

# **WELWYN HATFIELD DISTRICT PLAN**

## ***WRITTEN STATEMENT***

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Purpose of the Plan**

- 1.1 This document is the new local plan for the district of Welwyn Hatfield for the period up to 2011. It replaces the current statutory local plan, the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Alterations No.1. It contains the local planning framework, policies and proposals, which will guide the development and use of land in the district over the next 10 years and against which the Council will consider planning applications.
- 1.2 This document is the result of a full review of the current District Plan. There are several reasons why a comprehensive review was necessary:
  - (a) The former Plan was first prepared in the early 1990s. Although alterations to it were adopted as recently as 1998, these were limited to certain parts of the Plan to roll it forward to 2001, pending the completion of the Structure Plan Review. The former Plan was therefore reaching the end of its 'lifetime' and needed a complete review.
  - (b) The County Council adopted a new Structure Plan in 1998 (shortly after the alterations to the current District Plan were adopted) setting out a revised strategic framework for Hertfordshire for the period through to 2011 based on the principle of sustainable development. The new Plan has been updated to accord with this.
  - (c) There have been significant changes in Government planning policies. In particular, sustainable development, design quality, maximising the use of 'brownfield' land and reducing the need to travel have become central objectives of the planning system. Greater emphasis has also been given to diversifying the rural economy and development in town centres. These have required a fundamental review of the Plan's strategy, objectives and key policy areas.

### **Scope and Status of the Plan**

- 1.3 This Plan is a legal document. Together with the Structure Plan, the Waste Plan, and the Minerals Local Plan, it forms the statutory development plan for the district. The Structure Plan provides the strategic policies for the district; this Plan provides the local policies. This plan must be in general conformity with the Structure Plan and accord with national and regional planning guidance. The Plan has been prepared within this overall policy context, which is summarised in paragraphs 1.14 -1.18 below.
- 1.4 As the adopted statutory local plan, its policies and proposals may only relate to the development and use of land. This is stipulated by planning legislation. However, a wide range of social, economic and environmental issues were taken into account in preparing the Plan, including the objectives of other non-land use strategies mentioned in the policy context below. Where appropriate, relevant non-land use issues and strategies are explained in the supporting text to policies.
- 1.5 The Plan only deals with those planning issues that are the responsibility of Welwyn Hatfield District Council. It does not cover mineral excavation and

waste disposal, which are 'county matters' and are addressed in separate Minerals and Waste Local Plans produced by the County Council.

- 1.6 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 applications for development must be determined in accordance with the policies in the adopted development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This does not mean that **every** planning decision should be made in strict accordance with the policies in this Plan, but it does mean that there must be a good planning reason to justify relaxing or departing from a policy. All decisions taken as a consequence of the policies and proposals set out in this Plan will be made having regard to any relevant provisions of the Human Rights Act.

## Content

- 1.7 The Plan is made up of two parts:
- (a) Written Statement - this document, which sets out the overall strategy of the Plan and contains all of its policies (printed in bold) and their supporting text or 'reasoned justifications'.
  - (b) Proposals Map - based on an Ordnance Survey map of the district showing the site-specific proposals and policy areas to which the Written Statement refers. It is made up of 5 sheets at 1:10,000 scale covering the whole district and a series of inset maps at 1:2,500 scale for Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield Town Centres, the former Hatfield Aerodrome site and the Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt.
- 1.8 The Written Statement is divided into four main parts - District-Wide policies, policies for Urban Areas, policies for Rural Areas, and the Appendices. The purpose of this structure is to offer a more coherent grouping of policies, based on the land use characteristics of the district. However, the Written Statement should be read as a whole; policies are often interdependent and satisfaction of one policy does not guarantee satisfaction of others.
- 1.9 The adopted Plan is supported by supplementary planning guidance and a number of technical reports which contain much of the detail upon which policies are justified and which have been excluded from the Written Statement to keep it as concise as possible. Where relevant the guidance or reports are referred to in the policies or supporting text. The key ones include - the Residential and Employment Land Availability statements, a Study of Urban Potential for Housing (urban capacity study), a Housing Needs Study, Retail Capacity Study, Economic Profile, Habitats Survey, an Open Space Survey, a Playing Pitch Study, the Interim Car Parking Standards, the Supplementary Design Guidance and Town Centre studies. In addition, a number of site-specific proposals in the Plan are supported by supplementary planning guidance in the form of planning briefs or master plans which provide the detail of the proposals. It is important that the Plan is read in the context of these supporting documents.
- 1.10 Finally, the Plan has been subjected to a full Sustainability Appraisal, in line with Government advice in PPG12, in order to assess the likely environmental, social and economic impact of the policies in the Plan. The

results of the appraisal and the methodology used have been published in separate documents that sit alongside the Plan.

### **Plan Period**

- 1.11 This Plan has been prepared to cover the period up to 2011, in accordance with the time period for the adopted Structure Plan Review. Its housing allocations were drawn up to satisfy the housing requirements in the Structure Plan for the period 1991-2011, which in turn are based on household forecasts and housing requirements for the south east region for this period.

### **Timetable and Process for the Review**

- 1.12 Since this is a statutory plan, the procedures for its review are legally defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Plan) Regulations 1999. The key stages in the preparation of this Plan were as follows:

<i>Quality of Life Community Workshops</i>	<i>May-Sept 1998</i>
<i>Public Consultation on Key Issues</i>	<i>Sept-Nov 1999</i>
<i>Plan 'on deposit' for formal representations</i>	<i>Jan-March 2001</i>
<i>Consideration of objections by Council</i>	<i>March 2001-April 2002</i>
<i>Revised Plan 'on deposit' (second deposit)</i>	<i>June-July 2002</i>
<i>Public Local Inquiry</i>	<i>May-November 2003</i>
<i>Inspector's Report received</i>	<i>April 2004</i>
<i>Proposed Modifications to Plan 'on deposit'</i>	<i>Autumn 2004</i>
<i>Adoption of Plan</i>	<i>Spring 2005</i>

### **Policy Context**

- 1.13 The adopted Plan has been prepared in the context of a wide range of existing plans, strategies and guidance. In particular, the Council has had regard to national and regional planning guidance and the Structure Plan, but it has also taken account of the plans of other agencies and other Council strategies, where these are relevant to land-use planning and need to be co-ordinated with the District Plan.
- 1.14 National planning policies are contained in a series of *Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs)* and *Planning Policy Statements (PPSs)* issued by the ODPM, on behalf of the government. These set the national priorities for the planning system and give guidance on policies which should be included in local plans. In particular these give guidance on how plans should contribute to achieving sustainable development. Where relevant, PPGs and PPSs are referred to in the supporting text of the Plan. A full list of the current relevant PPGs and PPSs is attached at Appendix 7.
- 1.15 The current regional planning guidance for this area is contained in the *Regional Planning Guidance Note for the South East (RPG9)* published in March 2001. This supersedes the earlier version of RPG9 published in May 1994 which set the regional framework for the current Structure Plan and in particular for its housing requirements up to 2011. The new RPG9 has been

prepared for the period up to 2016. It sets a regional framework for sustainable development and a new housing requirement for Hertfordshire for the period from 1996-2016. The District Plan has been prepared in the context of both the 1994 and 2001 versions of regional guidance. However, with specific regard to its housing requirement, the reference point is the earlier RPG9, published in 1994, upon which the housing requirement in the adopted Structure Plan for the period 1991-2011 has been based. Until such time as the new RPG9 has been incorporated into a new Structure Plan, the District Plan cannot take account of its housing requirements.

- 1.16 The current Structure Plan for the district is the *Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991-2011*, which was adopted in April 1998. This provides the strategic policies for Welwyn Hatfield. Amongst other things, it requires that all development in Hertfordshire should be consistent with the principles of sustainable development and sets the housing requirement for the district for the period from 1991-2011. The District Plan has been prepared to conform with its policies. They are not repeated in this Plan, but are referred to throughout wherever they provide a strategic context to a particular policy.
- 1.17 There are a number of other plans and strategies, which have provided an important context in the preparation of this Plan:
- (a) *Local Transport Plan (LTP)* - prepared by the County Council, this sets out a rolling 5-year programme for transport improvements in Hertfordshire. It is reviewed and published annually. PPG12 advises that development plans and local transport plans should complement each other to ensure integration of transport and land use policies. The current LTP is for the period 2001/2 to 2005/6, published in July 2000. It includes countywide programmes for road safety, cycling, passenger transport and rural areas and an area plan for Mid-Hertfordshire, which contain proposals affecting Welwyn Hatfield. Policies in this Plan for Movement, Town Centres and Hatfield Aerodrome, in particular, have taken account of the LTP.
  - (b) *Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPS)* - these are non-statutory plans, prepared by the Environment Agency, which set out an integrated programme of action for environmental improvement, dealing with water resources, floodplains, air quality, pollution controls, biodiversity and waste. They are based on river catchment boundaries. Welwyn Hatfield falls into three catchments - the Upper Lee, Colne and North London. Account has been taken of relevant proposals in the LEAPS for these three areas in preparing the policies in this Plan, in particular for Resources.
  - (c) *Welwyn Hatfield Environmental Strategy* - published by the Council in 1996 as an early Local Agenda 21 strategy and action plan for sustainable development, this provides a broad framework for actions by the Council and its public, private and voluntary sector partners on environmental, social and economic issues. It covers biodiversity, woodlands, water, the atmosphere, rural and urban environments, transportation, waste management, public health, economic development and environmental education. In particular, it has provided a context for the Resources policies in the Plan.

- (d) *A 50 Year Vision for Wildlife and Natural Habitats of Hertfordshire* - the local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for Hertfordshire published in 1998, which sets the overall targets and framework for the conservation and enhancement of species and habitats in the county. The BAP has provided a basis for the review of policies on biodiversity in the Plan and in turn these policies should help to achieve some of the BAP's objectives.
- (e) *Nature Conservation Strategy for Welwyn Hatfield* - published by the Council in 1996, this provided a strategy and action plan for the protection, management and enhancement of nature and wildlife resources. It formed a context for the policies on Biodiversity in the Resources section of the Plan. This Strategy has now been superseded by the Welwyn Hatfield BAP.
- (f) *Watling Chase Community Forest Plan 1995, Forest Plan Review 2001 and Forest Plan Landscape Supplement 2001* - prepared by Watling Chase Community Forest. The 1995 plan is a visionary blueprint for the period 1995-2025 containing policies and proposals for implementation. The Review is a supplement to the plan, assessing achievements to date and setting the agenda for the next decade. The Landscape Supplement completes the landscape study and assessment of parts of the Forest not covered in the original plan.
- (g) *Housing Strategy* - prepared by the District Council, this sets out the objectives of the Council as the local housing authority for meeting housing needs and managing its housing stock, including any building or improvement programmes. The strategy is reviewed annually and covers a five-year period. The current version is for 2001-2006 and was published in September 2000. The policies in this Plan for the development of housing are consistent with this strategy.
- (h) *Economic Development Strategy* - this is a statutory plan produced annually by the District Council, which sets out the steps to be taken to promote the development of the local economy. The current strategy, published in March 2000, covers the period from 2000-2005. It proposes action to attract and support businesses, encourage an adequate supply of business premises and revitalise town centres. It is important that the policies in this Plan on employment, retail and town centre development are consistent with the strategy.
- (i) *Town Centre Strategies* - strategies for both Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City town centres have been prepared by the Council and its partners. These provide the overall vision for the future of the two town centres. The Plan has been prepared alongside these strategies, particularly the policies for Retailing and Town Centres, and will be important to achieving their objectives.
- (j) *Leisure Strategy* - again prepared by the District Council, this assesses the need for facilities and sets out the strategy for leisure provision, and increasing participation in sports and leisure. The current version was published in 1999 and covers the period 1999-2005. It contains proposals affecting leisure and cultural facilities, tourism, parks and

open space and has informed relevant policies in this Plan. This Strategy was updated in 2003 by the Cultural Strategy for the district titled 'Enjoying Life'.

- (k) Health Improvement Programme - prepared by the Welwyn Hatfield Primary Care Group, this contains the local plan of action to improve health and modernise health services. It has links with housing conditions, employment and health facilities and is therefore relevant background to policies in the District Plan.

## **Consultation and Public Participation**

1.18 In preparing this Plan, the Council has consulted widely with the local community in Welwyn Hatfield and with local businesses, landowners, voluntary organisations, conservation and amenity groups, statutory agencies and other local authorities. Throughout this the Council's aim has been to give people the opportunity to have their say in shaping the pattern of development in their area. Six stages of consultation have taken place:

- (i) Community Workshops

At the start of the process, between May and September 1998, a series of consultation workshops were held with local community groups and organisations. The purpose was to consider the principle of sustainable development and identify the key elements contributing to quality of life in the district, which the District Plan should seek to address.

- (ii) Key Issues Papers

From the results of the Community Workshops, a set of Issues Papers was published in September 1999, defining the key issues which the new Plan should address. The papers covered Sustainable Development, Resources, Rural Issues, Housing, Design and Open Space, Movement and Economy. A leaflet summarising the key issues was sent to every household in the district and comments were invited up to the end of November 1999. Comments received were taken into account in preparing the deposit version of the Plan.

- (iii) Deposit Version of the District Plan

The deposit version of the District Plan, containing the proposed land use policies and proposals for the district, was published in February 2001. A six-week period for formal consultation on the Plan took place between February and March 2001. These representations were all formally considered and taken into account in preparing the second or revised deposit version of the Plan.

- (iv) Revised Deposit Version of the District Plan

The Revised Deposit Version of the District Plan was published in June 2002. A six week formal consultation period ran from the 19<sup>th</sup> June to the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2002. These representations were all formally considered and taken into account when preparing the Pre-inquiry Changes to the Plan.

- (v) Pre-inquiry Changes to the District Plan

Pre-inquiry Changes (PICs) to the Revised Deposit Version of the District Plan were published in December 2002. An extended consultation period to allow for the Christmas season ran from the 11<sup>th</sup> December 2002 to the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2003. Representations to the PICs were formally considered by the Inspector in his report.

(vi) Proposed Modifications to the District Plan following the Inspector's Report

The report into the objections to the District Plan was released by the Inspector on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April 2004 and was later published by the Council. The Council's Statement of Decisions with regard to the Inspector's recommendations was published alongside the proposed modifications to the Plan and a period of six weeks given for public comments on the documents. The representations were all formally considered prior to the adoption of this Plan.

- 1.19 The content and results of the pre-deposit consultation exercises (points i and ii above) have been summarised more fully in a separate document entitled 'Statement of Public Consultation', which was published alongside the deposit version of the Plan, in accordance with Regulation 21 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Plan) Regulations 1999. The schedule summarising the representations received to the deposit version of the Plan and the Council's response was also published alongside the revised deposit version of the Plan.

## Statement of Conformity With the Structure Plan



Environment

Director: **Charlie Watson**

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My ref LMP/RC/02.04.06A  
Your ref

22 May 2002

Dear Mr ~~Conway~~ *Chris*,

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT, SECTION 46(2) AS AMENDED

### STATEMENT OF CONFORMITY BETWEEN WELWYN HATFIELD DISTRICT PLAN REVIEW TO 2011 – REVISED DEPOSIT VERSION AND THE ADOPTED STRUCTURE PLAN REVIEW, 1991-2011

I refer to your letter dated 26 April 2002 and the enclosed Welwyn Hatfield District Plan Review, Revised Deposit Version and the amended Proposals Maps (hereafter referred to as 'the proposals').

I am pleased to confirm that the proposals are considered to be in general conformity with the Structure Plan Review 1991-2011. Therefore please treat this letter as the County Council's formal response in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act Section 46(2) as amended.

Once the Plan has been placed on formal deposit, there will be some detailed matters about which the County Council will be making representations. However, the County Council hopes that these can be resolved through discussions prior to the Local Plan Inquiry.

Yours sincerely

Charlie Watson  
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT

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## **OVERALL STRATEGY - SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

2.1 The overall aim of the District Plan is to improve quality of life in the district by providing for sustainable development. This is now the central theme of national and strategic planning policy and it has been identified as a key issue in Welwyn Hatfield through consultation with the community in preparing the Plan.

2.2 The concept of sustainable development is fundamental to the future of people's lives. It is concerned with ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, both now and for generations to come. Simply put, it means:

*'Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.*

(World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).

2.3 The UK strategy for sustainable development 'A Better Quality of Life' identifies four key objectives underlying sustainable development:

- (a) Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- (b) Effective protection of the environment;
- (c) Prudent use of natural resources;
- (d) Maintaining high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

Achieving sustainable development means addressing these four objectives equally, both for present and future generations.

2.4 In addition the UK strategy identifies ten guiding principles for Government policy to take account of:

- (a) Putting people at the centre;
- (b) Taking a long term perspective;
- (c) Taking account of costs and benefits;
- (d) Creating an open and supportive economic system;
- (e) Combating poverty and social exclusion;
- (f) Respecting environmental limits;
- (g) The precautionary principle;
- (h) Using scientific knowledge;
- (i) Transparency, information, participation and access to justice;
- (j) Making the polluter pay.

2.5 The strategy recognises the important role of the planning system in securing sustainable development, whilst accepting that it is not the sole means by which it can be achieved. This is reinforced by government planning policy guidance. The planning system exists to provide for the current and future development needs of the population, such as homes, places of work and other buildings, but also to control the way that land is used and developed to meet these needs,

whilst at the same time conserving and enhancing the built and natural environment. PPG1 requires this to be done in a way that is 'consistent with the principles of sustainable development'.

- 2.6 At the heart of the planning system is the development plan, the purpose of which is to set the planning policy framework to guide future development at the local level. In Welwyn Hatfield, the development plan comprises the Structure Plan, the County Minerals Plan, the County Waste Plan and the District Plan. The strategy for the Structure Plan is based on sustainable development. It sets a framework for sustainable development in Hertfordshire and all development is expected to be consistent with its principles. The overall strategy for the District Plan is set within this national and strategic policy framework.
- 2.7 At the same time, it is important to recognise that there are many factors influencing sustainability and people's quality of life which are beyond the scope of the planning system. Some of these are controlled by other legislation or agencies, but ultimately the Plan can only control the development and use of land. In implementing the Plan and its policies, the Council will consult with other agencies and seek to take account of wider issues where they are relevant to planning.

### **KEY PLANNING ISSUES FOR THE DISTRICT**

- 2.8 As a result of its own unique location, geography, social characteristics and economic structure, Welwyn Hatfield has a particular range of needs, which the District Plan aims to address. These have been identified through consultation with the local community in preparing the plan.

#### **Protecting the Environment and Preserving Natural Resources**

- 2.9 Welwyn Hatfield is an area that experiences considerable development pressure, particularly for housing, but also business and other uses. Its proximity to London and attractive environment make it a desirable place to live. Whilst it is important that the district remains attractive and competitive, the resultant threat to the countryside and wildlife, the district's natural resources, its historic environment and the quality of the environment in its towns and villages are major concerns. It is essential to identify those elements of the environment which are irreplaceable or valuable and therefore need to be protected in their entirety, but also those elements which although able to accommodate some change need to be protected or enhanced to avoid their degradation. The District Plan seeks to integrate the need for housing and other development with protecting the natural and urban environment. The strategy must be to concentrate development into the main towns and villages, mainly on land which has already been built upon, and to identify those elements of the natural and historic environment which need to be preserved or enhanced, so protecting the quality of the district's environment in both town and countryside.
- 2.10 It is also important that the level and type of development occurring in the district is sustainable in terms of available natural resources. Water resources, minerals, fossil fuels, clean air and wildlife are all naturally-occurring resources, which once used or destroyed cannot be renewed. The Plan seeks to ensure that development is located and designed to conserve

these resources, for example through water conservation and energy efficiency measures and through policies to reduce the need to travel. Protecting these assets is important for the health of the local community as well as the quality of its environment.

