping the urban environment when appropriately located and designed. Proposals for tall buildings will be supported where they demonstrate high-quality design that contributes positively to the character, function, and sustainability of the area and are in sustainable urban locations.
- B.** All proposals for tall buildings must:
- a)** Location and Context – Provide a clear and robust rationale for the siting of the building, including:
 - Its role in marking key locations, nodes, or gateways;
 - Proximity to public transport and active travel networks;
 - Relationship to open land, settlement edges, and wider townscape structure.
 - b)** Character and Distinctiveness – Demonstrate how the proposal enhances local distinctiveness and responds sensitively to the surrounding built and natural environment, including:
 - Heritage assets and conservation areas;
 - Landscape features and townscape character.
 - c)** Design Quality – Exhibit exceptional design quality, particularly where the building is prominent, addressing:
 - Scale, form, height, massing, proportion;
 - Materials, detailing, adaptability, and durability;
 - Alignment with any relevant design codes, masterplans, or character assessments.
 - d)** Skyline and Views – Assess and respond positively to the impact on:
 - The skyline and visual relationship with surrounding buildings and landscape.

- e)** Public Realm Integration – Ensure successful integration at street level by:
 - Providing active frontages and high-quality public realm;
 - Enhancing pedestrian experience, safety, and accessibility.
- f)** Environmental Impacts – Minimise and mitigate environmental impacts, including:
 - Daylight, sunlight, overshadowing, and wind microclimate effects;
 - Compliance with relevant guidance such as BRE standards.
- g)** Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Be supported by a Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (TVIA) that:
 - Includes accurate 3D modelling and verified views (AVRs) showing the proposal in its local context.
- h)** Heritage Impact Assessment – Include a proportionate Heritage Impact Assessment where proposals may affect the historic environment, following guidance from Historic England.

Supporting Text

National planning policy and guidance seeks to ensure the effective and efficient use of land within existing urban areas and sustainable locations. Well- designed taller buildings can help to fulfil this objective by increasing densities and the viability of centres, whilst also acting as landmark features that aid navigation, emphasise important locations and make a positive contribution to character and skyline.

Building heights across the plan area are generally modest, comprising two to three storey developments. The exception to this is within the centres of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield, employment areas and large educational facilities. Consequently, the scope for building taller will depend upon the overall size of the development site and the sensitivity of the location. For example, rural sites or those locations which would adversely impact the setting of conservation areas, historic parks and gardens or listed buildings are unlikely to be considered appropriate for taller buildings.

Where taller buildings are proposed, it is essential they can integrate successfully into the surrounding townscape and landscape, make a positive contribution to the locality and provide appropriate amenity for local residents and businesses. Consideration should be given to the sustainability of such buildings, their environmental impact, durability and adaptability in the longer term.

DMP 49: Amenity

- A.** Proposals for residential development must demonstrate that they will provide and maintain a high standard of amenity for both existing and future users of buildings and external open space. This should be demonstrated through ensuring:

Sunlight and Daylight

- a)** The levels of sunlight and daylight within buildings, open spaces, and garden areas in particular, are satisfactoryⁱⁱⁱ;

Dual Aspect Homes

- b)** New homes are dual aspect, unless exceptional site specific circumstances make dual aspect impractical, and where impacts on ventilation (including avoiding the need for mechanical ventilation), daylight and overheating are fully mitigated,

Privacy

- c)** There is a reasonable degree of privacy to new and existing private living spaces and the main private garden area, with overlooking limited to an acceptable degree. The design of new communal garden areas should create spaces that provide opportunities for privacy or seclusion, particularly where residents do not have access to private balconies or other private external space.

Outlook and Visual Amenity

- d)** The outlook and visual amenity afforded from within homes 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.

Circulation Space

- e)** Shared circulation space and routes to private entrances within development should of suitable width, naturally lit and ventilated wherever possible. Long and/or narrow internal corridors should be avoided; and

Space Standards

- f)** All new dwellings, including conversions and changes of use, should meet or exceed the minimum gross internal floor areas and storage requirements set out in the Nationally Described Space Standard or subsequent versions. Applicants must provide clear evidence within their planning applications that proposed dwellings comply with these standards.
- B.** All development proposals, including commercial development, should ensure:
- a)** New development is not overbearing upon existing buildings and open spaces;
- b)** That proposed uses are compatible with surrounding land use; and
- c)** The design creates internal spaces that are safe and secure for all users. This includes adequate daylight, clear sightlines, and designing secure environments.

Supporting Text

Amenity is a key determinant of quality of life and contributes to sustainable development. Poor daylight, limited privacy, inadequate outlook, and substandard internal space can all significantly undermine health and well-being.

ⁱⁱⁱ When assessing development proposals, regard will be had to the Building Research Establishment's Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight, a Guide to Good Practice 2022, or any subsequent document.

The National Design Guide outlines principles for achieving well-designed places, and addresses residential amenity primarily under the “Homes & Buildings” characteristic.

The quality of internal and external space plays a vital role in creating places where people want to live, work, and spend time, and how well a place functions. Amenity encompasses a range of factors that contribute to the comfort, health, and well-being of residents and users of buildings and spaces. These include, but are not limited to, access to natural daylight and sunlight, outlook, privacy, ventilation, noise levels, and the relationship of a development with surrounding buildings and spaces.

Dual aspect homes support passive ventilation, improve daylight access, and reduce reliance on mechanical systems.

As urban densities increase, it is essential that amenity is not compromised. All new development, including extensions and annexes, needs to deliver a high standard of amenity for both existing and future occupants. In line with the NPPF, the Agent of Change principle requires that new development includes suitable mitigation measures to address potential impacts from existing businesses or community facilities. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they have been designed to provide a good standard of amenity for users in line with the policy requirements outlined above.

DMP 50: Private and Communal Amenity Space – Outdoor Space Standard

- A.** Development proposals for residential units (including those created by change of use or subdivision of existing buildings), must provide high quality outdoor amenity space for each dwelling. This minimum standard applies to flats, houses, and bungalows.

Table: Minimum Private Outdoor Amenity Space Standard

Number of Bedrooms	Private Outdoor Amenity Space (Flat/ Apartment)	Private Outdoor Amenity Space (House/ Bungalow)
1	5 sq.m	35 sq.m
2	7 sq.m	40 sq.m
3	10 sq.m	50 sq.m
4	N/A	60 sq.m

Design and Quality

- B.** All outdoor Amenity Space must:

- a)** Be provided as private gardens, balconies (minimum 1.5m depth), terraces, roof gardens or a combination thereof.
- b)** Be functional, useable, and designed to:
 - provide privacy and a sense of enclosure;
 - avoid significant overshadowing or overlooking;
 - be directly accessible from the principal dwellings main living areas.
- c)** Be well-integrated with the overall design of the development and contribute positively to the character of the area.
- d)** Include appropriate boundary treatments, landscaping and sustainable drainage features where possible.
- e)** Where it can be demonstrated that site constraints prevent the provision of private amenity space, high-quality communal outdoor amenity space must be provided that:
 - Is easily accessible to all residents.
 - Meets or exceeds the equivalent private space standards in both quantity and quality.

- Includes a mix of soft and hard landscaping, seating, and opportunities for play or relaxation.
- Is designed to ensure safety, privacy, and inclusivity for all age groups and abilities.

Supporting Text

National Planning Policy and guidance requires places to be designed with a high standard of amenity that promotes health and well-being. The National Design Guide promotes access to private and shared outdoor spaces to improve well-being, encourage active lifestyles, and enhance environmental sustainability. The Healthy Homes Standard (2025) promotes outdoor space as essential for mental and physical well-being.

The provision of private and shared outdoor space can play an important role in physical and mental health, is vital to residential amenity and can add significantly to the quality of life of residents of all ages.

Requiring private or shared outdoor space for all new residential developments, will contribute to the creation of sustainable, healthy, and high-quality living environments for future residents.

DMP 51: Servicing, Refuse and Recycling

- A.** Development proposals should ensure adequate space for the provision of services, the delivery and collection of mail, and appropriate access for all service vehicles.
- B.** Access to and space for the storage and collection of refuse and recycling receptacles must be secured and designed in accordance with the Council's Recycling and Refuse Separation and Storage Planning Guidance.

- C.** Bin stores and access to them should be appropriately sited and designed to ensure that they:
 - a)** Can perform their role effectively without prejudicing or being prejudiced by other functions and users;
 - b)** Maintain an attractive and coherent street scene, protect visual amenity and avoid unnecessary clutter;
 - c)** Avoid creating risk to human health or environmental amenity; and
 - d)** Are able to accommodate receptacles which meet the Council's standards for refuse facilities.

Supporting Text

The provision, design and availability of servicing, refuse and recycling facilities, including access routes for vehicles, location of services and presentation of refuse and recycling receptacles have an impact upon the quality and function of a building and surrounding public realm.

National planning policy and guidance requires the creation of places which are safe, attractive, free of street clutter, allow for the efficient delivery of goods and access by service and emergency vehicles, and avoid conflict between users.

When designing streets and other public and private spaces, adequate space should be provided to accommodate services such as mail delivery and collections boxes, delivery areas and refuse and recycling facilities. Provision of such services and facilities should be located to minimise disruption and impact on the street scene, being adequately screened wherever possible and should be in accordance with the Council's standards for refuse facilities.

Inappropriately designed schemes without adequate storage and access may lead to bins and other receptacles accumulating on a footway or a Public Right of Way, which can cause visual clutter or an obstruction to the free and safe flow of all highway users, including vulnerable highway users, such as those with disabilities and those with young children.

MP 52: Masterplanning

A. A comprehensive and collaborative approach will be taken to the development of large or complex sites. Masterplans must:

- a)** Set out a clear vision and objectives for the site;
- b)** Define the quantum, mix and spatial distribution of land uses;
- c)** Identify sustainable transport linkages and a movement hierarchy;
- d)** Establish the core design principles including layout, scale, landscaping and blue/green infrastructure and healthy design principles in accordance with SP7;
- e)** Be informed by a proportionate evidence base and meaningful community engagement;
- f)** Be endorsed by the local planning authority prior to the submission of any relevant planning application and will be treated as a material consideration in decision making.

B. Masterplans will be required in the following circumstances:

- a)** Proposals for 100 or more dwellings;
- b)** Large scale⁶⁵ mixed use proposals;
- c)** Proposals related to major development (as defined in the Glossary of this Plan) in the Green Belt;
- d)** Sites with complex heritage or archaeological sensitivities;
- e)** Sites in multiple land ownership, where coordination between parties will be required to ensure the delivery of a high quality, coherent development;
- f)** Town Centre sites with complex integration requirements;
- g)** Environmentally sensitive sites⁶⁶; or

- h)** Any other site where the local planning authority considers a masterplan necessary due to scale, complexity, or sensitivity.
- C.** To ensure the timely delivery of masterplans, the local planning authority will:
 - Use planning performance agreements (PPAs) and the pre-application process to work proactively with landowners and developers.
 - Encourage early and meaningful engagement with communities and stakeholders.
 - Consider the use of design review panels to assess the quality and robustness of masterplans.

Supporting Text

National planning policy and guidance sets out that policy-making authorities, in conjunction with communities and other authorities should identify suitable locations for development. Suitable tools such as masterplans and design guides or codes should be used to ensure land is used efficiently to achieve appropriate densities and secure a variety of well-designed buildings and places to meet the needs of different groups in the community.

Masterplans set the vision and implementation strategy for a development. They are site specific and focus on setting principles for development such as the scale and layout, mix of uses, transport and green infrastructure. They are distinct from design codes, which provide more detailed parameters for the physical form and appearance of development. A range of other plans and technical reports may be needed as supporting evidence, and a collaborative approach involving community/stakeholder engagement is also required to inform the masterplan.

A masterplan is not designed to be a prescriptive blueprint for how development will come forward but provides a clear steer on

⁶⁵ Mixed use proposals comprising of at least 100 dwellings and/or at least 2,000m² of employment floorspace.

⁶⁶ As defined in The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) or its subsequent replacement.

priorities and principles for development, which can then inform detailed design codes and planning applications. The level of detail included in the masterplan should be proportionate to the scale and complexity of the site.

This policy sets out the requirement for masterplans in specified circumstances and outlines the broad scope of masterplans.

The Approach to Masterplanning guidance document, which has been endorsed by the Council, provides further information on what is expected of masterplan documents and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.



SECTION 2

The Historic Environment

Chapter 10: The Historic Environment

Introduction

Welwyn Hatfield has a unique built environment and heritage which makes an important contribution to the identity of the area. Within the plan area 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 other non-designated assets, features and landscapes with historical significance.

The two New Towns, one of which originated as a Garden City, have historical significance beyond the local level. Other historical assets include remnants of Roman 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.

The Local Plan has to balance the need to protect, sustain and enhance these heritage assets while at the same time providing for growth and addressing the challenges of climate change. Part of this balance will be ensuring that any adverse effects of development are avoided, minimised or mitigated, whilst ensuring the historic places we value can function effectively in the future.

Although the new town heritage of Hatfield and parts of Welwyn Garden City remains a significant asset, some areas would benefit from regeneration and revitalisation. Some of this work has taken place in both towns in recent years, but further efforts may be needed in the future to ensure that they maintain their identities and strengthen their role as community and service hubs.

The policies in this chapter are informed by national legislation, planning policy and guidance, and seek to protect and where possible enhance the historic environment and heritage assets within the plan area. Consideration of the historic environment also

ties in with other objectives of the local plan such as place-making and high quality design, creating healthy, safe and accessible places, protection of the natural environment and adaptation of existing buildings to help achieve climate resilience.

SP 20: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

- A.** The protection, enhancement and management of historic assets within the borough will be sought commensurate with their status, significance and international, national and/or local importance.
- B.** Development that would secure positive improvements to and ensure the long-term conservation of heritage assets for the enjoyment of future generations will be supported.
- C.** Designation of heritage assets will be supported where it is deemed appropriate and necessary to safeguard them for the enjoyment of future generations.

Supporting Text

Heritage assets and the wider historic environment are a finite irreplaceable resource which contribute to the character of an area and quality of life. They should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance to enable enjoyment by this and future generations. Heritage interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic, and may be derived from the asset itself and/or its setting. Heritage assets and their settings may be of local, national or international significance.

Conservation and preservation of the historic environment is an important consideration in the planning process, and both national planning policy and legislation (such as the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990) serve to provide protection to heritage assets and their settings.

Plans and planning decisions are to have a positive approach to the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, taking into account putting heritage assets to viable uses consistent with their conservation, the wider benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring, and the opportunity for new development and the historic environment to positively contribute to local character and distinctiveness.

Within the borough there are many and diverse heritage assets of varying importance, some of which are identified on the Policies Map and can also be found in the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER). Designated heritage assets within the borough include:

- Scheduled Ancient Monuments (4)
- Registered Parks and Gardens (5)
- Listed buildings (6 Grade I, 25 Grade II*, 400 Grade II)
- Conservation Areas (10)

In addition to these designated assets, there are other non-designated assets, features and landscapes with historical significance, which do not meet the criteria for designation but have a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. Non-designated assets include the two New Towns, one of which originated as a Garden City, that have historical significance beyond the local level.

Some areas, deemed to be of moderate or high archaeological potential, have been identified as Areas of Archaeological Significance. There are currently 73 such areas within the borough.

Local Authorities have a duty to review Conservation Areas and designate new ones where appropriate. Additional protections such as Article 4 Directions to remove permitted development rights can also be put in place where necessary.

DMP 53: Heritage Assets

- A.** Proposals which affect designated heritage assets and the wider historic environment should consider the following:
- a)** The potential to sustain and enhance the heritage asset and historic environment in a manner appropriate to its function and significance.
 - b)** Successive small scale changes that lead to a cumulative loss or harm to the significance of the asset or historic environment should be avoided.
 - c)** 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.
 - d)** Architectural or historic features which are important to the character and appearance of the asset (including internal features) should be retained unaltered.
 - e)** The historic form and structural integrity of the asset should be retained.
 - f)** 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.
- B.** A Heritage Statement, Heritage Impact Assessment and/or Archaeological Assessment⁶⁷ 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

⁶⁷ Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments and Archaeological Assessments is available from Historic England: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa2-managing-significance-in-decision-taking/> and <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/statements-heritage-significance-advice-note-12/> (or their subsequent replacements)

but where the potential to contain heritage assets exists or further understanding of the significance of known heritage assets is needed.

- C.** 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 planning policy and guidance.
- D.** 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.
- E.** 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.

Supporting Text

National planning policy and guidance attaches great weight to the conservation of heritage assets, in accordance with their significance. Legislation such as the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 is also relevant to the protection of heritage assets within the borough.

In addition to national policy legislation and policies within this plan, the following tools and guidance are used by the Council to help conserve and enhance the historic environment and these are to be considered in development proposals and planning decisions where applicable:

- Conservation Area Character Statements, Appraisals and Management Plans
- Article 4 Directions to remove permitted development rights
- Historic Environment Record (HER)
- Register of Buildings at Risk
- Historic England Advice Notes and guidance

When considering development proposals, an understanding of the significance of a heritage asset and its setting, and justification for any development relating to these, is required in the form of a heritage statement, heritage impact assessment and/or archaeological assessment. Potential cumulative impacts should also be considered.

In accordance with national policy and legislation, depending on the significance of the asset and its setting, when assessing the potential impact of the development, significant harm should be avoided, lesser harm mitigated, and any such harm weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

There is a general presumption in favour of the preservation of Listed Buildings. Demolition will be acceptable only in very exceptional circumstances. Demolition within Conservation Areas will be resisted, particularly of buildings/features which make a positive contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, unless the harm to the significance of the asset is outweighed by the benefits of the proposal.

Where a loss of fabric or features is permitted, appropriate recording of these losses and deposit of evidence in a publicly accessible archive is required.

For development within Conservation Areas, reference should be made to any relevant Conservation Area documents such as character appraisals and management plans which are in place.

The adaptation of buildings for energy and carbon efficiency is covered in the Chapter on Climate Change and Flood Risk. Where this applies to historic buildings/heritage assets, guidance from Historic England should be referred to when considering such planning proposals and decisions.

SP 21: The Historic Environment of Welwyn Garden City

- A.** Welwyn Garden City has historical significance and a unique heritage as a garden city designed for 'healthy living' and a Mark One New Town. To protect this historical significance, in accordance with the design and historic environment policies in this Plan, proposals in Welwyn Garden City must:
- a)** Where applicable, conserve and where appropriate enhance heritage assets and their settings;
 - b)** Demonstrate how they have responded to the key characteristics of a Garden City⁶⁸, through their design and detailing;
 - c)** Where development proposals require a Design and Access Statement⁶⁹, demonstrate that the historic environment of Welwyn Garden City has been properly understood and incorporated into the proposal; and
 - d)** Where proposals require a masterplan, as set out in site allocations or DMP 52, demonstrate how the historic character and significance of the town and Garden City Principles⁷⁰ have been incorporated into the masterplan design.

