

25 January to 5pm 8 March 2021 'Call for Sites 2021' Site Identification Form

St Albans City and District Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan 2020-2038. The 'Call for Sites' is an early opportunity for individuals, landowners and developers to suggest sites within the District for development over the next 15-20 years. The site suggestions received by us will be used to inform the preparation of the new Local Plan 2020-2038.

You are invited to put forward any new sites that you would like the Council to consider in its Housing Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). These should be capable of delivering 5 or more dwellings, or economic development on sites of 0.25 hectares or more (or 500 square metres of floor space or more). The Council will take account of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) submissions previously received since 2009 and therefore there is no need to resubmit these unless circumstances have changed. Sites from previous SHLAAs will form part of the Council's assessment. Proposed land uses can include:

- Housing
- Gypsy & Traveller Housing
- Mixed Use
- Employment
- Renewable and low carbon energy and heat
- Biodiversity Improvement / Offsetting
- Green Belt Compensatory Land
- Land for Tree Planting
- Other

To enable sites to be mapped digitally, please provide GIS shapefiles of your site, where possible.

The consultation period runs for six weeks between Monday 25 January to 5pm on Monday 8 March 2021.

Unfortunately, we cannot treat any of the information you provide as confidential.

It is important to note that not all sites received through the 'Call for Sites' will be appropriate for consideration as part of the Housing Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). As a general rule:

We encourage you to submit sites that are likely to become available for development or redevelopment between now and 2038.

Please do not submit sites that:

 Are already included as a housing allocation in the St Albans District Local Plan Review (November 1994) – i.e. sites that are listed in 'saved' Policies 4 and 5.

- Have already been submitted to the Council for consideration via previous 'Call for Sites' and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) processes (unless information is updated/changed).
- Already have planning permission for development, unless a new and different proposal is likely in the future; or
- Are situated outside St Albans City and District's administrative area.

If you wish to update information about a site previously submitted please complete the form below.

Please return the <u>form and site location plan</u> to the Spatial Planning and Design Team. We strongly encourage digital submissions via our online portal.

By online consultation portal:

http://stalbans-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/

By e-mail to: planning.policy@stalbans.gov.uk

By post to: St Albans Council Offices, St Peters Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 3JE

Due to COVID-19; offices being shut and officers working from home; submissions by post are discouraged.

Your Details	
Name	
Company/Organisation	ADPractice Ltd.
Address	2 Mill Walk, Wheathampstead, Herts
Postcode	AL4 8DT
Telephone	01582 834361
Email	
Your interest	☐Site Owner X Planning Consultant ☐Registered Social Landlord ☐Local Resident ☐Developer ☐Community ☐Other

Site Details	
Requirements: Delivers 5 or more of Provides economic metres of floor space	development on sites of 0.25 hectares or more (or 500 square
Site address/location (Please provide a map showing the site boundary)	Land to the West of High Meads, Wheathampstead
Site area (in hectares)	1.7 ha
Coordinates	Easting 16801 Northing 14039
Site Location Plan Attached	XYes ⊟Ne
GIS mapping shapefile attached (in .shp file format)	⊟Yes XNo DWG of site attached
Landownership (please include contact details if known)	(c/o Agent)
Current land use	Agricultural
Condition of current use (e.g. vacant, derelict)	Farmed
Suggested land use	X Housing ☐ Gypsy & Travellers ☐ Mixed Use (please specify) ☐ Employment ☐ Renewable and low carbon energy and heat ☐ Biodiversity Improvement / Offsetting ☐ Green Belt Compensatory Land ☐ Land for Tree Planting ☐ Other (please specify)
Reasons for suggested development / land use	See Attached Statement.

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Site Constraints	Contamination/pollution issues (previous hazardous land uses)	□ Yes X No
	Environmental issues (e.g. Tree Presentation Orders; SSSIs)	□ Yes X No
	Flood Risk	□ Yes X No
	Topography affecting site (land levels, slopes, ground conditions)	☐ Yes X No - Site on slope but not sufficient to stop development
	Utility Services (access to mains electricity, gas, water, drainage etc.)	⊟- Yes X No
	Legal issues (For example, restrictive covenants or ownership titles affecting the site)	□ Yes X No
	Access. Is the site accessible from a public highway without the need to cross land in a different ownership to the site?	X Yes ☐ No (If no please provide details of how the site could be accessed. Without this information the site will not be considered to be deliverable).

	Other constraints affecting the site	☐-Yes (If yes, please specify) X No
	☐ Planning Permission Granted ☐ Planning Permission Refused ☐ Pending Decision ☐ Application Withdrawn ☐ Planning Permission Lapsed ☐ Pre-Application Advice X Planning Permission Not Sough Other ☐ Other Please include details of the about planning reference numbers and	ght ove choice below (for example
Other comments	Please see attached statement.	

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Revised submission Feb 2021

Response to St Albans District Council's Call for Sites

On behalf of

Land off High Meads, Wheathampstead,

Introduction

We act for Harpenden Road in the south, around the back of Gustard Wood, as far north as The Slype. Part of this land is the large field known as Bury Farm, which abuts the western boundary of Wheathampstead. At the request of the Landowner, we have looked at their land in terms of whether there are any suitable sites for potential release for housing land to assist St Albans District Council in meeting their housing targets.

Initial Assessment

Our initial assessment is based on the Phase One Green Belt Study of land within the three Districts of Dacorum, St Albans and Welwyn/Hatfield prior to the previous plan, and the agricultural value of the land within our Client's ownership. Much of the land is identified as of high Green Belt value in the November 2013 Strategic Review carried out by SKM.

The land, the subject of this submission, is within the very large parcel of land identified as GB37 on SKM's strategic plan which also includes land further to the south of the Harpenden Road, Nomansland Common and Heartwood Forest. It is clear that the particular characteristics of the land to the north of Harpenden Road are quite different to that of Nomansland and Heartwood Forest. Notwithstanding this, we accept that this parcel of land forms an important function of separating Wheathampstead and Harpenden. We are, however, also conscious of the District Council's previous view, as expressed in their promotion of the site to the north west of Harpenden, that incremental incursions into some of the Green Belt parcels may not cause unacceptable damage to the purpose of the Green Belt or contradict the initial assessment.