### **Maintaining and Developing a Sense of Community**

- 2.11 A key issue in maintaining quality of life and sustainability is the importance of a strong community spirit, both within existing settlements and neighbourhoods in the district and in new developments. The environment in which people live can have a strong influence on the strength of a community and its identity. The Plan has an important role in shaping future living environments in a number of ways. Community facilities, such as meeting halls, places of worship, shops, sports and entertainment centres, schools and health facilities, play areas and recreation grounds, are important to the life, health and identity of communities. The Plan seeks to protect these facilities and ensure they are provided as an integral part of any significant new developments. The redevelopment of Hatfield Aerodrome is the major development in the district, for which the master plan seeks to create a new community with facilities to support itself. The design and layout of development has an important impact on sense of place and community. Environments which are attractive and well designed, with public spaces which people can enjoy and where they feel safe, can generate civic pride and help to counteract vandalism and anti-social behaviour. The Plan gives priority to this in new development.
- 2.12 Sense of belonging and community is strengthened if people are able to live and work in the same town. As new towns, both Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City were planned to be self-contained, with most people living and working in the same town. However, today 43% of those resident in the district who work now travel outside the district to work, the largest proportion to London. By the same token a significant proportion of the jobs in the district are taken by people who live outside and commute in each day. Welwyn Hatfield is a net importer of labour, with 51,000 jobs and only 48,000 economically active residents. This pattern is due in part to the success of the district's economy, the strategic importance of its two main towns as employment centres for the county, its good north-south transport links and its proximity to London's employment market. But it does not help to strengthen the community spirit, nor does it help to reduce the need to travel. Whilst the Plan cannot control where people choose to live or work, it can seek a more even balance between jobs and houses to try to influence overall commuting patterns.
- 2.13 Community participation and empowerment are also crucial to building sustainable communities. This is recognised by the government in its sustainable development strategy and it has been an ongoing feature of the review of planning policies and development schemes in Welwyn Hatfield. The Council wishes to encourage greater involvement of local people in the future in shaping and taking ownership of plans and proposals for their communities.

## **Reducing the Need to Travel and Dependence on the Car**

- 2.14 Welwyn Hatfield is a heavily car dependent district. In 1999 the County Council undertook a survey of journeys in the district. It found that just over 71% of journeys were made by car, 8% by bus, 4% by train, and 14% walk or cycle. Whilst enabling personal mobility, the dominance of the car has widespread, negative impacts on people's quality of life, in terms of pollution, noise, congestion, pedestrian safety and health. Road traffic accounts for up to 75% of certain pollutants in the district and congestion occurs on key roads, such as the A1(M) and A414 at peak times.
- 2.15 Clearly, the growth of car ownership and the increased freedom and mobility which it offers are the biggest factors in this. However, the nature and pattern of settlements and the distribution of jobs and services in Welwyn Hatfield generates significant travel demands within and through the district. The district has a number of small and medium sized towns and villages, none of which are completely self-contained. As a result people often need to access employment and services outside their place of residence. The other key factor is the limitation of public transport services in the district. Welwyn Hatfield has good north-south rail services and good bus services within towns, but generally bus services between towns are less frequent and take much longer than the same journey by car.
- 2.16 To tackle these issues, a holistic approach is required, integrating planning and transport policies. The objectives are to reduce the overall need to travel and encourage a modal shift from the car to other means of travel, using 'carrot and stick' measures. The Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Hertfordshire sets out a programme of investment by which this can be achieved. The role of the District Plan is to ensure that the planning and design of development accords with this objective, by locating it where it is accessible by a range of modes, giving priority to pedestrians and cyclists, improving public transport services and reducing car parking provision in new development.

## **Meeting Local Housing Needs**

- 2.17 Welwyn Hatfield will continue to need houses, jobs, shops and other facilities to meet the needs of its residents and maintain quality of life both now and in the future. A key purpose of the Plan will be to provide for the development required to meet these local needs. In terms of housing, the County Structure Plan requires the district to provide some 5,600 new dwellings between 1991 and 2011, to meet the growth in the number of households locally. Whilst a number have already been built or granted planning permission, sites for some 3,500 dwellings are identified in the Plan. Government guidance in PPG3 makes clear that the priority should be to provide these on previously used land to minimise the use of 'greenfield' land.
- 2.18 A significant proportion of the new housing will need to be 'affordable' dwellings, since house prices in the area remain high and there continues to be a problem of affordability for some households. In addition, some will need to be built to standards which meet the needs of elderly people, as the population continues to age, and for disabled people. The Plan will aim to help reduce inequalities in

access to housing.

### **Maintaining Economic Prosperity and Jobs**

- 2.19 Although Welwyn Hatfield has a prosperous economy with low unemployment, there is still a need to encourage economic development that will maintain prosperity and is socially inclusive, enabling all sections of the community to participate in the economy. Therefore, it is important that the district remains attractive to businesses and can offer jobs of the right type and skills to local people. The Plan will have a central role in enabling development to secure this.
- 2.20 Over the past 10 years the district's economy has strengthened and diversified, with growth in services and 'knowledge-based' activities to offset the decline which has occurred in manufacturing and aerospace. It is important that this diversity is maintained, to avoid over-dependence on any one business sector. As business practices change, so the amount and type of floorspace required will change. It is important that the district's employment areas are able to offer land and floorspace of the right quality and quantity to meet the expansion or modernisation needs of local firms. This includes the specific requirements of small businesses and other business sectors whose requirements are under-provided for. The redevelopment of the former Hatfield Aerodrome site will be a key to achieving this, but the Plan must also enable redevelopment and flexibility for a wider range of employment uses within the existing employment areas.

### **Sustaining the Countryside and Rural Communities**

- 2.21 The district contains substantial areas of countryside and a number of rural communities, ranging from villages like Essendon and Northaw to hamlets like Bell Bar and Swanley Bar. Whilst there is a closer dependency between the rural and urban communities in Welwyn Hatfield than in more remote rural areas, the countryside here sustains economic and social activity, which must be maintained in its own right. As such, the Plan seeks to enable people to continue to live and work in the countryside. This means supporting agriculture and other rural business, allowing for recreational and leisure pursuits in the countryside on which the rural economy depends, protecting and providing for village shops and community facilities, and ensuring affordable rural housing for those who must live in the countryside.
- 2.22 At the same time the whole of the district's rural areas lie within the Green Belt where there is a presumption against inappropriate development in an effort to contain urban growth. The countryside also contains attractive landscapes and is important in supporting semi-natural habitats and their associated wildlife, which need to be preserved, both for their intrinsic value and their importance for people's health and informal recreation. Therefore, the Plan attempts to protect the Green Belt and quality of the countryside, whilst allowing limited development to sustain rural communities.

### **Revitalising Town and Village Centres**

- 2.23 Town centres and village shopping centres are vital to the sustainability and quality of life of their communities. They provide shopping, services,

community facilities and entertainments which meet the needs of local residents. They are a major source of employment; over 20% of jobs in the district are in the retail distribution and services sector. In addition, they offer the greatest potential for reducing car travel, since they usually have the best public transport access and offer a range of facilities all within walking distance of each other. The growth of out of town shopping during the 1980s and 1990s has threatened the viability of town and village centres, which have been unable to compete with the greater car accessibility and cheaper land values of out of town sites. However, government policy has now changed, directing shopping and leisure development back into town and village centres.

- 2.24 Within Welwyn Hatfield, all of the main villages retain some local shops and services, perhaps the most vibrant centre being Welwyn village. The Plan seeks to protect their core shopping and service function and enhance their accessibility. The main centres in the district are Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield, which have different requirements. Welwyn Garden City town centre has remained the most competitive, thanks largely to the development of the Howard Centre shopping centre and the continued presence of John Lewis. It is now one of the main retail centres in the county, recognised in the Structure Plan as a 'minor sub-regional centre' and an historic centre. The Plan seeks to ensure that it remains competitive by creating opportunities for additional retail floorspace and enabling it to offer a wider range of services to the local community, particularly restaurants, pubs and leisure, without harming the amenities of nearby residential areas. Hatfield town centre, on the other hand, has experienced significant decline as a retail centre over the past 10-15 years. Its smaller size and ageing new town infrastructure have limited its attractiveness and competitiveness. However, it continues to perform a vital shopping and service function for the community of Hatfield, but needs regeneration. The Plan aims to respond to this by creating the opportunity for a comprehensive redevelopment scheme, which will build upon the confidence generated by the new Asda supermarket and exploit the opportunities for new community, leisure and residential uses in the centre.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN**

- 2.25 In the light of these issues and to achieve the overall aim of securing sustainable development in the district, the Plan has the following objectives.

To:

1. *Preserve and enhance the district's wildlife and biodiversity, landscape, urban open land and historic environment, and minimise the use of natural resources.*
2. *Provide for development to meet the recognised needs of local people in terms of housing, jobs, shopping, leisure, services, health and community facilities, education and training.*
3. *Maintain the Green Belt and concentrate development within the main towns and villages of Welwyn Garden City, Hatfield, Welwyn, Oaklands and Mardley Heath, Digswell, Woolmer Green, Welham Green, Brookmans Park, Cuffley and Little Heath, in particular on previously developed land.*

4. *Seek to sustain the countryside and rural communities, allowing development in rural areas where this helps to sustain the rural economy and community life, preserves the quality of the countryside and supports the purposes of the Green Belt.*
5. *Minimise the overall need to travel by encouraging more balanced and self-contained settlements, promoting mixed-use development and locating development where it is accessible.*
6. *Reduce dependence on the car by requiring development to be located and designed so it is accessible by and gives priority to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.*
7. *Maintain and enhance the quality of the urban environment by protecting open space and requiring good quality, sustainable design in all new development.*
8. *Foster a 'sense of community' through the protection and provision of services and facilities and through careful design of new development.*
9. *Maintain and improve the vitality and viability of Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield town centres and the district's village and local centres, by protecting their primary shopping functions and encouraging a greater diversity of uses.*
10. *Increase economic prosperity through the regeneration of key areas of the district, in particular Hatfield Town Centre and the former Hatfield Aerodrome site.*

2.26 The policies and proposals in the Plan seek to implement this strategy. In preparing these policies the Sustainability Appraisal has been used to ensure that they are sustainable.

# **DISTRICT-WIDE POLICIES**

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

- 3.1 The overall aim of the Plan is to secure sustainable development in the district, in order to improve quality of life. Therefore, the Council expects that all development should be consistent with the principles of sustainable development. This accords with government guidance in PPG1 and with the aims and objectives of the Structure Plan, set out in its Policy 1.
- 3.2 The overall strategy of the Plan translates the key objectives of sustainable development as put forward in Government policy into a series of objectives, which reflect the circumstances of Welwyn Hatfield. In turn the policies in the Plan seek to implement these sustainability objectives. In the first instance therefore, development must be consistent with the objectives and policies of the Plan.
- 3.3 In order to achieve sustainable development, it is necessary that we are able to assess, as openly and objectively as possible, the sustainability of individual development proposals. The 'precautionary principle', which is one of the main principles underlying decision making on sustainable development, suggests that we have a duty to assess the costs and benefits of a proposal, in an open and transparent way, so that we have a clear understanding of its potential risks and sustainability benefits before making a decision on it. This does not mean that we should only permit development if we are sure that harm will not arise nor that we should refuse permission if there is a limited amount of information about its impact. The planning system only allows development to be refused if it would cause 'demonstrable harm'. It is not always possible to have absolute certainty about the longer term impact of development and requiring that level of certainty would severely hinder progress towards improvements in quality of life. Furthermore, most development has both costs and benefits. However, the precautionary principle does mean considering all potential costs and benefits, having the best possible information available on these on which to make a decision and making the basis for that decision transparent.
- 3.4 To this end, the Council has devised a 'Sustainability Checklist' containing a number of detailed criteria against which all development will be assessed. This is set out in the Supplementary Design Guidance. The checklist provides a guide to enable assessment in a rigorous and transparent way as to whether a development satisfies the sustainability objectives and policies of the Plan. Further guidance regarding the checklist will be provided in conjunction with the Hertfordshire Sustainable Development Design Guide which is currently being developed by the County Council.
- 3.5 Not all of the criteria apply to all scales of development, but in general, the larger the development the greater the number of criteria which will need to be satisfied. Six categories of development are identified:
- (a) *Large scale* - more than 5 houses or 235 sq. metres of commercial floorspace.
  - (b) *Small scale* - 5 houses or less and 235 sq. metres of commercial floorspace or less.

- (c) *Householder developments.*
  - (d) *Changes of use of land, buildings and conversions.*
  - (e) *Non building development* - such as car parking, landscaping or engineering operations.
  - (f) *Advertisements and telecommunications.*
- 3.6 The criteria applying to each scale are identified in the Supplementary Design Guidance. Householder developments, which comprise the majority of planning applications in the district, have a more limited range of criteria, which are listed in a separate 'Householder Checklist' at the end of the Supplementary Design Guidance.
- 3.7 Some of the criteria relate to aspects of a development which may be covered by other legislation, such as the Building Regulations, or controlled by other statutory agencies, such as pollution and the Environment Agency. However, all of the criteria measure the contribution that a development will make to the future sustainability of the district and should therefore be considered at the planning application stage, both by the applicant and by the Council.
- 3.8 Applicants will be expected to submit a statement with their planning application, showing how their proposal addresses the criteria in the checklist. An application would be considered valid without the submission of a sustainability statement, but proposals must still however, be consistent with Sustainable Development principles which the checklist illustrates. Failure to supply such a statement could delay consideration of the proposed development. The checklist does not include design criteria, which are set out in the Design chapter and the Supplementary Design Guidance and will need to be addressed separately by applicants through an urban design statement as required in Policy D11.

### **Policy SD1 - Sustainable Development**

**Development proposals will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the principles of sustainable development are satisfied and that they accord with the objectives and policies of this plan. To assist the Council in determining this, applicants will be expected to submit a statement with their planning application demonstrating how their proposals address the sustainability criteria in the checklist contained in the Supplementary Design Guidance.**

## **GREEN BELT AND SETTLEMENT PATTERN**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 4.1 One of the key objectives of the Plan is to concentrate development into the district's main towns and settlements. This is a central strand of the Plan's sustainable development strategy. Not only will this minimise development on 'greenfield' land and in the countryside, it will also ensure development occurs where it is most accessible and closest to other facilities, so reducing people's need to travel, and where there are existing infrastructure and services to support it.
- 4.2 The district's settlement pattern is characterised by a number of medium sized towns and villages, situated along main road and railway routes radiating northwards from London and separated by narrow bands of countryside. In addition, there are a number of small villages and sporadic ribbon developments within the countryside, which are generally in more isolated, less accessible locations. It is this settlement pattern which gives the district its unique qualities and should be preserved.
- 4.3 One of the main policy tools for maintaining this pattern and ensuring urban concentration is the Green Belt. This has been a long-standing feature of planning in the south-east, made necessary by the considerable development pressure around London. The whole of Welwyn Hatfield District lies within the Green Belt, which exerts a strong restraint on urban expansion.
- 4.4 The purpose of this chapter is to define the hierarchy of settlements within which development can take place and the broad limits to the extent of development. This provides a spatial framework for the rest of the policies in the Plan.

### **STRATEGY**

- 4.5 The main objectives of the Plan in respect of the district's Green Belt and settlement pattern are:
  - (a) To maintain the Green Belt as the principal means of restraining the physical expansion of the district's urban areas;
  - (b) To maintain the existing settlement pattern in the district;
  - (c) To concentrate development into the district's main towns and settlements;
  - (d) To maintain areas of special restraint between the urban area and the Green Belt, to be safeguarded to meet future growth needs beyond the Plan period and thereby ensure the permanence of the Green Belt boundaries.

## **POLICIES**

### **Definition of the Green Belt**

- 4.6 The whole of the district lies within the Green Belt. Government guidance in PPG2 defines five purposes of including land in the Green Belt:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
  - To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
  - To safeguard the surrounding countryside from further encroachment;
  - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
  - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 4.7 In addition, PPG2 states that the Green Belt has a positive role to play in fulfilling the following purposes:
- To provide opportunities for access to the open countryside for the urban population;
  - To provide opportunities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation near urban areas;
  - To retain attractive landscapes, and enhance landscapes, near to where people live;
  - To improve damaged and derelict land around towns;
  - To secure nature conservation interest; and
  - To retain land in agricultural, forestry and related uses.
- 4.8 Policy 5 of the Structure Plan confirms that the Green Belt will be maintained in the south of Hertfordshire which includes all of the land in Welwyn Hatfield. The Council recognises the important role of the Green Belt in the district, particularly in preventing its towns and settlements from merging into one another, preserving the countryside and concentrating development into its urban areas. As such it is a key element in achieving sustainable development and must be maintained.
- 4.9 The towns and settlements specified below where development will be concentrated are excluded from the Green Belt. The detailed boundaries of the Green Belt around these settlements are defined on the Proposals Map. These boundaries were defined in the first District Plan adopted in 1993 to take account of the long-term development needs of the district. In preparing this Plan the Council has given consideration as to whether there is a need to alter the Green Belt boundaries to accommodate the development needs of the district up to 2011 and beyond, but is satisfied that these needs can be accommodated on sites identified within the towns and specified settlements excluded from the Green Belt.

## **Policy GBSP1 - Definition of the Green Belt**

**The Green Belt will be maintained in Welwyn Hatfield as defined on the Proposals Map. The towns and specified settlements listed in Policy GBSP2 are excluded from the Green Belt. The precise boundaries of the Green Belt around these towns and settlements are defined on the Proposals Map.**

### **Towns and Specified Settlements**

- 4.10 The district has two main towns - Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield. They are the main sources of housing for the district, contain the major shopping and service facilities, schools and community facilities and are the principal locations for local employment. They are both well served by public transport - bus and rail - and by road. Whilst not being fully self-sufficient, as new towns they are more self-contained than many other towns of their size. In short they offer the best opportunity for sustainable development. They will be the principal focus for development in the district during the Plan period, in accordance with Policy 6 of the Structure Plan.
- 4.11 The district also comprises a number of large villages with populations of between 1,000 and 4,000. The largest of these are Cuffley, Brookmans Park, Welwyn, Welham Green, Mardley Heath and Oaklands; the smallest are Digswell and Woolmer Green. Principally they are a source of housing for their communities, but they also have shops and services, schools and community facilities, in varying ranges. The largest, except for Mardley Heath and Oaklands, have large village centres, with a wide range of shops and services, pubs and restaurants, libraries, community halls, surgeries and schools. The smallest villages have a handful of shops and facilities at their centre. Brookmans Park, Cuffley, Digswell and Welham Green are all served by rail; the other three have main road access. Whilst less self-sufficient and dependent to a certain extent on the two towns for employment and main services, they all support communities and are very accessible. In addition, there is Little Heath on the southern boundary of the district. Little Heath is a part of the town of Potters Bar, located in Hertsmere borough, from where it is well served by shops, services and employment. All of these settlements offer opportunities for sustainable development. They are identified as 'Specified Settlements' within this Plan, where, in accordance with Policy 6 of the Structure Plan, limited development will be allowed which is compatible with the maintenance and enhancement of their character and the maintenance of their Green Belt boundaries.