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.
- 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.

⁶⁸ Key characteristics of a Garden City are as set out in the supporting text for this policy.

⁶⁹ As set out in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2012 (as amended); Part 3, Section 9; or its subsequent replacement.

⁷⁰ As set out in 'Garden City Principles for masterplanning strategic developments' box.

- 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.
- 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.

Supporting Text

National planning policy requires that plans 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*. Garden Cities influenced the design of the first wave of New Towns, and Welwyn Garden City was designated as a Mark One New Town after the Second World War.

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. Whilst it is recognised that Garden City principles need to be adapted to the requirements of the 21st Century, key characteristics of Welwyn Garden City that should be considered in development proposals 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

Since the New Town era, Welwyn Garden City has continued to develop successfully but faces a number of challenges which include the need to support growth whilst maintaining the character of the town.

Garden City principles are recognised as a basis for good planning and need to inform how these challenges are addressed. These are to be used to guide the masterplanning of strategic developments and are included in the 'Garden City Principles for masterplanning strategic developments' box.

DMP 54: Welwyn Garden City Town Centre Shopfronts

- A.** Proposals for new or altered shopfronts in Welwyn Garden City town centre will only be permitted where they meet the following design principles:
 - a)** The design of the shopfront reflects the scale and style of the existing building and the terrace in which it sits and reflects its uniformity.
 - b)** Repair of existing shopfronts is preferred over replacement. Replacement shopfronts must replicate original designs or adopt styles that enhance the building's character.

- c) Traditional materials such as painted softwood or natural stone should be used wherever practicable. Bold or strident colours should be avoided unless used sparingly and with discretion;
- d) The design retains and/or restores original architectural detailing, such as pilasters, corbels, stall risers, and stone surrounds, wherever possible;
- e) Large shopfronts spanning multiple premises must use vertical subdivisions, such as pilasters and stall risers, to preserve the appearance of individual units;
- f) Security measures should be integrated into the design, avoiding unsightly external roller shutters. Internal lattice grilles are preferred, and external lattice shutters may be considered only in exceptional circumstances;
- g) Blinds and awnings – Only traditional straight awning types mounted on rollers are permitted. Dutch blinds and balloon canopies are discouraged as they disrupt the architectural integrity of the building and streetscape.

Supporting Text

Welwyn Garden City town centre contains many original traditional shopfronts which contribute significantly to the distinct local character of the WGC Conservation Area. These shopfronts are integral to the town's heritage, reflecting its planned neo-Georgian design and creating a cohesive and attractive streetscape. This policy seeks to ensure that shopfront alterations, repairs, and replacements are carried out sensitively, preserving the architectural integrity of individual buildings and the wider conservation area while accommodating modern retail needs. For further detailed guidance, please refer to the Welwyn Garden City Guide to shopfront and advertisement design.

DMP 55: Advertisements and Signage in Welwyn Garden City Town Centre

- A. The display of advertisements and signage requiring express consent will only be permitted if they meet the following criteria:
 - a) Advertisements must not harm the character or visual amenities of the conservation area;
 - b) Advertisements must respect the character of the building and streetscape, ensuring they do not obscure architectural features such as pilasters, stone surrounds, or first-floor windows;
 - c) Fascia signs should be proportionate to the fascia depth and complement the shopfront design;
 - d) Acrylic or shiny materials are not permitted. Lettering should convey only essential information (e.g., retailer name and street number) and be proportionate to the fascia;
 - e) Corporate logos and standard designs must be adapted to maintain the integrity of the building and streetscape;
 - f) Internally illuminated box facias or projecting signs are not appropriate; and
 - g) Only one projecting sign per shopfront is allowed, positioned at fascia level and designed to harmonise with the shopfront.

Supporting Text

In Welwyn Garden City town centre, advertisements play a key role in supporting the vitality of local businesses while also influencing the visual quality of the streetscape. Many traditional shopfronts and architectural features contribute to the unique character of the WGC Conservation Area, and

poorly designed or intrusive signage can detract from this. This policy provides guidance to ensure that advertisements are designed and positioned in a way that respects the historic and architectural significance of the area, enhancing the overall appearance of the town centre. For further detailed guidance, please refer to the Welwyn Garden City Guide to shopfront and advertisement design.



**Our
Local
Plan.**

SECTION 2

The Natural Environment

Chapter 11: The Natural Environment

Introduction

The natural environment of Welwyn Hatfield is a defining asset of the borough, underpinning its landscape character, biodiversity, green and blue infrastructure, and overall sense of place. This section of the Plan sets out a comprehensive framework to conserve, enhance and restore these assets, ensuring that development contributes positively to ecological resilience, landscape quality, climate adaptation and community wellbeing. It brings together national policy requirements — including biodiversity net gain, the Environment Act 2021 targets, and emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategies — with local evidence such as the Landscape Character Assessment, Landscape Sensitivity Assessment and the Green Corridor Project. Collectively, the policies seek to secure high quality green infrastructure, protect the best and most versatile agricultural land, safeguard designated sites and priority habitats, promote urban greening, and ensure that trees, soils and water environments are integral considerations from the earliest stages of design.

SP 22: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment and Landscape Character

- A.** Proposals that seek to conserve and enhance the natural environment and landscape character, and support habitats and biodiversity will be supported.
- B.** To achieve this, development must:
 - a)** Strengthen, conserve or restore the prevailing quality, character and condition of the natural landscape of the plan area through consideration of the Welwyn Hatfield Landscape Character Assessment, the strategy for

managing change within each landscape area, and any evidence supporting the Landscape Character Assessment;

- b)** Conserve and enhance biodiversity through the conservation of habitats and species, including by complementing the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain and having due regard to the Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy;
- c)** Support the protection, enhancement, restoration and management of environmental and ecological assets within the plan area, in line with their significance and importance;
- d)** Avoid the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land;
- e)** Retain good quality and important trees and hedgerows, including those that have been protected through a Tree Preservation Order;
- f)** Protect the quality and quantity of the water environment; and
- g)** Contribute to the provision of green infrastructure and urban greening throughout the plan area.

Supporting Text

This policy provides protection for the Natural Environment, including natural designations and assets.

The plan area and its surrounds contain a wide array of nature conservation sites which could be negatively impacted by development if not considered at an early stage of planning.

The Environment Act 2021 set clear statutory targets for biodiversity and water, including an important new target to reverse the decline in species abundance by the end of 2030. Whilst the statutory requirement of Biodiversity Net Gain has been in place since 2024, the protection of ecological and environmental assets has been a key topic in National Planning Policy for many years prior to this introduction. The Natural Environment policies in this plan conform to the statutory framework for Biodiversity Net Gain, whilst linking the incentivisation of the draft

Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy to the Statutory Metric so that priorities in the LNRS are used to deliver an improvement to biodiversity.

Whilst Green Infrastructure plays a role in making communities healthier due to the physical and mental benefits GI provides, GI can also provide a platform for biodiversity improvement by creating networks and connections for species to move freely. The Welwyn Hatfield Green Corridor Project is key to the delivery of strategic GI, providing benefits for ecological assets as well as providing access to green space for people. The principles in this policy can also be applied to local green infrastructure and criteria to ensure that existing and new green infrastructure is planned, delivered and managed.

The character, diversity, and distinctiveness of the Welwyn Hatfield landscape also forms an integral part of the strategic green and blue infrastructure, and is key to maintaining the borough's distinctive mixture of rural and urban.

SP 23: Green Infrastructure

A. The Council will work with partners to actively support the creation and enhancement of strategic green infrastructure across the plan area. The Council will support proposals that help to deliver:

- a)** A network of public open spaces such as parks, woodlands, and natural green areas, with a priority being those within walking distance of residential neighbourhoods, to promote physical and mental wellbeing, in line with Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework Accessible Greenspace Standards⁷¹;
- b)** Inclusive, safe, and legible access for people of all ages and abilities, including improvements to the accessibility and connectivity of Public Rights of Way (PRoW), bridleways, and permissive paths;

- c)** Well-designed places and developments which are attractive to people and businesses by contributing to the network of green and blue infrastructure through features such as green spaces, water features, integrated Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), street trees and green roofs;
- d)** Provision of green and blue infrastructure to reduce and mitigate the impacts of climate change, protect water quality and facilitate flood risk management, including through measures such as carbon storage, urban shading and cooling, canopy interception and infiltration and slowing run off; and
- e)** Ecological connectivity through the creation and retention of green infrastructure, linking ecological habitats which boost biodiversity, species migration and nature recovery.

B. To facilitate these principles, development should consider opportunities to protect, enhance and increase provision of green and blue infrastructure at the early stages of planning. Design codes and masterplans should also incorporate green infrastructure principles.

C. The Council will work with developers, health partners, and infrastructure providers to ensure active community involvement in the design, management, and long-term stewardship of green spaces.

Supporting Text

Green Infrastructure is defined as 'a network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity⁷².'

⁷¹ <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/AccessibleGreenspaceStandard.aspx> or any subsequent standards.

⁷² As defined in national planning policy and the Glossary of this Plan.

Green infrastructure can include parks, playing fields, other areas of open space, woodland, allotments, private gardens, sustainable drainage features, green roofs and walls, street trees and 'blue infrastructure' such as streams, ponds, canals and other water bodies⁷³.

By ensuring equitable access to high-quality, multifunctional green spaces, this policy aims to promote physical and mental health and well-being, ecological networks, climate change resilience and high-quality design by incorporating green and blue infrastructure as a fundamental part of development, helping to achieve the wider goals of sustainable development.

National planning policy and guidance states that the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, including high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation is important for the health and well-being of communities. It also delivers wider benefits for nature, climate resilience, placemaking and the economy, and helps mitigate against pollution.

This reflects the Garden City principles embedded in the design of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield, where access to good quality green infrastructure and open space has long played a vital role in shaping sustainable, well-balanced and healthy places.

DMP 56: Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

- A.** Where development of agricultural land is proposed on sites which are not allocated in the Local Plan:
 - a)** Applicants should provide information relating to the relevant Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey data in order to demonstrate whether their development proposal is likely to affect best and most versatile agricultural land; or

- b)** If suitable data does not exist, then a new field survey should be carried out and submitted to the planning authority.
- B.** Development of the best and most versatile land (ALC Grade 1-3a) will normally be refused, unless it can be robustly demonstrated that:
 - a)** No suitable alternative site of lower agricultural quality (Grades 3b-5 or brownfield land) is available within the plan area; and
 - b)** The proposed development meets an overriding need that cannot be met elsewhere; and
 - c)** The sustainability benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the long-term loss of BMV land.
- C.** Limited exceptions may be considered for:
 - Infrastructure or community uses requiring a specific location;
 - Renewable energy developments where land can be restored without loss of quality;
- D.** Where development is permitted, layouts should seek to retain higher quality land for gardens, allotments, or community food production. Soil conservation measures must be clearly outlined.

Supporting Text

Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. This includes recognising the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land.

BMV agricultural land is graded 1 to 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC), and is defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Agricultural Land Classification identifies Grade 1 as excellent quality, Grade 2 as very good quality, Grade 3 as good to moderate

⁷³ PPG: Natural Environment; Green infrastructure; What can green infrastructure include?; Paragraph 004 Reference ID: 8-004-20190721; Revision date: 21 07 2019

quality and subgrade 3a as good quality agricultural land. (Subgrade 3b is moderate quality, Grade 4 is poor, and Grade 5 is very poor quality agricultural land).

This policy sets out the matters that will be taken into account for proposals that affect the BMV agricultural land, ensuring that land that has the greatest potential to help secure the nation's food security is protected wherever possible.

Development of agricultural land will be assessed in accordance with the relevant national planning policy and guidance⁷⁴. Natural England will be consulted on development proposals which are not for agricultural purposes and are not in accordance with the provisions of the development plan and involve the loss of more than 20 hectares grades 1, 2 or 3a agricultural land. This includes the circumstances in which the proposed development is likely to lead to a further loss of agricultural land amounting cumulatively to 20 hectares or more, e.g. as part of a phased development⁷⁵.

DMP 57: Landscape

- A.** Proposals will be expected to help conserve and enhance the borough's natural landscape by being sympathetic to local landscape characters, national character areas and their setting.

Local Landscape Character Areas

- B.** Proposals will be assessed for their impact on local landscape character areas and their contribution to the strategy and guidelines for character areas in the Welwyn Hatfield Landscape Character Assessment. Proposals which contribute positively to the strategy and guidelines will be afforded positive weight.
- C.** Residential development proposals will also be assessed against the Welwyn Hatfield Landscape Sensitivity

Assessment, including how the key sensitivities and mitigation factors are taken into account.

National Character Areas

- D.** Proposals will be assessed for their impact on national character areas and their contribution to the statements of environmental opportunity as detailed by Natural England. Proposals which contribute positively to the statements of environmental opportunity will be afforded positive weight.

Supporting Text

Green Infrastructure is defined as 'a network of Whilst there are no protected landscapes, the character of the borough is shaped by distinctive landscapes as illustrated within the Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessment.

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.

The Council produced a Landscape Sensitivity Assessment in 2019, which concentrates on the sensitivities of the landscape to residential development. The mitigation factors provided in this document will allow any potential development to have a lesser effect on Welwyn Hatfield's landscape.

DMP 58: Biodiversity

- A.** Proposals will be expected to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity sites, habitats, species and networks. The Council will expect proposals which are likely to affect designated sites, habitats, species and/or networks to implement the following mitigation hierarchy

⁷⁴ Guide to assessing development proposals on agricultural land, Natural England, Feb 2021 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agricultural-land-assess-proposals-for-development/guide-to-assessing-development-proposals-on-agricultural-land>) (or any subsequent amendments).

⁷⁵ In accordance with the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

by submitting a Mitigation and Compensation Plan:

- Information
- Avoidance
- Mitigation
- Compensation

- B.** Compensation measures will be assessed on a case-by-case basis proportional to the level of importance of the site, habitat and/or species.

Designated Sites

- C.** In addition to the above mitigation hierarchy, proposals will be expected to recognise and adhere to the hierarchy for international, national and locally designated sites:

Internationally Designated Sites

- D.** Planning permission will not be granted if the proposal is likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity of the site, unless it can be robustly demonstrated that there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest which is sufficient to override the harm to the site.

Nationally Designated Sites

- E.** Planning permission will not be granted if the proposal is likely to have an adverse effect on the integrity on the site, unless the benefits of the development clearly outweigh its likely impact on the features of the site and any broader impacts on the network of sites.

Locally Designated Sites

- F.** Planning permission will not be granted if the proposal is likely to have an adverse impact unless the need for, and benefits of, the development outweigh the loss or harm.

Habitats and Species

- G.** In addition to following the mitigation hierarchy, proposals will be expected to recognise and adhere to the following principles for specific habitats and species:

Irreplaceable Habitats

- H.** Planning permission will not be granted unless there are wholly

exceptional reasons where the public benefit would clearly outweigh the loss or deterioration of the habitat. Buffer zones of a minimum of 15m must be implemented around irreplaceable habitats.

Priority Habitats and Species

- I.** Planning permission will not be granted if the proposal is likely to damage or cause harm unless the need for, and benefits of, the development outweigh the loss or harm.

Protected Species

- J.** If there is a reasonable likelihood that a protected species is present and likely to be affected by development proposals, an ecological survey will be required detailing how the mitigation hierarchy has been followed to protect the species.
- K.** In accordance with national guidance, the Council will take into account the likelihood of obtaining a license for European Protected Species or species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 when considering development proposals that affect these species.

Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Recovery Strategies

- L.** Development will be expected to provide and deliver robust and measurable net gains for biodiversity, including providing biodiversity net gain requirements in line with the statutory framework.
- M.** Development proposals will be expected to promote site permeability for wildlife and avoid the fragmentation of wildlife networks. Proposals that incorporate features to encourage biodiversity, such as swift bricks, will be positively supported.
- N.** Development proposals will be expected to have regard to the Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Proposals contributing to the actions and priorities that affect the site in the LNRS will be afforded positive weight in decision making.

Supporting Text

Enhancing and protecting biodiversity and geodiversity is a key objective of National Planning Policy. It is widely accepted that the UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world due to historic and ongoing decline. The 'Hertfordshire's State of Nature' document, published by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust in 2020, 20% of assessed species were either extinct or threatened with extinction. Of those species, 49% have noticeably decreased since 1970.

Local Plans should therefore play a role in the protection and enhancement of biodiversity. The plan area is home to several types of international, national and local designated sites, as well as local wildlife-rich habitats. The emergence of the Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy has also sought to improve biodiversity across the county. At a national level, the introduction of mandatory biodiversity net gain in 2024 has also sought to improve biodiversity and reduce the overall impact that development can have on habitats.

This policy sets out the matters that will be taken into account for proposals that affect biodiversity, including designated sites and habitats.

DMP 59: Urban Greening

- A.** All development proposals must integrate green infrastructure through urban greening at an early stage of design as part of a holistic design approach. Urban greening should deliver multiple benefits, including biodiversity enhancement, climate resilience (cooling and shading), sustainable drainage, water quality improvement, and health and wellbeing.
- B.** Development should provide urban greening elements (in proportion to the scale and extent of the development proposal) responding to site opportunities/constraints, local character, and strategic GI priorities. Information should be submitted detailing:

- the types of urban greening proposed;
 - the justification for the type of urban greening approach taken; and
 - how the urban greening elements will be maintained/managed over the lifetime of the development
- C.** Major development proposals are required to calculate and achieve a minimum urban greening factor (UGF) of:
 - 0.4 for residential developments
 - 0.3 for commercial developments
 - 0.5 for residential developments on previously undeveloped sites
 - D.** Where site specific constraints demonstrably prevent meeting the minimum UGF, applicants must evidence the constraints and deliver alternative onsite measures that achieve equivalent or superior multifunctional benefits.
 - E.** Urban greening should respond to local character, enhance connectivity with existing green infrastructure, and contribute to biodiversity net gain outcomes (without double-counting) and be coordinated with the statutory biodiversity metric and Habitat Management & Monitoring Plan (HMMP), and contribute to climate change adaptation. Long-term maintenance must be secured through planning conditions or legal agreements.

Supporting Text

Urban greening is integral to achieving sustainable development: the NPPF (updated 7 February 2025) expects plans and decisions to promote well designed, sustainable places, protect and enhance the natural environment, and adapt to climate change. Embedding green infrastructure early in design responds directly to these objectives and relevant PPG topics (design, natural environment, flood risk, BNG).

Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework provides principles, headline

standards and a design guide to secure multifunctional GI (including Urban Greening Factor as a headline standard) and to improve equitable access to nature (e.g., access to greenspace within a 15minute walk). The policy's UGF approach and emphasis on early integration, connectivity and long term management directly align with this framework.