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This is further reinforced by a Planning Inspector's decision in relation to the Welwyn/Hatfield Plan where she said "That is largely because the Phase One Green Belt Review was at such a strategic level as to render its findings on the extent of the potential harm to the purposes of the Green Belt, caused by development within the large parcels considered as a whole, debatable when applied to smaller individual potential development sites adjacent to the urban areas".

It is clear, therefore, that small scale sites, adjacent to existing urban areas, may well be acceptable in terms of the overall strategy for new residential development. This is obviously subject to the other criteria set out in any policies brought forward in response to the Inspectors comments relating to the recently withdrawn plan.

The Proposal

The existing boundary of Wheathampstead to the west is an irregular shape, with the submitted area forming an oblique angle between Bury Green and High Meads. We are of the view that there is the potential for a fairly straightforward area of 1.7 hectares being taken into the core of Wheathampstead. We have therefore prepared and enclose an illustrative layout as to how this could possibly be developed.

Whilst we note the District Council's requirements of a development density of somewhere in the region of 40 dwellings per hectare, our view is that, in order to keep a rationale and balanced development with the surrounding area, to produce sufficient social housing to meet the District Council's requirements of 40% and to provide a good landscaping barrier to the remaining Green Belt, we will need to reduce the density a little. It may, however, be possible to improve on the illustrative plan in this respect and this would be subject to negotiation if the site is accepted in principle as suitable for residential development.

A further two factors reducing the density on the illustrative scheme is the slightly awkward shape of the site and the provision of single storey retirement bungalows on a small green at the head of High Meads. We feel this would be, aesthetically and in planning terms, a desirable feature.

Sustainability

The site is readily connected to the centre of Wheathampstead with walking distances shorter than much of the existing Village. We have also shown a footpath to the south of the site, which connects through Local Authority land,

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onto Brewhouse Hill, as well as a connection to the existing footpath, which goes out across the current agricultural land towards Harpenden. The centre of Wheathampstead provides not only shopping and employment, but bus services to Harpenden, St Albans, Hitchin, Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City.

Conclusion

This proposal is a minor extension of Wheathampstead, in an area well connected and integrated with the rest of the Village and relatively close to the core of the existing settlement. The proposal gives the opportunity not only of providing valuable additional residential properties, but improving the landscape buffer to the agricultural land beyond, with no noticeable detrimental effect to the primary purposes of the Green Belt.

It should therefore be considered positively for future residential development.

In terms of availability, it is envisaged that the land would become available within no more than one year from designation.



HELAA Reference (Internal use only)

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Due to COVID-19; offices being shut and officers working from home; submissions by post are discouraged.

Your Details	
Name	
Company/Organisation	DLA Town Planning Ltd
Address	5 The Gavel Centre, Porters Wood, St Albans
Postcode	AL3 6PQ
Telephone	01727 85907
Email	
Your interest	□Site Owner X Planning Consultant □Registered Social Landlord □Local Resident □Developer □Community □Other

Site Details			
Requirements:Delivers 5 or more of the provides economic metres of floor space	developn	nent on sites of	0.25 hectares or more (or 500 square
Site address/location (Please provide a map showing the site boundary)		est of Lamer La	ane, Wheathampstead
Site area (in hectares)	2.7ha		
Coordinates	Easting	517767	Northing 214388
Site Location Plan Attached	X Yes □No		
GIS mapping shapefile attached (in .shp file format)	□Yes X No		
Landownership (please include contact details if known)			
Current land use	Vacant		
Condition of current use (e.g. vacant, derelict)	Vacant		
Suggested land use	☐ Mixed☐ Emple☐ Rene☐ X Biodiv☐ X Greer☐ X Land☐ Other☐	y & Travellers Use oyment wable and low versity Improve n Belt Compens for Tree Plantir r (please specif	ng (y)
Reasons for suggested development / land use		pe to achieve b	northern addition to Wheathampstead iodiversity targets as justified in the Call

development / land use	delivery of suggested development / land	☐ 11-15 Years
------------------------	--	---------------

Site Constraints	Contamination/pollution issues (previous hazardous land uses)	☐ Yes X No
	Environmental issues (e.g. Tree Presentation Orders; SSSIs)	☐ Yes X No
	Flood Risk	☐ Yes X No
	Topography affecting site (land levels, slopes, ground conditions)	☐ Yes X No
	Utility Services (access to mains electricity, gas, water, drainage etc.)	X Yes □ No
	Legal issues (For example, restrictive covenants or ownership titles affecting the site)	☐ Yes X No
	Access. Is the site accessible from a public highway without the need to cross land in a different ownership to the site?	X Yes ☐ No (If no please provide details of how the site could be accessed. Without this information the site will not be considered to be deliverable).

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Planning Status	☐ Planning Permission Granted ☐ Planning Permission Refused ☐ Pending Decision ☐ Application Withdrawn ☐ Planning Permission Lapsed ☐ Pre-Application Advice ☐ Planning Permission Not Sou ☐ Other Please include details of the about planning reference numbers and	ught ove choice below (for example
Other comments		



Land West of Lamer Lane, Wheathampstead

St Albans Call for Sites response 2021

Planning Report on behalf of

DLA Ref: 95/062 March 2021

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- This report is submitted in response to the Call for Sites on behalf of the owner of the land west of Lamer Lane, Wheathampstead.
 The site is being promoted for residential development.
- 1.2 There is an evident and urgent need for additional housing sites within St Albans district. A greater emphasis on small and medium-sized sites is needed to ensure a balanced portfolio and provide a more robust and resilient housing land supply. The Council's new Green Belt Review will therefore need to assess the specific Green Belt impact arising from potential development sites, rather than the previous broad-brush assessment.
- 1.3 Wheathampstead is a Specified Settlement within the district and is clearly a sustainable location for growth. The report site is well located in relation to key services and facilities and is within walking distance of schools, shops, health and leisure facilities. It lies around 50m from a bus stop and is one of the closest potential development sites to the heart of the village and the facilities available there.
- 1.4 The site adjoins built development to south and would form a sensible northern extension to the village. The site will not extend the built envelope of Wheathampstead any closer to

- neighbouring settlements so will not cause coalescence in any form.
- 1.5 Critically, the site offers up a substantial area of land north of the proposed built development that would be made available as public open space and could be used for tree planting and ecological enhancements. The community benefit of this element of the proposal offsets the impact of development on the Green Belt and reflects the guidance in national policy regarding developments delivering improvements to remaining Green Belt.
- 1.6 There are no constraints that would prevent development.
- 1.7 The site is in single ownership and could be brought forward for development quickly. There are no 'ransom strips' present and the development is not dependent upon overcoming any constraints, including the need to deliver significant infrastructure. This is particularly important given the urgency of the housing need and the time needed for strategic sites to deliver on the ground.
- 1.8 The site should be allocated for housing and removed from the Green Belt in the next iteration of the Local Plan.