### **Policy GBSP2 - Towns and Specified Settlements**

**The following are defined as towns and specified settlements where development will be located in accordance with the policies for urban areas in the Plan. Development will mainly be concentrated in the two towns. Within the specified settlements development will be limited to that which is compatible with the maintenance and enhancement of their character and the maintenance of their Green Belt boundaries.**

#### **Towns - Welwyn Garden City; Hatfield**

**Specified Settlements - Brookmans Park; Cuffley; Digswell; Little Heath; Oaklands and Mardley Heath; Welham Green; Welwyn; Woolmer Green.**

**Settlements within the Green Belt**

- 4.12 The district comprises a number of smaller settlements, including rural villages and areas of sporadic or ribbon development, which reflect the historical settlement pattern of the district based around agriculture. These are Essendon, Northaw, Newgate Street, Lemsford, Ayot St Lawrence, Ayot Green and St Peter, Burnham Green, Stanborough, Mill Green, Bullen's Green, Bell Bar, Swanley Bar, Wild Hill and Woodside. They are all located within the Green Belt and as such are subject to the general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt set out in PPG2. The forms of development considered appropriate within the Green Belt are identified in Policy RA1, which applies to all of these settlements.
- 4.13 However, it is possible to distinguish two categories of Green Belt settlement from the above list to which the Plan applies different policy approaches:
- (a) Rural villages supporting a number of facilities, such as a primary school and/or a church, a village hall, a shop/post office and pubs, and as such, have a degree of self sufficiency to sustain their communities. These are Essendon, Northaw, Newgate Street and Lemsford.
  - (b) Other small settlements, which vary in size, but comprise mainly housing grouped either around a green, in a ribbon form or more sporadically arranged, with very few or no facilities. These are Ayot St Lawrence, Ayot Green and St Peter, Burnham Green, Stanborough, Mill Green, Bullen's Green, Bell Bar, Swanley Bar, Wild Hill and Woodside.
- 4.14 Policy 6 of the Structure Plan recognises that development in smaller Green Belt settlements can be accommodated to support facilities and services needed and to meet the employment and housing needs for the settlement and its surrounding area. As part of the sustainable development strategy the Plan seeks to encourage development to sustain rural communities. Therefore, as an exception, the Council will support development in the Rural Villages listed in paragraph 4.13(a) above, where, in accordance with the Structure Plan, it is required to support the housing and employment, local facilities and service needs of the settlements and the communities they support. Policy RA2 sets out the circumstances for this.
- 4.15 Within the remaining Green Belt settlements listed in paragraph 4.13(b), in line with the strategy of the Plan, the Council wishes to see existing facilities retained. Policies RA12 and RA13 in particular set out the circumstances where this is appropriate.

**Areas of Special Restraint**

- 4.16 PPG2 advises that when reviewing local plans, local planning authorities should consider the boundaries of the Green Belt in relation to a timescale which is longer than that normally adopted for other aspects of the Plan. In order to ensure the protection of the Green Belt within this longer term, it may

mean safeguarding land between the urban area and the Green Belt which may be required to meet longer-term needs.

- 4.17 The 1993 adopted District Plan identified such an area of land, designated as an Area of Special Restraint, at Panshanger Aerodrome on the eastern edge of Welwyn Garden City. In preparing this Plan, the Council has given consideration to whether this land should be released to meet development requirements in the period up to 2011. The Council is satisfied that these requirements can be accommodated on the sites identified within the towns and specified settlements elsewhere in the Plan. However, in order to maintain the permanence of the Green Belt this Area of Special Restraint has been retained and will be safeguarded to allow space for the development needs of the area beyond the Plan period. This land is not required for development in the period up to 2011. Its release for development after 2011 will be a matter for consideration in future reviews of the Plan, in the light of longer-term development requirements and advice on the sequential selection of land for development contained in government guidance. Should this land be released for development in the longer term an area of land on its northern edge has been identified for structural landscaping to be provided in advance of any development to minimise its impact on the surrounding landscape and long distance views.

**Policy GBSP3 - Area Of Special Restraint And Structural Landscape Area**

**The area of land at Panshanger Aerodrome in Welwyn Garden City, as defined on the Proposals Map, will be safeguarded against potential future growth needs beyond the period of this Plan. Any release of this land for development, in whole or in part, will be a matter for determination in future reviews of this Plan. In addition, no development should take place until structural landscaping has been provided within the area defined for that purpose on the Proposals Map.**

# **RESOURCES**

## **INTRODUCTION**

- 5.1 Two of the core objectives of sustainable development are the effective protection of the environment and the prudent use of natural resources. The district contains a number of important environmental resources, including land, energy, water, wildlife, air and built heritage. It is important to distinguish between resources which are non-renewable and renewable:
- (a) *Non-renewable* resources are those which once damaged, destroyed or used up cannot be replaced, reused or recycled - these include energy from fossil fuels, like oil and gas, minerals such as sand and gravel, wildlife habitats and species, archaeology and historic buildings and the earth's atmosphere or air which is being continually damaged by pollution;
  - (b) *Renewable* resources are those which occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment, such as energy from the sun, wind and oceans, and the fall of water. Previously developed land also, although limited in supply, can be seen as a renewable resource, which can be reused and redeveloped.
- 5.2 Prudent use of resources involves minimising the use of non-renewable resources and increasing the use of renewable resources, without endangering the resource or causing serious damage or pollution. This is necessary not only to preserve critical environmental assets, but also so that future generations will be able to enjoy such basic standards as clean water and air, heat and light and open space.
- 5.3 The planning system, in particular the development plan, has an important role to play in this, but it is one of a number of strands of legislation and action being taken by the government, local authorities and other agencies to ensure the prudent use of resources. Planning policies can help by controlling the location and design of new development so as to, for example, preserve wildlife areas and the landscape, protect water resources from depletion or pollution, increase the energy efficiency of new buildings and reduce the need to travel and use of the car (and hence reduce the use of fossil fuels and pollution). However, in doing this the Council must work in tandem with other agencies such as the Environment Agency, water companies, Health and Safety Executive, and English Nature, which have statutory responsibilities for these resources, as well as through its own environmental health services.
- 5.4 The Environment Agency, in particular, has a broader responsibility for the management of environmental resources, including water resources and quality, biodiversity, floodplains, air quality pollution controls and waste. The Local Environment Agency Plans (LEAPs) covering this district have been taken into account in preparing the policies in this chapter.
- 5.5 This chapter sets out the planning policies for the management of the district's resources. As well as its natural resources such as land, energy, water, wildlife and air, this also includes the district's built heritage, such as its Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and archaeological remains, which are

regarded as a non-renewable resource. The chapter also includes policies on noise and light pollution and waste management which together have an impact on the use of land.

## ISSUES

- 5.6 Land is a finite resource and therefore has to be used wisely. It is the resource which the Plan has most control over, since it is the purpose of the planning system to ensure the efficient and effective use of land in the public interest. The district lies in an area of high development pressure, close to London, but has large tracts of countryside which require protection. At the same time, under government guidance the Plan must find land to meet the development needs of the district. A central objective of the Plan, therefore, is to recycle land and maximise the use of land which has already been developed or used.
- 5.7 Energy is a basic requirement of everyday life, to enable people to heat and light their homes, factories and businesses, run household appliances and fuel vehicles. Currently, the vast majority of our energy needs are met through the burning of fossil fuels, such as coal, gas or oil. However, this not only diminishes what are finite natural resources, it also produces gases, particularly carbon dioxide, which cause pollution and contribute to global warming. Government policy aims to reduce energy consumption, particularly of fossil fuels, and encourage greater use of renewable energy sources, such as solar power, as part of the strategy for sustainable development. Planning policies can contribute towards this through the location and design of development. This chapter includes relevant energy policies for the district.
- 5.8 Water is a crucial natural resource on which we rely for our drinking and other domestic needs, to support industry and for leisure and recreation. Watercourses and other wetland features are also integral features of the landscape, which support habitats for wildlife. It follows therefore, that water resources must be conserved and protected from pollution. The principal responsibility for the protection of water resources and quality lies with the Environment Agency and the provision of water supplies, drainage and sewerage treatment are the responsibility of the water companies. There is no separate government planning policy guidance on water. However, development clearly has a major impact on the supply and quality of water resources and, therefore, the Plan must ensure that account is taken of this resource in the location and design of development.
- 5.9 Wildlife and their habitats, such as grasslands, woodlands, heathlands and wetlands, are an integral part of the survival of human life, providing oxygen, water, clothing, health, education and recreation. The district contains a wide variety of wildlife habitats, including 5 Sites of Special Scientific Interest of recognised national importance and 190 Wildlife Sites of county importance, as well as other landscape features which are of local value in supporting or allowing the movement of wildlife. These are valuable natural resources, which the Structure Plan states should not be depleted. Development can have a damaging effect on these areas unless controlled and, therefore, this chapter contains policies to protect the sites of recognised value and

protected species. Government policy, reflected in the Council's own Biodiversity Action Plan aims to increase biodiversity. Policies in this chapter seek to achieve this in relation to new development.

- 5.10 Clean air is a natural resource which is important to people's quality of life. Air pollution causes damage to health, but most significantly, greenhouse gas emissions cause climate change, with a threat to life at the global level. The main source of air pollution is transport, particularly cars, although some industrial processes are also responsible. Government policy recognises the important relationship between land use planning, transport and pollution control systems in tackling air quality. Policies aimed at reducing congestion and car usage will help to improve air quality; these are covered in the Movement chapter of the Plan. Powers to control major sources of air pollution rest with the Environment Agency and the Council has a duty to produce an air quality management strategy. These powers and duties must operate in conjunction with planning policies. The role of the Plan is to control the location and design of potentially polluting uses of land; the control of emissions is a matter for other agencies.
- 5.11 Welwyn Hatfield has a significant heritage of historic settlements, buildings and archaeological remains, which are culturally and educationally important to the district as a link with the past and form a finite and non-renewable resource. These range from the remains of Roman settlements, historic houses and villages dating back to medieval ages, to the more contemporary heritage of Welwyn Garden City. There are pressures for change and development within these areas and therefore it is important that the Plan seeks to preserve and where possible enhance these resources, to ensure that they can be enjoyed by future generations.

## **STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES**

- 5.12 The overall aim of the Plan in terms of resources is to preserve and enhance the district's natural, cultural and built heritage and to minimise the use of natural resources. To achieve this there are a number of specific objectives:
- (a) To make the best use of land as a finite resource, by recycling and maximising the use of previously developed land and minimising the use of 'greenfield' land;
  - (b) To minimise the use of non-renewable energy sources and maximise opportunities to use renewable energy in the design and location of new development;
  - (c) To minimise the use of other non-renewable materials ;
  - (d) To minimise the risks of flooding, ground and surface water pollution and encourage the conservation of water resources;
  - (e) To protect the district's wildlife and its habitats and enhance biodiversity at every opportunity;
  - (f) To minimise the risks of pollution in all its forms as a result of development and seek to raise air quality standards through enabling a reduction in car use and promoting tree planting;

- (g) To preserve and enhance the district's historic, architectural and archaeological heritage.

## **POLICIES**

### **Land**

#### Maximising the Use of Previously Developed Land

- 5.13 Land is a finite resource which in Welwyn Hatfield is under considerable pressure for development. Some 60% of the land within the district is countryside and designated as Green Belt, and is subject to policies restricting development set out in the Rural Areas section of this Plan. At the same time, the district must accommodate the future development needs of its population as well as ensuring open space is preserved. Government policy urges that development should be located on previously used land, before considering 'greenfield' sites. This is particularly so for housing development, where PPG3 requires a sequential approach to be taken in the selection of sites and states that by 2008, 60% of additional housing should be provided on previously developed land and through building conversions. The overall strategy of the Plan requires that development should be concentrated into the main towns and settlements and a number of development sites are identified in the policies of the Plan for Urban Areas as well as open space which should be protected.
- 5.14 Given the pressure on land within the district, the need to maintain open space and the thrust of government policy, it is important that best use is made of those sites which have been identified and of other land which has already been used or developed. In general the Council will not support proposals for the development of 'greenfield' land where suitable previously developed sites exist. In some cases there may be constraints preventing a site which has been previously used from being developed. For example, the site may be contaminated or require significant infrastructure. Where this is the case the Council will work with the site owners and other agencies to assist in bringing sites forward. There may also be existing or potential value of a site as a habitat for nature conservation, which may need to be taken into account.

#### **Policy R1 - Maximising the Use of Previously Developed Land**

**In order to make the best use of land in the district, the Council will require development to take place on land which has been previously used or developed. Development will only be permitted on 'greenfield' land where it can be demonstrated that no suitable opportunities exist on previously used or developed land.**

#### Contaminated Land

- 5.15 Government policy in PPG23 Planning and Pollution Control specifically encourages the reuse of contaminated land as part of the strategy to make best use of land and relieve development pressure on 'greenfield' land. Under the 1995 Environment Act the Council now has a duty to inspect the district to identify sites which may be contaminated and determine the remediation requirements. The Council published its Contaminated Land Strategy in June

2001 which sets out the timetable for this. When considering planning applications for the development of land which may be contaminated, the Council will need to assess whether, in the light of the type of contamination, the proposed development will be suitable and whether there are likely to be any unacceptable risks to health or the environment arising from its development or future occupation. The responsibility for decontamination rests with the developer or owner. The Council will normally require developers to undertake a full investigation to establish the level of contamination in soils and/or groundwater/surface waters on such sites and undertake the necessary remediation measures, if necessary by imposing conditions on planning permissions.

### **Policy R2 - Contaminated Land**

**The Council will encourage proposals for the development and reuse of land which is or may be contaminated. On such sites, applications must be accompanied by a full survey of the level of contamination and proposals for remediation measures. In considering whether planning permission should be granted, the Council will need to be satisfied that there will be no unacceptable risk to health or the environment arising from the remedial works or the proposed use of the site in relation to the type of contamination.**

### **Minerals**

- 5.16 Hertfordshire, because of its underlying geology, is important for minerals such as sand, gravel, chalk and clay which are part of the national resource. There are a number of mineral workings within the district. As the minerals Planning Authority, Hertfordshire County Council is responsible for determining planning applications for the winning and working of minerals in the County. Policies regarding mineral extraction in the county are contained in the Minerals Local Plan, which was adopted in July 1998 and covers the period 1991-2006. The Minerals Local Plan identifies 'specific' sites and preferred areas to guide the location of mineral working in the County. This is currently being reviewed and potential locations for future sand and gravel workings identified. The policy towards safeguarding of mineral resources and mineral extraction is contained in the County Structure Plan.

### **Energy**

- 5.17 The production, transfer and use of energy is a major contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and pollution. Schemes which help reduce the demand for energy through improving the efficiency with which energy is generated, transferred and used are key components of a sustainable development strategy. It not only offers environmental benefits but economic and social benefits (such as reducing fuel poverty). This section of the plan aims to provide the framework for more efficient forms of energy use as part of development. It should be noted that other guidance and legislation (in particular Building Regulations) have equally important roles to play, but are not repeated here. Further details and advice from the Council and other organisations is available.

### Energy Efficiency

- 5.18 The demand for energy can be reduced through more efficient use, and the introduction of conservation measures in the design and layout of buildings. For example the use of Passive Solar Design (PSD) techniques can help to make the best use of shade or the sun's heat in order to offset the demand for cooling or heating. Factors which require consideration include orientation; built form and internal layout; window design; materials; reflective surfaces; atria and conservatories; and landscaping. Further details on PSD techniques can be found in the Supplementary Design Guidance note published in conjunction with this Plan Review. The Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) also sets out principles for designing and constructing sustainable buildings, including energy matters.
- 5.19 Up to 70% of the energy of the fuel used in conventional power stations is lost as waste heat. Local small scale combined heat and power plants are more efficient because, amongst other things, they use the heat by-products to heat nearby housing or facilities. Developers of major schemes should consider the use of such plants. Although the Council's powers to influence some of the design and construction issues under the planning system are limited, it will seek to encourage good practice. Wherever possible consideration should be given to the incorporation of energy efficiency measures in all developments. Proposals for development should take into account the best practical environmental option. This can be defined as the option that provides the most benefit or the least damage to the environment as a whole, at acceptable cost, in the long term as well as the short term.

### **Policy R3 - Energy Efficiency**

**The Council will expect all development to:**

- (i) Include measures to maximise energy conservation through the design of buildings, site layout and provision of landscaping; and**
- (ii) Incorporate the best practical environmental option (BPEO) for energy supply.**

### Renewable Energy

- 5.20 Government policy aims to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and encourage greater use of renewable energy sources where proposals are economically attractive and environmentally acceptable. Government planning policy is contained within PPS 22: Renewable Energy. There are several potential sources of renewable energy e.g. solar, waste, landfill gas, sewage and farm slurry, wind, water, geo-thermal and wood. In Hertfordshire, according to a 1997 survey by the Department of Trade and Industry, the potential for solar power generation is very significant and considerably higher than any other form of renewable energy. This type of energy is ideally suited to being generated at the local level, particularly for single dwellings, and thus new-build dwellings offer an excellent cost-effective opportunity to make a significant contribution to the harnessing of renewable energy in the district. Other sources of renewable energy can themselves raise environmental concerns such as pollution, traffic generation and visual impact. Whilst supporting the use of renewable energy in principle the Council will wish to

take into consideration likely detrimental impacts. Applications will be required to be supported by an Environmental Impact Assessment where this is appropriate in terms of Circular 2/99.

#### **Policy R4 - Renewable Energy Sources**

**Planning permission will be granted for proposals for the development of renewable energy sources subject to all of the following criteria:**

- (i) It would not have a significant visual impact;**
- (ii) It would not generate an unacceptable level of traffic;**
- (iii) It would not result in an unacceptably high level of atmospheric emissions;**
- (iv) It would not have a significant adverse impact upon features or areas of ecological, architectural, landscape or conservation importance;**
- (v) It would not have a detrimental impact upon adjoining properties and land holdings; and**
- (vi) It would not generate an unacceptable level of noise.**

#### **Waste**

5.21 The disposal of waste is an essential community service. The County Council is responsible for planning for all types of waste and the disposal of household and commercial waste, while the District Council is responsible for waste collection. The amount of waste produced is increasing, and the costs of disposal, both financially and environmentally, are rising. Waste is, therefore, an issue with important land use planning and environmental implications, which need to be considered as an integral part of sustainable development.