The UGF is a practical design tool to quantify the quantity and quality of greening across a site. Best practice (e.g., the Natural England Urban Greening Factor Standard) recommends 0.40 for residential and 0.30 for commercial schemes, provides calculators, and sets out how to submit and review UGF in planning applications—including phasing and outline applications. Setting 0.50 for greenfield residential strengthens outcomes where baseline habitats would otherwise be lost, reflecting Natural England guidance that authorities may tailor UGF to local circumstances to secure higher standards in sensitive contexts

Urban greening refers to the incorporation of vegetation into urban environments. It covers a wide range of options including, but not limited to, street trees, living roofs, living walls, and rain gardens. It can help to meet other policy requirements and provide a range of benefits including amenity space, improving social interaction, enhanced biodiversity, addressing the urban heat island effect, sustainable drainage and amenity.

Natural England have developed an Urban Greening Factor (UGF) for England. The UGF Standard aims to ensure that new and existing urban areas deliver sufficient green cover to support climate resilience, biodiversity and improved environmental quality. The UGF complements BNG by ensuring whole site greening (including SuDS planting and urban trees) while the metric secures habitat outcomes.

Proposals required to demonstrate and calculate an urban greening factor should utilise the Natural England Urban Greening Factor tool or an industry-recognised equivalent.

DMP 60: Trees

New Trees

- A.** All new development involving new dwellings or non-residential floorspace should provide new native and more drought resistant trees, hedgerows and other planting to contribute to high quality design, layout and landscaping, and to maximise the green infrastructure network and increase the borough's tree canopy cover. In addition to this, new streets should be tree-lined where this does not negatively affect proposed infrastructure and necessary hardstanding.
- B.** Proposals involving the planting of trees near existing highways will be expected to demonstrate that the highways authority has been consulted and that the planting locations and species are compatible with relevant highways standards.
- C.** All newly planted trees must be supported by appropriate long-term maintenance arrangements.

Existing Trees

- D.** All development proposals will only be supported where they:
 - a)** Minimise impacts on existing trees, hedges and other vegetation. Where trees are lost, they should be compensated for with suitable replacements
 - b)** Positively integrate existing trees into landscaping
- E.** Major development proposals will be required to:
 - a)** Undertake an arboricultural survey by a suitably qualified professional to demonstrate how impacts have been considered at an early stage of development design; and
 - b)** Demonstrate that retained trees can be protected from development impacts at all stages of construction and demolition

F. The Council will not grant permission if development will result in the loss of or harm to existing trees falling within any of the categories below, unless there are demonstrable and justifiable reasons:

- Trees protected with a Tree Preservation Order (TPO)
- Veteran, ancient and trees of notable value
- Trees which contribute to the heritage significance or conservation areas (such as trees noted in conservation area appraisals as 'important trees')
- Trees which have high amenity value

Supporting Text

Trees are a vital component of our natural environment, contributing to landscape character, biodiversity, climate resilience, air quality, and the health and wellbeing of communities. National planning policy emphasises the importance of protecting and enhancing trees and woodland, including the need for new streets to be treelined and for development to incorporate high quality green infrastructure from the earliest stages of design. This policy sets out how development should respond to these expectations, ensuring that both new and existing trees are properly considered, integrated and safeguarded.

New tree planting plays a key role in strengthening the borough's green infrastructure network and increasing overall canopy cover, which supports climate change adaptation through shading, cooling and carbon sequestration. The use of native and more drought resistant species is encouraged to ensure long term resilience to changing climatic conditions and to maximise benefits for local wildlife. Treelined streets are an important design principle, helping to create attractive, walkable neighbourhoods and contributing to the Garden City character that defines parts of the borough. Where trees are proposed near existing highways, early engagement with the highways authority is essential to ensure appropriate species selection, planting locations and compatibility

with highway safety and maintenance requirements.

Long term stewardship is critical to securing the benefits of new planting. Newly planted trees require appropriate maintenance, including watering, protection and management, to ensure successful establishment and longevity. Planning conditions or legal agreements may be used to secure these arrangements where necessary.

Existing trees are an irreplaceable asset and should be retained and integrated into development wherever possible. Mature trees, hedgerows and established vegetation contribute significantly to local character, biodiversity and amenity, and their loss can rarely be fully mitigated. Development proposals must therefore demonstrate how impacts on existing trees and hedgerows have been minimised, and where loss is unavoidable, provide suitable replacement planting that reflects the scale, quality and function of what is being removed.

For major development, early and robust assessment is essential. An arboricultural survey undertaken by a suitably qualified professional should inform the design process from the outset, ensuring that root protection areas, shading, and long term growth are properly accounted for. Applicants must also demonstrate that retained trees can be protected throughout construction and demolition, in line with recognised best practice such as BS 5837.

Certain categories of trees warrant the highest level of protection due to their ecological, cultural or historic value. This includes trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders, veteran and ancient trees, and trees that contribute to the significance of conservation areas or have high amenity value. The loss or harm of such trees will only be permitted in wholly exceptional circumstances where robust and justifiable reasons are demonstrated.

Together, these requirements ensure that development contributes positively to the borough's landscape, supports biodiversity and climate resilience, and maintains the high quality, green character that residents value.



**Our
Local
Plan.**

SECTION 2

Infrastructure

Chapter 12: Infrastructure

Introduction

It is important that appropriate and good quality infrastructure is in place to meet the needs of local communities and help them be successful and thrive. Infrastructure comes in a number of forms and may be provided by the private or public sector. Broadly, it can be divided into three types:

- **Physical Infrastructure.** This is things like transport infrastructure such as roads, pedestrian facilities or cycle paths, utilities networks such as the gas, electricity, water and telecommunications distribution networks, and waste and recycling facilities.
- **Social Infrastructure.** This is things like primary and secondary schools, healthcare facilities, community facilities, libraries and cultural facilities along with places of worship.
- **Green or Blue Infrastructure.** This is things like parks and gardens, recreational facilities, formal and informal green spaces, waterways and sports pitches.

Infrastructure comes in different scales and serves different areas. Strategic infrastructure covers a wide area, perhaps the Borough as a whole or a wider area. This may include the strategic highways network or waste and recycling facilities. Neighbourhood infrastructure would support the day to day needs of a local area and may include new or improved schools, GP surgeries and the like. On site infrastructure is necessary to serve or enable a particular development and may include connections to the gas or electricity networks, or local roads or cycleways.

It is important that new or improved infrastructure supports new development and the existing community, and much of this can be delivered as a part of, or as a result of, new development, and it is important that new developments support and make provision for such infrastructure where necessary.

SP 24: Infrastructure Provision

- A.** 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.
- B.** 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 (primarily through the adopted Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) but with site specific elements provided through Section 106 where necessary), or by direct provision of such infrastructure on-site within the development.
- C.** 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.
- D.** The Council will use CIL funding, Section 106 agreements, grants, unilateral undertakings, and planning conditions to secure this. Exact contributions and phasing will be negotiated between the Council, developers, Hertfordshire County Council and others as required.
- E.** The adopted Planning Obligations SPD sets out guidance in relation to the negotiation of Section 106 contributions and will be updated to reflect the Council's approach to planning obligations now the Community Infrastructure Levy has been implemented. Furthermore, the Council will continue to work with its partners to address existing deficiencies and secure appropriate levels of funding.

Supporting Text

In 2025, the Council adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and began to collect contributions for development in October 2025. This largely replaced the previous system of collecting contributions for infrastructure from development through Section 106 agreements. However, some section 106 agreements are still required to fund very specific needs arising from development, and three of the Strategic Sites allocated in the Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan (2016-2036) were excluded from CIL as they had very specific infrastructure requirements or situations which made continuing to deliver infrastructure through Section 106 most appropriate.

The Council will collect funds for infrastructure through CIL and through Section 106 agreements as appropriate. Whilst the level of CIL funding is set out in the adopted CIL charging schedule, any Section 106 agreements will be negotiated as required.

DMP 61: Aviation Safeguarding

- A.** Official safeguarding maps have been issued by the operators of London Heathrow and London Luton aerodromes, and for a civil en-route technical site which lies just outside the borough. The outer boundaries of these officially safeguarded areas are shown on the Policies Map as they apply to the plan-area. An official safeguarding map for wind turbine development also applies to the whole of the borough.
- B.** Planning applications and applications for the approval of reserved matters falling within officially safeguarded areas will be subject to consultation with the relevant operator/s, consistent with the consultation criteria described on the official safeguarding maps. Consultation responses received will be taken into account in decision making.

- C.** A non-official safeguarding map has also been issued by the operator of London Elstree Aerodrome. Planning applications and applications for the approval of reserved matters falling within non-officially safeguarded areas will be subject to consultation with the aerodrome operator, consistent with the consultation criteria described on the map. Consultation responses received will be taken into account in decision making.

Supporting Text

London Heathrow and London Luton aerodromes are officially safeguarded civil aerodromes for which official safeguarding maps have been issued by the aerodrome operators. Two official safeguarding maps have also been issued by the National Air Traffic Services, one of which relates to a civil en-route technical site which lies just outside the borough, the other to a technical site map for wind turbine development, (which applies to all planning authorities in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland).

These official safeguarded maps and the consultation criteria described on the maps are the responsibility of the aerodrome and technical site operators, (not the local planning authority). The maps may be altered by the relevant issuing body over time.

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (safeguarded aerodromes, technical sites and military explosives storage areas) Direction 2002⁷⁶, consultation will be undertaken with the relevant operator/s so that they are afforded the opportunity to consider if their operations would be inhibited, e.g. by buildings, structures or other works over certain heights, where an increase in bird hazard risk might arise, or by proposals involving wind turbine development.

London Elstree Aerodrome is a non-officially safeguarded aerodrome for which a non-official safeguarding map and consultation

⁷⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-aerodromes-technical-sites-and-military-explosives-storage-areas/the-town-and-country-planning-safeguarded-aerodromes-technical-sites-and-military-explosives-storage-areas-direction-2002>

criteria has been issued by the aerodrome operator. Government guidance asks local planning authorities to respond sympathetically to requests for non-official safeguarding.

DMP 62: Electronic Communications Development

- A.** The expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology is essential for economic growth and social well-being and is supported in principle. However, applications for electronic communications development (including applications for prior approval) should be supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development. This should include:
- a)** The outcome of consultations with organisations with an interest in the proposed development, including where a mast is to be installed near a school or college, or within a statutory aviation safeguarding zone or technical site;
 - b)** Any statements of self-certification required by national planning policy;
 - c)** Evidence that mast-sharing or the co-location of equipment through the use of existing masts, buildings and other structures has been fully explored so as to minimise the unnecessary proliferation of new masts and sites.
- B.** Equipment should be appropriately located and sympathetically designed in order to respect the character of the surrounding area and the amenity of existing occupiers, and minimise visual impact particularly in sensitive locations;
- C.** Where installed on a building, equipment should be appropriately located and sympathetically designed in order to respect the character and appearance of that building and the

amenity of existing occupiers, and minimise visual impact.

- D.** Applications should include full details of the design and external appearance of the proposed development, as well as landscaping and screening proposals;
- E.** Proposals should avoid harm to areas or assets of particular importance, such as designated heritage assets, habitats sites and irreplaceable habitats;
- F.** Evidence should be provided that any proposed infrastructure is not expected to cause significant and irremediable interference with other electronic equipment, air traffic services or instrumentation operated in the national interest.
- G.** Where housing and economic development is proposed, electronic communications infrastructure should be integrated into the design and layout at an early stage in the design process with Fibre to the Premises secured.

Communications Infrastructure

Access to mobile phones and the internet are an integral part of daily life, facilitating the way we communicate, learn, order goods and services and carry out business activities. Digital technologies are playing an increasingly important role in many areas within our society, including skilled job creation, civic engagement, and in the delivery of social services.

The provision of advanced, high-quality and reliable communications infrastructure enhances levels of connectivity, aids economic growth and social well-being. In accordance with national planning policy, planning decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology.

Development by, or on behalf of an electronic communications code operator, including the installation, alteration or replacement of any electronic communications apparatus is afforded certain permitted development rights

by legislation⁷⁷, which means that planning permission is not required in certain circumstances.

Where required by the same legislation, the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the 'prior approval' of the authority will be required as to the siting and appearance of the development. Where development is not permitted (as set out in legislation) planning permission is required, then a planning application will be made.

This policy supports the expansion of electronic communications networks, provided development is managed in a sustainable and sensitive manner, protecting local character and amenity and with the necessary evidence to justify the proposal.

ⁱ Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 Schedule 7 part 15F.

ⁱⁱ 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.

ⁱⁱⁱ When assessing development proposals, regard will be had to the Building Research Establishment's Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight, a Guide to Good Practice 2022, or any subsequent document.

⁷⁷ The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)



Site Allocations

Section 3: Site Allocations

Introduction and Purpose

This section sets out the sites that the Council is considering for allocation in the new Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan to meet identified housing and employment needs up to 2043.

It includes:

- **Existing site allocations** from the adopted Local Plan that the Council considers remain suitable and deliverable within the new plan period
- **New potential site allocations** that are being considered for development
- **A schedule of reasonable alternative sites** that have been submitted to the Council and assessed as part of the plan-making process

Together, these sites form an important part of the evidence and options being consulted on at this Regulation 18 stage.

The purpose of this section is to provide transparency about the sites under consideration, the role they could play in the development strategy, and the key issues associated with their potential development. The Council is seeking views on the suitability of these sites, the assumptions that underpin them, and whether there are any reasonable alternatives that should be considered.

Regulation 18 Consultation Context

This consultation is being carried out under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. At this early stage in the preparation of the Local Plan, the Council is seeking views on options and alternatives, rather than presenting a final set of allocations.

In relation to site allocations, the Council is inviting comments on:

- The suitability, availability and deliverability of the sites identified
- The scale and nature of development proposed
- Key constraints, mitigation measures and site-specific requirements
- Infrastructure needs and delivery assumptions
- Whether any sites should be excluded, amended or added, including reasonable alternative sites

All representations received will be considered alongside updated technical evidence to inform the next stage of the Local Plan.

Existing Allocations and New Proposed Sites

As part of preparing the new Local Plan, the Council has reviewed existing site allocations from the adopted plan to determine whether they remain appropriate, deliverable and consistent with national policy and local objectives.

Where existing allocations are included in this section, they are presented to reflect the current baseline position. Their inclusion does not imply that capacities, boundaries or development requirements are fixed, and these may change as the Local Plan progresses.

New potential site allocations have also been identified through the Council's call for sites, land availability assessments and emerging evidence. These sites are presented for consultation and comparison alongside existing allocations and reasonable alternatives.

The inclusion of any site in this section does **not** allocate the land for development, grant planning permission, or pre-determine future decisions. Final site allocations will only be confirmed following further consultation, sustainability appraisal, and independent examination.

How to Use This Section

Schedules of existing site allocations and new potential site allocations are shown below. They are grouped in accordance with the settlement hierarchy set out in Section 1. The new potential site allocations are those that have passed the Council's initial site selection assessment work and align with the strategy to concentrate development in the most sustainable settlements. A list of reasonable alternative sites is also provided.

A proforma setting out high-level information on the sites identified for allocation has been prepared. This is presented in a consistent format, setting out:

- Site location and description
- Proposed land use(s)
- Indicative capacity or floorspace
- Anticipated delivery timescales
- Key site-specific considerations and requirements

This information should be read alongside:

- Section 2 – Strategic and Development Management Policies
- National planning policy and guidance
- The Sustainability Appraisal and other supporting evidence

This section is intended to support informed engagement and feedback, rather than to provide a definitive statement on future development outcomes.

Schedule of existing site allocations and new potential site allocations

Tier 1 Settlements

Existing allocations

Ref	Settlement	Site name	Use	Dwellings	Green Belt
SDS1	Welwyn Garden City	North-east of Welwyn Garden City	Residential-led mixed use	872	No
SDS2	Welwyn Garden City	South-east of Welwyn Garden City	Residential-led mixed use	600	No
SDS3	Welwyn Garden City	Broadwater Road West SPD site and BioPark	Residential-led mixed use	1,473	No
HS2	Welwyn Garden City	Creswick	Residential	340	No
HS3	Welwyn Garden City	80 Bridge Road East	Residential	32	No
HS12	Welwyn Garden City	Town Centre North - Campus East	Residential	206	No
HS31	Welwyn Garden City	YMCA, 90 Peartree Lane	Residential	26	No
SDS5	Hatfield	North-West Hatfield	Residential-led mixed use	2,000	No
HS11	Hatfield	Land at South Way	Residential & primary school	120	No
HS14	Hatfield	L Kahn Manufacturing, Wellfield Road	Residential	62	No
HS38	Hatfield	Meridian House, The Common	Residential	11	No
HS42	Hatfield	College Lane (North)	Residential	115	No

New potential site allocations that are being considered for development

Ref	Settlement	Site name	Use	Dwellings	Green Belt
HEL-69	Hatfield	Land at Ellenbrook (Parcel 1)	Residential	30	Yes
HEL-90	Hatfield	ASDA Hatfield, 98 Town Centre	Residential	200	No
HEL-79	Hatfield	Lord William Cecil Memorial Hall	Residential	20	No
HEL-30	Rural/Potters Bar	Land South of Coopers Lane Road	Residential	424	Yes

HEL-16	Welwyn Garden City	Land at Broadwater Road/Pear tree Primary School	Residential	21	No
HEL-17	Welwyn Garden City	Caravan Club and Cricket Club, Ascots Lane	Residential	96	Yes
HEL-75	Welwyn Garden City	Land at Haldens House / Blythway House	Residential	24	No
HEL-76	Welwyn Garden City	64-68 Bridge Road East	Residential	16	No
HEL-77	Welwyn Garden City	Greenvale	Residential	33	No
WGCA	Welwyn Garden City	Campus North	Residential	300	No
WGCB	Welwyn Garden City	Campus West	Residential	100	No

Tier 2 Settlements

Existing allocations

Ref	Settlement	Site name	Use	Dwellings	Green Belt
HS18	Welwyn	The Vineyards	Residential	30	No
HS19	Welwyn	Sandyhurst, The Bypass	Residential	36	No
HS20	Welwyn	School Lane	Residential	9	No
SDS7	Welham Green	Marshmoor	Employment floorspace class E(g) 40,500 sqm and residential	100	No
HS44/45	Welham Green	Land at Welham Manor and west of Station Road	Residential	72	No
HS46	Welham Green	Dixons Hill Road	Residential	120	No
HS21	Brookmans Park	Land west of Golf Club Rd	Residential	14	No
HS22	Brookmans Park	Land west of Brookmans Park Station	Residential (plus 2FE Primary School)	428	No
HS23	Brookmans Park	Land east of Golf Club Road	Residential	10	No
HS25	Little Heath	Land north of Hawkshead Road	Residential	34	No
HS47	Little Heath	Videne and Studlands, Hawkshead Road	Residential	61	No
HS27	Cuffley	Land at The Meadway	Residential	73	No
HS29	Cuffley	Land north of Northaw Road East	Residential	73	No
HS30	Cuffley	Wells Farm, Northaw Road East	Residential	75	No