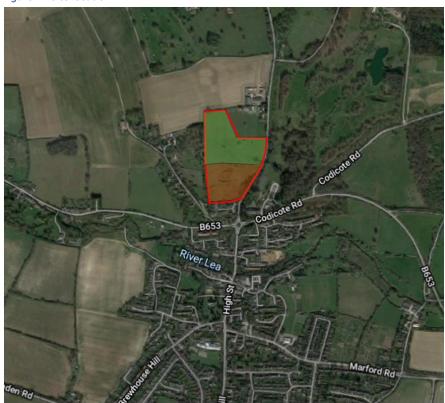


2.0 **SITE & CONTEXT ANALYSIS**

2.1 Location

The site, shown in Figure 1 below is located, abuts the northern boundary of the large village of Wheathampstead, to the west of Lamer Lane, (B651) close to its roundabout junction with the B653 to the south.

Figure 1 - Site location



2.2 Context and land uses

The site comprises a broadly rectangular site of some 2.7ha, located to the north of Garden Court, a residential cul-de-sac, with a partial, well treed return onto Lamer Lane to the east; the northern section of the eastern boundary being formed by the footpath running north-westwards. To the north and west it adjoins open land, the western boundary being demarcated by a mature tree line.

2.3 Access

The site would be accessed from Lamer Lane to the east of the site.

2.4 **Development Plan Notation**

The proposals map of the St Albans District Local Plan Review 1994 shows the Site within the Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB), abutting the Green Belt boundary and the Specified Settlement of Wheathampstead to the south. The site also adjoins the Wheathampstead Conservation Area. The site is not subject to any other designation or at risk from flooding.

2.5 Local services

The site enjoys excellent access to a range of local services and facilities. As detailed below, the majority of these services are located within 2km of the site.



 Table 2.6: Summary of Local Services (approximate measurements)

Facility	Local Provision	Proximity
		to site (km)
Retail	Wheathampstead Post Office	0.47
	Ushers Bakery	0.58
	Tesco Express	0.50
	Impression Unisex Salon	0.47
	ATM	0.50
Education	St Albans High School	0.15
	St Helens Primary School	0.83
	Beech Hyde Primary School	1.43
Places of Worship	St Helens Church	0.65
	St Thomas More RC Church	0.87
Health	The Village Surgery	1.08
	Manor Pharmacy	0.58
Sport/Leisure	Wheathampstead Memorial Hall & Library	1.03
	Marford Road Playing Fields	0.95
Employment	Village Centre	0.60

the Report Site, providing frequent direct services to St Albans, St Pancras International, Gatwick Airport and Brighton to the south and Luton Airport, Luton and Bedford to the north.

Harpenden Railway Station is located some 5.5km to the west of

2.7

2.6 **Public Transport**

The site is located within 50m of regular bus routes that extend along Lamer Lane (B651) and 300m of routes that operate along the Lower Luton Road (B653), so as to able to easily access the regular services to the neighbouring towns of Harpenden, Luton, St Albans, Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City.



3.0 **STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

- 3.1 This Call for Sites opportunity marks the start of a new Local Plan process. With the withdrawal of the draft Local Plan in 2020 following the withdrawal of the Strategic Local Plan in 2017, the need for an up-to-date strategic framework for development is more urgent than ever.
- 3.2 The objectively assessed housing need for St Albans district is around 900 dwellings per year. This should be the starting point. However, the Council will also be aware of neighbouring authorities that are struggling to meet their own housing requirements. The Council will need to have open and constructive dialogue with these authorities if it is to satisfy the Duty to Cooperate. The potential for St Albans district to assist with meeting housing needs from surrounding areas should not be dismissed at this stage. There is considerable development potential within the district, partly stemming from the fact that Green Belt boundaries have not been properly reviewed for around 35 years. The Council should not see the 900 homes per year target as a ceiling if greater potential emerges through the Green Belt review or other evidence.

Housing need

- 3.3 The reliance on a Local Plan adopted in 1994 and the housing policies and land allocations therein has had a catastrophic effect on housing delivery within the district. With an annual housing target of around 900 homes per year and annual housing completions since 2001 running at 376 homes per year, a whole generation of young people have been largely unable to access the housing market. Recent performance can be judged by the latest Housing Delivery Test results for St Albans District (published in February 2021), which indicated a HDT measurement of only 63% for the period 2017/18 to 2019/20 the 33rd worst of the 298 local authorities in England.
- 3.4 While housing completions have, to a degree, been propped up by recent changes to permitted development rights, these have not had an impact on the delivery of affordable housing. The target of 200 affordable homes per year from the 1994 Local Plan has not been met. Since 1994, 1,826 affordable homes have been delivered, against a target of 5,200 only 34% of the target and a shortfall of 3,374 affordable homes. In 2019/20, only 31 affordable homes were completed just 7% of total completions.
- 3.5 The delivery of a new Local Plan with updated housing targets, new housing allocations and new Green Belt releases is of the utmost importance for the district.



The portfolio of housing sites

- 3.6 To meet housing need will require the delivery of a mixed portfolio of housing sites. A range of sizes, types and locations will be needed to enable a wide range of housebuilding organisations to contribute to meeting needs, including arrangements for self-build properties.
- 3.7 The previous focus only on strategic sites of 500 dwellings or more must change. As highlighted by the Inspectors examining the now-withdrawn draft Local Plan, and as recognised by the Council's Planning Portfolio holder, small and medium-sized sites within the Green Belt must be seriously considered.

Green Belt considerations

3.8 The Council's Green Belt review from 2012 provides a useful starting point but is in no way adequate to support a new Local Plan. The focus on strategic sites must change and the Green Belt review must look at the site-specific impacts of proposed development sites. The broad-brush, coarse-grain approach to assessing parcels of Green Belt land in the 2012 Review must be developed into a more sophisticated and nuanced review of development potential. This will include both strategic and smaller-scale housing and employment sites.