5.22 The Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan 1995-2005, adopted January 1999, should be referred to for waste management policies, and it sets out detailed background and guidance on waste planning matters. The Plan forms part of the Development Plan for Welwyn Hatfield District against which all planning applications are to be considered. The District Council recognises the limited direct involvement that it can have in waste disposal and other related development. These are matters for the County Council or, ultimately, are dependent on commercial activities and social responsibility outside the scope of planning. However, the Council is supportive of the strategy of the County Council as set out in the Waste Local Plan, which represents a major shift in policies away from a dependency on landfill as the main means of waste disposal. For example, a key component of the Waste Local Plan strategy is the incorporation of the hierarchy of waste management. The four elements of the waste hierarchy are:

- Minimisation;
- Re-use;
- Recovery – recycling, energy, composting;
- Disposal as a last resort.

- 5.23 Waste production and its implications need to be considered at all stages in the development process, from initial site clearance and the choice of building materials, through its occupation to its eventual clearance. The Council will seek to ensure that the design and organisation of works minimises the waste of materials, and that a minimum of materials are removed from the site. As much as possible of existing materials should be retained on site for re-use consistent with environmental practices. Material which is to be removed should be carefully segregated by type to enable reclamation and re-use elsewhere. On larger schemes materials recycling should take place on site and the products used in the development. Materials will have to be stored carefully so that they do not cause pollution or eyesores. Where sites are contaminated, on-site remediation is preferable where practicable and appropriate. This reduces the pollution potential and the problem is not merely moved elsewhere.
- 5.24 After re-using materials found on site, the practice most likely to aid waste reduction will be the use of recycled products. Recycled aggregates provide one example of such a product that is currently available. As awareness of the importance of conserving resources increases, the list of recycled products will extend. The design of all schemes should accommodate storage for a variety of different types of segregated waste. Communal schemes (e.g. mini recycling collection points) will be encouraged provided that problems of vehicular access, vandalism, potential pollution and noise can be overcome. The potential for the recycling of green waste for combined heat and power units within larger developments should be considered. Thought also needs to be given to the deconstruction of buildings and infrastructure, the practicalities, and ease with which materials may be recovered and re-used.
- 5.25 Whilst the Council will encourage all applicants to take notice of the waste implications of their schemes, only larger development schemes will be required to submit a demonstration of how waste management issues are to be addressed. Larger schemes are defined as:
- Developments of more than 5 houses;
  - Commercial and industrial development of more than 235 sq.ms;
  - Car parks with more than 200 spaces;
  - Golf courses;
  - Developments which attract large numbers of visitors; and
  - Other developments which the Council considers to have important waste management implications.

#### **Policy R5 - Waste Management**

**The Council will require applications for larger schemes (as defined in paragraph 5.24) to include details of the measures to be taken in the design, construction, operation, occupation and demolition of existing buildings on site to:**

- (i) Minimise the amount of waste generated;**
- (ii) Re-use or re-cycle suitable waste materials generated;**

- (iii) **Minimise the pollution potential of unavoidable waste;**
- (iv) **Treat and dispose of the remaining waste in an environmentally acceptable manner; and**
- (v) **To maximise utilisation of appropriate secondary construction materials, including recycled aggregates.**

## **Water**

5.26 It is very important for sustainability to conserve water resources for the future and prevent pollution of surface and ground water. Although there have been few planning controls over water resources in the past, there are ways in which the planning process can influence the resource in dealing with development. In addition PPG25 Development and Flood Risk was published in July 2001 which states the importance that the Government attaches to the management and reduction of flood risk in the land use planning process.

## River Corridors

5.27 The main rivers in the district are the Lee, the Mimram and the Mimshall Brook. Their corridors are important for water resources, encouraging biodiversity, fisheries and recreation and for their function as flood plains. They also make a significant contribution to the landscape. The Mimram is a high quality chalk stream and is considered to be of regional importance because of its diverse habitats and the Lee, which has been greatly modified in the past, provides a varied riverine landscape. The Mimshall Brook is a tributary of the Colne and flows west through North Mymms. The Brook is intermittent in parts as at Water End Swallow Holes. The Council will seek to promote through consultation with the Environment Agency and other relevant organisations the effective management of river corridors of the Lee, Mimram, and Mimshall Brook, the location of which are shown on the Proposals map, as important areas for water resources, biodiversity and recreation. There is a need to protect and, where possible, enhance the natural elements of the river corridors to maintain and increase biodiversity, their function as floodplains and to protect operational access. Development in river corridors should be set back from the river separated by a sympathetically landscaped buffer strip planted with suitable native species. The Council will support proposals which include the enhancement of the river corridor especially if it involves deculverting and/or naturalisation. This aim has to be balanced against improving public access and encouraging suitable water-related recreation.

### **Policy R6 - River Corridors**

**Initiatives to protect and enhance the river environment for biodiversity, including proposals for deculverting and naturalisation of the river channel, will be supported. Suitable public access and informal water based or waterside recreation within main river corridors will also be supported where it is appropriate, provided that there is no conflict with the biodiversity of the site. Development will not be permitted which would involve the culverting or diverting of any watercourse, and/or the siting of buildings in close proximity to the river channel, unless the**

**Council is satisfied that there would be no detriment to the river corridor.**

#### Protection of the Water Environment

- 5.28 The water environment consists of the aquifer and surface water e.g. rivers, streams, wetlands and ponds. The aquifer in the district is essential to provide water supplies for domestic, industrial and agricultural use. Groundwater also feeds into the surface water system by means of springs and river flows. Pollution of ground and surface water can result from varied activities such as disposal of effluent in soakaways, contaminated land, landfilling of unsealed sites over permeable bedrock, chemical spillage from industrial process or discharge from roads. In turn this pollution can affect the natural water cycle and cleaning up of contaminated water, in particular groundwater, is very expensive and difficult. The Environment Agency has produced "Policy and Practice for the Protection of Groundwater " which provides a policy framework for the protection of groundwater, and is based on the principles of groundwater vulnerability. Source Protection Zone Maps are available from the Environment Agency. These show areas which form an increased risk to abstractions. The Council will therefore resist development following consultation with the Environment Agency that may prejudice both the aquifer and surface water quality. If proposals are acceptable the use of sustainable drainage systems, which amongst other objectives seek to reduce the concentration of pollutants entering the water environment, should be encouraged if they will lead to enhancement of ground water quality. The Environment Agency can offer advice on best management practices.

#### **Policy R7 - Protection of Ground and Surface Water**

**Planning permission will not be granted for development which poses a threat to the quality of both surface and/or groundwater. Where proposals are acceptable the use of sustainable drainage systems will be encouraged, dependent on local site and underlying groundwater considerations.**

#### Development on Floodplains and Flood Prevention

- 5.29 Floodplains act as storage and conveyancing areas for floodwater and may also have high environmental and amenity value. Floodplains therefore need safeguarding from inappropriate development. Any development, including raising the floor of the floodplain, may affect its storage capacity. This results in an increased risk of flooding and may affect other parts of the interconnected water system. The Environment Agency has identified the floodplains in the district, the majority of which are in the Green Belt. The Council will resist proposals after consultation with the Environment Agency for new development in these areas.
- 5.30 New development outside floodplains can result in increased problems of flooding downstream because of an increase in run-off from impermeable surfaces. There may be ways however of ameliorating the problem by the use of sustainable drainage systems including, for example, balancing ponds, swales and porous pavements. These techniques will require appropriate design and siting. The suitability of certain infiltration techniques will also

depend on site specific groundwater considerations. There may also be opportunities for increasing biodiversity with sustainable drainage techniques. The Council will not allow development, after consultation with the Environment Agency, that would increase the risk of flooding downstream because of increased surface run-off.

#### **Policy R8 - Floodplains and Flood Prevention**

**Within the floodplains identified on the Proposal Map, planning permission for development will not be granted where proposals would;**

- (i) Decrease the capacity of the floodplain to store flood water; or**
  - (ii) Impede the flow of water; or**
  - (iii) Increase the number of people and properties at risk from flooding.**
- Planning permission for new development outside floodplains will not be granted where the proposals would result in an increase in flooding downstream because of increased run-off.**

**The use of sustainable drainage systems will be encouraged, dependent on local site and underlying groundwater considerations.**

**Proposals for development necessary to prevent an increase in flooding will be considered in terms of their impact on biodiversity, the landscape and recreation.**

#### Conservation of Water Resources

- 5.31 Water companies still hold the responsibility for provision of water supplies and must provide water as a statutory duty, whatever the demand. However the supply of water, the conservation of water supplies, and wastewater disposal must be important factors in considering development. There is a need to ensure that measures to meet increased demand should not be detrimental to other water users of the environment. For example increase in demand impacts on local water tables and hydrology and may then have a negative effect on local wetland habitats and wildlife. The Mimram in particular already suffers from low flows and it is possible that the river has been badly affected by abstraction for public supplies. The Environment Agency is currently investigating the problem of low flows in the Mimram. Development should ideally be restricted to areas with an adequate existing water resource and a more sustainable approach applied i.e. the use of local water supplies, the recycling of drinking and wastewater. The Council will consult with the relevant bodies regarding proposals and would wish to promote sustainable water management where applicable, especially in larger development sites.

#### **Policy R9 - Water Supply and Disposal**

**Permission will not be granted for proposals that:**

- (i) Would be detrimental to existing water abstractions, fisheries, amenity and nature conservation;**

- (ii) **Would cause adverse change in flows or levels in the groundwater, or any rivers, streams, ditches, springs, lakes or ponds in the vicinity.**

**Proposals should be consistent with the long term management of, and co-ordinated with, the provision of new water supply and disposal infrastructure.**

5.32 In addition all development should include water conservation measures. The Council accepts that some water conservation measures such as sustainable drainage systems, large water storage systems, reed beds and alternative water supplies can only be used on large scale developments, but other measures should be incorporated in small scale development proposals. These include:

- Water butts;
- Rainwater recovery systems;
- Soft planting;
- The use of permeable surfaces and minimal hard landscaping on areas such as driveways and patios to help reduce surface water run-off.

#### **Policy R10 - Water Conservation Measures**

**New development will be expected to incorporate water conservation measures wherever applicable, including sustainable drainage systems, water storage systems, soft landscaping and permeable surfaces to help reduce surface water run-off.**

#### **Biodiversity**

5.33 Biodiversity is the term used to describe the variety of life throughout the natural world. The intricate and diverse networks of ecosystems provide the support systems which are essential for human existence i.e. oxygen, water, food, clothing, health and relaxation. Human activities however continue to destroy the world's biodiversity; over 100 species have been lost to the UK alone in the last century and many more are at risk including at a local level common birds such as the starling and house sparrow.

5.34 The Rio summit of 1992 made a commitment to maintain the world's biodiversity and the Government subscribes to the principles of the Rio convention. In consequence a UK Biodiversity Action Plan was published in 1994. This led to a County Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), "A 50 year vision for the Wildlife and Natural Habitats of Hertfordshire", published in 1998. The BAP identifies key habitats and species in Hertfordshire. The Council has adopted a BAP for Welwyn Hatfield District to replace the Nature Conservation Strategy for the district.

#### Enhancing Biodiversity

5.35 PPG9 states that our natural wildlife heritage is not confined to the various designated sites but is found in many urban areas. In addition to protecting specific sites, the Council wishes to enhance biodiversity throughout the district by ensuring that all new development contributes positively to increasing the range of habitats and species in the area. In addition, the Council requires that new development should demonstrate how it would

enhance a site's biodiversity, for example through a management agreement or the inclusion of appropriate landscaping. Applicants are expected to submit a sustainability statement covering ecological appraisal in accordance with Policy SD1.

### **Policy R11- Biodiversity and Development**

**All new development will be required to demonstrate how it would contribute positively to the biodiversity of the site by;**

- (i) The retention and enhancement of the natural features of the site;**
- (ii) The promotion of natural areas and wildlife corridors where appropriate as part of the design;**
- (iii) The translocation of habitats where necessary, where it can be demonstrated that the habitat or species concerned cannot be successfully accommodated within the development;**
- (iv) The use of locally native species in planting in accordance with Policy D8 Landscaping;**
- (v) Helping meet priorities/targets set out in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.**

5.36 PPG9 Nature Conservation identifies different levels of protection for sites of varying importance for biodiversity, for example European and National statutory sites such as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPAS), National Nature Reserves, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Local Nature Reserves and non statutory locally designated sites such as County Wildlife Sites. PPG 9 recognises that local and informal designations form part of a habitat network which helps to retain local biodiversity, but designation should only be for sites of substantive local value.

#### Sites of International Importance

5.37 The district contains a small part of the Wormley-Hoddesdon Park Woods candidate Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is identified on the Proposals Map. This designation is intended to protect the habitat of threatened species of wildlife. In accordance with PPG 9 development proposals for a candidate SAC will be treated in the same way as if it had already been designated.

### **Policy R12 - Special Area of Conservation**

**Proposals for development or land use which may affect a designated or candidate special area of conservation will be subject to the most rigorous examination. Development or land use change not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site and which is likely to have significant effects on the site (either individually or in combination with other plans or projects) and which would affect the integrity of the site will not be permitted unless the Council is satisfied that:**

- (i) There is no alternative solution;**

- (ii) **There are imperative reasons of overriding public interest for the development or land use change.**

**Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and /or a priority species, development or land use change will not be permitted unless the Council is satisfied that it is necessary for reasons of human health or public safety or for the beneficial consequences of primary importance for nature conservation.**

#### Sites of Special Scientific Interest

5.38 English Nature is responsible for the notification of Sites of Special Scientific Interest of national and international importance for nature conservation. These are areas of special national interest because of their flora, fauna, geological or landform features. There are five such sites designated within the district, which are identified on the Proposals Map. They are Sherrardspark Wood, SSSI 1; Wormley-Hoddesdon Park Wood South, SSSI 2 (also in Broxbourne and East Hertfordshire); Water End Swallow Holes, SSSI 3; Northaw Great Wood, SSSI 4; and Redwell Wood SSSI 5 (part Hertsmere). In addition the district shares a boundary with Tewinbury SSSI, which is in East Hertfordshire. The Council will protect these sites and any other SSSI designations, which may come forward in the future, from development proposals likely to affect them, following consultation with English Nature.

#### **Policy R13 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest**

**Proposals for development in or likely to affect Sites of Special Scientific Interest will be subject to special scrutiny. Where such development including that on land adjoining or adjacent to the sites may have an adverse effect, directly or indirectly, on the SSSI it will not be permitted unless the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the site itself and the national policy to safeguard the national network of such sites.**

**Where development is permitted the Council will consider the use of conditions and/or planning obligations to ensure the protection and enhancement of the site's nature conservation interest.**

#### Local Nature Reserves

5.39 A Local Authority has statutory powers to set up and manage Local Nature Reserves on land in its ownership. Five Local Nature Reserves have been designated in the district, and are identified on the Proposals Map. They are Danesbury Park, LNR 1; Sherrardspark Wood, LNR 2; The Commons, LNR 3; Northaw Great Wood, LNR 4; and Mardley Heath, LNR 5. The Council would wish to protect these from development and also intends to identify and set up further sites in conjunction with English Nature and other interested parties, where appropriate and as resources allow.

#### **Policy R14 - Local Nature Reserves**

**Planning permission will not be granted for any development likely to have an adverse effect on local nature reserves unless it can be clearly demonstrated that there are reasons for the proposal which outweigh**

**the need to safeguard the substantive nature conservation value of the site.**

**Where development is permitted which would damage the nature conservation value of the site such damage should be kept to a minimum. Where appropriate the Council will consider the use of conditions and/or planning obligations to provide appropriate compensatory measures.**

#### Wildlife Sites

- 5.40 PPG 9 Nature Conservation also allows for the designation of Regionally Important Geological / Geomorphological Sites (RIGS). Such features of the landscape are of major importance for wildlife flora and fauna. They are similar to the Wildlife Sites in that they are non-statutory locally designated sites. The Hertfordshire RIGS group has identified a potential site in the district and there may be potential for further sites to be identified for example, through mineral workings.
- 5.41 The Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre (HBRC), in conjunction with the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, carried out a Habitat Survey from 1994 to 1997 and subsequently identified Wildlife Sites for this district, based upon the latest available information. These are listed in Appendix 1 and identified on the Proposals Map. Wildlife Sites are defined as areas, identified by locally developed criteria, which are the most important places for wildlife outside statutorily protected areas. The Wildlife Sites include most of the areas identified in the previously adopted Plan, additional sites and areas run by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Gobions Woodland Trust and the Digswell Lake Society. These Wildlife Sites may change over time and as new information becomes available sites may be added to or removed from the list in Appendix 1, depending on their value. Some Wildlife Sites extend into the settlements, but most urban areas as such, are not covered by the Wildlife Sites. Most areas of potential wildlife value within the urban areas are part of the network of 'Urban Open Land' sites designated under Policy OS1. Urban Wildlife Sites will be designated in the future when specific criteria have been developed in conjunction with the HBRC and the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.
- 5.42 The Council will seek to protect the Wildlife Sites from development and planning permission will not be granted for any development likely to cause harm to their wildlife habitats, unless there are strong reasons to do so and mitigating measures are taken. Within some sites, there may be a threat of harm from development which would normally enjoy 'permitted development rights', for example, war games, motorsports or clay pigeon shooting in woodlands or small scale buildings on those sites which are within the grounds of a residential property. Where this is the case and the Council considers that there is a real threat of 'permitted development' causing harm, it may consider the use of Article 4 Directions, to remove permitted development rights and bring such forms of development under planning control.

## **Policy R15 - Wildlife Sites**

**Planning permission will not be granted for any development which would have an adverse effect on Wildlife Sites or Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites unless:**

- (i) It can be demonstrated that the reasons for development outweigh the need to safeguard the biodiversity of the site; and**
- (ii) Measures are taken to mitigate the effect of the development, to compensate for any residual adverse effects and to reinstate the nature conservation value of the site.**

### Protected Species

5.43 The loss of some species of wildlife has been increasing since the Second World War and therefore the Council will resist development which would adversely affect the most vulnerable species. Many endangered species may be found in many places not notified as SSSIs. These species are identified in the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act and in the Habitat Regulations, the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994. Where development is permitted that may affect those species the Council will where appropriate consider the use of conditions and/or planning obligations to:

- Facilitate the survival of individual members of the species;
- Reduce disturbance to a minimum;
- Provide adequate alternative habitats to sustain at least the current levels of population.

## **Policy R16 - Protection of Species**

**Planning permission will not be granted for any development or use of land which would have an adverse impact on badgers or species protected by schedules 1, 5, or 8 of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act, as amended.**

**Where development is permitted the Council will consider the use of conditions and/or planning obligations to ensure the protection of the site's species.**

### Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

5.44 Trees, woodlands and hedgerows are important for biodiversity and as a vital element in the landscape; they help reduce atmospheric pollution and the build up of CO<sup>2</sup> and can reduce noise. They can supply shelter and help with a feeling of enclosure and greatly add to the character and attractiveness of the district, in both rural and urban areas. The district contains areas of ancient, semi-natural woodland as well as veteran trees, and hedgerows which can act as wildlife corridors between rural and urban areas. In the rural areas the changing nature of agriculture has resulted in the loss of woodland and more specifically hedgerows.