New potential site allocations that are being considered for development

Ref	Settlement	Site name	Use	Dwellings	Green Belt
HEL-38	Brookmans Park	Land north of Bradmore Way	Residential	140	Yes
HEL-86	Welham Green	Land at Potterells Farm, Station Road	Residential	80	Yes
HEL-89	Brookmans Park	Land at Potterells Farm, Station Road	Residential	150	Yes

HEL-3	Cuffley	Land to the east of Colesdale Farm	Residential	35	Yes
HEL-14	Cuffley	Cuffley Telephone Exchange, Station Road	Residential	7	No
HEL-44	Cuffley	Land to the south-east of the KGV playing fields	Residential	180	Yes
HEL-5	Little Heath	Leggatts Park (Scenario 2)	Residential	465	Yes
HEL-7	Little Heath/Swanley Bar	Land at Swanley Bar	Residential	90	Yes
HEL-1	Welham Green	Barnbeth, 24 Station Road	Residential	7	Yes
HEL-4	Welham Green	Land south of Bulls Lane	Residential	60	Yes
HEL-66	Welham Green	Land north of Pooleys Lane	Residential	80	Yes
HEL-73	Welwyn	Land west of Fulling Mill Lane (Scenario 1)	Residential	232	Yes

Tier 3 Settlements

Existing allocations

Ref	Settlement	Site name	Use	Dwellings	Green Belt
HS15	Woolmer Green	Land east of London Road	Residential	150	No
HS43	Woolmer Green	51-53 London Road, Woolmer Green	Residential	34	No
HS16	Oaklands & Mardley Heath	Land at 2 Great North Road and to the rear of 2-12a Great North Road	Residential	25	No

New potential site allocations that are being considered for employment development

Ref	Settlement	Site name	Use	Floorspace	Green Belt
HEL-88	Brookman's Park	Brookman's Park Transmitter Station	Employment Class E / B2/B8/ Data Centre	46,000 - 111,5000sqm	Yes
HEL-31	Hatfield	New Barnfield	Employment Class E / B2/B8	11,300m2	Yes

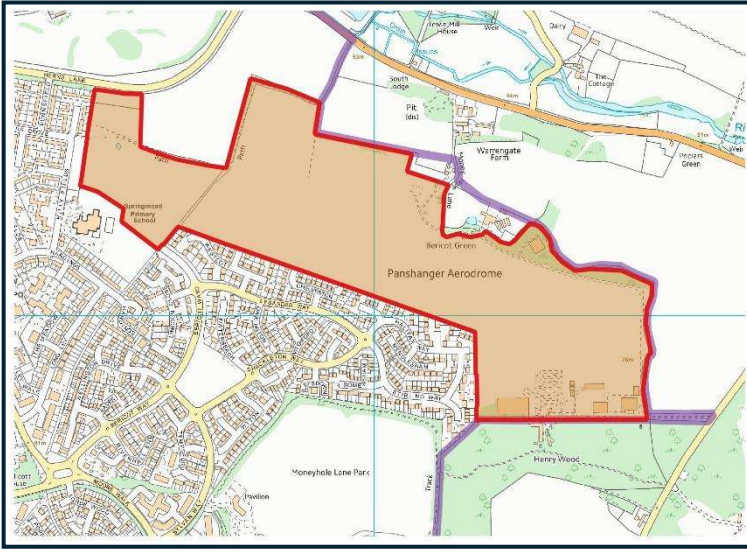
Schedule of reasonable alternative sites

Ref	Settlement	Site Name	Tier	Use	Dwellings	Reason for non-inclusion at this stage
HEL-48	Brookmans Park	Land West of Bluebridge Road	2	Residential	155	Additional highway work required
HEL-60	Brookmans Park	Land at Raybrook Farm	2	Residential	28	Additional highway work required
HEL-11	Lemsford	Land West of Great North Road	4	Residential	63	Not within Tier 1 or 2
HEL-40	Welwyn	Land at School Lane / Whitehill	2	Residential	63	Additional Highway work required
HEL-20	Welwyn	Land on the south-west side of Fulling Mill Lane, Welwyn	2	Residential	14	Additional Highway work required
HEL-24	Digswell	Land at Harmer Green Lane, Digswell	3	Residential	100	Additional highway work required and not within Tier 1 or 2
HEL-35	Woolmer Green	Land at London Road, Knebworth	3	Residential	25	Not within Tier 1 or 2
HEL-12	Lemsford	Land adjacent to Lemsford School	4	Residential	24	Not within Tier 1 or 2
HEL-67	Lemsford	Land at Roebuck Farm	4	Residential	39	Not within Tier 1 or 2
HEL-37	Bell Bar	Upper Bell Lane Farm, Bell Lane	5	Residential	100	Not within Tier 1 or 2
HEL-39	Bell Bar	Land to the northeast of Great North Road	5	Residential	34	Additional highway work required and not within Tier 1 or 2
HEL-80	Bell Bar	Home Farm Buildings	5	Residential	8	Not within Tier 1 or 2
HEL-15	Bullens Green	Tollgate Farm Tollgate Road, Colney Heath	5	Residential	63	Not within Tier 1 or 2
HEL-70	Hatfield	Land at Ellenbrook (Scenario 2)	1	Residential	140	Access and flood risk work required
HEL-28	Bullens Green	Land at Tollgate Farm, Bullens Green Lane	5	Residential	180	Not within Tier 1 or 2
HEL-58	Stanborough	Land east of Great North Road	5	Residential	7	Not within Tier 1 or 2
HEL-29	Northaw	Hill View Farm, Northaw Road West	4	Residential	105	Not within Tier 1 or 2
HEL-25	Stanborough	Land to the north of New Road Stanborough	5	Residential	90	Not within Tier 1 or 2
HEL-49	Little Heath	Land South of Hawkshead Road	2	Residential	88	Additional highway work required
HEL-22/23	Stanborough	Land East of A6129	5	Employment	26,500sqm	Not within Tier 1 or 2

HEL-78	Welwyn Garden City	Chequersfield	1	Employment	25,500sqm	Additional land contamination and noise mitigation work needed
HEL-74	Welwyn	Land West at Fulling Mill Lane (Scenario 2)	2	Residential	240	Additional Highway work required



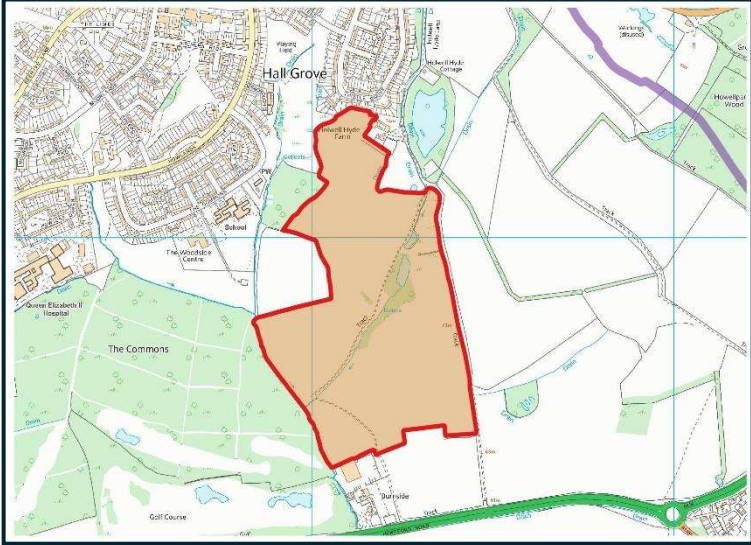
Site Allocations Tier 1

Site Name: North East of Welwyn Garden City	Site Reference: SDS1
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: North East of WGC
	Location: Welwyn Garden City
	Ward: Panshanger
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 42.39
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential-led mixed use
	Estimated Capacity: 872
	Timescale: 0-10 years
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation SDS1 • Part Green Belt • Public Right of Way (062) • Adjacent Ancient Woodland and Local Wildlife Site	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: A comprehensive Masterplan has been prepared for the site and submitted to the Council as part of an outline planning application. The Masterplan sets out the proposed quantum and distribution of land uses, access arrangements, movement framework, landscape structure, and sustainable design and layout principles for the site. The Masterplan has been informed by the Strategy Diagram (Figure 11) in the adopted Local Plan (2016-2036) and has been prepared in consultation with the Council and other relevant stakeholders. It is intended to guide the phased delivery of the site and provide a coherent framework for future development. Where the outline planning application is approved, the Masterplan will form part of the approved planning framework for the site and will be implemented through subsequent reserved matters or detailed planning applications, as appropriate. Development of the site should be planned comprehensively to create a high-quality extension to the Panshanger neighbourhood, incorporating Garden City principles. These principles should be secured through a Design Code or equivalent design framework, to be approved by the Council and implemented through the consideration of subsequent planning applications. Any future proposals on the site should be consistent with the approved Masterplan and associated design guidance, unless otherwise agreed by the local planning authority. 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:
 - 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.

Other relevant planning information:

- The site benefits from outline planning permission granted in two phases:
 - Phase 1: up to 650 dwellings (6/2018/0873/OUTLINE)
 - Phase 2: up to 210 dwellings (6/2021/3096/OUTLINE).
- Reserved matters approval has been granted for the Spine Road (application ref: 6/2021/3436/RM).
- A reserved matters application for part of Phase 1, comprising 169 dwellings, is currently under consideration (application ref: 6/2025/0563/RM).

Site Name: South east of Welwyn Garden City	Site Reference: SDS2
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: South east of Welwyn Garden City
	Location: Welwyn Garden City
	Ward: Howland; and Brookmans Park & Little Heat
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 33.24
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential-led mixed use
	Estimated Capacity: 600
	Timescale: 0-15 years
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation SDS2 • Public Right of Way (023) • Small area of Flood Zone 2/3 along central watercourse • Adjacent to the Commons Local Nature Reserve and Local Wildlife Site	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: 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 has been prepared by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council and East Herts District Council, working with the landowner and other key stakeholders. The Masterplan will provides 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 Gypsy and Traveller provision, 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;
- b. Gypsy and Traveller provision (4 pitches for East Herts' and 11 pitches for Welwyn Hatfield's needs) to contribute towards the needs of both authorities;
- 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 an 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 Panshanger 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 Panshanger 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 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 Holwell 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;

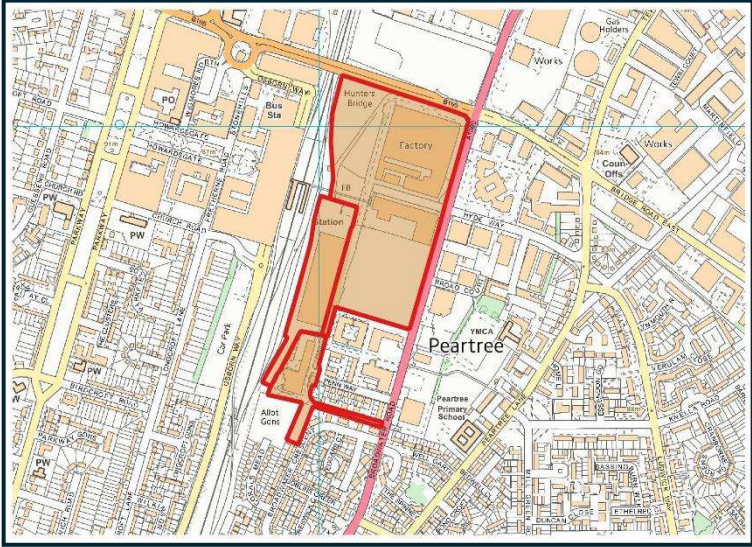
m. Necessary utilities, including integrated communications infrastructure to facilitate home-working; and

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.

Other relevant planning information:

The Masterplan Framework for Birchall Garden Suburb was approved at the 5 September 2023 Cabinet meeting. It will now become a material consideration for Development Management purposes. Available at: <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/planning-policy-guidance/masterplans-1>

Site Name: Broadwater Road West SPD site and BioPark	Site Reference: SDS3
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Broadwater Road West SPD site and BioPark
	Location: Welwyn Garden City
	Ward: Peartree
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 12.41
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential-led mixed use
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation SDS3 • Grade 2 Listed Building (Nabisco Shredded Wheat Factory) • Part Flood Zone 2 (Surface Water) • Broadwater Road West Mixed Use Area • Adjacent Designated Employment Land (EA1) • Adjacent Local Wildlife Site	Estimated Capacity: 1473
	Timescale: 0-15 years
Site specific development requirements and considerations: 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 1,473 new homes over the plan period. Mixed use development on this site will comprise primarily employment, housing, leisure and rail-related uses. Development on this site will conform to the Strategy Diagram shown in Figure 10 in the adopted Local Plan (2016-2036) 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.
- xiii. 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 as well as the potential for contaminated land.
- xiv. 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.

Other relevant planning information:

Broadwater Road West (N) Pea02b (former Shredded Wheat factory)

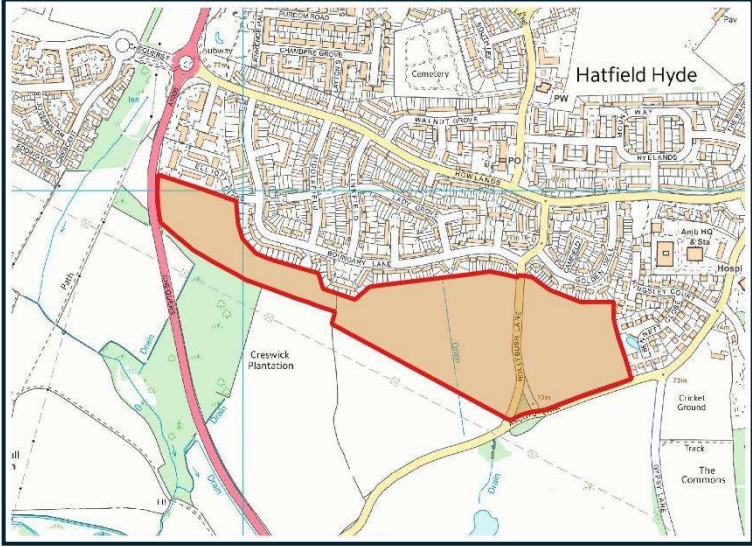
- This site was initially granted planning permission for a residential led mixed use scheme in 2017. A subsequent application (6/2018/0171/MAJ) for a higher density scheme, including 1,340 dwellings plus 114 extra care bedspaces, was submitted in 2018 and granted permission in early 2019. This permission remains extant.
- Since the planning permission was granted, the southern side of the site was acquired by Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing Association (MTVH), therefore splitting ownership into two parts known as the 'south site' and 'north site'.
- In early 2021, two further planning applications were submitted for increased schemes at both the south site and the north site. These applications were not determined.
- On the southern part of the site, the first 208 housing completions were delivered in December 2022 by MTVH under the extant (2018) planning permission. However, following these initial completions further delivery at the site was constrained by complications associated with the phasing of the scheme and how it interacts with the delivery of development on the northern half of the site.
- In early 2024 the north side of the site was bought, and the new owner submitted a further planning application in February 2025 (6/2025/0321/MAJ) which was approved subject to s106 agreement in November 2025. This scheme for the north part of the site includes 578 residential units, including 133 houses, 304 build-to-rent apartments and a 141 unit retirement living community.
- Overall, the new permission for 578 residential units (at the north of the site) and the remaining 435 units through the extant permission (at the south of the site) amount to 1,013 residential units.

Broadwater Road West (SW) Pall Mall, Pea02c (currently occupied by a warehouse and distribution centre)

- No relevant planning information to date.

BioPark, Broadwater Road, Pea102 (former BioPark research and development complex)

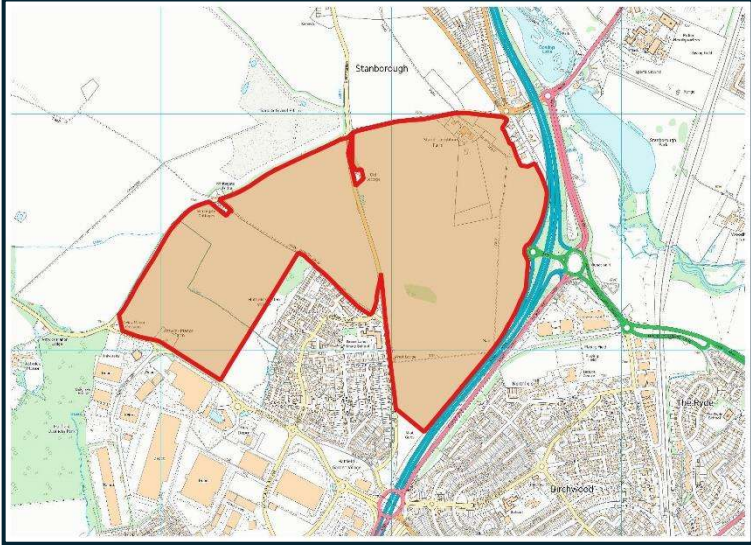
- Planning permission was granted for 289 residential units at this site in August 2022 (6/2020/3420/MAJ).

Site Name: Creswick	Site Reference: HS2
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Creswick
	Location: Welwyn Garden City
	Ward: Hollybush
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 13.74
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation HS2 • Green Belt Landscape Buffer • Public Right of Way (068) • Part Hatfield Woodhall Unregistered Park and Garden	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Ecological impacts would need to be mitigated, including buffer to wildlife site • Wastewater infrastructure needs to be upgraded • Retain public rights of way and enhance public access to areas of recreation • Clearance from electricity lines and pylons • Sustainable urban drainage to address possibility of surface water flooding • 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.	
Other relevant planning information: Planning permission has been granted for the site, including a hybrid planning permission under application reference 6/2022/1375/MAJ, with reserved matters for phases 2, 3 & 4 under consideration 6/2025/1024/RM. Construction is currently underway.	

Site Name: 80 Bridge Road East	Site Reference: HS3
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: 80 Bridge Road East
	Location: Welwyn Garden City
	Ward: Peartree
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 0.45
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 32
	Timescale: 0-10 years
Planning Designations affecting the site: • None	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Adopted Local Plan allocation HS3 • Access arrangements need to be rationalised • Wastewater infrastructure needs to be upgraded • Air quality because of queueing traffic on Bridge Road East • Traffic noise • Potential for contaminated land which would require remediation	
Other relevant planning information: • Adjacent to Designated Employment Area (EA1). Agent of change principle applies.	

Site Name: Town Centre North- Campus East	Site Reference: HS12
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Campus East
	Location: Welwyn Garden City
	Ward: Handside
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 1.96
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 206
Timescale: 0-10 years	
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation HS12 • Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area • Welwyn Garden City Town Centre • Part Flood Zone 2 (Surface Water)	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Air quality/noise survey and report will be required at planning application stage due to proximity to railway • Railway land asset protection measures • Heritage impact assessment will be required (WGC Conservation Area)	
Other relevant planning information: A planning application for up to 250 dwellings is currently under consideration by the local planning authority (application reference 6/2022/2801/MAJ).	