4.0 **PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 **Site**

There is no relevant planning history on this site.



5.0 PREVIOUS SHLAA ASSESSMENT

5.1.1 This site has been submitted through previous Call for Sites invitations and was assessed in the 2016 SHLAA under the reference no. SHLAA-GB-W-433. At that stage the Council decided not to shortlist the site as was then presented. The reasons for this conclusion were:

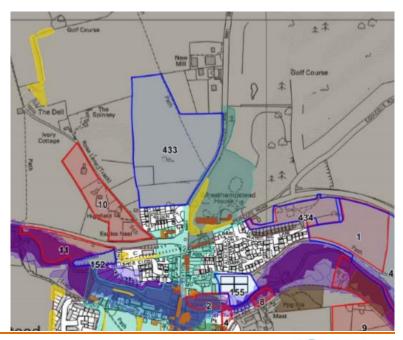
The site makes a crucial contribution to Green Belt purposes. The land rises up on a ridge which is very prominent when viewed from the open countryside to the west and is also visible from the Lower Luton Road to the south. The area is rural in character and is visually distinct from the built up area of Wheathampstead to the south of the Lower Luton Road. The setting of Wheathampstead Conservation Area would be affected by development in this location.

Development would create significant additional development pressure on adjoining open fields to the west

5.1.2 It is important to note that this conclusion was reached in respect of the 7.32ha site as a whole being developed. The site plan contained in the SHLAA is included at Figure 2 below. The way in which the site is now presented, and particularly the extent of built development and open space now proposed requires a fresh examination.

5.1.3 It is also important to note that the Council's 2016 SHLAA conclusions were reached in the context of a draft Local Plan promoting 436 dwellings per year. The target now required from the draft Local Plan is 900 homes per year, meaning sites that were previously rejected must now be revisited.

Figure 2: SHLAA 2016 extract





6.0 **SITE CONSTRAINTS**

6.1 The Council's Call for Sites 2021 pro forma seeks information on any constraints affecting potential sites. While the constraints applying to this site are discussed throughout this report, the information is summarised here in the same format as requested on the pro forma, for ease of reference.

6.2 **Contamination/Pollution**

No suspected issues of contamination or pollution that would preclude development.

6.3 **Environmental issues**

No significant environmental constraints other than the site is located within the Green Belt.

6.4 Flood risk

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 and therefore is at very low risk of flooding.

6.5 **Topography**

The site is essentially level such that large amounts of spoil would not need to be removed.

6.6 **Utility services**

It is likely that utilities are available to the neighbouring residential dwellings in Garden Court to which a connection could easily be made.

6.7 **Legal issues**

The site is in single ownership and could be brought forward for development quickly. There are no 'ransom strips' present.

6.8 Access

The proposed site layout shows that access can be achieved off the public highway from Lamer Lane.



7.0 OUTLINE OF PROPOSAL

- 7.1 The overall site extends to around 7.3ha. Of that area, around 3.1ha (42%) is proposed for residential development. This area abuts Garden Court to the south and would form a sensible northern addition to Wheathampstead.
- 7.2 The remainder of the site, around 4.2ha (58% of the total site) is proposed for open space, see Figure 3 below. The Council is taking seriously the challenge of climate change and is including within the remit of the Call for Sites, sites for uses such as Biodiversity Improvement/Offsetting, Green Belt Compensatory Land and Land for Tree Planting. On that basis, the northern part of the report site is being promoted as a site for tree planting, biodiversity enhancements and public open space in association with the proposed built development to the south.
- 7.3 The route of Public Footpath 57 runs past the site and this provides the opportunity to link the proposed open space with the wider rights of way network. Currently, the link between the end of public footpath 57 and Wheathampstead village centre is via a relatively narrow footway alongside Lamer Lane. As part of the proposals, the length of footway alongside the report site a distance of around 110m could either be widened or moved to run within the development site along a dedicated route. This

- would represent a significant upgrade to existing pedestrian facilities and help to promote walking both as a means of sustainable transport and for recreation/health benefits.
- 7.4 It is envisaged that the 4.2ha would include substantial areas of tree planting, particularly at the northern edge of the site. Further south, the open space could take a more open form with areas for recreation and exercise, as well as areas for biodiversity enhancements.
- 7.5 The provision of this area of open space to the north of the site provides a clear long-term boundary to development and, if the land were to be taken on by a public body, gives a further level of control over future growth patterns around the village.
- 7.6 In terms of built development, the 3.1ha could yield around 75100 dwellings, depending on the density adopted. An indicative layout was produced by architect, Briffa Phillips, illustrating a total of 77 units on broadly the same site as now proposed, although slightly smaller (see Figure 4 below). As an alternative, the site could make provision for a 60-bed care home, which would take up around 1ha of the site, leaving the remaining area capable of yielding 50 homes. Further discussion with the Council on the mix of units and type of residential accommodation proposed would be welcome.





Figure 3: indicative development concept

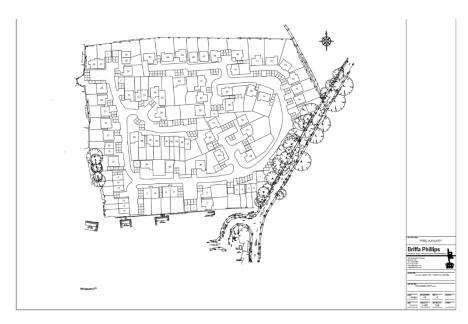


Figure 4: indicative residential layout



8.0 **GREEN BELT IMPACT**

8.1.0 Paragraph 134 of the NPPF states that the Green Belt serves five purposes. These five purposes have been set out below with an assessment on the site's contributions to each purpose.

8.2.0 Purpose 1 - to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Development of the site would extend the built area of Wheathampstead further north than its current extent. Wheathampstead itself was not considered a "large built-up area" for the purposes of the Council's previous Green Belt assessment so the contribution of the report site to this purpose is as part of a wider area of Green Belt between larger settlements. The proposed open space and tree planting proposed to the north of the proposed built development would provide an "end stop" to any built development and would help to secure a long-term boundary to further growth.