5.45 In the urban areas there is also a significant green heritage to protect. The origins of Welwyn Garden City, which combined the benefits of both town and countryside, set standards of landscaping which have been the basis of

design for new towns ever since. This approach of planting of trees and shrubs combined with the retention of original trees, hedgerows and woods has continued throughout the urban areas of the district. The Council would wish to retain existing trees, hedgerows, and woodland whilst requiring where appropriate new planting of locally native species to encourage biodiversity. Trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders are protected by law requiring the Council's consent before potentially harmful work is carried out. Work to trees in Conservation Areas require six weeks notice to the Local Authority.

### **Policy R17 - Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows**

**The Council will seek the protection and retention of existing trees, hedgerows and woodland by the use of planning conditions, section 106 agreements, hedgerow retention notices and tree preservation orders where applicable. New development will be required to incorporate wherever appropriate new planting with locally native species and should be in accordance with Policy D8 Landscaping.**

## **Air Quality**

- 5.46 The maintenance of high air quality is a major factor affecting quality of life. Major developments, road related development, traffic levels and some types of industry can increase emissions which reduce air quality. The Environment Act 1995 places a duty on local authorities to review and assess air quality in their districts. Those areas that are expected to exceed national guidelines in the year 2005 will be deemed Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and the local authority must devise a strategy to reduce pollution concentrations. The review is underway in Welwyn Hatfield District, but it is unlikely that any AQMAs will be identified. However, provision is made in the following policy to cover the possibility.

### **Policy R18 - Air Quality**

**The Council will have regard to the potential effects of a development on local air quality when determining planning applications. Consideration will be given to both the operational characteristics of the development and to the traffic generated by it. Any development within areas designated as Air Quality Management Areas must have regard to guidelines for ensuring air quality is maintained at acceptable levels as set out in the Air Quality Strategy.**

## **Noise and Vibration**

- 5.47 Noise can have a detrimental effect on the environment and on quality of life. PPG 24 'Noise' provides guidance on the use of planning powers to minimise the adverse impact of noise. In accordance with that advice the Council will seek to ensure that noise-sensitive developments, such as housing, are separated from major sources of noise. It will also seek to ensure that new development with a potential for causing noise nuisance is sited away from noise-sensitive land uses, both existing and known proposed developments. Noise can be accompanied by vibration that can cause disturbance. British Standard 6472:1992 will be used to evaluate exposure to vibration in

buildings. The Council has powers under Environmental Health legislation in respect of statutory noise nuisances.

5.48 In considering proposals for development the Council will take into account:

- Possible future increases in noise levels;
- That the introduction of noisy activities into some residential and rural areas can be especially disruptive because of their existing very low background noise levels;
- That intermittent sources of noise can be more disruptive than constant sources;
- That particular difficulties are posed by fast food restaurants, public houses, night clubs etc, both from noise generated within the establishments and by customers in the vicinity, traffic and parking, especially in view of their evening and late night activity;
- That whilst design measures such as orientation, layout and double-glazing can reduce noise levels within buildings, such measures are less effective in reducing the level of noise experienced in public or private amenity areas.

#### **Policy R19 - Noise and Vibration Pollution**

**Proposals will be refused if the development is likely:**

- (i) **To generate unacceptable noise or vibration for other land uses; or**
- (ii) **To be affected by unacceptable noise or vibration from other land uses.**

**Planning permission will be granted where appropriate conditions may be imposed to ensure either:**

- (iii) **An adequate level of protection against noise or vibration; or**
- (iv) **That the level of noise emitted can be controlled.**

**Proposals should be in accordance with the Supplementary Design Guidance.**

#### **Light Pollution**

5.49 Light pollution concerns the adverse effects of light spill from artificial light installations. Artificial light is beneficial for community safety and security, for extending the time available for recreation and leisure, ie optimising the use and viability of facilities such as sports playing surfaces and for adding interest (such as the enhancement of buildings). However artificial light can be detrimental to both humans and wildlife if poorly designed or installed. Street, security and commercial lights as well as sports floodlighting can illuminate wide areas of land and atmosphere. Residential amenity and both rural and urban views can be detrimentally affected. Artificial light can change the character of the countryside at night by creating the impression that it is urbanised, and thereby harm the character and openness of the Green Belt. Photos taken from satellites at night reveal the extent of light pollution in

Western Europe and it is now virtually impossible for astronomers to find any location in southern England where light pollution does not disrupt visibility. Added together light spillage represents a massive waste of energy and also unnecessary expenditure.

- 5.50 The Council will use its development control powers to try to keep light pollution to a minimum. Careful lighting schemes and installations that avoid detrimental impacts on amenity and wildlife, and minimise spillage and glare will be encouraged. Where appropriate, the Council may require landscaping to minimise the effects of external lighting. In determining applications, the Council will use the guidance contained in the Institution of Lighting Engineers Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Light Pollution which also lists other relevant standards.

#### **Policy R20 - Light Pollution**

**In order to minimise light pollution, external lighting scheme proposals, including floodlighting, will only be approved where it can be demonstrated that all of the following criteria can be satisfied:**

- (i) The scheme proposed is the minimum needed for security and operational purposes or to enhance the external appearance of the building to be illuminated;**
- (ii) Glare and light spillage are minimised;**
- (iii) The amenity of residential areas is not adversely affected;**
- (iv) The visual character of historic buildings and conservation areas are not adversely affected;**
- (v) There would be no adverse impact on the character or openness of the countryside and green belt;**
- (vi) There would be no adverse effects on ecology and the natural environment including wildlife; and**
- (vii) There would be no dazzling or distraction of drivers using nearby roads.**

#### **Telecommunications Installations and Apparatus**

- 5.51 Government planning policy on telecommunications in PPG8 emphasises that modern telecommunications are an essential and beneficial element in the life of the local community and the development of the economy. They enable people to work, shop, gain access to information and services and be entertained without leaving their homes. In this way, modern telecommunications can also benefit the environment by reducing the need to travel and thereby reducing vehicle emissions. Telecommunications apparatus includes masts, aerials, radio antennae, satellite dishes and development for cable television.
- 5.52 PPG8 advises that local planning authorities should respond positively to proposals for telecommunications development, especially where alternative locations are unsuitable due to technical constraints, whilst at the same time, taking account of the need to protect the environment of urban and rural

areas. This requires a balance to be struck between the wider benefits of telecommunications development and the potential harm it can cause to visual amenity.

- 5.53 It is essential to ensure that telecommunications development does not harm the quality and appearance of the natural and built environment, including the countryside, towns and villages in the district. The Council will therefore require telecommunications apparatus to be sensitively sited so as to minimise its visual impact. In all cases, opportunities to screen the development should be taken, such as by using existing tall buildings/structures or natural features such as trees or woodland. The Council will encourage mast sharing wherever this is possible and environmentally acceptable. When considering proposals for new free standing masts, the Council will require written evidence from the developer to demonstrate that they have explored the possibility of sharing existing masts or using locations such as tall buildings, together with evidence of why this is not Practicable.
- 5.54 In recent years, there have been increasing concerns about the health implications of mobile telephones and their associated masts and base stations. In May 2000, the Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones (IEGMP) chaired by Sir William Stewart, published their report (The Stewart Report) into the possible health effects of the use of mobile phones, base stations and transmitters. The report concluded that it is not yet possible to state categorically that there are no risks to health from the radiation that these installations produce and that further research is needed. It therefore recommended that a 'precautionary approach' should be taken in dealing with mobile phone technology. Accordingly, emissions should be required to fall within ICNIRP (International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection) guidelines and accord with the advice contained in PPG8 on locations next to sensitive sites such as colleges and schools, including nurseries or pre-school play groups. Due to the sensitivity of such sites, all applications and determinations received for mobile phone masts, base stations and transmitters proposed near college, school, nursery or pre-school playgroup locations will be required to include details of consultation in line with PPG8 or its successor.
- 5.55 The Council will work with the telecommunication code system operators in providing and maintaining a register of existing sites where planning permission has been granted for telecommunications development, in order to maximise the opportunities for mast sharing, and will encourage them to advise the Council of their wider strategic requirements for installations within the individual towns and settlements where they are proposing development. The Council will adopt the following policy in considering proposals for telecommunications installations and apparatus. Proposals may either require the submission of a planning application or an application for prior approval of details. Before installing certain telecommunications apparatus under permitted development rights, a code system operator must apply for a determination as to whether the Council's approval of the siting and appearance of the development is required. This only allows the Council to consider the issues of the siting and appearance of the development, not the

principle of the development itself. This policy will be reviewed in the light of developing technology and further government guidance on the health issues associated with telecommunications development.

### **Policy R21 - Telecommunications Development**

**Proposals for telecommunications development will be considered against the following criteria:**

**For mobile phone masts, base stations and transmitters:**

- (i) For new free standing masts, the applicant must be able to demonstrate that there are technical reasons which prevent the installation of the apparatus on existing masts, buildings or other structures;**
- (ii) New free standing masts must have sufficient spare capacity to allow mast sharing, subject to any technical or environmental constraints, which will be secured by the use of planning conditions or Section 106 Agreements;**
- (iii) All applications and determinations must be accompanied by information on the level of emissions likely to be generated by the installation and the level of emissions must fall within the ICNIRP (International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection) guidelines and the advice contained in PPG8 in relation to emissions near college, school, nursery or pre-school playgroup grounds and buildings;**
- (iv) Clear public exclusion zones should be placed around all base station antennae together with appropriate warning signs;**
- (v) All applications and determinations received for mobile phone masts, base stations and transmitters proposed near college, school, nursery or pre-school playgroup locations must include details of consultation in line with PPG8 or its successor.**

**For all telecommunications development, including mobile phone installations, domestic satellite equipment and radio masts:**

- (vi) The development must not harm the appearance of the street scene nor appear visually intrusive;**
- (vii) The development must not harm the character of a Conservation Area nor the character and setting of a Listed Building;**
- (viii) If erected on a building, it must not be out of keeping with the building, in terms of siting, scale, size, profile and colour, so as to harm the appearance of the building;**
- (ix) If proposed in areas designated for their landscape, historic or nature conservation importance, including Conservation Areas and the Green Belt, applicants must be able to demonstrate why sites outside these areas cannot be used.**

**Where permission is granted for telecommunications development, the Council will impose a condition requiring the installation to be removed**

**as soon as possible once it is no longer required for telecommunications purposes.**

### **Historic Environment**

5.56 The Historic Environment is by its nature irreplaceable. It is evidence of past human activity, from the prehistoric period to the present day. It encompasses the whole of the historic landscape not just designated sites, such as listed buildings, conservation areas, ancient monuments, archaeological areas of significance and registered parks and gardens, but also other historical features such as places of worship, defence installations, burial grounds, farms and fields, and sites of manufacture.

### Conservation Areas

5.57 The district has eight Conservation Areas. These are the historic cores of Ayot Green, Ayot St. Lawrence, Essendon, Old Hatfield, Northaw, and Welwyn, together with two areas in Welwyn Garden City, the central part and the Beehive area. Their boundaries are defined on the Proposals Map. These areas contain significant links with the past, in terms of the historical development of the district and traditional forms of architecture. In particular, they contain most of the district's Listed Buildings. Therefore, it is important that the historical and architectural character of these areas is preserved and enhanced. As far as possible existing buildings should be retained and adapted for re-use rather than demolished and redeveloped. Where new buildings are acceptable, they must be designed to harmonise with their surroundings and preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, using, where appropriate, traditional materials and features. Advertisements in Conservation Areas are dealt with in paragraphs 5.8 and 5.9 of the Supplementary Design Guidance. Shopfront security, shop awnings, canopies and blinds within the Conservation Areas are dealt with in paragraphs 6.5 and 6.11 of the Supplementary Design Guidance.

### **Policy R22 - Development in Conservation Areas**

**Within the Conservation Areas, as shown on the Proposals Map, any proposals for new buildings or extensions and alterations to existing buildings will only be permitted where they would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, in terms of siting, form, scale, materials, detailing and landscaping.**

**Before determining an application for planning permission in a conservation area, the Council will require detailed plans and elevational drawings showing the proposed development in relation to its surroundings. Minor works will also be required to respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.**

5.58 Within Conservation Areas the demolition of most buildings is subject to planning control. The general presumption in PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment is in favour of retaining buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. The Council will therefore resist proposals for demolition within Conservation Areas, unless a very special case has been made and acceptable detailed plans for the site's redevelopment have been put forward. The wider effects

of demolition and redevelopment on the character of the Area will be assessed before consent is granted. In order to aid the Council make this assessment developers will be required to provide documentary evidence in line with criterion (iv) of Policy R27.

- 5.59 Where appropriate, the Council will require historic materials and/or components arising from demolition or other works to historic buildings to be set aside either for re-use in alterations works to the building or for disposal to a bona fide architectural salvage company.

#### **Policy R23 - Demolition of Buildings in Conservation Areas**

**Within Conservation Areas consent will not be granted for the demolition of any buildings or structures in the designated Conservation Areas, unless the character or appearance of the Conservation Area is thereby preserved or enhanced (whether or not such works form part of a redevelopment scheme).**

**Consent will not be granted for demolition without acceptable detailed plans for the redevelopment or landscaping of the site. Conditions will be imposed in order to ensure that a contractual obligation has been entered into to undertake the proposed works prior to the commencement of demolition and that planning permission has been granted.**

- 5.60 Local Authorities have a duty, under Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, to consider whether further reviews of their Conservation Areas are called for. As part of the monitoring process, and to assess the need for such reviews, the Council will endeavour to produce a character appraisal for each of the Conservation Areas in the district, as advised in PPG15. These character appraisals will identify those areas in need of review or enhancement, provide guidance for the design of new buildings and alterations to existing buildings and will also serve to co-ordinate the standard of development expected from the Council's own works, and those of statutory undertakers.
- 5.61 Unsympathetic alterations or improvements to buildings can damage the character of these areas as can neglect of infrastructure and landscape. Where, following a conservation area review or character appraisal, this is identified as a problem, the Council will carry out a dual policy approach of improvement works and Article 4 directions to remove permitted development rights, subject to the availability of resources.

#### **Policy R24 - Character Appraisals and Enhancements**

**The Council will produce a character appraisal for each of the district's Conservation Areas, to guide the design of development or alterations to existing buildings and identify the need for Conservation Area enhancement schemes. Based on these, subject to the availability of resources, the Council will draw up and implement a programme of works for the maintenance and enhancement of their historic and architectural character.**

**Where a character appraisal identifies that the carrying out of permitted development in a Conservation Area could cause serious harm to the character of the area, the Council will make a direction under Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order, requiring planning permission to be obtained for such development.**

#### Listed Buildings

5.62 Welwyn Hatfield District has over four hundred Listed Buildings, which are listed in Appendix 2. The preservation of the historic and architectural character of these buildings is of prime importance. Any alteration or extension must pay full attention to the existing fabric and to its restoration where decay or neglect has caused damage. The Council will consider the use of repairs notices and emergency repairs notices, where appropriate, to effect repairs to buildings not held in good repair or to barns under threat due to neglect. The Council will expect traditional methods and materials to be used, wherever possible, in any works carried out to a Listed Building. In considering proposals for development affecting a Listed Building, the Council will normally seek the advice of the Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust. Listed Buildings often provide a refuge for protected species such as bats, barn owls etc. Their presence will be a material consideration in the determination of applications for Listed Building consent. Proposals for works to Listed Buildings should safeguard them from any adverse impacts resulting from the development and where appropriate enhance their habitat, in accordance with Policy R16 of the Plan.

#### **Policy R25 - Works to Listed Buildings**

**Permission will be refused for any proposal which would adversely affect the historic character or architectural quality of a Listed Building or its setting. Listed Building Consent will not be granted for any extensions or external or internal alterations to buildings of special architectural or historic importance unless all of the following criteria are satisfied:**

- (i) New works respect the character, appearance, and setting of the building in terms of design, scale and materials;**
- (ii) Architectural or historic features which are important to the character and appearance of the building (including internal features) are retained unaltered;**
- (iii) The historic form and structural integrity of the building are retained; and**
- (iv) Full detailed drawings of the proposed works are submitted with the application.**

5.63 In some cases it may prove impossible to maintain Listed Buildings in their original use. The most important issue is the preservation of their historic and architectural features and character. Therefore, the Council will adopt a flexible policy towards the use of Listed Buildings, since it is often the case that a more economic use can secure their restoration and ensure continued preservation.

## **Policy R26 - Alternative Uses for Listed Buildings**

**Applications for the change of use of Listed Buildings will only be permitted when all of the following criteria are met:**

- (i) The proposal would not harm the character or setting of the building;**
- (ii) The change of use could be successfully implemented without the essential need for other development which would harm the building's character or setting, and;**
- (iii) The change of use results in the continued preservation of the building's fabric or its restoration.**

5.64 There is a general presumption in favour of the preservation of Listed Buildings. It is important that these buildings are given maximum protection. Indeed there is a statutory duty on local planning authorities to 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'. Demolition will be acceptable only in very exceptional circumstances. The Council will endeavour to protect Listed Buildings wherever possible, and will consider demolition only as a last resort. In assessing proposals for the demolition of Listed Buildings, the Council will consider the following factors, as advised in PPG15:

- The condition of the building, and the costs involved in repairing and maintaining it;
- The adequacy of efforts made to retain the building in use;
- The merits of alternative proposals for the site.

5.65 Where proposals for the demolition or major alteration of a Listed Building are submitted they should be accompanied by an impact assessment report setting out the historic/archaeological interest and importance of the structure affected by the proposal, and assessing the impact of the proposed demolition work. In cases where exceptional circumstances result in consent being granted for demolition or major alteration to a Listed Building, an appropriate condition will be imposed requiring the developer to secure a programme of archaeological historic building recording prior to the commencement of any works, including a photographic record. A full report of this recording work should be submitted to the Council for approval.

## **Policy R27 - Demolition of Listed Buildings**

**Listed Building Consent for the complete or partial demolition of any building of special architectural or historic interest will not be granted other than in the following exceptional circumstances:**

- (i) Clear and convincing evidence has been provided that it is not practicable to continue to use the building for its present or previous use and that no viable alternative uses can be found, and that preservation in some form of charitable or community ownership is not possible;**

- (ii) **The physical condition of the building has deteriorated, to a point that it can be demonstrated that demolition is essential in the interests of public safety. A comprehensive structural report will be required to support this criterion;**
- (iii) **Demolition or major alteration will not be considered without acceptable detailed plans for the site's development. Conditions will be imposed in order to ensure a contractual obligation has been entered into for the construction of the replacement building(s) and / or the landscaping of the site prior to the commencement of demolition; and**
- (iv) **Where, exceptionally, consent is granted for the demolition or major alteration to a listed building, before any demolition or major alteration takes place, applicants will be required to record details of the building by measured drawings, text and photographs, and this should be submitted to and agreed by the Council.**

### Historic Parks and Gardens

- 5.66 Historic parks and gardens contribute to the quality and character of the landscape, reflecting cultural and horticultural ideas of their time. They may often provide outstanding landscape settings for Listed Buildings, have rare plant collections and may be an immensely valuable ecological resource, contributing to biodiversity. The Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest is prepared by English Heritage. The designation is non-statutory, but PPG15 "*Planning and the Historic Environment*" advises local planning authorities to protect registered parks and gardens in preparing development plans and in determining planning applications. PPG15 also allows for the identification of locally important historic parks and gardens that make a contribution to the heritage of the district. They also offer a resource for recreation, tourism and education and often provide outstanding settings for Listed Buildings.
- 5.67 The registered sites are identified on the Proposal Map. These are listed in Appendix 3 to the Plan, together with other sites which at present are regarded as being of more local significance. The Council will seek to preserve their character and setting through the application of its planning powers.