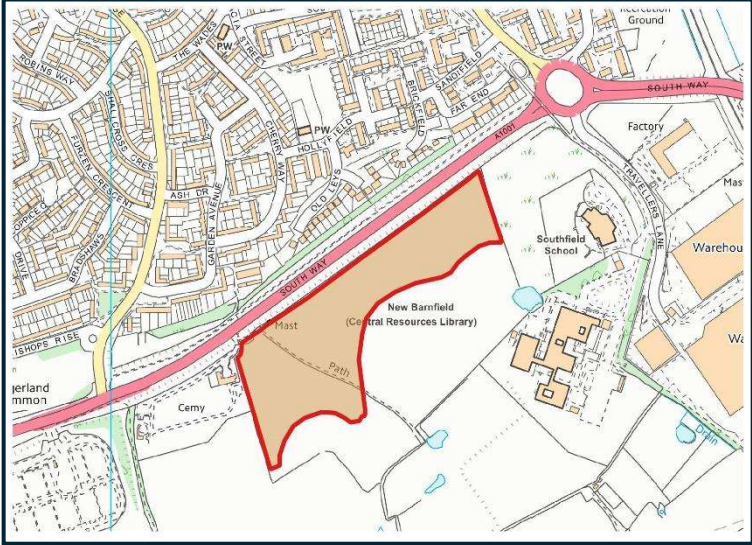
Site Name: YMCA, 90 Peartree Lane	Site Reference: HS31
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: YMCA, 90 Peartree Lane
	Location: Welwyn Garden City
	Ward: Peartree
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 0.66
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation HS31 • Adjacent to Urban Open Land	Estimated Capacity: 26
	Timescale: 0-5 years
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • A noise survey and report may be required at planning stage • Electricity cables in the north east of the site could have design/layout implications	
Other relevant planning information: Outline planning permission has been granted under application reference 6/2019/2714/OUTLINE, with reserved matters approval subsequently granted under 6/2024/2316/RM.	

Site Name: North West Hatfield	Site Reference: SDS5
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: North West Hatfield
	Location: Hatfield
	Ward: Hatfield Villages
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 131.31
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential-led mixed use
	Estimated Capacity: 2,000
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation SDS5 • Part Green Belt • Small areas of Flood Zone 2 (Surface Water) • Part Area of Archaeological Significance • Adjacent to Grade 2 Listed Building – the Old Cottage	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: A masterplan setting out the quantum and distribution of land uses, access, sustainable design and layout principles has been agreed by the Council, working with the landowners and other key stakeholders. The Masterplan, adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document, provides 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.
- 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.

Other relevant planning information:

The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for North West Hatfield was adopted at the 4 March 2024 Cabinet meeting. It is a material consideration for Development Management purposes. Available at: <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/planning-policy-guidance/masterplans-1>

Site Name: Land at South Way	Site Reference: HS11
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land at South Way
	Location: Hatfield
	Ward: South Hatfield and Welham Green
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 5.76
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential + 2 FE primary school
	Estimated Capacity: 120
	Timescale: 0-5 years
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation HS11 • Public Right of Way (021/023)	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • South Way road junction to access the site will require significant upgrades • Mitigate impact on adjacent wildlife site and site ecology • Mitigate air and noise pollution from the A1(M) and South Way • Mitigation potential impact on Water End SSSI • Easement for public rights of way • Waste water infrastructure upgrades • Provision of land for a new 2FE Primary School site and playing field • Access to be provided through the housing allocation from South Way • 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.	
Other relevant planning information: Outline planning permission has been granted for the development of the site (application reference 6/2023/1532/OUTLINE).	

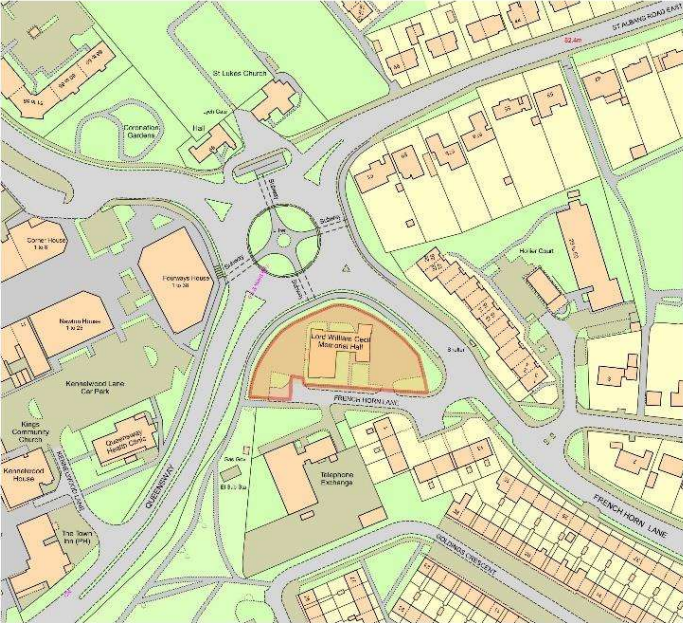
Site Name: L Kahn Manufacturing, Wellfield Road	Site Reference: HS14
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: L Kahn Manufacturing, Wellfield Road
	Location: Hatfield
	Ward: Hatfield Centra
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 0.88
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 62
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation HS14 • Adjacent to Urban Open Land	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Potential need for junction improvements on Wellfield Road to facilitate increased traffic flow • Mitigate noise pollution from Wellfield Road • Potential for contaminated land which would require mitigation • Waste water infrastructure upgrades • Potential need for a bat assessment to determine presence and potential impacts	
Other relevant planning information: None	

Site Name: Meridian House, The Common	Site Reference: HS38
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Meridian House, The Common
	Location: Hatfield
	Ward: Hatfield Central
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 9.29
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation HS38 • Hatfield Town Centre	Estimated Capacity: 11
	Timescale: 0-10 years
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • A noise survey and report may be required at application stage due to proximity to Town Centre uses	
Other relevant planning information: None	

Site Name: College Lane (North)	Site Reference: HS42
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: College Lane (North)
	Location: Hatfield
	Ward: Hatfield South West
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 2.41
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 115
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation HS42 • Part Flood Zone 2 (Surface Water) • Public Right of Way (029) • Part Urban Open Land (176)	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Area of Urban Open Land to be retained and enhanced through new landscaping and open space • Public Right of Way through the site to be maintained • An air quality survey and report may be required (proximity to A1(M)) • An acoustic buffer and single aspect (habitable rooms) design may be required • Preliminary Ecological Survey and report may be required (potential for nesting birds/roosting bats in trees / reptiles in rough vegetation) • Site located within Ground Source Protection Zone and Surface Water flood risk affects part of the site • Wastewater infrastructure upgrades likely to be required	
Other relevant planning information: None	

Site Name: Land at Ellenbrook (Parcel 1)	Site Reference: HEL-69
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land at Ellenbrook (Parcel 1)
	Location: Hatfield
	Ward: Hatfield Villages
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 6.35
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 30
Timescale: 0-10 years	
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Green Belt • Area on the east side of the site is within flood zone 2 and 3, including Ellenbrook Lane and Wilkin's Green Lane • Adjacent to GII LBs at Great Nast Farm as historic farm buildings – setting of a historic agrarian landscape • Adjacent to GII LBs at Great Nast Hyde (the Site could also have a historic ownership connection with this house) and the GII* listed house of Torilla • Sand and gravel safeguarding area (Hertfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan), opportunistic extraction supported • Within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone (no statutory consultation required for residential development)	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Improvements to play area and provision of new open space • Flood Zone 1, 2 and 3, development to be located in areas less vulnerable to flooding on site • Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment Required • Safe access with new junction at Ellenbrook Lane including cycling and walking routes into the site • Adjacent to Listed Buildings, layout must preserve or enhance the setting of these assets, and provide a suitable buffer. The western part of the site is particularly key for the setting of the CA. Development is therefore most appropriate toward the north, east and northeast. • To minimise impact on landscape and visual character, development proposals should maintain the areas of BAP Priority Habitats, minimise encroachment on the historic buildings off Wilkin's Green Lane, retain rural character of Wilkin's Green Lane and Ellenbrook Lane and minimise impact on the setting of the Alban Way Long Distance Footpath. • Agricultural Land Grading confirmation will be required assessment at planning application stage.	
Other relevant planning information: • None	

Site Name: ASDA Hatfield, 98 Town Centre	Site Reference: HEL-90
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: ASDA Hatfield, 98 Town Centre
	Location: Hatfield
	Ward: Hatfield Central
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 1.65
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential, Class E
	Estimated Capacity: 200
Timescale: 0- 10 years	
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Located within Hatfield Town Centre boundary • Core Retail Area • Area of Archaeological Interest Buffer • Viewpoints from the Grade I listed Hatfield House and parkland • Sand and gravel safeguarding area (Hertfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan), opportunistic extraction supported	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Retained or re-provided supermarket. • Car parking re-provision in accordance with operational requirements – basement or podium parking acceptable with residential above • Strategy to manage parking during construction required. Utilisation of adjacent car parks may be required • Noise impact assessment required due to traffic and existing supermarket uses, with mitigation in line with the Agent of Change principle • Detailed acoustic design needed to secure acceptable residential amenity • Surface water flood risk affects a small area of the site (particularly around the petrol filling station) • Waste water network modelling may be required to confirm capacity and impact • Ground investigations required to ensure no impact on water supply infrastructure • Layout must respond to retained supermarket operations and servicing • Any new tall buildings on the site should not feature prominently in views from Hatfield House and parkland • Improvements to pedestrian and cycle access required, particularly along Queensway • Site Waste Management Plan likely to be required	
Other relevant planning information: • Site to come forward in line with new Town Centre Masterplan	

Site Name: Lord William Cecil Memorial Hall	Site Reference: HEL-79
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Lord William Cecil Memorial Hall
	Location: Hatfield
	Ward: Hatfield Central
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 0.21
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Mixed use, community on ground floor residential above
	Estimated Capacity: 20
	Timescale: Within 5 years of plan adoption
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Located within Hatfield Town Centre boundary • Queensway Opportunity Area • Public Right of Way Hatfield 135 along site boundary • Sand and gravel safeguarding area (Hertfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan), opportunistic extraction supported • Within Groundwater Source Protection Zone (SPZ 2/3) • Setting of Grade II listed St Luke's Church (approx. 100m north) • Viewpoints from the Grade I listed Hatfield House and parkland	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Design and layout must account for underground water infrastructure • Noise impact assessment required due to road traffic noise • High-quality acoustic design and mitigation needed • Heritage Statement required to assess impact on setting of St Luke's Church • Any new tall buildings on the site should not feature prominently in views from Hatfield House and parkland • Scale, massing and layout must respond to nearby low-rise residential properties • Potential archaeological watching brief or evaluation may be required • Preliminary ecological survey may be required. Great Crested Newts Risk Zone • Opportunities to improve walking and cycling environment along French Horn Lane	
Other relevant planning information: • Site to be part of new Hatfield Town Centre Masterplan	

Site Name: Land South of Coopers Lane Road	Site Reference: HEL-30
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land South of Coopers Lane Road (Chequers Mead Farm, Coopers Lane Road, Northaw, Potters Bar, EN6 4AD; part of landholding at New Farm Cottage, Coopers Lane Road, Northaw, Potters Bar, EN2 8AU)
	Location: Northaw and Cuffley
	Ward: Northaw and Cuffley
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 21.7 ha
	PDL: No although a small area of PDL exists on the northern edge associated with former equestrian / farm buildings.
	Proposed Use: Residential development with associated education provision (expansion of adjoining Oakmere Primary School).
	Estimated Capacity: 424
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Green Belt • Local Wildlife Site (part of site: Chequers Mead House Meadows & Ponds) • Adjacent to Five Acres Wood Local Wildlife Site and Local Green Space • Sand and gravel safeguarding area (Hertfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan), opportunistic extraction supported • Within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone (no statutory consultation required for residential development)	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Mitigation hierarchy to be applied in relation to Local Wildlife Sites, including minimising development in the LWS area, buffering, habitat enhancement and biodiversity offsetting to achieve a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain • Retention of Five Acres Wood with an appropriate buffer (minimum 15m) • Flood Risk Assessment, drainage strategy and ordinary watercourse consents required • Integration of underground infrastructure easement (6m either side) into site design • Wastewater network modelling and potential off-site upgrades required • Access improvements to Coopers Lane Road and delivery of pedestrian, cycle and bus connectivity, including a link via Oakmere Primary School land to Chace Avenue will be required in conjunction with school expansion • Ecology Impact Assessment required • Noise mitigation measures likely required at the northern access point	
Other relevant planning information: • None	

Site Name: Land at Broadwater Road/Peartree Primary School	Site Reference: HEL-16
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land at Broadwater Road/Peartree Primary School
	Location: Welwyn Garden City
	Ward: Peartree
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 3.18
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Education expansion and residential development
	Estimated Capacity: 21
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Part designated Employment Area • Tree Preservation Order • Urban Open Land	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Ground stability investigations due to swallow holes • Access improvements to ensure suitable for all modes and clarification of access between north and south sections of site • Heritage assessment relating to nearby listed buildings • Mitigation of employment land loss through new education provision • Noise assessment required • Tree protection and retention • Drainage strategy and avoid flow path areas • Drinking Water Safeguard Zone • Bat survey/Preliminary ecological assessment • Enhanced urban open land provision	
Other relevant planning information: Only available if school site is not required for relocation and expansion of existing Peartree Primary School	

Site Name: Caravan Club / Cricket Club, Ascots Lane	Site Reference: HEL-17
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Caravan Club and Cricket Club, Ascots Lane
	Location: WGC
	Ward: Hatfield East
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 4.84 ha
	PDL: Part previously developed land (cricket clubhouse, caravan park hardstanding and associated buildings) and part non-PDL (woodland and open grass areas).
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 96
	Timescale: Site expected to become available from 2032/33, with delivery anticipated within years 6-10/11–15 of plan adoption
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Green Belt • Part of site within and adjacent to a Local Wildlife Site (WS/79) • Priority habitat (deciduous woodland) within and adjacent to the site • Sand and gravel safeguarding area (Hertfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan) • Within Groundwater and Surface Water Drinking Water Safeguard Zones • Within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone (no statutory consultation required for residential development)	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Application of the mitigation hierarchy in relation to Local Wildlife Site and priority habitats, including buffers and habitat protection • Tree and hedgerow survey required, with protection of important hedgerows • Drainage strategy and Flood Risk Assessment required at application stage • Desk-based archaeological assessment and potential post-determination evaluation • Improvements to pedestrian crossings, cycling facilities and access to bus services, including links to secondary education • Consideration of opportunistic extraction of sand and gravel at application stage • Site waste management plan likely required • Delivery of new public open space should be integrated into the layout towards the north of the site	
Other relevant planning information: • None	

Site Name: Land at Haldens House / Blythway House		Site Reference: HEL-75	
		Site Address: Land at Haldens House / Blythway House	
		Location: Welwyn Garden City	
		Ward: Haldens Ward	
		Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 0.76 ha	
		PDL: Yes	
		Proposed Use: Residential	
		Estimated Capacity: 24	
		Timescale: Within years 6-10 of plan adoption	
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Planning Designations affecting the site: • Within Drinking Water Safeguard Zone – Surface Water (Lee Navigation) • Within Groundwater Source Protection Zone 2 • Within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone (no statutory consultation required for residential development) • Adjacent to completed Local Plan allocation HS4			
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Drainage strategy and Flood Risk Assessment required at application stage • Noise impact assessment required due to proximity to Bessemer Road and nearby employment uses • Contaminated land desktop study required due to previous land use • Retention of existing trees along the eastern boundary and provision of tree and hedgerow survey • Preliminary roost assessment required due to potential for roosting bats • Opportunities to deliver biodiversity enhancements consistent with the Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy • Improvements to pedestrian crossing points at the Bessemer Road / Knightsfield / Haldens roundabout to be considered			
Other relevant planning information: • None			

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- Within Drinking Water Safeguard Zone – Surface Water (Lee Navigation)
- Within Groundwater Source Protection Zone 2
- Within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone (no statutory consultation required for residential development)
- Adjacent to completed Local Plan allocation HS4

Site specific development requirements and considerations:

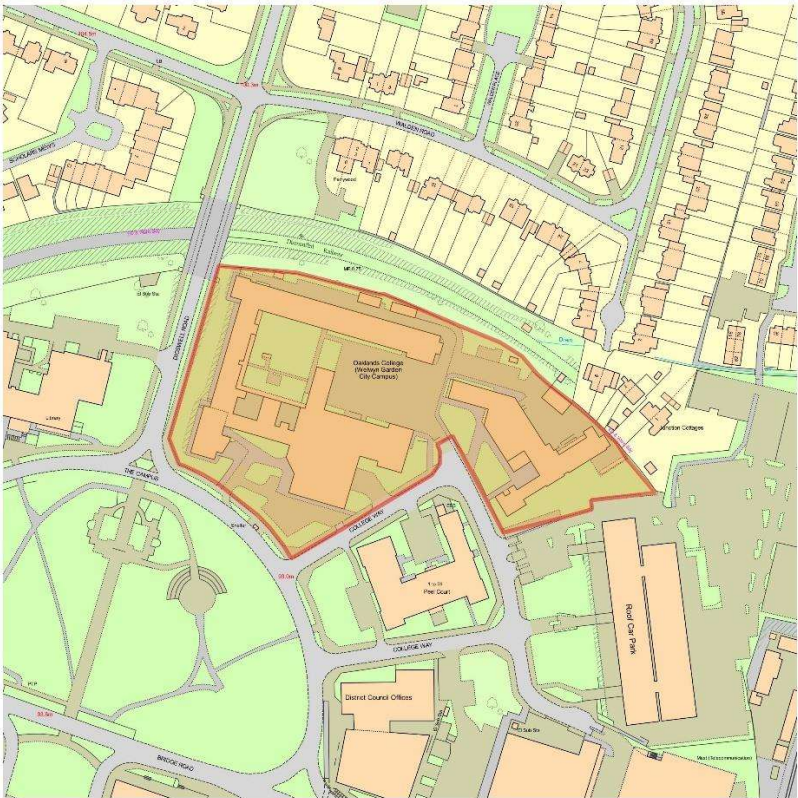
- Drainage strategy and Flood Risk Assessment required at application stage
- Noise impact assessment required due to proximity to Bessemer Road and nearby employment uses
- Contaminated land desktop study required due to previous land use
- Retention of existing trees along the eastern boundary and provision of tree and hedgerow survey
- Preliminary roost assessment required due to potential for roosting bats
- Opportunities to deliver biodiversity enhancements consistent with the Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Improvements to pedestrian crossing points at the Bessemer Road / Knightsfield / Haldens roundabout to be considered