8.3.0 Purpose 2 – to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.

The nearest settlement to the north beyond the site is the hamlet of Gustard Wood, with the next nearest settlement beyond that would be the small village of Kimpton some 4km away. The nearest towns would be Harpenden to the west and Hatfield to the east. While the development site does fall between Harpenden and Hatfield, the nature of the site means the contribution to preventing coalescence is extremely limited.

8.4.0 Purpose 3 – to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

The land is currently undeveloped and as such development would constitute encroachment in some form. However, this is the case for most potential development sites in the Green Belt and, as such, this contribution is of limited value in determining between potential sites. Of more importance is the proposed benefits arising from this scheme in the form of tree planting and ecological enhancements that would contribute positively to the countryside setting and help to offset any impact on the Green Belt.

8.5.0 Purpose 4 – to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.

The land lies adjacent to the Wheathampstead Conservation Area. However, it is separated from the Conservation Area by Lamer Lane and this feature, together with the trees on either side of the road, limit the relationship with the site and limit any impact the development of the site would cause.



8.6.0 Purpose 5 – to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

It is a common assumption that all Green Belt land within the District makes a significant contribution to this purpose.

8.7.0 **Summary of harm to Green Belt**

Paragraph 133 of the NPPF stipulates that "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". Thus, whilst openness is an essential characteristic, in assessing its importance this cannot be divorced from the overriding aim of preventing urban sprawl. This notion is supported by paragraph 139 of the Framework, with regard to Green Belt boundaries. This states that when defining boundaries, local planning authorities should, inter alia, "not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open". As such, it is considered that the harm would be very limited for the following reasons:

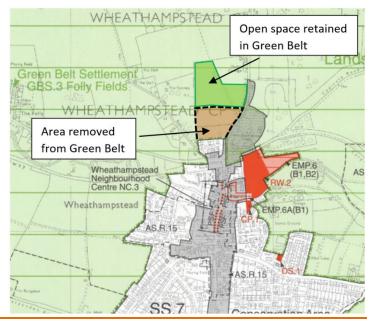
- The extent of built development is restricted to that adjacent to the current built-up edge of the village.
- A substantial area of land north of the proposed development would be made available as public open space and used for tree planting and ecological enhancements. This reflects the guidance in the NPPF paragraph 138 that seeks any Green Belt

impact to be "offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land." The proposal represents exactly the sort of scheme envisaged by government policy.

8.8.0 **New position of Green Belt boundary**

The current position of the Green Belt boundary as defined in the 1994 Local Plan is shown on Figure 5 below, together with the part of the report site proposed to be removed from the Green Belt. The open space area could remain in the Green Belt.

Figure 5: Existing Green Belt boundary with report site shown





9.0 **CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.1 There is an evident and urgent need for additional housing sites within St Albans district. A greater emphasis on small and medium-sized sites is needed to ensure a balanced portfolio and provide a more robust and resilient housing land supply. The Council's new Green Belt Review will therefore need to assess the specific Green Belt impact arising from potential development sites, rather than the previous broad-brush assessment.
- 9.2 Wheathampstead is a Specified Settlement within the district and is clearly a sustainable location for growth. The report site is well located in relation to key services and facilities and is within walking distance of schools, shops, health and leisure facilities. It lies around 50m from a bus stop and is one of the closest potential development sites to the heart of the village and the facilities available there.
- 9.3 The site adjoins built development to south and would form a sensible northern extension to the village. The site will not extend the built envelope of Wheathampstead any closer to neighbouring settlements so will not cause coalescence in any form.
- 9.4 Critically, the site offers up a substantial area of land north of the proposed built development that would be made available as

public open space and could be used for tree planting and ecological enhancements. The community benefit of this element of the proposal offsets the impact of development on the Green Belt and reflects the guidance in national policy regarding developments delivering improvements to remaining Green Belt.

- 9.5 There are no constraints that would prevent development.
- 9.6 The site is in single ownership and could be brought forward for development quickly. There are no 'ransom strips' present and the development is not dependent upon overcoming any constraints, including the need to deliver significant infrastructure. This is particularly important given the urgency of the housing need and the time needed for strategic sites to deliver on the ground.
- 9.7 The site should be allocated for housing and removed from the Green Belt in the next iteration of the Local Plan.