#### **Policy R28 - Historic Parks and Gardens**

**Development will not be permitted if it would lead to the loss of, or cause harm to, the historic character, appearance or setting of any part of a registered historic park or garden.**

**Proposals for development in any unregistered historic parks and gardens listed in Appendix 3 will be considered in terms of their contribution to the quality and character of the historic environment.**

**The Council will work with the County Council, the Hertfordshire Building Preservation Trust and the Hertfordshire Gardens Trust to promote the preservation and maintenance of this resource.**

## Archaeology

- 5.68 Ancient Monuments and archaeological remains are an important part of the district's heritage and form a finite and non-renewable resource which is important both culturally and educationally. These remains take the form of those that are known, such as scheduled ancient monuments, those that are anticipated, and those that are undiscovered and unsuspected. There are over 340 individual records of known archaeological sites and finds in Welwyn Hatfield recorded on the County Sites and Monuments Record maintained by Hertfordshire County Council. Of these, four are designated as scheduled ancient monuments under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and are statutorily protected.
- 5.69 Government guidance, in the form of PPG16, explains the importance of archaeology and advises on the handling of such matters in the planning process. Particular emphasis is placed on the importance of policies within development plans and their implementation through development control, as a means of ensuring remains are preserved or recorded.
- 5.70 The list of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Areas of Archaeological Significance is not exhaustive, and will be revised as necessary. Exclusion from either designation should not imply that a site has no archaeological merit. Some of the most important concentrations of archaeological remains recorded on the County Sites and Monuments Record, as maintained by Hertfordshire County Council, are identified on the Proposals Map as Areas of Archaeological Significance, although important archaeological remains may exist elsewhere in the district. These Areas have been identified in order to alert developers to the need to consider the archaeological implications of their proposals at the earliest possible stage of any development proposal in order to minimise potential conflict. However, the Council will seek to protect valuable remains throughout the district in its planning policies.
- 5.71 In considering planning applications on sites within the Areas of Archaeological Significance or other sites of potential interest, the Council will, as necessary, seek guidance from the County Council's Archaeologist. Account will also be taken of archaeological planning guidance notes where these have been produced by the County Council as supplementary guidance. Where appropriate the Council will seek to secure the enhanced management of sites and remains within the district.

### **Policy R29 - Archaeology**

**Where a proposal for development may affect remains of archaeological significance, or may be sited in an area of archaeological potential, developers will be required to undertake an archaeological assessment, if necessary with a field evaluation, and to submit a report on the findings to the Local Planning Authority, before an application is determined.**

**Planning permission will not be granted for development which adversely affects the site or setting of Scheduled Ancient Monuments, or other nationally important sites and monuments.**

**Where development proposals affect sites and monuments of less than national importance, the Council will seek preservation *in situ* of remains. In cases where this is neither feasible, nor merited, planning permission may be granted, subject to conditions requiring adequate provision being made for excavation and recording.**

**When planning permission is granted for development that would affect archaeological remains, taking into account the importance of the remains, conditions will be imposed to ensure that the remains are properly recorded, the results analysed and published and where practicable, the management and presentation of archaeological sites and their settings is enhanced.**

## **MOVEMENT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 6.1 The relationship between land use and transport is a key element in any strategy for sustainable development and quality of life. The movement of people and goods between different land use activities generates the demand for transport facilities and services. An efficient transport network is essential to economic prosperity, but the way in which movement is accommodated can have an impact on the quality of the environment.
- 6.2 Statutory responsibility for the transport system rests with a number of bodies, including the Highways Agency, County Council, rail and bus operators. Their plans and priorities are determined at a national level through the government's 10-year Transport Plan. At the local level, the Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan defines the objectives and programme for transport improvements. The District Council itself has limited statutory responsibility for transport, apart from car parking management, taxi licensing and bus passes, but it works in partnership with the County Council and the operators to shape their investment programmes. In particular, as the local planning authority, it has a major role to play in controlling the location and design of development to integrate with transport planning objectives.
- 6.3 This chapter sets out the planning policies which the Council will use to integrate land use with transport and to ensure the movement patterns generated by development can be accommodated by the transport system. It has been prepared in the context of the priorities set out in the Local Transport Plan and government guidance.

### **ISSUES**

- 6.4 The effective management of movement is particularly critical in Welwyn Hatfield. Its settlement pattern, with a number of small and medium sized towns, which are relatively interdependent, generates significant movement flows within the district, as people travel to different towns for shops, leisure and work. The district's two main towns, Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield, are also important centres of employment within the county, attracting large commuting flows from outside of the district. At the same time, a significant proportion of the district's population work in London and other nearby settlements, generating flows out of the district. Welwyn Hatfield is dissected by several strategic transport routes, being on the M25, A1(M), A414 and the East Coast Main Line Railway. Whilst this is good for business and people's own geographical mobility, it brings with it associated environmental problems.
- 6.5 Government and county transport policy has shifted fundamentally over the last decade. Whilst it recognises that the car will remain a vital element of the transport system, because of concerns about congestion, safety and pollution, the emphasis now is on reducing the overall need for people to travel and encouraging a shift to other modes of transport, in an effort to reduce the need for people to use their cars. This position is reflected both in

the government's 10-year Transport Plan and Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan.

- 6.6 Within this context the key challenge for Welwyn Hatfield will be to achieve a more sustainable pattern of movement, whilst maintaining the current level of accessibility, which is important to its economic vitality. The District Plan has an important part to play in this, in a number of ways. Firstly, it seeks to locate development where it is already accessible by a number of modes of transport, in particular concentrating new retail and leisure development into the two town centres, but also housing where it is close to facilities or well served by transport. Policies in the Housing and Retailing and Town Centres chapters of the Plan promote this. Secondly, in order to improve the infrastructure and services for non-car modes, where development takes place, the Plan seeks to ensure that priority is given to walking, cycling and passenger transport in the design and servicing of development. Thirdly, where development can be made more accessible by non-car modes, either by location, design or improvements to infrastructure, car use can be limited by reducing available car parking.
- 6.7 This chapter sets out a range of policies through which the movement elements of these three aims can be achieved. It is important to say that they can only be effective if they are implemented as a package of policy measures and in conjunction with other policies in the Plan.

## **STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES**

- 6.8 To achieve the overall aim of a more sustainable pattern of movement, the policies in this chapter seek to fulfil the following objectives:
- (a) To reduce the overall need to travel by integrating land uses with transport;
  - (b) To support the development of integrated transport policy;
  - (c) To reduce dependency on the car and encourage modes of travel which have less adverse environmental impact;
  - (d) To give priority to walking and cycling;
  - (e) To encourage effective traffic management and the improvement of road safety for all sectors of the community;
  - (f) To encourage greater use of passenger transport and improvements to services and facilities; and
  - (g) To facilitate the accessibility needs of all in a safe and sustainable manner.
- 6.9 These objectives are to be achieved by implementing a range of policies and strategies. The policies and strategies will be two-pronged in that they tackle both land use in relation to movement and movement in relation to land use.

## **POLICIES**

### **Integrating Transport and Land Use**

- 6.10 The location and design of development can play a positive role in encouraging more sustainable modes of transport. A key aim of the Plan is for development to be located in existing settlements. Amongst other things this is where the greatest choice of more sustainable transport modes is to be found and the concentration of different land uses reduces the distance of journeys. Even in these locations development offers opportunities to improve existing movement networks and facilities and to create new ones.
- 6.11 A key to attaining a more sustainable pattern of movement lies in changing attitudes towards the car and to lessening dependency upon it especially for short journeys. However, a radical change in behaviour will only be achieved in response to a comprehensive and integrated transport strategy, which relates different modes of transport to each other to offer real modal choice. It must ensure that measures to make the use of cars less attractive are balanced by the adequate and enticing provision of sustainable alternatives.
- 6.12 In the Local Transport Plan (LTP), the County Council groups inter-related towns where significant capital investment is needed to make improvements to the local transport system. Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield have been grouped together with St Albans in the Mid Hertfordshire Area. The District Council will work with Hertfordshire County Council and other bodies in the preparation and implementation of an Area Plan for Mid Hertfordshire as part of the LTP. Wherever possible this will provide more sustainable alternatives to the car and it will provide improved east-west linkages incorporating the Hatfield Aerodrome development as set out in the master plan for the site.

#### **Policy M1 - Integrating Transport And Land Use**

**Through the development process the Council will take every opportunity to integrate different modes of travel. Development proposals, except for those which are necessary in rural areas, will be permitted only in locations with accessibility to pedestrian and cycle routes and passenger transport services, or where this can be created, and where the environment and infrastructure can accommodate the amount and type of transport movement likely to be generated. In considering development proposals, the Council will give priority to walking and more sustainable modes of travel.**

**Internal layouts in development schemes must demonstrate priority to non-car users. They must include safe and effective routes for pedestrians and cyclists, with appropriate facilities, as well as catering for people with mobility difficulties and making provision for passenger transport and where appropriate the needs of horseriders.**

### **Transport Assessments**

- 6.13 Developments which are likely to generate significant movement and travel demand, must be assessed comprehensively in terms of their impact on the transport network. Developers will be required to submit a Transport Assessment with any such application. These should demonstrate the journey

patterns the development would generate for different modes of travel and the ability of the existing infrastructure and services to accommodate this demand, as well as proposing measures to ameliorate those impacts and assist in shifting journeys onto more sustainable modes. These will replace the previous requirement for Traffic Impact Assessments.

- 6.14 Guidance for the preparation of Transport Assessments is available from the County Council. Studies will be required for the following thresholds of development:
- (a) Housing developments of 200 dwellings or more;
  - (b) Retail developments of 2000 sq. m gross floor area or more;
  - (c) Business development of 5000 sq. m gross floor area or more;
  - (d) Industrial/Warehouse developments of 5000 sq. m gross floor area or more;
  - (e) Sports Centres, leisure complexes, golf courses and centres.

### **Policy M2 - Transport Assessments**

**Developers of major new traffic generating developments will be required to submit a transport assessment with the planning application. This must demonstrate the measures to be taken to minimise vehicular movements through improvements to passenger transport, pedestrian, and cycling facilities and state whether new highways works or traffic management measures will be required.**

### **Green Travel Plans**

- 6.15 Commuting to work by car is the main cause of traffic congestion. Other business related car journeys also exacerbate the problem. For some people the car is their only means of getting to work, such as people living in rural areas or working night shifts where no passenger transport or other suitable mode of travel is available. However, there are many opportunities for people to travel to work by other modes. Retail and leisure centres and large visitor attractions also generate significant car travel.
- 6.16 The County Council and the Hertfordshire Business Travelwise Initiative promote the use of Green Travel Plans (also called Green Transport or Green Commuter Plans). A Green Travel Plan (GTP) is a set of measures aimed at staff, customers and clients, that reduce the need to travel and encourage the use of sustainable transport, including alternatives to or more efficient use of the car, in journeys to and from a business site. Detailed guidance on the preparation of GTPs has been published by the Hertfordshire Technical Chief Officers Association (HTCOA), setting out the thresholds of development for which GTPs are required.
- 6.17 The Council will encourage all existing businesses to introduce GTPs, particularly those employing large numbers of people. However, it is an easier task at the planning stage, before employees or customers have become set in their travel patterns. It is also easier for the infrastructure necessary to

accommodate alternatives to the private car to be incorporated into the design of a site from the outset rather than be fitted in afterwards. The Council will therefore require all new development above the thresholds set out in the HTCOA's guidance to be supported by a GTP.

### **Policy M3 - Green Travel Plans**

**All new development at or above the thresholds set out in HTCOA's guidance on 'Developing a Green Travel Plan', should be supported by a Green Travel Plan. The implementation of measures included in a Green Travel Plan will be secured through planning conditions, or a Section 106 Agreement. The Council will also work with existing businesses to encourage the adoption and implementation of Green Travel Plans in line with the guidance.**

### **Developer Contributions**

- 6.18 Where a development is proposed which is likely to place additional demand on the local transport system, the developer will be expected to meet, or where appropriate, contribute towards the cost of any improvements to infrastructure or services necessary to accommodate the development and ameliorate its impact. This will not just involve improvements to the highway infrastructure, but will also include provision for pedestrians, cyclists, passenger transport and where appropriate horse riding. This may, for example, include the cost of providing a bus service at the early stages of a development when the level of use is insufficient to make the service viable without subsidy. The important criteria will be to ensure that the development is adequately served by a range of means of transport and that there are realistic alternatives to the car.
- 6.19 Any such contributions will be secured ideally by means of Section 106 Agreements attached to the planning permission or by other appropriate legally binding agreements. However, it must be noted that any necessary infrastructure works must be environmentally acceptable and the provision of adequate transport infrastructure in itself will not be sufficient to make the development acceptable if there are substantial environmental objections to it.

### **Policy M4 - Developer Contributions**

**Where development necessitates alteration to existing or the provision of new transport infrastructure or services, permission will be granted only if those works are environmentally acceptable and if the applicant agrees to meet, or where appropriate contribute to, the cost of the works or services. Planning conditions or a Section 106 Agreement or other legal agreement will be used to ensure the implementation of the works or obligations.**

### **Walking**

- 6.20 Walking is undoubtedly the healthiest, cheapest and most sustainable mode of travel. It accounts for a significant number of journeys, particularly for the

young, the elderly and those without a car. It is being promoted by health organisations and is of increasing significance as a leisure activity. The Council wishes to promote walking as a realistic alternative to the private car, primarily for short journeys, but also for longer journeys, when combined with bus or rail travel for example. The Council is already supporting the creation of 'Safer Routes to School' in conjunction with the County Council, but would like to see greater priority given to this mode in future.

- 6.21 To this end the Council has published a 'Walking Strategy' setting out its proposals for pedestrian movement. In particular, it requires improvement of the existing pedestrian network, to ensure it is convenient, safe and attractive to use and serves other modes, particularly in and to town and local centres, leisure and community facilities, where people wish to visit. With regard to new development, the Council will expect to see priority given to the pedestrian in the design and layout of schemes and to see footpaths linking into the existing network. Good pedestrian routes and crossing facilities will be required to ensure convenient access to bus stops in order to promote the use of buses. It will seek to protect and where possible enhance existing public rights of way within urban areas and rural areas, opposing development which would divert or obstruct footpaths in such a way as to make pedestrian movement less convenient.

#### **Policy M5 - Pedestrian Facilities**

**Wherever possible and practical the Council will seek improvements in facilities for the safe and convenient movement of pedestrians. The Council will require proposals for new development to give priority to pedestrian access in their layouts through the inclusion of safe and direct routes linking to existing or proposed footpath networks and facilities. Developers may be required to provide or contribute towards off-site pedestrian facilities where this would be necessary to integrate it with surrounding areas. Development which would prejudice convenient and safe pedestrian movement will be refused.**

**The Council has published a walking strategy for the district, setting out its proposals for improving the pedestrian network and promoting walking and to provide guidance on the priorities for new development.**

#### **Cycling**

- 6.22 Cycling is a cheap and sustainable method of movement that is especially suitable for short to medium length journeys. However, the use of bicycles needs positive encouragement with adequate facilities for cyclists and the creation of a safe cycling environment. In 1998 the Council published the Welwyn Hatfield Cycling Strategy, the aim of which is 'to increase cycle usage'. In recent years, new east-west and north-south routes have been created and the Council is working with the County Council and other organisations to extend the network. However, there remain gaps in the district's cycle network, which require completion, including better linkages into town centres and cycle links to/from development on the Hatfield Aerodrome development. The Council has produced an updated Cycling Strategy Review which identifies new routes and initiatives.

## **Policy M6 - Cycle Routes And Facilities**

**The Council will require proposals for new development to encourage cycling through the inclusion of safe cycle routes and parking for cycles, and where appropriate secure waterproof storage and changing and showering facilities for cyclists. New cycle routes should link with existing or proposed cycle paths. Developers may be required to provide or contribute towards off-site facilities and the overall planned cycle network.**

**The Council has reviewed the Welwyn Hatfield Cycling Strategy, to ensure that it continues to provide an adequate framework to guide investment in the infrastructure necessary to create a comprehensive network of routes and facilities in the district.**

## **Horse Riding**

- 6.23 Welwyn Hatfield has a large horse riding population and a fragmented bridle network. New developments can encroach on the minor roads used by riders. In consideration of a sustainable and integrated transport system, the Council will seek to retain minor roads (and verges on busier roads) used by riders, or will require appropriate alternative paths to be provided.

### **Policy M7- Equestrian Facilities**

**The needs of horse riders will be taken into account, whenever development would affect routes used by riders, or where the creation of new paths along strategic routes would be jeopardised. Suitable replacement paths will be required when routes used by riders will no longer be suitable for continued use, as a result of other changes to the road network or new development.**

## **Powered Two-Wheeled Vehicles**

- 6.24 Powered two-wheelers range in size from motorised bicycles through motor scooters to high performance motorcycles. At the lower end of the scale, two-wheelers are more environmentally friendly than cars and can help deliver environmental improvements provided that they are not a substitute for walking, cycling or passenger transport. In road safety terms powered two-wheeled vehicle users are vulnerable road users; something they have in common with cyclists and pedestrians. The needs of powered two-wheelers must be considered in the design and implementation of transport schemes, parking provision and new development. Employers and others should cater for the need of users of two wheelers to wash, change and store clothing as would be expected for pedal cyclists.

### **Policy M8 - Powered Two-Wheelers**

**The Council supports the use of powered two-wheeled vehicles as a more environmentally friendly mode of transport than the car. It will require that the internal layouts for development schemes are designed to make provision for powered two-wheeled vehicles and their users.**

## **Passenger Transport**

- 6.25 Passenger transport in the form of buses, coaches and trains is more environmentally friendly than the private car because of the greater numbers of people that can be carried on each trip. Taxis can also be considered part of the passenger transport system; although mainly used by only one or two people per trip, they frequently act as feeders to transport nodes where passengers transfer to buses or trains for longer journeys.
- 6.26 Passenger transport will be of growing importance if progress is to be made towards a more sustainable pattern of movement. Whilst the Council has very limited powers to directly influence the basic network of bus and rail passenger services, it can intervene in the form of subsidies and support for community transport initiatives and various voluntary sector services. The Council will encourage initiatives such as 'Dial-a Ride' which can complement standard bus services by serving people with mobility difficulties and those living in rural areas, and 'Park and Ride' which can help to integrate modes.
- 6.27 Passenger transport, particularly the bus, is the only means of transport available to many people including women, children, the elderly and people on low incomes. The government sees the bus becoming the focus of an efficient transport system where people can get where they want to be quickly and comfortably without having to rely on using a car. But at the moment buses, in particular, are seen by many as inconvenient and unreliable; this perception must change. Buses must be responsive to local needs and provide for essential journeys to work, including acting as feeders to the rail network, and to shops, education, social and health facilities. The Council will work with the County Council and bus operators to seek improvements to the quality of services.
- 6.28 Wherever possible passenger transport services should be given priority over the car in the design of development and transport schemes, including road and traffic management schemes. Whenever a new development generates a need for passenger transport the developer will be required to provide or contribute to the necessary infrastructure within the development or off-site. Developers may also be required to subsidise bus services to new developments, particularly at the early stages of development to ensure provision before services becomes commercially viable.