Other relevant planning information:

- None

Site Name: 64-68 Bridge Road East	Site Reference: HEL-76
	Site Address: 64-68 Bridge Road East
	Location: WGC
	Ward: Peartree
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 0.26
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential / Community
	Estimated Capacity: 16
Timescale: 1- 5 years	
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Designated employment area (proposed for de-designation) • Drinking Water Safeguard Zone	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Re-provision of community facilities • Contaminated land assessment • Noise mitigation • Improvements to pedestrian and cycling connections	
Other relevant planning information: None	

Site Name: Green Vale	Site Reference: HEL-77
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Green Vale
	Location: WGC
	Ward: Howlands
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 0.88
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 33
	Timescale: TBC
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adjacent Urban Open Land • Drinking Water Safeguard Zone	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Site to deliver an uplift in housing • Layout to accommodate underground utilities • Drainage strategy • Bat surveys • Tree and hedgerow retention • Biodiversity enhancements	
Other relevant planning information: • None	

Site Name: Campus North	Site Reference: WGCA
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Campus North
	Location: WGC
	Ward: Handside
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 2.06ha
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential, Community, Ancillary Class E
	Estimated Capacity: 300
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Conservation Area • Adjacent to Urban Open Land • Welwyn Garden City Town Centre	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Reprovision of Oaklands College within Welwyn Garden City Town Centre • Heritage impact assessment will be required (WGC Conservation Area) • Leisure and Class E uses appropriate at ground floor level fronting the Campus with residential above • The design must adhere to the Welwyn Garden City Design Principles for masterplanning strategic developments • The setting and appreciation of the Conservation Area and Urban Open Land should be enhanced • Site lies on the former unregistered historic Digswell Sherradspark park and garden. Open Space provided should look to reflect and incorporate historic significance of this park and garden • Noise impact assessment required due to road traffic noise • High-quality acoustic design and mitigation needed	
Other relevant planning information: • A masterplan will be required for this site	

Site Name: Campus West	Site Reference: WGCB
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Campus West
	Location: WGC
	Ward: Handside
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 0.58
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential, Leisure, Class E
	Estimated Capacity: 100
	Timescale: 5-10 years
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Conservation Area • Adjacent to Urban Open Land • Welwyn Garden City Town Centre	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Reprovision of Library on site or within Welwyn Garden City Town Centre • Leisure and Class E uses appropriate at ground floor level fronting the Campus with residential above • Improved linkages with the remaining Campus West, including ancillary Class E and Leisure uses will be appropriate • Heritage impact assessment will be required (WGC Conservation Area) • The design must adhere to the Welwyn Garden City Design Principles for masterplanning strategic developments • The setting and appreciation of the Conservation Area and Urban Open Land should be enhanced • Site lies on the former unregistered historic Digswell Sherradspark park and garden. Open Space provided should look to reflect and incorporate historic significance of this park and garden • Noise impact assessment required due to road traffic noise • High-quality acoustic design and mitigation needed	
Other relevant planning information: • A masterplan will be required for this site	

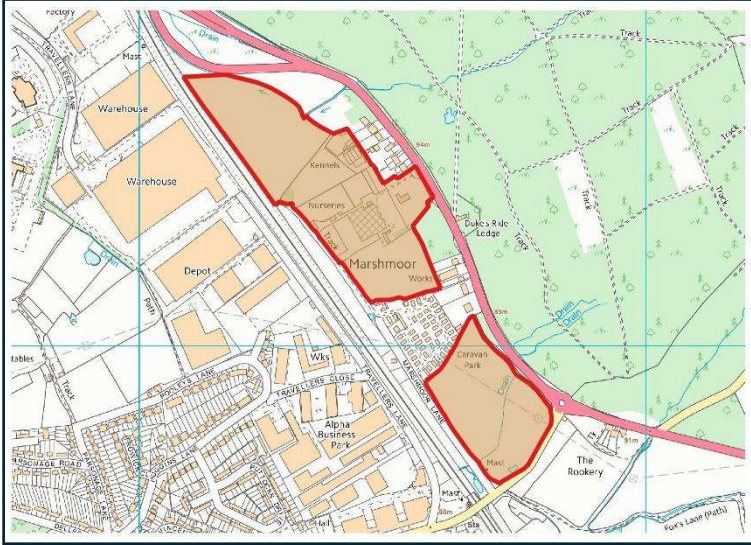


Site Allocations Tier 2

Site Name: The Vineyards	Site Reference: HS18
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: The Vineyards
	Location: Welwyn
	Ward: Welwyn West
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 1.2
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 30
	Timescale: 0-5 years
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation HS18 • Forms part of Danesbury Park Unregistered Historic Park and Garden • Adjacent to Local Nature Reserve – Danesbury Park	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Achievement of sufficient visibility splays in each direction. • 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. • Appropriate design, layout and mitigation measures to deliver satisfactory internal and external noise levels and healthy residential environments. • Opportunity to retain and protect trees. Compensatory planting if trees are lost as a result of development • Phase 1 ecological survey and (possibly) a reptile survey. Ecological compensation may be required • 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	
Other relevant planning information: Outline planning application pending consideration, reference 6/2025/1781/OUTLINE	

Site Name: Sandyhurst, The Bypass	Site Reference: HS19
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Sandyhurst, The Bypass
	Location: Welwyn
	Ward: Welwyn West
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 1.018
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 36
	Timescale: 0-5 years
Planning Designations affecting the site: Adopted Local Plan allocation HS19	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: - 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. - Proximity to A1(M) - Air quality survey and report required. - Appropriate design, layout and mitigation measures to achieve satisfactory internal and external noise levels and healthy residential environments. - Opportunity to retain and protect trees. Compensatory planting if trees are lost as a result of development. - Habitat potential. Phase 1 ecological survey and (possibly) a reptile survey. - Ecological compensation may be required.	
Other relevant planning information: Planning permission has been granted for residential development (application reference 6/2020/3418/MAJ)	

Site Name: School Lane	Site Reference: HS20
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: School Lane
	Location: Welwyn
	Ward: Welwyn West
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 1.306
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 9
Timescale: 0-5 years	
Planning Designations affecting the site: Adopted Local Plan allocation HS20	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: - Visibility currently sub-standard - enhanced splays will be required. - 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. - A sequential approach to layout and the use of SuDS to suitably manage surface water flood risk to, within and from the site. - Pockets of trees are a landscape feature and may provide habitats for birds. Phase 1 habitats survey required. - Opportunity to retain and protect trees. Compensatory planting if trees are lost as a result of development. - Archaeological field evaluation may be required and appropriate consideration subject to findings. - 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.	
Other relevant planning information: None	

Site Name: Marshmoor	Site Reference: SDS7
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Marshmoor
	Location: Welham Green
	Ward: Welham Green and South Hatfield
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 13.35
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Employment floorspace class E(g) 40,500 sqm and residential
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation SDS7 • Public Right of Way through southern parcel (026) • Flood Zone 2 and 3 cover part of the southern parcel	Estimated Capacity: 100
	Timescale: 0-10 years
Site specific development requirements and considerations: A Supplementary Planning Document for the Marshmoor Policy Area has been prepared and adopted by the council. The SPDs sets the quantum and phasing of development within SDS7. 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 - The primary vehicular access into SDS7 should be taken from the Dixons Hill Road/A1000 roundabout; - 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 WelwynHatfield 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 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

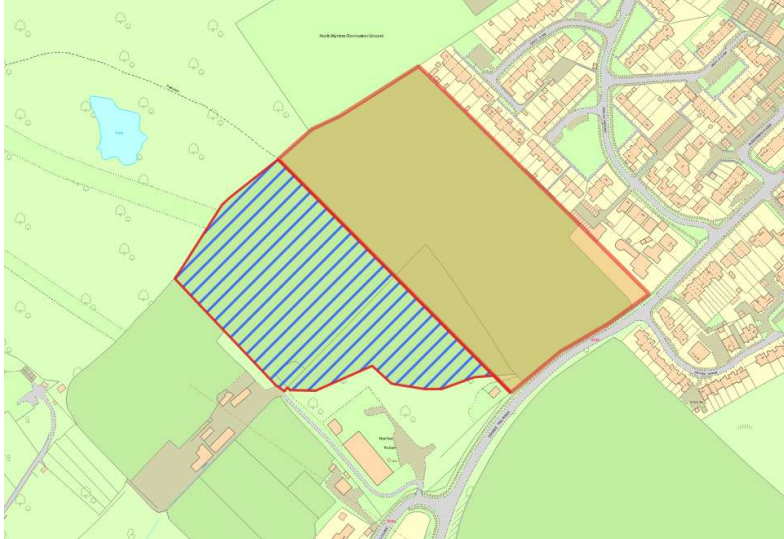
- xiii. A more detailed understanding of flood risk associated with SDS7 will need to be established via a Flood Risk Assessment, informed by detailed hydraulic models where necessary, that takes account of all sources of flood risk, in particular fluvial flood risk from ordinary watercourses and surface 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.

Other relevant planning information:

The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Marshmoor was adopted at the 9 July 2025 Cabinet meeting. It will now become a material consideration for Development Management purposes. Available at: <https://www.welhat.gov.uk/planning-policy-guidance/masterplans-1>

Site Name: Land at Welham Manor and west of Station Road	Site Reference: HS44/45
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land at Welham Manor and west of Station Road
	Location: Welham Green
	Ward: Welham Green and South Hatfield
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 3.089
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
Planning Designations affecting the site: Adopted Local Plan allocation HS44/HS45	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: - Both sites should be brought forward together as a comprehensive development (with opportunities to connect the two sites, through the positioning of open space / footpath links) - HS45 - Primary access from Station Road, secondary access (pedestrians/cyclists and emergency vehicles) from Welham Manor. HS44 – Primary Access from Welham Manor - Heritage Statement/Impact Assessment is required (proximity of Listed Building) - Sensitive treatment of boundary either site of access from Station Road will be required to protect amenity of adjoining residents - 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 - Sites lie within an SSSI impact risk zone. Development will trigger a Natural England consultation at planning application stage	
Other relevant planning information: Planning permission has been granted for residential development (application reference 6/2024/1866/FULL) for 9 dwellings and (application reference 6/2024/2418/MAJ) for 64 dwellings (net)	

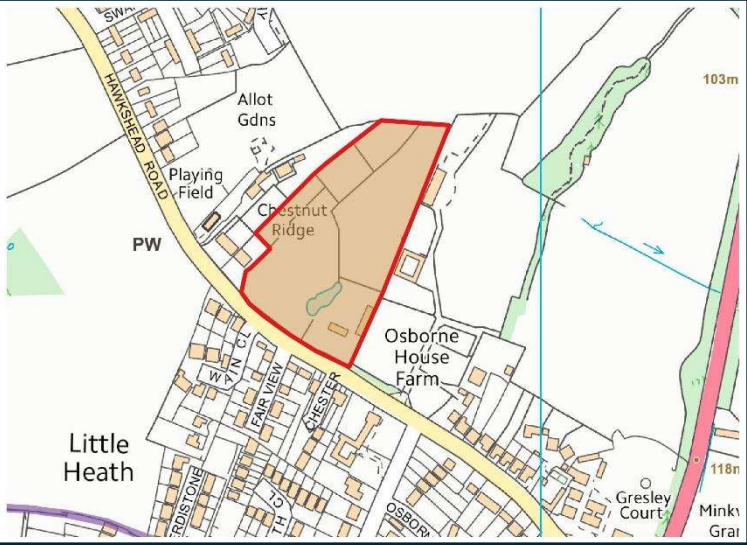
Site Name: Dixons Hill Road	Site Reference: HS46
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Dixons Hill Road
	Location: Welham Green
	Ward: Welham Green and South Hatfield
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 3.96
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 120 increasing to 204
Timescale: 0-10 years	
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation HS46 • Small area of Flood Zone 3 (Surface Water) • Adjacent to Bush Wood Ancient Woodland and Local Wildlife Site	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Site lies within an SSSI impact risk zone. Development will trigger a Natural England consultation at planning application stage • 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	
Other relevant planning information: Existing allocation (HS46) indicates an estimated site capacity of 120 dwellings, additional land to the southwest of the site, currently in the Green Belt, could deliver an additional 84 dwellings	

Site Name: Land west of Golf Club Rd	Site Reference: HS21
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land west of Golf Club Rd
	Location: Brookmans Park
	Ward: Brookmans Park and Little Heath
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 0.69
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 14
Planning Designations affecting the site: Adopted Local Plan allocation HS21	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: - Retain and protect trees and woodland - Enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety and reduce vehicle speeds on Golf Course Road and at the St George's Wood Road junction	
Other relevant planning information: Planning permission has been granted for residential development (application reference 6/2023/1221/OUTLINE)	

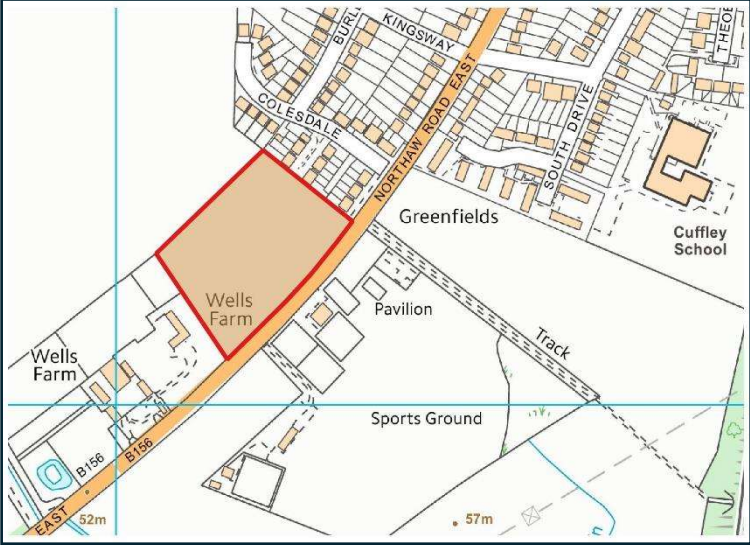
Site Name: Land west of Brookmans Park Station	Site Reference: HS22
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land west of Brookmans Park Station
	Location: Brookmans Park
	Ward: Welham Green and South Hatfield
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 18.247
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential (plus 2FE Primary School)
	Estimated Capacity: 428
	Timescale: 0-10 years
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation HS22 • Small linear areas of Flood Zone 3 (Surface Water) • Public Right of Way (009) • Adjacent to Brick Kiln Wood Local Wildlife Site and Ancient Woodland Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Realignment of Station Road will be required to provide safe access to the site • 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 • Adopt a flood risk sequential approach to site layout and incorporate SuDs to address surface water flood risk to, within and from the site • Mitigate noise pollution from the railway • Secure any necessary upgrades to waste water infrastructure • Avoid and mitigate any potential impact on Water End SSSI • 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 • Provision of land for a new 2FE Primary School site and playing field • 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	
Other relevant planning information: The Strategic Framework for the Land west of Brookmans Park Railway Station (site HS22) was approved by the Executive Member for Planning on 26 November 2024 and will now become a material consideration for Development Management purposes. Available at: https://www.welhat.gov.uk/planning-policy-guidance/masterplans-1	

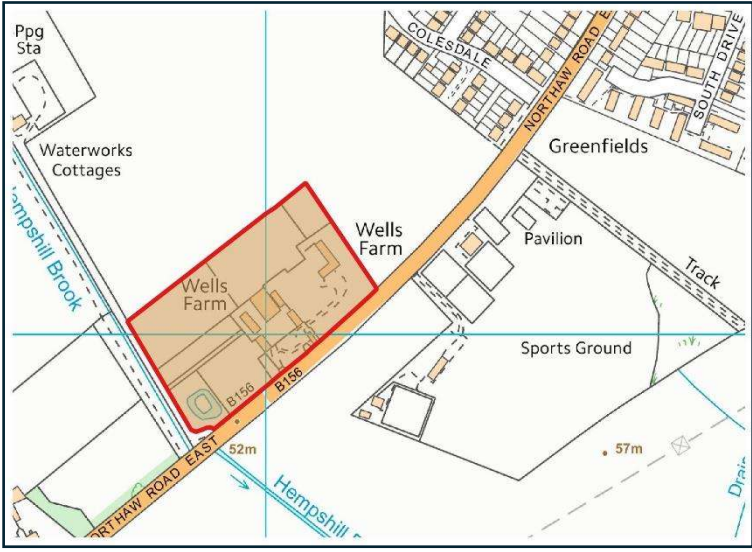
Site Name: Land east of Golf Club Road	Site Reference: HS23
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land east of Golf Club Road
	Location: Brookmans Park
	Ward: Brookmans Park and Little Heath
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 0.52
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 10
Timescale: 0-5 years	
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation HS23 • Adjacent to George's Wood Local Wildlife Site	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Secure any necessary upgrades to waste water infrastructure • Retain and protect TPO tree and other notable trees of value • Enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety and reduce vehicle speeds on Golf Course Road and at the St George's Wood Road junction • Enhance the hedge along the northern boundary of the site to provide a robust and defensible Green Belt boundary	
Other relevant planning information: None	

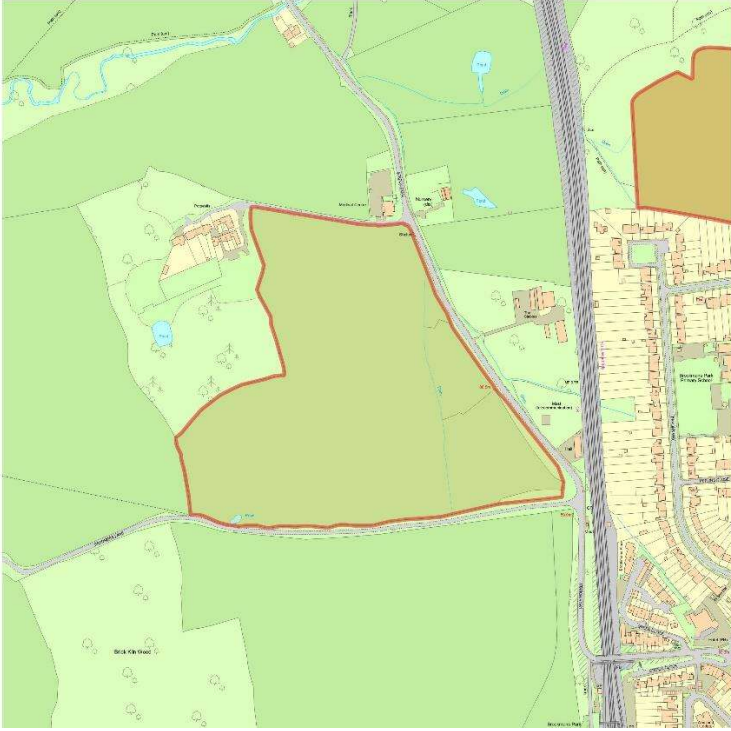
Site Name: Land north of Hawkshead Road	Site Reference: HS25
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land north of Hawkshead Road
	Location: Little Heath
	Ward: Brookmans Park and Little Heath
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 0.89
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential
Estimated Capacity: 34	
Timescale: 0-5 years	
Planning Designations affecting the site: Adopted Local Plan allocation HS25	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: - The southern wooded boundary and Hawkshead Road should be retained, and woodland management used to enhance ecology - 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 - Provide a substantial tree buffer along the northern boundary of the site to provide a robust and defensible long term Green Belt boundary.	
Other relevant planning information: Planning permission has been granted for residential development (application reference 6/2021/3304/MAJ)	

Site Name: Videne and Studlands, Hawkshead Road	Site Reference: HS47
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Videne and Studlands, Hawkshead Road
	Location: Little Heath
	Ward: Brookmans Park and Little Heath
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 2.57
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 61
	Timescale: 0-5 years
Planning Designations affecting the site: Adopted Local Plan allocation HS47	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: - Due to the need to achieve a satisfactory access both sites should be brought forward on a comprehensive basis - A Heritage Statement/Impact Assessment will be required (proximity to Grade II Listed Osborne House) - Mitigate any harm to the setting of Osborne House - A preliminary Ecological Assessment will be required (potential for nesting birds/roosting bats and reptiles in rough vegetation) - A noise survey will be required at planning application stage - 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	
Other relevant planning information: Planning permission has been granted for residential development (application reference 6/2022/2317/MAJ) and is under construction.	