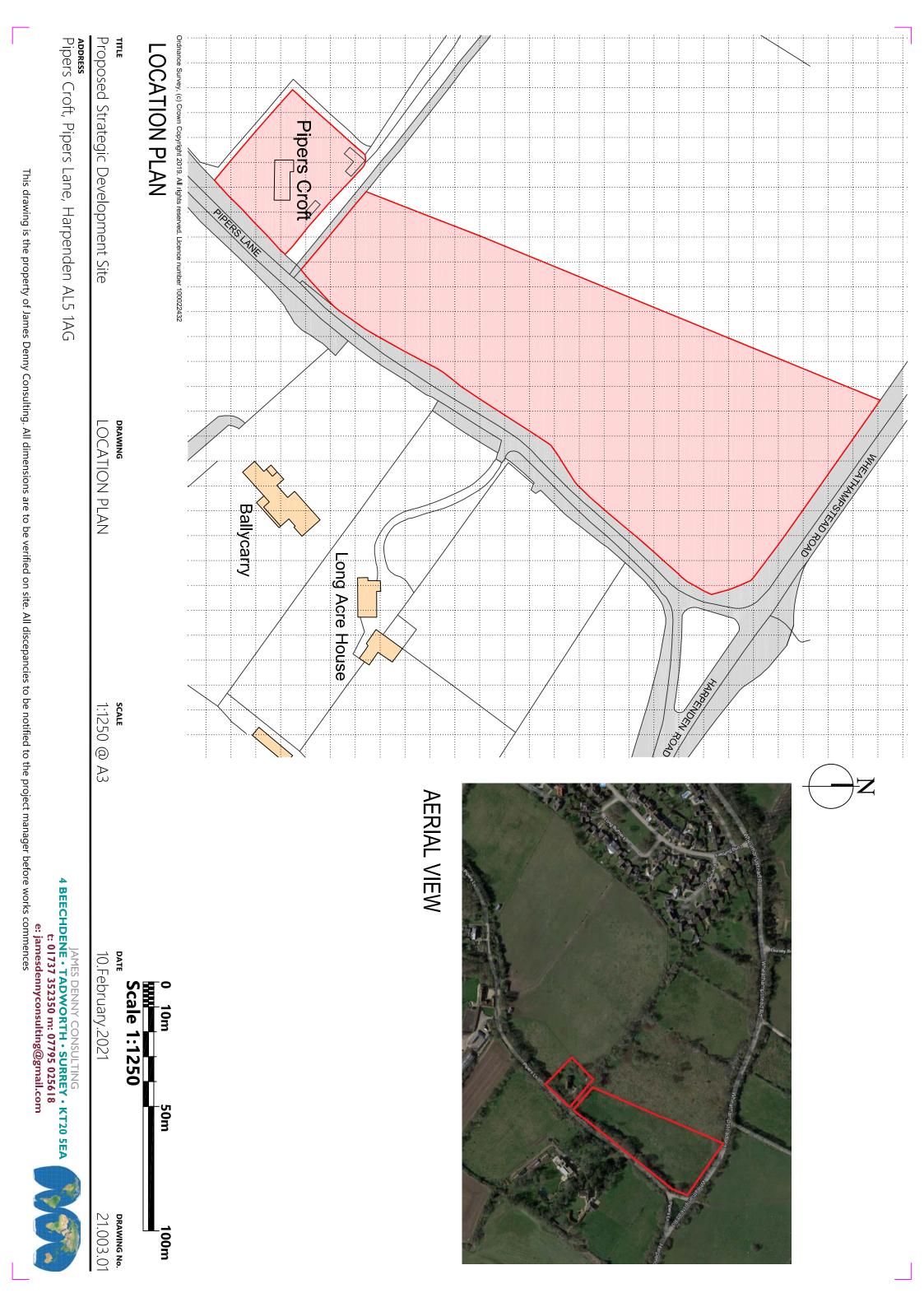


Please find attached a location plan and broader aerial view of the immediate vicinity of our clients land at Pipers Croft, Pipers Lane, Harpenden AL5 1AG.

It is understood that the council are currently considering sites through a 'Call for Sites' process expiring Monday 8 th March. Our client wishes for this site to be considered with others for a strategic relationship with the Council for the broader development of adjacent parcels of land with others. Our client retains the Freehold of the site which has a combined area of 1.7htrs (4.2acres). Currently it has a single dwelling of no Architectural Merit, that could be considered as access to a broader development site to the rear; or alternatively as a margin to increase the road width of Pipers lane able to improve the road junction with Wheathampstead Road allowing access to a development site, whilst being developable in its own right.

WH23

N.B Pipers Croft Parcel (house and gardens) has been withdrawn from site promotion





VH24	
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HELAA Reference (Internal use only)

25 January to 5pm 8 March 2021 'Call for Sites 2021' Site Identification Form

St Albans City and District Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan 2020-2038. The 'Call for Sites' is an early opportunity for individuals, landowners and developers to suggest sites within the District for development over the next 15-20 years. The site suggestions received by us will be used to inform the preparation of the new Local Plan 2020-2038.

You are invited to put forward any new sites that you would like the Council to consider in its Housing Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). These should be capable of delivering 5 or more dwellings, or economic development on sites of 0.25 hectares or more (or 500 square metres of floor space or more). The Council will take account of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) submissions previously received since 2009 and therefore there is no need to resubmit these unless circumstances have changed. Sites from previous SHLAAs will form part of the Council's assessment. Proposed land uses can include:

- Housing
- Gypsy & Traveller Housing
- Mixed Use
- Employment
- Renewable and low carbon energy and heat
- Biodiversity Improvement / Offsetting
- Green Belt Compensatory Land
- Land for Tree Planting
- Other

To enable sites to be mapped digitally, please provide GIS shapefiles of your site, where possible.

The consultation period runs for six weeks between Monday 25 January to 5pm on Monday 8 March 2021.

Unfortunately, we cannot treat any of the information you provide as confidential.

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We encourage you to submit sites that are likely to become available for development or redevelopment between now and 2038.

Please do not submit sites that:

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- Have already been submitted to the Council for consideration via previous 'Call for Sites' and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) processes (unless information is updated/changed).
- Already have planning permission for development, unless a new and different proposal is likely in the future; or
- Are situated outside St Albans City and District's administrative area.

If you wish to update information about a site previously submitted please complete the form below.

Please return the <u>form and site location plan</u> to the Spatial Planning and Design Team. We strongly encourage digital submissions via our online portal.

By online consultation portal:

http://stalbans-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/

By e-mail to: planning.policy@stalbans.gov.uk

By post to: St Albans Council Offices, St Peters Street, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 3JE

Due to COVID-19; offices being shut and officers working from home; submissions by post are discouraged.

Your Details	
Name	
Company/Organisation	JB Planning Associates Ltd
Address	Chells Manor, Chells Road, Stevenage
Postcode	SG2 7AA
Telephone	01438 312130
Email	
Your interest	□Site Owner ✓Planning Consultant □Registered Social Landlord □Local Resident □Developer □Community □Other

Site Details				
Requirements: Delivers 5 or more dwellings or; Provides economic development on sites of 0.25 hectares or more (or 500 square metres of floor space or more)				
Site address/location (Please provide a map showing the site boundary)	Woodlar	nds, 13 Saunce	y Wood, Harpei	nden AL5 5DP
Site area (in hectares)	0.67			
Coordinates	Easting	514995	Northing	215852
Site Location Plan Attached	✓Yes □No			
GIS mapping shapefile attached (in .shp file format)	□Yes ✓No			
Landownership (please include contact details if known)				
Current land use	Residen	tial		
Condition of current use (e.g. vacant, derelict)				
Suggested land use	 ✓ Housing ☐ Gypsy & Travellers ☐ Mixed Use (please specify) ☐ Employment ☐ Renewable and low carbon energy and heat ☐ Biodiversity Improvement / Offsetting ☐ Green Belt Compensatory Land ☐ Land for Tree Planting ☐ Other (please specify) 			
Reasons for suggested development / land use	To bette	r utilise the land	d in order to deli	ver additional housing.