## **Policy M9 - Bus And Taxi Facilities**

**The Council will support the improvement of passenger transport services throughout the district and will require priority to be given to this mode over the car in the design and layout of new developments. For developments which are likely to place significant additional demands on existing infrastructure the Council will require developers to provide additional infrastructure as necessary. This may include the provision of bus lanes and parking bays, taxi ranks, bus stops with shelters and seating, either within the layout of the scheme or off-site. Where appropriate developers may also be required to fund the provision of bus services, particularly at the early stages of a development before they become independently viable.**

### Railways

- 6.29 The rail network is critical to achieving more sustainable travel patterns in the district. Currently around 20% of the district's workers travel to work by train and demand for services is increasing. The district is served by the East Coast Main Line which includes lines from London Kings Cross and Moorgate via Finsbury Park, serving stations to the north, including Brookmans Park, Welham Green, Hatfield, Welwyn Garden City and Welwyn North in the district. A branch from Finsbury Park also serves Cuffley on the eastern side of the district then proceeds through Hertford North linking back to the ECML at Stevenage. This route is a key commuter route for the district; services comprise a mixture of local and long distance services. Furthermore a number of freight operations share the lines.
- 6.30 Growth in use of the route has taken place in recent years and is forecast to continue, but there are capacity constraints to future growth in services. The Strategic Rail Authority will publish a strategy for the ECML setting out proposals for improving capacity. The Council recognises the need for additional capacity along the ECML and therefore supports in principle the improvement of rail services along the route. However, the Council will monitor any strategies or proposals put forward by the SRA for the ECML to ensure that any changes benefit local services and achieve the best outcome for local residents, both in terms of future rail services and environmental impact.
- 6.31 The Council also supports the Thameslink 2000 project, another major capital investment scheme to expand the strategic network and introduce new cross-London routes, including services on the ECML. This should mean that stations within the district have improved services with more trains and trains that continue to Gatwick airport and to south coast destinations rather than terminating at London.
- 6.32 With all the projects which may give direct or indirect benefits to rail users in the district, the Council is concerned that local stations should benefit from improved services. However, services depend not only on the rail infrastructure but on the train operators too. The Council will therefore closely monitor the current franchises replacement programme, as the new franchises will specify the required service levels. Existing conditions at some stations in the district, in particular those which are not permanently staffed,

are poor, with specific concerns about safety. With so much attention being drawn to major projects elsewhere, it is essential to maintain pressure for improvements to local stations. Thus the Council will work with the County Council, Railtrack and the train operating companies to secure improvements to local railway stations to provide a safe and pleasant environment for travellers and good interchange facilities.

### Passenger Transport Interchanges

- 6.33 In order for passenger transport to be attractive and effective there needs to be easy interchange between the various modes of travel, with a safe and secure environment for travellers and a good information service. The building of the Howard Centre in Welwyn Garden City gave the Council the opportunity to secure a new bus station and rail travel centre in close proximity to each other and to car parks in the town centre. Facilities for taxis have proved less satisfactory, but the Council is seeking better arrangements for these.
- 6.34 By comparison, in Hatfield, the distance separating the railway station from the town centre means that the same level of integration of passenger transport services is not possible. However, within the town centre there is an opportunity to create a bus interchange and this is an objective of town centre regeneration strategy set out in the Retailing and Town Centres chapter. The provision of new services to the Hatfield Aerodrome development should offer the opportunity to provide a strategic transport corridor between that area, the town centre and the railway station, which will help to overcome the physical separation. In line with the priority to be given to walking and cycling and the aim to integrate modes, the Council will also wish to see better linkages between the cycle and footpath network and passenger transport interchanges.

### **Policy M10 - Passenger Transport Interchanges**

**The Council will work with the County Council and passenger transport operators to seek improvements to passenger transport interchanges that will improve accessibility within the district, through the Local Transport Plan and where appropriate developer contributions.**

### **Freight Transport**

- 6.35 A considerable volume and range of freight is hauled by road because of the convenience of door to door delivery. Much freight passes through the district en route to other destinations on the motorway network. Where road haulage continues the Council wishes to see it on primary routes. These are the motorways, trunk roads and the more important County "A" roads built to 70mph standards, which avoid towns and villages.
- 6.36 The use of the railways for freight transport is less environmentally damaging than using road transport. The Council will support rail operators in seeking to increase opportunities for rail freight, subject to its impact on passenger services and people living close to railway lines. In order to facilitate rail freight the Council will support the provision of more facilities for the transfer of freight onto rail transport.

### **Policy M11 - Rail Freight Depots**

**The Council will work with the County Council, Railtrack, the Strategic Rail Authority and railfreight operators to ensure that the potential for transfer of freight movements from road to rail is maximised. The Council will identify and where appropriate protect sites which could be critical in developing infrastructure for the movement of freight, and support the establishment of railfreight terminals taking into account local employment uses, environmental impact and the suitability of the local road network to accommodate collection and distribution vehicles.**

### **Transport Land**

6.37 In the past land no longer required for transport purposes has been developed or used for alternative purposes appropriate to the location. Thus in many places operational transport land, such as rail freight depots, former rail sidings and bus depots, have been lost forever. However, with the reassertion of the importance of passenger transport, every effort now needs to be made to retain appropriate operational transport land for transport uses. The Council would prefer to see redundant or surplus operational transport land remain available for potential future transport uses during the Plan period. However the individual circumstances of each site will be taken into account when considering proposals for development or change of use.

### **Policy M12 - Operational Transport Land**

**Where applications are submitted for the redevelopment or change of use of operational transport land, priority will be given for uses related to sustainable transport. Applications for change of use will need to demonstrate that there is no long-term need for the land for transport purposes, taking account of the operator's strategy, the local transport plan and other relevant strategies. Applications for change of use which would benefit from the accessible location and meet sustainable development and integrated transport objectives, will be encouraged.**

### **The Road Network and Traffic Management**

6.38 The change in emphasis from roads to a more integrated transport policy does not mean that investment in roads will cease. Government and County Council policy still recognises that the car will remain a vital element of the transport system. However, it does mean that the emphasis will gradually shift from ever increasing road capacity towards improving capacity in other modes of transport.

6.39 One of the functions of traffic management is to do with getting different types of traffic onto appropriate roads. Roads of national importance have local impacts too. There are economic advantages from being located on a strategic network and there can be environmental benefits from the diversion of heavy through traffic away from local roads. However, strategic roads themselves can have adverse environmental impacts on areas through which they pass.

- 6.40 The A1(M) runs north-south through the district. Proposals put forward in the 1990s to ease congestion on the A1(M) by widening it to 3 lanes between junctions 6-8 were supported by the Council, subject to provisos on minimising environmental impact. These proposals have since been deferred pending a study of capacity along the whole of the London-South Midlands corridor, including the A1(M), M1 and M11 routes. This study will look into all modes of travel, including the rail network to identify solutions to the capacity problems, but it is required to make a recommendation on whether the scheme for junctions 6-8 of the A1(M) should go ahead. The Council is aware that the delay in the decision on this scheme adds to the anxiety of those residents who are concerned that their properties might be affected. The Council will continue to lobby for a satisfactory solution to congestion on the A1(M) to be found as soon as possible, through the early completion of the London-South Midlands Multi-Modal study.
- 6.41 Another government commissioned study, the Orbit Study, looked at existing problems of orbital travel around London, to see what could be done to address them. The Orbit Study produced a long-term strategy for the better management of the M25 and considered a wider corridor. The Council will also support the County Council in examining opportunities to improve east-west routes within Hertfordshire which will bring benefits to the district.

### **Motorway Service Areas**

- 6.42 Government policy on motorway service areas (MSAs) is to concentrate on completing a national network of MSAs at 30-mile intervals. Infilling at around 15 mile intervals should only be granted exceptionally where a clear and compelling need and safety case has been established.
- 6.43 There is a comprehensive MSA, including a hotel, adjacent to the A1(M)/M25 interchange at South Mimms, in the Borough of Hertsmere, south of Welwyn Hatfield District. The lengths of the A1(M) and M25 passing through the district fall within the fifteen-mile catchment of the South Mimms MSA. Furthermore the most suitable locations for additional MSAs are all located in the Green Belt, where there is a presumption against inappropriate development. It is therefore highly unlikely that proposals for a new MSA in this district will be required or acceptable.

### **Policy M13 - Motorway Service Areas**

**Proposals for new motorway service areas within the district will only be permitted where all of the following criteria can be satisfied:**

- (i) It can be shown that there is an overriding need to make such provision within 15 miles of the existing facility;**
- (ii) If the proposed location is within the green belt the developer will be expected to demonstrate the very special circumstances which exist to override green belt policy;**
- (iii) If the proposed site is at an existing motorway junction, the developer will be expected to demonstrate that no other site is**

**available and that steps will be taken to mitigate the likely impact of the development;**

- (iv) That the proposals do not include features such as significant hotel, leisure or conference facilities, which may cause the service area to become a destination in its own right.**

### **Traffic Management**

- 6.44 The County Council's policy, as the Local Highway Authority, is to channel traffic onto appropriate routes within the highway network, which comprises a variety of routes from motorways down to local distributor and access roads. This requires roads to be designed to appropriate engineering standards to establish the correct priority. The Council supports this approach. Whereas roads in new developments can be designed to give priority to non-car users, existing residential areas and shopping centres, which were built with general purpose roads, may require the introduction of traffic calming and other management measures, in order to change priorities.
- 6.45 As part of the studies being conducted on the two town centres, the Council is looking at movement and traffic and will bring forward proposals to improve priority and access for non-car modes. Traffic and parking arrangements at some of the neighbourhood shopping centres also require review. In a number of areas conditions are difficult in residential streets served by general-purpose roads. There is conflict between the interests of pedestrians and cyclists, parked cars, buses, delivery and service vehicles and people using the road as a through route. The Council will work with the County Council to bring forward highway schemes to calm traffic, increase safety for all road users and make visual and other improvements to the environment. In the past a solution to conflicting users has been to segregate the different modes and to introduce physical methods of traffic calming. Increasingly the solution is being sought by mixing modes and requiring a greater duty of care from motor vehicle users. For example, the concept of 'Home Zones' is being promoted nationally, for residential areas where non-motorised movement is given precedence, reinforced by low speed limits, revised carriageway alignment, the location of parking bays, and new landscaping which includes planting, sitting out areas and play equipment. The Council supports this initiative and will look for opportunities where it can be applied in the district.

### **Parking**

- 6.46 The availability of car parking has a major influence on the choice of means of transport. Car parking can also take up a large amount of space in developments and reduce densities. Government policy sees reducing the level of parking in new development as essential in promoting sustainable travel choices, making the best use of land and tackling congestion. It considers it necessary to achieve lower levels of parking in association with development than has generally been achieved in the past. Accordingly, PPG3 includes a maximum advisory parking standard for residential development and similar national maximum standards are expected to be identified for other land uses, through revisions to PPGs or in the new RPG9

for the South East. Policy 25 of the County Structure Plan also promotes a restraint-based approach to car parking.

- 6.47 The Council supports this approach to parking, but any restraint in car parking needs to be introduced carefully. Reducing or preventing car parking in one area, can push the problem elsewhere. Where non-residential parking is concerned, for businesses and in town centres, too restrictive a regime can threaten the viability and competitiveness of the economy, where business and development could be drawn away to other areas which are more lenient with provision. Moreover, restraining car parking can only work where there are improvements in the quality and availability of other modes of transport, at which other policies in this chapter are aimed.
- 6.48 In order to have effective policies on parking they need to be set in the context of an overall parking strategy. The Council intends to produce such a strategy for Welwyn Hatfield. It will cover not only the provision of parking in new development but the management of existing parking, both on- and off-street to meet a variety of objectives, covering the range of different users, and using a variety of tools including pricing and time controls. Because the subject extends beyond the remit of a land use plan, the parking strategy will have to be in the form of a corporate document, setting a wider framework for policies in this Plan. It will anticipate the side effects of addressing specific problems and will identify appropriate remedial solutions.
- 6.49 Parking standards for the district are set out in the Council's supplementary planning guidance (SPG) on parking, which is based on the guidance prepared by the County Council to supplement Structure Plan Policy 25 and ensure countywide consistency. They include provision for powered two-wheelers. In addition, in order to ensure accessibility for all, dedicated parking provision will be required for people with mobility problems. At the same time to ensure greater provision is made for good quality cycle parking, the standards seek provision for cycle parking. The standards for car parking and for powered two-wheelers represent the maximum provision that will be permitted in new development. However, the standards for disabled people and for cycle parking represent the minimum standards.
- 6.50 The standards for parking provision for non-residential uses, set out in the Council's SPG, are demand-based and therefore should meet needs without resulting in over-provision. In rural areas they will normally apply directly to all new non-residential development. Within the district's urban areas, in locations where there is good accessibility by non-car modes and which are economically buoyant, the standards for non-residential uses will be the starting point for applying progressive reductions in on-site parking. The supplementary planning guidance sets out the approach for reduced parking in these areas. It identifies the zones where different percentage reductions can be made. Under this approach rural areas would be allowed the full maximum demand based standard. At the other extreme, in town centre locations with a thriving economy and access to a range of non-car alternatives, fewer non-operational parking spaces would be needed and the provision for new developments could be a reduced by up to 50% of the maximum standard.

- 6.51 Residential development will generally be expected to accommodate all parking on-site and full provision to the maximum standard will be the norm. The standards set out in the supplementary guidance reflect the expected lower levels of demand associated with certain categories such as housing for the elderly. Significantly lower levels of parking provision may be acceptable where demand is likely to be less and any tendency for overspill on-street is or can be controlled e.g. high density housing in town centres, near rail stations or housing over shops. The Council will support 'car-free' developments where tenants, lessees or purchasers have entered legally binding agreements that they will forgo car ownership.

#### **Policy M14 - Parking Standards For New Development**

**The Council will require parking provision for new development to be made in accordance with the standards set out in the Council's supplementary planning guidance on parking. These standards represent the maximum allowable provision, except for cycle parking and car parking for disabled people where the standards represent the minimum allowable.**

**In urban areas of the district which are accessible by non-car modes, the Council will require parking standards for non-residential development to be reduced below the maximum allowable provision, in line with the methodology set out in the supplementary planning guidance on parking, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that such a limitation to the development would be detrimental to the economic viability of the area. The zones where such reductions will be applied are identified in the supplementary planning guidance.**

#### **Aviation**

- 6.52 There is one remaining active airfield in the district at Panshanger, which was formerly a military airfield but was granted planning permission as a civil airfield in 1954 for use by light aircraft. Since then the Panshanger residential area has been developed and now borders the airfield. The airfield is identified in the Plan as an area of special restraint and has been since 1993. This means that it has been safeguarded for potential future development needs in the district beyond the period of this Plan. As such its release for development will be a matter for consideration in a future review of the Plan.
- 6.53 Meanwhile, there are increasing concerns about the effect of aircraft noise from the airfield on residents in Panshanger and surrounding villages. The Council will therefore continue to monitor its use to ensure that it is being operated within the terms of its planning permission and within acceptable noise levels on the ground. However, the Council cannot act against aircraft in flight. The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) regulates controlled airspace, uncontrolled air space being regulated by the Air Navigation Order and other national and international regulations. The CAA, based on aviation safety criteria, licenses the airfield and does not have responsibility for environmental issues. The Council will not permit any expansion of facilities

or intensification of the use of the airfield beyond the limits of the existing planning permission.

**Policy M15 - Panshanger Airfield**

**The Council will monitor the use of Panshanger Airfield and will not permit any expansion of its facilities nor its use for flying activities beyond that allowed by its existing planning permission.**

# **DESIGN**

## **INTRODUCTION**

- 7.1 Design is not only concerned with how places look but with how places work and are used by people. It is to do with the interaction between people and places, the built form, movement in and around this form and the natural environment.
- 7.2 Design is an integral part of creating sustainable environments; it can aid with the careful use of natural resources and help with social progress. A poor environment can affect the quality of life of residents; good design can help improve the environment and help create lively places with well-used safe and accessible streets and spaces.
- 7.3 This chapter sets out the major design principles and policies that need to be considered within the district to ensure the highest quality of design in all new developments, to preserve and enhance the overall quality of design in the district.

## **ISSUES**

- 7.4 The value of urban design and its role in the planning system has become increasingly important in the past few years. The Government's 'Quality in Town and Country' initiative in 1996 and the Urban Design Campaign marked a turnaround in government thinking. The quality of design in new development is now recognised as one of the three key aims of the planning system with which local authorities should be concerned. Good design will help to encourage more sustainable and viable communities for the future.
- 7.5 Over the past few years, the Government has paid increasing attention to the design and sustainability of settlements. In the past, greater attention was paid to preserving and enhancing 'special areas', such as Conservation Areas (i.e. 'making the best better') and less regard was paid to the other areas, which were often those that needed time and money spent on them. Current government policy aims to enhance the vitality and viability of urban areas by improving urban design and encouraging the use of previously developed land without causing town cramming. Whilst raising residential densities is important, the quality of design of such developments is equally if not more important.
- 7.6 The publication of the revised PPG1 in 1997 gave a high priority to design in planning. The latest versions of other PPGs, in particular PPG3, have also given an increased importance to the quality of design in new development. In summary, government guidance on design promotes:
  - High quality, mixed use developments;
  - That the design of buildings and urban design both require an understanding of the context in which the development takes place;
  - That good design can promote sustainability, improve the environment, attract business and investment and reinforce civic pride and a sense of place;

- Attention should be paid and weight given to the impact of new development on existing buildings;
- New residential development should be well designed, concentrated principally in existing urban areas and make a significant contribution to promoting urban renaissance;
- The need to travel, in particular by car, should be reduced by influencing the location of different types of development and fostering forms of development which encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport;
- That landscaping should play an integral part in all new development;
- That applicants for planning permission should be able to demonstrate how the need for good design has been taken account of in development proposals and that regard has been paid to relevant planning policies, design guidance and good practice guidance;
- Local authorities should reject poor design, but should not impose a particular taste or style on development, unless it is to promote and reinforce local distinctiveness.

7.7 In addition to the PPGs, other reports and guidance have been published which seek to raise design quality. The Urban Task Force report, published in June 1999, recognises the importance of design excellence in producing sustainable development, as well as social inclusion and environmental responsibility. This has been reflected in the Government's Urban White Paper, 'Our Towns and Cities: The Future' published in November 2000. More detailed design guidance can be found in 'By Design, Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards Better Practice', published in May 2000 by DETR and CABE (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) and also in 'By Design: Better Places to Live' published in September 2001 by the DTLR and CABE, which is a companion guide to PPG3. The County Structure Plan states that the design of development will be expected to help achieve the sustainability aims and objectives of the Plan.