Site Name: Land at The Meadway	Site Reference: HS27
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land at The Meadway
	Location: Cuffley
	Ward: Northaw and Cuffley
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 2.92
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 73
	Timescale: 0-5 years
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation HS27 • Small area of Flood Zone 3 (Rivers)	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Nature conservation measures to include a buffer to Cuffley Brook and the ecosite • Avoid and mitigate any potential impact on Northaw Great Wood and Wormley Hoddesdonpark Wood SSSIs • Mitigate noise pollution from the railway • Application of the Sequential Approach to flood risk, supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy • A contaminated land survey and report would be required, and if necessary suitable remediation carried out • 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 • 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 • As appropriate, contribute to highway improvement proposals within and around Cuffley, and as required improvements to the junction of the Meadway with Station Road	
Other relevant planning information: Planning permission has been granted for residential development (application reference 6/2024/0105/MAJ) and is under construction.	

Site Name: Land north of Northaw Road East	Site Reference: HS29
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land north of Northaw Road East
	Location: Cuffley
	Ward: Northaw and Cuffley
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 1.95
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
Planning Designations affecting the site: Adopted Local Plan allocation HS29	Estimated Capacity: 73
	Timescale: 0-5 years
Site specific development requirements and considerations: - Avoid and mitigate any potential impact on Northaw Great Wood and Wormley Hoddesdonpark Wood SSSIs - Potential for habitat creation and wildlife corridors should be explored as part of any planning application - Need for pre-application investigations due to the proximity of Area of Archaeological Significance, with recording and preservation if required - 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 - Need for a Traffic Assessment - Pedestrian crossing facilities would be required in the vicinity of the site - Provision of a substantial tree screen adjoining the western boundary to create a robust and defensible Green Belt boundary - As appropriate, contribute to highway improvement proposals within and around Cuffley	
Other relevant planning information: None	

Site Name: Wells Farm, Northaw Road East	Site Reference: HS30
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Wells Farm, Northaw Road East
	Location: Cuffley
	Ward: Northaw and Cuffley
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 2.931
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential
Planning Designations affecting the site: Adopted Local Plan allocation HS30	Estimated Capacity: 75
	Timescale: 0-5 years
Site specific development requirements and considerations: - Need for pre-application investigations due to the proximity of Area of Archaeological Significance, with recording and preservation if required - Avoid and mitigate any potential impact on Northaw Great Wood and Wormley Hoddesdonpark Wood SSSIs - A contaminated land survey and report would be required, and if necessary suitable remediation carried out - A specific flood risk assessment of the site would be required at planning application stage. - SuDs design would need to take specific account of topography of the area to manage overland flows. - Provision of a substantial tree screen adjoining the western boundary to create a robust and defensible Green Belt boundary - As appropriate, contribute to highway improvement proposals within and around Cuffley	
Other relevant planning information: None	

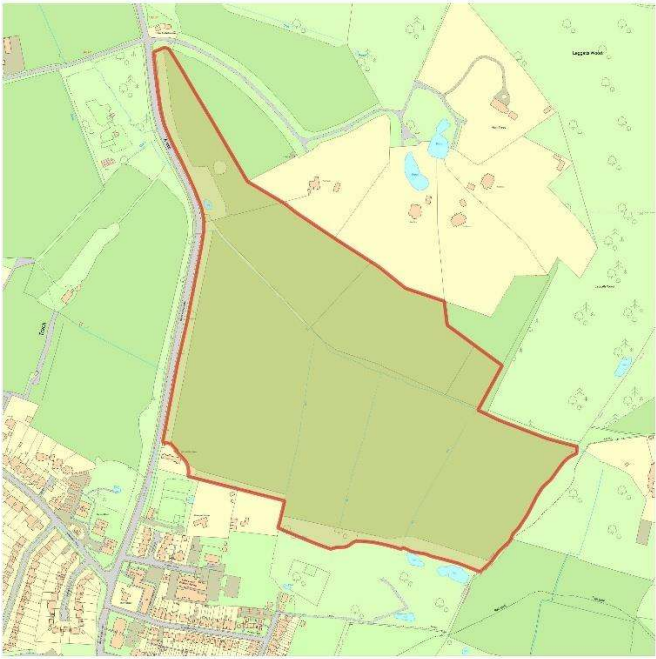
Site Name: Land at Potterells Farm (South)	Site Reference: HEL-89
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land at Potterells Farm, Station Road
	Location: Brookmans Park
	Ward: Welham Green and Hatfield South
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 11.5ha
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 150
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Green Belt • Small area of Flood Zone 2 (Surface Water) • Adjacent to Grade 2 Listed Building (Walled Garden and adjoining House at Potterells) • Adjacent to Local Wildlife Site	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Provision of a minimum 15 metre buffer to the adjacent Local Wildlife Site • Significant buffer needed to preserve the setting of the Grade 2 Listed structure and building, development should be located towards the southern end of the site • Reduction of the net developable area required to account for surface water flood risk • Application of the Sequential Approach to flood risk, supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy • Ecological survey required for protected species which may be present on site • New access and layout to be secured on Bradmore Lane including new pavements and cycle access, pavement widening on station road on the sites eastern flank • Development layout to accommodate significant underground infrastructure • Consideration of biodiversity net gain and alignment with Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy priorities for the South East Heath and Woods Focus Area	
Other relevant planning information: None	

Site Name: Land north of Bradmore Way	Site Reference: HEL-38
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land north of Bradmore Way
	Location: Brookmans Park
	Ward: Brookmans Park & Little Heath
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 7.99
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 140
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Green Belt • Small area Flood Zone 2 (Surface Water) • Adjacent Ancient Woodland • Adjacent Local Wildlife Site (Peplin's Wood) • Groundwater Source Protection Zone 1 • Drinking Water Safeguard Zone (groundwater and surface water)	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Provision of a minimum 15 metre buffer to the adjacent ancient woodland and Local Wildlife Site • Reduction of the net developable area to account for surface water flood risk and ordinary watercourse flow paths, particularly along the southern boundary • Application of the Sequential Approach to flood risk, supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy • Demonstration of safe access and egress in relation to flood risk • Development layout to accommodate significant underground infrastructure • Ecological appraisal required, including consideration of biodiversity net gain and alignment with Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy priorities • Utilities coordination and additional ground investigations where required to protect water supply infrastructure	
Other relevant planning information: None	

Site Name: Land to the east of Colesdale Farm	Site Reference: HEL-3
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land to the east of Colesdale Farm
	Location: Cuffley
	Ward: Northaw and Cuffley
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 2.35
	PDL: Partly previously developed land
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 35
	Timescale: 1-5 years
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Green Belt • Adjacent to Public Right of Way Northaw 009 • Drinking Water Safeguard Zone (groundwater – Vale of St Albans, bespoke bromate) • Sand and Gravel Belt (no identified superficial deposits) • Adjacent to walking route designation (Northaw and Cuffley Neighbourhood Plan – T2)	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Flood Risk Assessment required due to part of the site lying within Flood Zone 3 and areas of surface water flood risk • Development layout must avoid flood risk areas and apply sequential approach • Junction and access improvements likely required to accommodate development safely • Festival held on adjacent land to the north-west, access will need to be secured to this land. • Noise mitigation required to address traffic noise through good acoustic design • Archaeological geophysical survey and trial trenching required • Retention of key landscape features including pond, hedgerows and woodland along site boundaries • Preliminary ecological assessment required; site lies within GCN green and amber zones (district licensing applicable) • Opportunities to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain aligned with LNRS priorities	
Other relevant planning information: Current outline planning application planning consideration by the Local Planning Authority (application reference 6/2025/2131/OUTLINE)	

Site Name: Cuffley Telephone Exchange, Station Road	Site Reference: HEL-14
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Cuffley Telephone Exchange, Station Road
	Location: Cuffley
	Ward: Northaw and Cuffley
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 0.10
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 7 Timescale: Developable within years 5-10 of the plan period, subject to decommissioning of the telecommunications infrastructure (promoted availability late 2030s)
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adjacent to Cuffley Large Neighbourhood and Village Centre	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Access improvements required from Station Road to ensure safe accommodation of all modes • Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy required • Noise impact assessment and good acoustic design required due to traffic noise • Potential contaminated land desk-top study required due to previous telecommunications use • Tree and hedgerow survey required to inform retention and mitigation • Preliminary Ecological Assessment and bat roost assessment required due to mature trees and existing buildings • Assessment of the telephone exchange as a potential non-designated heritage asset required • Development must comply with Northaw and Cuffley Neighbourhood Plan policies, particularly those relating to design, traffic and active travel	
Other relevant planning information: • None	

Site Name: Land to the southeast of KGV playing fields	Site Reference: HEL-44
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land to the southeast of the KGV playing fields
	Location: Cuffley
	Ward: Northaw and Cuffley
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 10.7
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 180
Planning Designations affecting the site:	
• Green Belt • Land affected by Flood Zones 2 and 3 • Overhead electricity power lines	
Site specific development requirements and considerations:	
• Reduction of net developable area to address flood risk and power line safety corridors • Opportunity for a green biodiverse corridor under the pylon buffer zone • Flood Risk Assessment required • Access and footway improvements will be sought to connect to existing rights of way • Biodiversity enhancements in accordance with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy	
Other relevant planning information:	
• None	

Site Name: Leggatts Park (Scenario 2)	Site Reference: HEL-5
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Leggatts Park (Scenario 2)
	Location: Little Heath
	Ward: Brookmans Park & Little Heath
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 23.17
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential development with areas of open space
	Estimated Capacity: 465
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Green Belt • Adjacent Local Wildlife Sites • Presence of veteran trees • Groundwater Source Protection Zone 1	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Mitigation for surface water flood risk. Flood Risk Assessment required and sequential approach applying. • Wastewater network modelling and upgrades needed to accommodate scale of development, liaison with Thames Water necessary • Ecological buffers to Local Wildlife Sites and veteran trees • Heritage mitigation in relation to Northaw Place – heritage impact assessment required • Major highway and access improvements including active travel measures. Primary access point approximately 435 metres north of the junction with Hawkshead Road. Pedestrian crossing facilities required on the A1000 on both sides of any site access together with a new two metres wide footway on the eastern side of the A1000. A secondary emergency access would be needed on the A1000. • Improved connectivity to Little Heath Primary School via new footways should be explored • Opportunities to contribute to Local Nature Recovery strategy priority of creating new acid grassland and heath wood pasture; and manage existing grassland and heathland to maintain the biodiversity of existing good quality habitats and enhance poor quality sites • Archaeological finds possible due to site lying on old Leggatt's Park Grounds. • New publicly accessible open space should be provided	
Other relevant planning information: • None	

Site Name: Land at Swanley Bar	Site Reference: HEL-7
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land at Swanley Bar
	Location: Little Heath
	Ward: Brookmans Park & Little Heath
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 7.79
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 90
Planning Designations affecting the site:	
• Green Belt • Flood Zone 1, with areas at moderate risk of surface water flooding to centre of site • Adjacent to Gobions Registered Park and Garden • Groundwater Source Protection Zone 1	
Site specific development requirements and considerations:	
• Heritage Impact Assessment required • Retain open space to mitigate heritage and landscape effects in the northwestern corner of the site. This could be used for BNG and informal play and recreation • Flood risk and drainage strategy • Archaeological assessment • Biodiversity enhancements aligned with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy • Widening of Swanley Bar Lane may be required on the southern side • To ensure sustainable access to nearby shops and services, the site would either need to provide some amenities on-site or provide enhanced connections into Potters Bar. This could include the creation of a new linkage across land in the promoter's control to Hawkshead Lane and potentially connecting Little Heath open space to support a range of users including pedestrians, cyclists and people with disability/reduced mobility • Opportunity to contribute to the priorities/actions of the Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy including creating new acid grassland and heath wood pasture	
Other relevant planning information:	
• None	

Site Name: Land at Potterells Farm (north)	Site Reference: HEL-86
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land at Potterells Farm (North)
	Location: Welham Green
	Ward: Welham Green & South Hatfield
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 5.86
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 80
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Green Belt • Adjacent to Grade 2 Listed Building (Crawford Cottages)	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Reduction of net developable area to protect heritage assets to the eastern side, buffer needed • Heritage impact mitigation in relation to Grade 2 Listed Crawford Cottages. Further assessment is needed to establish the potential significance of the former farmstead buildings abutting the site and to establish the site's contribution to the settings of the LBs • Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment is required due to adjacent suspected line of the Roman Road from Verulamium to Cheshunt • Biodiversity enhancements in line with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy • Primary access from Pooleys Lane with new junction required • Additional pedestrian/cycling accesses should link the site with the allocated housing site to the north • Development to avoid and provide a buffer to overhead power lines, opportunity to create a green corridor here • Links to the existing public right of way via new footpaths into the site should be explored • Retention of mature hedgerows and trees to be a priority. Design should avoid loss. • Due to previous land use a contaminated land site survey (desk top study) is required and appropriate remediation in accordance with a remediation schedule. • Opportunity to contribute to the priorities/actions of the Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy	

- To minimise adverse impact on landscape and visual character, development proposals should maintain a transition from settlement to open fields to wooded backdrop and maintain/enhance hedgerow boundaries
- Site is approx. 180m from Water End Swallow Holes SSSI, 2.5km from Redwell Wood SSSI, 4km from Northaw Great Wood SSSI and falls within a Natural England Impact Risk Zone. Due to the scale and type of promoted development (50+ dwellings outside of existing settlements/urban areas) Natural England should be consulted at planning application stage as there is potential for the development to have a harmful effect on the SSSI, SAC, SPA or Ramsar sites that they underpin

Other relevant planning information:

- None

Site Name: Barnbeth, 24 Station Road	Site Reference: HEL-1
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Barnbeth, 24 Station Road
	Location: Welham Green
	Ward: Welham Green & Hatfield South
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 0.33
	PDL: Part PDL
	Proposed Use: Residential
Estimated Capacity: 7	
Timescale: 1-5 years	
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Urban area • Adjacent to Grade II listed building (Fairview, 15 Station Road) • Adjacent to an allocated Local Plan housing site, HS44/45 • Groundwater Source Protection Zone 1	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Heritage Statement required. Design, scale and layout of any scheme should consider impacts on the setting of the Listed Building • Archaeological assessment due to potential underground archaeology may be required • Tree and hedgerow survey, retention of trees should be integral to the design and layout proposed • Biodiversity net gain informed by the Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy - create new traditional orchard habitats • Improvements to local footpaths to provide enhanced pedestrian connectivity to buses and services in the vicinity of the site	
Other relevant planning information: • None	

Site Name: Land south of Bulls Lane	Site Reference: HEL-4
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land south of Bulls Lane
	Location: Welham Green
	Ward: Welham Green & South Hatfield
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 4.08
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 60
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Green Belt • Land affected by Flood Zones 2 and 3 • Adjacent to railway corridor • Groundwater Source Protection Zone 1	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Reduction of net developable area to avoid flood risk and protect heritage assets • Flood Risk Assessment and sequential test required • Noise mitigation relating to railway and community uses • Heritage impact mitigation in relation to Skimpans Farm including setting any housing back from the listed buildings and use open space and planting to form a buffer between them and new housing • Two points of access (east and west), both from Bulls Lane to be delivered, with access that must be suitable and achievable for all modes, including pedestrians and cyclists, and to the satisfaction of the Highways Authority • Archaeological assessment may be required • Biodiversity enhancements in line with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy - restore Nightingale and European Water Vole populations, and at the southern end to create, restore, or enhance diverse wetland habitats within floodplains and around headwater reaches • Site is located within approximately 120m of Water End Swallow Holes SSSI site and the site falls within an impact risk zones for SSSI. Natural England must be consulted. • Asset protection measures may be required due to adjacent railway land	
Other relevant planning information: • Current outline planning application planning consideration by the Local Planning Authority (application reference 6/2025/2337/OUTLINE)	

Site Name: Land north of Pooleys Lane	Site Reference: HEL-66
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land north of Pooleys Lane
	Location: Welham Green
	Ward: Welham Green & South Hatfield
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 4.77
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 80
Timescale: 1-10 years	
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Green Belt • Adjacent Local Wildlife Site • Adjacent to designated Employment Area	
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • Reduction of net developable area to accommodate power line safety corridors and drainage • New vehicular access from Pooleys Lane that demonstrates that it accommodates active travel measures to the satisfaction of the HCC Highways Authority • Risk of surface water flooding could be more than 3.3% (1 in 30) each year. Drainage strategy, flood risk assessment and access/egress due to flow paths and ponding • Noise mitigation relating to adjacent employment area • Contaminated land desktop study required • Trees and hedgerow survey with priority for retention of existing trees and hedgerows • Archaeological investigations will be necessary • Drinking Water Safeguard Zone – surface water and groundwater • Groundwater Source Protection Zone 1 – ground investigations required • Industrial plant noise from units to east of site. Noise impact assessment and good acoustic design required. Commercial noise so ‘agent of change’ will apply (NPPF 200) to ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses • Biodiversity enhancements in line with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy	
Other relevant planning information: Current outline planning application planning consideration by the Local Planning Authority (application reference 6/2025/0871/OUTLINE)	