Likely timescale for delivery of suggested development / land use	✓ 1-5 Years □ 6-10 Years □ 11-15 Years □ 15+ Years

Site Constraints	Contamination/pollution issues (previous hazardous land uses)	☐ Yes ✓ No
	Environmental issues (e.g. Tree Presentation Orders; SSSIs)	☐ Yes ✓ No
	Flood Risk	☐ Yes ✓ No
	Topography affecting site (land levels, slopes, ground conditions)	☐ Yes ✓ No
	Utility Services (access to mains electricity, gas, water, drainage etc.)	✓ Yes □ No
	Legal issues (For example, restrictive covenants or ownership titles affecting the site)	□ Yes ✓ No
	Access. Is the site accessible from a public highway without the need to cross land in a different ownership to the site?	✓ Yes ☐ No (If no please provide details of how the site could be accessed. Without this information the site will not be considered to be deliverable).
	Other constraints affecting the site	☐ Yes (If yes, please specify) ✓ No

Planning Status	☐ Planning Permission Granted
	☐ Planning Permission Refused
	☐ Pending Decision
	☐ Application Withdrawn
	☐ Planning Permission Lapsed
	☐ Pre-Application Advice
	✓ Planning Permission Not Sought
	☐ Other
	Please include details of the above choice below (for example
	planning reference numbers and site history)
Other comments	



Woodlands, Sauncey Wood, Harpenden SITE LOCATION PLAN

Client: RIchard Wimms, Woodlands, Sauncey Wood, Harpenden

1649/01 03/03/2021

1:1,250 @ A4

metres 25



jb planning associates town planning and development consultants

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Chells Manor, Chells Lane STEVENAGE, SG2 7AA

T 01438 312130

info@jbplanning.com www.jbplanning.com

jb planning associates

8 March 2021

BY E-MAIL: planning.policy@stalbans.gov.uk
St Albans Council Offices
St Peters Street
St Albans
Hertfordshire
AL1 3JE

Dear Sirs

St Albans Call for Sites 2021 Consultation

Please find attached a completed 'Call for Sites 2021' Site Identification Form, which is submitted on behalf of our Client,

The address of the Site, which is owned by our Client, is Woodlands, 13 Sauncey Wood, Harpenden AL5 5DP. It is a residential property extending to 0.67 ha in size and located to the north-east of Harpenden within the hamlet of Sauncey Wood.

As explained further below, our Client's Site is capable of accommodating five dwellings at an appropriate density which makes better use of the site, but which would still be in keeping with the existing low-density character of neighbouring development.

Site Description

The Site was previously developed with many outbuildings (circa 16 stables plus several barns) which were demolished by our Client in the early 2000's. Please see enclosed photographs (**Appendix 1**). Most of the concrete bases still exist.

The buildings on the site now comprise the main house, extensive decking, detached gym, large stable block, and a three-car detached garage. All of the associated land has been used as a garden since the property was purchased in 1998.

The Site is bounded by three other houses and two roads (Common Lane and Sauncey Wood). It is therefore enclosed by built form, with no soft boundaries to open countryside.

The Site boundary is mainly defined by very large mature trees (oak/ash/conifers) combined with close board fencing. This affords significant privacy for the site, but also from neighbouring houses. There are no tree preservation orders relating to the site.

The Site is located in Flood Zone 1, the lowest category of flood risk; there are no known contamination issues; and it is relatively flat in nature. It can therefore be developed easily without the need for cut and fill operations to create a suitable development platform.



Access to the Site is already established from Sauncey Wood, but the opportunity also exists to access the Site from Common Lane (subject to highway advice) given that our Client controls this frontage. Consequently, there is the potential for either or both roads to be utilised in order to access the site subject to further highway assessment.

Appendix 5 of the Publication Draft Local Plan (2018) set out a list of sites with planning permission. We consider it important to note that this included 5/2016/0714 in respect of 7 Sauncey Wood, where it identified that planning permission had been granted for one dwelling on 20 June 2016. This being a substantially larger replacement dwelling. We consider that this demonstrates that the principle of further residential intensification in this locality is acceptable.

Planning Policy Considerations

We consider that the following content of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 to be pertinent in relation to the justification for the allocation of the site in the forthcoming Draft Local Plan.

Paragraph 68 states that small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and recognises that these are often built-out relatively quickly. For that reason, in order to promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should seek to identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare. It gives great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes.

We consider that our Client's property to be a small sized site that is fully capable of being developed within the first five years of the Plan's adoption and would assist the Council in achieving the 10% requirement as identified above.

Paragraph 117 highlights that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. It also emphasises that strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or 'brownfield' land. We consider it important to have regard to the definition of Previously Developed Land (PDL) as set out in Annex 2 of the NPPF:

"Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape".

It is important to recognise that in relation to the exclusion of residential gardens, Sauncey Wood is not located within a built-up area. Therefore, the whole of the site is considered to be Previously Developed Land (PDL). The High Court Judgment in relation to Dartford BC v Secretary of State (21 January 2016) [Neutral Citation Number: [2016] EWHC 635(Admin) CO/4129/2015] and the subsequent Court of Appeal Judgment dated 14 March 2017 [Neutral Citation Number: [2017] EWCA Civ 141 CO/4129/2015] demonstrate why this is the case.

The development proposed would better utilise the site by delivering much needed housing on previously developed land, whilst at the same time still being of an appropriate density that would reflect the existing nature and characteristics of neighbouring housing in the locality.

Paragraph 122 specifies that planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account the identified need for different types of housing and the availability of land suitable for accommodating. It also refers to the availability and capacity of existing and proposed infrastructure and services and to sustainable travel modes that limit future car use.

The site is in a sustainable location which is approximately 2 km from Harpenden railway station and town centre, and 650m from Katherine Warington Secondary School. The locality has also recently been the subject of proposed major Broad Location for growth (see section below).

Paragraph 123 states that where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site. Local Plans should contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible.

It is evident that St Albans District is under considerable pressure in terms of identifying sufficient sites to meet its overall housing needs. It is also clear that lack of affordability is a huge issue of concern given local people's significant inability to access the housing market. Consequently, there is a very strong and urgent need for smaller scale provision in the new Plan such as our Client's site.

Broad Location for Growth

It is important to note that the recently withdrawn St Albans City and District Local Plan 2020-2036 Publication Draft (2018) proposed various Broad Locations for Growth. These included North East Harpenden. It is evident from the following policy extract that a major urban extension to Harpenden was being proposed that would have resulted in the town's expansion, which would have resulted in new residential development in very close proximity to our Client's Site.

"Policy S6 vii) - North East Harpenden Broad Location

Objective: To provide an urban extension of Harpenden.