Site Name: Land west of Fulling Mill Lane (Scenario 1)	Site Reference: HEL-73
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land west of Fulling Mill Lane
	Location: Welwyn
	Ward: Welwyn West
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 12.24
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 232
	Timescale: 1- 10 years

Planning Designations affecting the site:

- Green Belt
- Adjacent to Welwyn Conservation Area
- Adjacent to Singlers Marsh Local Nature Reserve and Local Wildlife Site
- Source Protection Zone 1 (Inner Zone)
- Drinking Water Safeguard Zone (surface water)
- Sand and Gravel Belt (Hertfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan)
- Area of Archaeological Significance (AAS7)

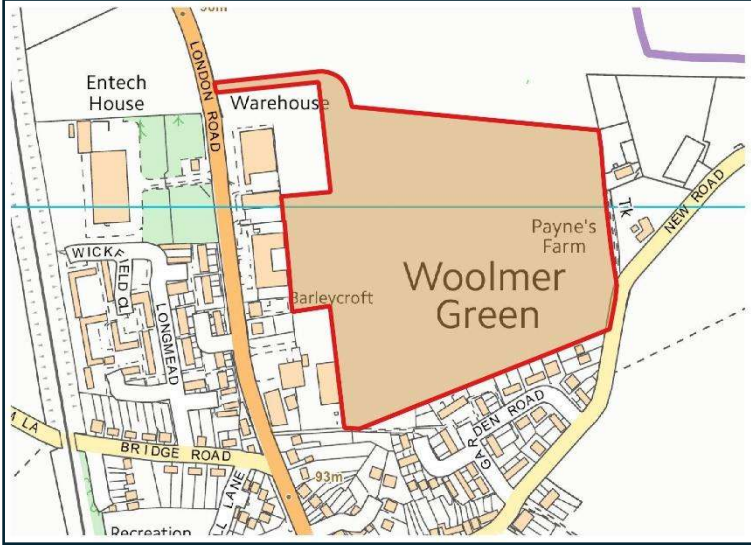
Site specific development requirements and considerations:

- Significant access and highway improvements required along Fulling Mill Lane, including bridge widening to provide safe pedestrian access
- Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy required; sequential approach to flood risk to be applied
- Safe access and egress must be demonstrated given flood risk on Fulling Mill Lane
- Design and layout must protect the setting of the Welwyn Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings, with reduced development in sensitive parts of the site
- Compensatory measures required where infrastructure works impact Singlers Marsh LNR/LWS
- Retention of access and buffers around underground and above-ground water infrastructure
- Archaeological geophysical survey and trial trenching required pre-determination
- Ground investigations required due to SPZ1 designation
- Contaminated land desk study and remediation (if necessary) require
- Landscape mitigation required to reflect moderate sensitivity and rural character

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preliminary ecological assessment required; site lies within GCN green zone• Opportunistic extraction of sand and gravel encouraged• Opportunity to deliver biodiversity net gain aligned with LNRS priorities |
| Other relevant planning information: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• None |



Site Allocations Tier 3

Site Name: Land east of London Road	Site Reference: HS15
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land east of London Road
	Location: Woolmer Green
	Ward: Welwyn East
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 7.66
	PDL: No
	Proposed Use: Residential
	Estimated Capacity: 150
Planning Designations affecting the site:	
• Adopted Local Plan allocation HS15 • Small area of Flood Zone 3 (Surface Water) • Adjacent to Grade 2 Listed Building - Paynes Farmhouse • Adjacent to Designated Employment Land (EA10)	
Site specific development requirements and considerations:	
• Achieving satisfactory visibility splays • Landscape buffer along northern boundary, to offset the impact of the development on the wider landscape and help define the Green Belt boundary • Application of the Sequential Approach to flood risk, supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy • Landscape buffer to the east to protect setting of adjacent listed building • Heritage Impact Assessment at planning application stage • 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. • 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' • Archaeological field evaluation may be required and appropriate conditions imposed subject to findings	
Other relevant planning information:	
Planning permission has been granted for residential development, including outline consent and subsequent reserved matters approval (application references 6/2023/2552/OUTLINE and 6/2025/1501/RM).	

Site Name: 51-53 London Road	Site Reference: HS43
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: 51-53 London Road
	Location: Woolmer Green
	Ward: Welwyn East
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 0.85
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential
Planning Designations affecting the site: • Adopted Local Plan allocation 43 • Small area of Flood Zone 3 (Surface Water)	Estimated Capacity: 34
	Timescale: 6-10 years
Site specific development requirements and considerations: • 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' • A contaminated land survey would be required at planning application stage • Noise survey and report required at planning application stage (proximity to B197) • Preliminary Roost Assessment required at planning application stage, given the proximity to known bat roosts • Application of the Sequential Approach to flood risk, supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy	
Other relevant planning information: None	

Site Name: Land at 2 Great North Road and to the rear of 2-12a Great North Road	Site Reference: HS16
 © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council LA100019547 2025	Site Address: Land at 2 Great North Road and to the rear of 2-12a Great North Road
	Location: Oaklands & Mardley Heath
	Ward: Welwyn West
	Red Line Boundary Size (ha): 1.74
	PDL: Yes
	Proposed Use: Residential
Planning Designations affecting the site: Adopted Local Plan allocation HS16	Estimated Capacity: 25
	Timescale: 6-10 years
Site specific development requirements and considerations: - Both sites should be brought forward together as a comprehensive development - Multiple land owners with an interest in the site will need to work jointly to bring the site forward. - Mitigate air and noise pollution from the A1(M) and B197. Noise and air quality reports required at planning application stage - Retain and protect northern wooded area	
Other relevant planning information:	



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Appendices

Appendix A: Housing Trajectory

Meeting Housing Needs

The delivery of new homes in Welwyn Hatfield over the plan period is set out in this housing trajectory. This forecasts anticipated delivery of new homes each year to 2043. The trajectory will be kept up to date and reviewed each year in the Council's Annual Monitoring Report. If insufficient land comes forward for housing within the plan period, then the strategy to meet overall housing need will be reviewed.

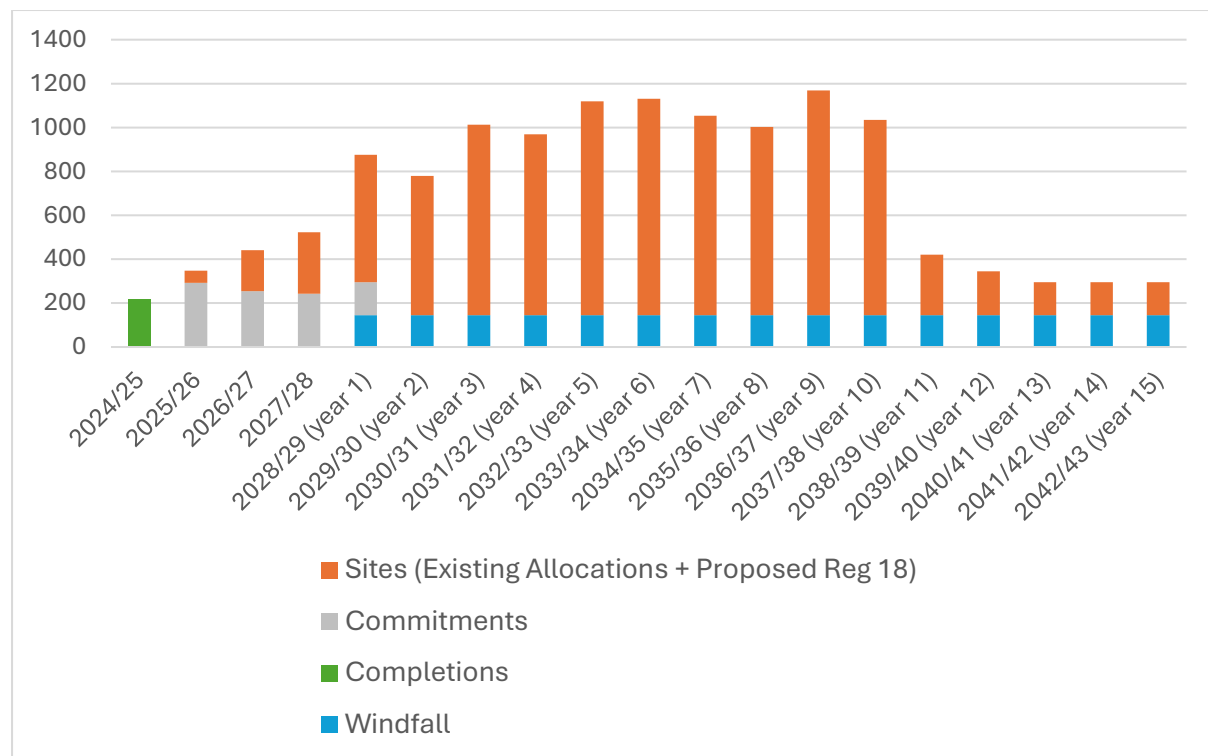
The number of homes to be delivered on proposed site allocations during the plan period totals 9,991 dwellings. This includes site allocations which have been carried forward from the Welwyn Hatfield 2016-36 Local Plan. The site allocations are listed in the site allocations chapter of this Plan.

The Council has taken into consideration completions for 2024/25, as well as existing commitments (sites with outstanding planning permission) which amounted to 941 dwellings as at 1 April 2025.

It is not possible to identify all housing sites which will come forward over the plan period. Therefore an allowance for historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends has been made. The majority of homes completed within three years from the housing supply update (1 April 2025) are likely to already be known about and accounted for in the supply. Therefore, the windfall allowance is applied from 2028/29 at an annual rate of 145 dwellings per annum. This amounts to a total windfall allowance of 2,175 dwellings over 15 years.

Local Plan Housing Supply	Total dwellings (net) 1 Apr 2024 – 31 Mar 2043
Sites (Existing Allocations + Proposed Reg 18 Sites)	9,991
Completions 24/25	216
Commitments (at 1 Apr 2025)	941
Windfall allowance	2,175
Total plan period	13,323

Table A1: Housing Trajectory



Appendix B: Marketing and Viability Requirements Guidance for Planning Applications

Marketing

A number of policies in the Local Plan require evidence of active, comprehensive and realistic marketing prior to allowing the redevelopment or change of use of a building or land. This appendix sets out the detailed requirements for marketing to demonstrate that there is no longer a realistic demand for the existing use, or expected demand for alternative employment generating use(s) in future, in order to justify a change.

Vacant or under-used premises should normally be continuously marketed under their existing use and other suitable employment-generating uses. Where the premises are in poor condition, have been partially demolished, or are otherwise not capable of meeting modern business needs without significant investment, the marketing exercise should extend to the site being promoted as a potential redevelopment opportunity, whilst still reflecting the existing or other suitable employment-generating uses.

Where the loss of an employment generating use is proposed, the Council will have regard to the length of marketing, marketing strategy and marketing report. Further details on the requirements for each of these elements can be found below.

Length of marketing

Prior to applying to change the use of land or buildings protected under the relevant policies of the Local Plan (TO INCLUDE LIST ONCE THIS HAS BEEN INCLUDED IN POLICY) the property should be marketed for a continuous period of at least 12 months, starting from the point at which the advertisement is published or erected. It is expected that the property will be marketed with at least two recognised commercial agents with appropriate coverage and local expertise.

Marketing strategy

Before marketing begins, a strategy should be prepared in accordance with the requirements set out below.

- **Background** – why the property is being marketed.
- **Location** – including consideration of context and links to transport networks as well as general setting and surroundings (i.e. employment area/local centre)
- **Descriptions** – including details on floorspace, layout, specification, occupation history and car parking as relevant.
- **Planning** – a summary of the existing planning use, site history.
- **Restrictions** – no covenant or any other form of tie restricting the future use or operation of the property or land.
- **Tenure** – both freehold and leasehold terms should be offered.
- **Marketing recommendations** – this should consider:
 - Basis of instruction – joint agency (minimum 2) with details of chosen or favoured agents etc.
 - Method of disposal – private treaty or formal/informal bids.
 - Advertisement options – sale boards, internet, PR, publications, mailing etc.
- **Expenditure** – the budget for the marketing campaign should be proportionate to the anticipated return from the property. This is expected to be a minimum of 3% of the anticipated return from the property.
- **Guide price** – this should be commensurate with the current market price for comparable premises. It is expected that the value of the property will be derived from an expert RICS registered valuer or accredited member of RICS (Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors) to avoid the premises being advertised at an aspirational value that is unrealistic and may deter interest.
- **Guide terms** – these should be flexible and take into account prevailing market conditions. The length of leases should not be overly prescriptive.

The extent of marketing initiatives will vary based on the type of premises being advertised. However, as a minimum the following initiatives should be employed for all premises:

- **Marketing board** – this should be relative to the type and size of premises. A simple 'For Sale' or 'To Let' board may be appropriate for small commercial premises and community facilities. For larger commercial units, larger boards

giving details of the property including the guide price and number or size range of spaces available (i.e. multi-occupancy buildings) should be employed. Boards should be clearly visible from main transport routes.

- **Marketing particulars** – including the following:
 - Location
 - Internal and external photographs
 - Description of accommodation
 - Terms (leasehold, freehold, long lease etc.)
 - Guide Price/Rent (separated where multiple spaces are available)
 - Current planning position and Other Potential Uses – to include other employment generating uses* (to be defined in footnote)
 - Services and Utilities
 - Energy Performance Certificate
 - Rateable value and business rates
 - VAT status
 - Legal and professional costs
 - Contact information for the agent(s)
- **Press advertisement** – for small commercial units and community facilities an advert should be placed and maintained in the local newspaper, and specialist publications as appropriate. For larger commercial units, specialist publications (i.e. Estates Gazette, Property Week) should always be used. In addition, for large commercial units a press release should be given to local and regional press.
- **Online advertisement** – the premises should be published on agents' websites as well as at least one national commercial property search engine (i.e CoStar, EGI, Rightmove). For very large or significant commercial units/sites, a bespoke website for the property could be created.
- **Targeted advertisement** – where appropriate, other providers should be informed directly that the premises is being marketed. This is likely to be particularly relevant for community facilities where there may be a requirement for alternative provision.

Marketing report

If, following the 12 months of marketing, there has been no success in selling or letting a unit (or spaces comprises therein) then a report detailing the marketing undertaken and demonstrating compliance with these requirements should be prepared and submitted alongside any planning application for redevelopment or change of use.

To demonstrate that alternative uses have been properly considered, the planning application must be submitted no earlier than three months and no later than nine months after the marketing period has concluded.

The marketing report must demonstrate:

- The original marketing strategy (in accordance with the above requirements).
- A copy of the agents' marketing instructions (excluding any commercially sensitive data e.g. fees).

- The duration and dates of the marketing campaign (minimum 12 months).
- Evidence that the marketing strategy was delivered – photos of marketing boards, copies of particulars, screenshots of online adverts, copies of press articles, records of advertisements sent via mailing lists and any other relevant adverts.
- A full log of relevant correspondence throughout the marketing campaign. This should include, where relevant:
 - The number of enquiries received (by email, phone, direct to agent)
 - The number of viewings undertaken, including the date and nature of interest (i.e. investment, occupation, redevelopment etc.)
 - Offers received, including date and level. If any offers were rejected the grounds for rejection must be provided.
 - Details of reasons why the prospective occupier(s) deemed the premises unsuitable.
- If the record of enquiries indicated a lack of interest, the report should include two agents' opinions as to why the property is not selling and demonstrate measures taken to increase interest.
- Evidence to show how the marketing strategy has been regularly reviewed and modified in response to the level of interest received, including consideration as to whether the unit could be reconfigured, sub-divided or altered to improve the marketing prospects. This may also include whether the existing space could be used by micro and start-up businesses.

In summary, the marketing statement should include all details and evidence of the steps taken to market premises as detailed above. The Council will assess the marketing statement against the check-list of requirements.

For clarity a check-list of the marketing requirements is set out below:

Phase	Requirement	Details
Pre-Marketing	Property Information	Background, Location, Description, Planning
	Terms and Conditions	Restrictions, Tenure, Pricing, Guide Terms
	Marketing Plan	Instruction, Method, Advertising, Budget
During Marketing	Duration	Minimum 12-months
	Required Initiatives	Marketing Board, Marketing Particulars, Press Ad, Online Ad, Targeted Ad
Post-Marketing	Submission Window	Submit report with planning application no earlier than three months and no later than 6 months

		after marketing period ends
	Report Content	Strategy Evidence, Correspondence Log, Agents Opinions, Strategy Review

Viability

Applications proposing the loss of an employment-generating use are required to submit a viability assessment *only where* the submitted marketing report has identified a level of market demand for the site, but a sale or letting has not been achieved due to the Applicant arguing that the high costs associated of modernising or redeveloping the premises to meet that demand make the use economically unviable. The viability appraisal must provide a clear explanation of the potential to redevelop/reuse the site or premises for a range of employment generating uses, having regard to its location and site characteristics, and demonstrate that the cost of aligning the site with modern occupier needs is financially unviable.

The appraisal must consider a range of potential alternatives for the proposed site or premises, including the following:

- The re-use, refurbishment, partial or complete redevelopment of the site for its current or alternative employment generating uses;
- The sub-division or adjoining of plots;
- Other alterations to existing units.

Costs and values must be set at prevailing market rates at the time of submission of the planning application. However, sensitivity analysis should be undertaken to demonstrate how changes in economic cycles may impact development viability. Viability evidence should demonstrate consideration of the guidance and standards set out in the PPG and RICS publications¹.

Appendix C: Glossary

Best and most versatile agricultural land: Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

Design code: A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.

Design guide: A document providing guidance on how development can be carried out in accordance with good design practice, often produced by a local authority.

Green infrastructure: A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.

Householder development: (a) Development for an existing dwellinghouse, or development within the curtilage of such a dwellinghouse for any purpose incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse or, (b) an application for any consent, agreement or approval required by or under a planning permission, development order or local development order in relation to such development.

Main town centre uses: Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

Major Development: For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m² or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Minor development: The provision of dwellinghouses where (a) the number of dwellinghouses to be provided is less than 10; or (b) the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of less than 0.5 hectares and it is not known whether the development falls within (a).

The provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is less than 1,000 square metres, or development carried out on a site having an area of less than 1 hectare.

Nationally Described Space Standards: As set out in the Statutory Guidance on Technical Housing Standards (or its successor), including the minimum gross internal floor areas and storage as set out below.

Table 1. Minimum gross internal floor areas and storage (m²)

Number of bedrooms (b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37) *			1.0
1b	2p	50	58		1.5
2b	3p	61	70		2.0
2b	4p	70	79		2.0
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
3b	5p	86	93	99	2.5
3b	6p	95	102	108	2.5
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
4b	6p	99	106	112	3.0
4b	7p	108	115	121	3.0
4b	8p	117	124	130	3.0
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5
5b	7p	112	119	125	3.5
5b	8p	121	128	134	3.5
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
6b	8p	125	132	138	4.0

Original building: A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.

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. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

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.