Proposals: The development will be required to deliver:

- 1. Masterplanned development led by the Council in collaboration with local communities, landowners and other stakeholders.
- 2. Minimum capacity 760 dwellings.
- 3. The 760 dwelling figure above includes at least one 50+ home C3 Flexi-care scheme and 10 units to provide special needs accommodation, in accordance with Policy L2.
- 4. Minimum 40% Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy L3.
- 5. Minimum overall net density 40 dwellings per hectare.

- 6. Housing size, type and mix as set out in Policy L1 and Appendix 6.
- 7. Strategic and local public open space, including managed woodland and ecological network links.
- 8. Retention of important trees and landscape features.
- 9. Recreation space and public open space.
- 10. A site for and appropriate contributions towards a 2 FE primary school, including Early Years provision.
- 11. Transport network (including walking and cycling links) and public transport services upgrades/improvements.
- 12. 3% of homes provided to be self-build housing.
- 13. Sufficient assets to provide sustainable management of community facilities, open spaces and parklands.
- 14. Excellence in design, energy efficiency and water management.
- 15. Appropriate renewable energy production and supply mechanisms".

Whilst we fully recognise that the Publication Draft Local Plan has now been formally withdrawn by the Council, we consider that, given the District's overall housing needs, there is a very high likelihood that the new Local Plan will contain either a very similar or amended proposal for growth to the northeast of Harpenden. In which case, we believe that this would provide additional support for the allocation of our Client's Site. Not least, because of the physical changes that would occur in the locality given the outward expansion of residential development including a significant level of new infrastructure that would be provided as a result of any urban extension.

Conclusion

The Site is capable of accommodating 5 dwellings at a density in keeping with the local character of the area and making use of PDL. It is situated in a locality that St Albans Council itself recently identified as a Broad Location for Growth that was suitable to accommodate an urban extension to the north east of Harpenden. The Site is a sustainable location with good access to Katherine Warington Secondary School, Harpenden railway station and Harpenden town centre's facilities and services.

Please do not hesitate to let us know if you require any further information or wish to discuss any aspects of our submission.

Yours faithfully



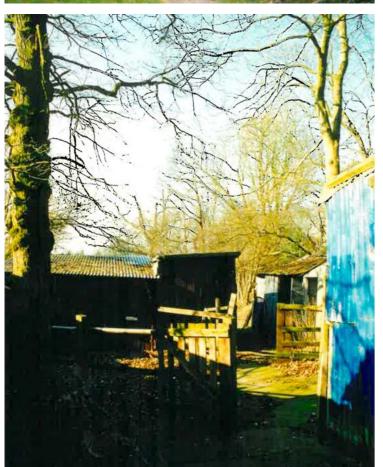
Appendix 1



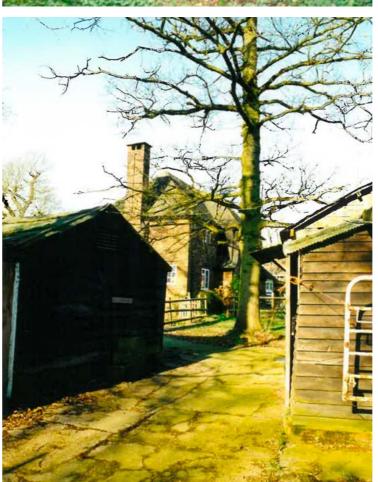












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25 January to 5pm 8 March 2021 'Call for Sites 2021' Site Identification Form

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Your Details		
Name	Mr A Newman	
Company/Organisation	LK2 Architects Ltd	
Address	Studio 2, Deepdale Lane, Deepdale Enterprise Park, Lincoln.	
Postcode	LN2 2LL	
Telephone		
Email		
Your interest	□Site Owner ☑Planning Consultant □Registered Social Landlord □Local Resident □Developer □Community □Other	

Site Details					
Requirements: Delivers 5 or more dwellings or; Provides economic development on sites of 0.25 hectares or more (or 500 square metres of floor space or more)					
Site address/location (Please provide a map showing the site boundary)	Blackbridge, Wheathampstead, Sheepcote Lane, St Albans, AL4 8ND (Site Location attached)				
Site area (in hectares)	57 Hectares.				
Coordinates	Easting	518801	Northing 214675		
Site Location Plan Attached	⊻Yes □No				
GIS mapping shapefile attached (in .shp file format)	☑Yes □No				
Landownership (please include contact details if known)	Tarmac Aggregates Ltd				
Current land use	Semi Re	estored – F	ill Site		
Condition of current use (e.g. vacant, derelict)	Vacant.				
Suggested land use	☐ Mixed ☐ Employ ☐ Rene ☐ Biodiv ☐ Green ☑ Land ☑ Other Sports, L	y & Travelled Use (plead oyment wable and versity Import Belt Comfor Tree Pland (please spand)	low carbon energy and heat rovement / Offsetting pensatory Land anting pecify) Recreation – F2(c)		
Reasons for suggested development / land use	Strategi	c Need. No	ted in Justification Document.		

Likely timescale for delivery of suggested development / land use	☑1-5 Years ☐ 6-10 Years ☐ 11-15 Years ☐ 15+ Years

Site Constraints	Contamination/pollution issues (previous hazardous land uses)	✓ Yes □ No
	Environmental issues (e.g. Tree Presentation Orders; SSSIs)	☑ Yes □ No
	Flood Risk	☐ Yes ☑ No
	Topography affecting site (land levels, slopes, ground conditions)	☐ Yes ☑ No
	Utility Services (access to mains electricity, gas, water, drainage etc.)	☐ Yes ☑ No
	Legal issues (For example, restrictive covenants or ownership titles affecting the site)	✓ Yes☐ NoNoted in JustificationDocument.
	Access. Is the site accessible from a public highway without the need to cross land in a different ownership to the site?	✓ Yes ☐ No (If no please provide details of how the site could be accessed. Without this information the site will not be considered to be deliverable).

	Other constraints affecting the site	☐ Yes (If yes, please specify) ☑ No
Planning Status	 □ Planning Permission Granted □ Planning Permission Refused □ Pending Decision □ Application Withdrawn □ Planning Permission Lapsed □ Pre-Application Advice ☑ Planning Permission Not Sou □ Other 	
	Please include details of the about planning reference numbers and N/A	
Other comments		