7.8 The Crime and Disorder Act introduced by the Government in 1998 obliges local authorities to take account of community safety in its plans and decisions. 'Designing out Crime' is an important element of good design, to make environments safer and enable people using them to feel safe. Circular 5/94, 'Planning Out Crime' contains further information on this and developers may also wish to contact the Hertfordshire Constabulary Architectural Liaison Officer before submitting planning applications.

7.9 In the past the emphasis has been on preserving and enhancing 'special' areas with recognised quality such as Conservation Areas, i.e. making the best better, but it is now recognised that high quality design should be incorporated in all new development. Also, up to now rigid, quantitative standards have been applied to design, resulting in development which is often stifled in terms of imaginative and innovative design and is of a mediocre standard.

## STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES

- 7.10 The strategy and objectives of the Plan for design are set out below:
- (a) To ensure the highest quality of design in all new developments to help create vital and viable environments in which to live, work, shop, spend leisure time and invest;
  - (b) The design of new developments will be expected to respect and enhance local distinctiveness and character, whilst allowing for innovative design and new technology to be used;
  - (c) Applicants for planning permission will be expected to show how their proposals meet the design principles and policies in the Plan and the Supplementary Design Guidance.

## POLICIES

### Quality of Design

- 7.11 The quality of design in parts of the district is historically of a high quality and the Council wish to see good quality design in all new developments in the district. The district is home to two planned towns; Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City, which is internationally famed as an example of a Garden City. In the towns can be seen some early examples of good urban design; the importance of this should be built on to make the whole district a good example of urban design.
- 7.12 The architecture of all new development should contribute to the quality of design in the district, be appropriate to the setting and context of the area of development and be of the highest standard.
- 7.13 The good quality design of new developments should help promote sustainable development, improve and enhance the quality of the existing environment, attract business and investment into the district and help reinforce civic pride and create a sense of place. Good design should help public acceptance of necessary new development.

### Policy D1: Quality of Design

**The Council will require the standard of design in all new development to be of a high quality. The design of new development should incorporate the design principles and policies in the Plan and the guidance contained in the Supplementary Design Guidance.**

### Design Principles

- 7.14 The Council has adopted a design-led approach to new development, in which it will seek to apply the following design principles:
- *Character*
  - *Continuity and Enclosure*
  - *Quality of the Public Realm*

- *Ease of Movement*
- *Legibility*
- *Adaptability*
- *Diversity*

7.15 Developments which take account of these principles should promote sustainable, more responsive environments which will in turn provide a better quality of life for those who live and work in the district. These principles are explained more fully below with further information on how to achieve them in the Supplementary Design Guidance.

### Character and Context

- 7.16 The context of a site i.e. the character and setting of the area in which it is located is crucial, and a clear understanding and appreciation of this in the design of new development is the starting point for creating distinctive and attractive places.
- 7.17 Character is one of the main issues affecting design in this district. Welwyn Hatfield has a diverse character comprising of both urban and rural settings, and settlements of different sizes and ages. Within both these settings there are different character areas, therefore each development has a unique context.
- 7.18 New development should respect and relate to the area in which it is proposed. This is not to say that new development must mirror the local character, rather that it must be sensitive to it and not harm it. It should seek to enhance key characteristics which contribute to the landscape and architectural quality. Where an area is accepted as being of poor quality and undistinguished, the challenge is to create a new area of distinctiveness and quality. Character and innovation can exist together with old and new buildings fitting together provided they are carefully designed. Innovative design that has similar scale and massing to the existing will be welcomed where it enhances the character of the area.
- 7.19 In considering the character and context of an area, account should be taken of its history, the geography and geology of the area, the landform of a site, the existing vegetation and landscaping, including trees, the existing street layout and pattern and form of building, and use of space, the local materials, the scale, height and massing of the built form and boundary treatments, and of any distinctive architectural and landscape quality and features such as trees, fenestration and brickwork. Further guidance can be found in the Supplementary Design Guidance.
- 7.20 Where other Supplementary Planning Guidance has been adopted such as Village Design Statements, Character Appraisals and Landscape Character Area Statements, these should also be used as a principal source of information about the design context of the development. Policy R24 states that character appraisals will be produced for the Conservation Areas, and these appraisals should be used to help new development proposed in Conservation Areas respect and relate to the area. In addition, design statements accompanying planning applications for development should

demonstrate that the developer has taken character and context into account. Further guidance can be found in the Supplementary Design Guide.

### **Policy D2: Character and Context**

**The Council will require all new development to respect and relate to the character and context of the area in which it is proposed. Development proposals should as a minimum maintain, and where possible, should enhance or improve the character of the existing area.**

#### Continuity and Enclosure

- 7.21 This helps distinguish between public and private spaces. All developments should promote the continuity of street frontages, with buildings that clearly define public and private spaces and give enclosure to the public realm whilst promoting safety and security.
- 7.22 The means of enclosure should provide both privacy and security without becoming a dominant visual feature of the site. Regard should be paid to the character of the area when choosing the form of enclosure to be incorporated.
- 7.23 New development should:
- Relate to the line of the buildings in the street and provide an active and where possible continuous street frontage;
  - Incorporate pedestrian access from the street rather than from the rear or from internal courtyards;
  - Have distinctive fronts and backs;
  - Define and enclose private space to the rear of buildings;
  - Define open spaces and streets i.e. by the use of appropriately scaled buildings and trees;
  - Clearly define the relationship between the fronts of buildings and the street.

### **Policy D3: Continuity and Enclosure**

**The Council will require all new development to incorporate the principles of continuity and enclosure to distinguish between public and private spaces.**

#### Quality of the Public Realm

- 7.24 Historically, the public realm has been important in the district, particularly in the central open space areas of the planned settlements. It is important that any development which incorporates public realm is well designed to ensure that the public areas are both attractive and successful, i.e. the space is usable by every sector of the population. Public areas must not be land which is left over after the buildings have been designed, but should be designed to form a part of and feature of the development. Where possible the open spaces should have natural surveillance; this will make them both feel and be safer. Design of the Public Realm should also meet the requirements of Policy D8 on Landscaping.

- 7.25 Developments will be expected to enhance the public realm by:
- Being accessible to all;
  - Ensuring that the ground floor use of units in central areas creates activity and interest;
  - Incorporating spaces into the design of developments so that they are not simply left over spaces;
  - Ensuring that the design provides natural surveillance over public spaces and areas;
  - Taking the microclimate into account in the orientation and design of buildings and spaces;
  - Integrating street furniture and public art into the design of development to give areas identity.

#### **Policy D4: Quality of the Public Realm**

**The Council will expect new development where appropriate to either create or enhance public areas and the public realm.**

#### Design For and Ease of Movement

- 7.26 It is important that all new development helps create places which are both easy to get to and move through. It should be remembered that streets are more than just channels for vehicles; they should offer a safe and attractive environment for all users to help make going outside a safe and pleasant experience. It is essential that transport routes reflect urban design qualities and not just traffic considerations, i.e. a street should be a public space.
- 7.27 One of the main priorities of the Plan is to reduce dependence on the car and encourage the use of other more sustainable forms of transport including walking, cycling and passenger transport. The impact of this on the design of new developments is that highway engineering standards should no longer be the starting point in the design of layouts. Encouragement will be given to schemes that give maximum space to pedestrians and cyclists and minimum space to the car.
- 7.28 A well-designed urban structure has a network of routes and spaces allowing for use by pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, with that order of priority. All new routes should connect to existing routes and movement patterns and where possible follow established short cuts. The design of a street layout should where possible include public transport facilities, and walking distances between major land uses and public transport stops should be minimised to encourage the use of public transport and make it more popular.
- 7.29 Whilst the Council is keen to ensure that design is not dominated by roads and provision for the car user, it must be remembered that it is unrealistic to design out the car and therefore parking provision should be incorporated as an integral part of design. In commercial, business and leisure developments this should be carefully designed to prevent an over dominance of car parking and in residential developments the parking may either be within the curtilage of development or in carefully designed parking courts.

## **Policy D5: Design For Movement**

**The Council will require all new development to take account of its impact on existing and proposed movement patterns. New development will be required to make provision for pedestrian, cyclist and passenger transport facilities. Parking and traffic management provision must be included in new development.**

### Legibility

- 7.30 A legible place is one which has a clear identity and which is easy to understand i.e. the ability to recognise where you are and where you can go in a development. This can be achieved by creating interesting places and views between the most important parts of the site. Traditional urban design features, such as landmark buildings, good views and a variety of roads radiating from one point will help people recognise where they are at all times and to distinguish one place from another. Roads and footpaths, and areas of public and private open space will need to be clearly identified to encourage confidence, legibility and safety.
- 7.31 All new developments in the district, especially large scale ones, should reinforce the identity of the district and be clearly legible to the user.
- 7.32 New development will be expected to:
- Be sited to respect and enhance existing views and vistas or create new ones;
  - Position buildings with active uses at junctions or nodal points;
  - Pay careful attention to the design of corner developments and ensure they are interesting and distinctive and become points of local identity;
  - Aid legibility through the use of detailing and materials, particularly at ground level.

## **Policy D6: Legibility**

**The Council will require all new development to enhance and contribute to the legibility of the development itself and of the area in which it is located.**

### Adaptability

- 7.33 Adaptability of development is allowing for change relatively easily, i.e. the most successful places are those that have prospered in changing circumstances. Developments should promote flexible and versatile buildings and open spaces that can respond to changing social, technological, economic and market conditions; this avoids large scale blight and dereliction and the need for comprehensive redevelopment. Within the district, areas such as the town centres and employment areas need to be able to adapt and respond to changes in economic climates resulting in the rise and decline of industries and changes in demand for housing, workspace, infrastructure and buildings. (See Policy EMP13 in Chapter 12 Employment).
- 7.34 Residential development needs to be able to adapt to the occupiers' changing needs such as working from home or changes in requirements due to health

and age changes, or through permanent or temporary disability. This adaptability can be found by building to Lifetime Homes standards (see Policy H10 in Chapter 9 Housing).

### Diversity

7.35 The Council considers it important that the area is diverse and is able to provide choice and variety to the user. Developments should promote a fine-grained mix of uses, users and forms that serve to create important, sustainable places. How well used a place is, can be affected by the mix of uses (within a building, street or area) and what economic and social activities the place supports. Mixed uses can occur and be appropriate at a variety of scales: within a building, a street, neighbourhood, village or town. The Plan identifies particular areas where mixed uses may be appropriate such as the town and neighbourhood centres e.g. Hatfield, Welwyn Garden City and Hilltop in Hatfield. In town centres residential use provides customers for shops, makes use of space above shops and generates activity when shops are closed, whilst in residential areas, workplaces and other commercial uses can create activity within otherwise predominantly dormitory areas i.e. live work units (see Policy EMP14 in Chapter 12 Employment). Within residential areas a variety of tenures and mix of unit sizes can help create diversity (see Policy H8 in Chapter 9 Housing). Mixed-use development can be particularly good in higher density and more accessible locations and can help provide choice and variety.

### **Other Design Policies**

7.36 Whilst all developments will be expected to conform to the Design Principles, there are other design policies which are applicable to all development in the district and which development should conform to. These policies are set out below; information on more specific design standards can be found in the Supplementary Design Guidance.

7.37 The Supplementary Design Guidance includes information on:

- Design principles: additional information to that above
- Energy efficiency including passive solar design
- Noise
- Sunlight and daylight
- Servicing and access
- Residential extensions
- Gardens and communal areas
- Overlooking and privacy
- Advertisements; general, in Conservation areas and in Welwyn Garden City Town Centre
- Shop front design
- Security shutters and grilles

- Blinds, awnings and canopies
- Development briefs

Information and policies on energy efficiency, waste and water conservation can be found in Chapter 5 Resources.

## Designing Out Crime

7.38 The Council considers it important that all new development has regard to the safety of residents and users in its design and layout. Well-designed development can reduce the opportunity for crime and therefore reduce the fear of crime. One of the main ways of reducing crime is to allow natural or casual observation over the public realm and to ensure the separation of private and public space. Natural surveillance is a form of natural policing. With distinct separation between the fronts and backs of buildings, there should be no exposed private areas which could be accessed by criminals, and all the private areas should be overlooked, taking account of the need for privacy. Care needs to be taken in the planning of communal parking and entrances as they may lead to confusion over ownership and responsibilities which can lead to less effective security. Landscaping schemes should not obliterate public areas from natural vision and the possible mature size of plants should be taken into account in planting schemes. In considering design, the advice in Circular 5/94, 'Planning Out Crime' should be taken into account and developers may also contact the Hertfordshire Constabulary Architectural Liaison Officer before submitting planning applications. However, the approach adopted should be sufficiently flexible to allow solutions to remain sensitive to local circumstances.

### **Policy D7: Safety by Design**

**The Council requires the design of new development to contribute to safer communities, to help with the reduction of the fear of crime.**

## Landscaping

7.39 The design and use of spaces between and around buildings are as important as the design of the buildings. A poorly landscaped, leftover piece of land will detract from the quality of the built environment. A carefully landscaped piece of open space will benefit local residents and users both in terms of amenity land and in providing a buffer between the development and adjoining land. The incorporation of landscaping is important for increasing biodiversity and habitats and encouraging wildlife into urban areas. Within the district, particularly in Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield, there is a strong tradition of verges which the Council wish to see replicated in new development. The Council will expect landscaping schemes to incorporate native British species and, where possible, those commonly found in Hertfordshire, as well as those that are drought tolerant, low maintenance and beneficial to wildlife. All new landscaping schemes should be generous and not token.

7.40 Where established planting is removed to allow for development, the Council will expect a replacement planting scheme to be incorporated in the development proposals. The replacement planting should be appropriate and

equivalent to that which is lost, however, it may be appropriate to replace a mature tree with an equivalent biomass of vegetation.

- 7.41 The Council will require detailed site surveys, in accordance with British Standards guidelines, to ensure the retention of trees, hedgerows and woodland on proposed development sites. If important trees or hedges appear to be under threat from the proposals the Council may request for the development to be redesigned around them. Special measures should be used to protect trees during the course of development such as fencing off. The Council will ensure that existing and new planting is managed through the preparation and undertaking of a maintenance schedule.

#### **Policy D8: Landscaping**

**All development, other than changes of use of buildings, should include landscaping as an integral part of the overall design. This should reflect the strong tradition of urban landscape design in the district.**

**Landscaping schemes will require the use of materials which respect the character of the area, the planting of trees, hedgerows and shrubs and details of future maintenance. The retention and enhancement of existing key landscape features such as trees and shrubs, ponds and watercourses will be expected where feasible; where this is not possible, replacement planting should be carried out.**

**The design of landscaped areas should be such that maintenance is straightforward. On larger schemes, certain landscaped areas will be required to be designed in a manner capable of adoption.**

**Tree Preservation Orders or planning conditions may be used to ensure continued future protection of particular trees, groups of trees or woodlands.**

#### **Access and Design for People with Disabilities**

- 7.42 In the past, people with disabilities and mobility problems were often deprived of the opportunity to use a public facility, area or building because of inconsiderate design. More recently, changes in Building Regulations, the introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act and increased awareness of disability, have led to buildings designed with better and more direct access for the disabled.
- 7.43 Applicants and developers must consider the needs of people with disabilities and impaired mobility at the earliest opportunity. Part M of the Building Regulations 1991, as amended by the Building Regulations (Amendment) 1998, came into effect on 25 October 1999 and is concerned with access and facilities for disabled people. The regulations include access to a building from the entrance to the site curtilage, the car parking on site and also that the external circulation between the parts of a building is suitable. The provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 required that by 2004, all public buildings have to be accessible to all.

- 7.44 The Council considers that every opportunity should be taken to improve access provision for all sections of the community and will undertake to support initiatives such as the Shopmobility scheme for major retail areas.

**Policy D9: Access and Design for People with Disabilities**

**All new development should be designed to allow access by the disabled, young children in prams and pushchairs and those who are temporarily disabled through accident or injury. This includes access required to the site and access within the buildings and open spaces on the site. The Council will continue to provide for the movement needs of people with mobility restrictions in existing and proposed public areas and will support the promotion of mobility initiatives wherever possible.**

**Public Art**

- 7.45 The provision of works of art in public areas and spaces can be an effective way of reinforcing or establishing the character of a particular area and creating a sense of place and civic pride. The Council will therefore encourage the use of such works of art which may take a number of forms from street furniture to major sculpture. The Council will encourage developers to commission and contribute towards the provision of public works of art for display adjacent to public buildings, business developments, street scenes and public open spaces.

**Policy D10: Public Art**

**The Council will expect developers to include, as appropriate, the provision of an element of public art within proposals for new development.**

**Design Statements**

- 7.46 The Council believes that all developers should be held responsible for design of their developments. The Council expects developers to take account of the design principles and policies in this Plan and the guidance in the Supplementary Design Guidance, when drawing up their proposals. This responsibility is reinforced by PPG1 which states that applicants for planning permission should be able to demonstrate how they have taken account of the need for good design in their proposals and that they have had regard to relevant development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance.
- 7.47 To aid good design, the Council will expect developers to submit a design statement with planning applications for residential developments or for business and commercial developments. The design statement should justify the design approach used in the proposed development, how it accords with the design principles and guidance set out in the Plan and how the design responds to the local character and context of the area in which the site is located. The design of extensions or alterations to houses are also important. To aid good design, the Council will consider householder applications using a design checklist.
- 7.48 The following extract from the DETR's publication 'By Design – Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards Better Practice' (May 2000) provides an

initial guide on the content of design statements. It says, '*Design statements should explain the design principles and the design concept and explain how the design relates to its wider context (through a full context appraisal where appropriate). The written design statement should be illustrated as appropriate by plans and elevations, photographs of the site and its surroundings and other illustrations such as perspectives.*'

#### **Policy D11: Design Statements**

**Applicants will be required to submit a design statement with all applications for business, commercial or residential developments.**

**The statement should justify how the development meets the design principles, policies and guidance set out in the Plan and the Supplementary Design Guidance.**

**Householder applications will be considered against a design checklist.**

#### **Development Briefs**

- 7.49 The development briefing process is designed to assist developers in providing detailed advice on appropriate and acceptable development solutions at an early stage in the planning process. This is done by interpreting the relevant development plan policies for the site and the characteristics of the site and its location, to ensure a high quality built environment which contributes to the local community. This approach reduces uncertainty for developers, by informing them about the constraints and opportunities presented by the site and the type of development expected by the local planning authority. It also improves the efficiency with which the subsequent applications can be considered by reducing negotiation time.
- 7.50 Each site will be unique and it is therefore expected that each development brief will be similarly unique, responding to the nature, size, ownership and location of the site. Although it is expected that each brief will be different, there are essential steps in the process of development briefing that are common to the preparation of each brief. More information as to what should be included in development briefs can be found in the Supplementary Design Guidance.
- 7.51 Where developers and/or landowners wish to prepare a brief, this must be done in consultation with the Council. All development briefs will be subject to public consultation before they are adopted.

#### **Policy D12: Development Briefs**

**The Council will require development briefs for sites proposed for major residential, commercial, business, or mixed use schemes and any other sites for which it is felt to be appropriate.**

## **IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 8.1 The strategy and policies of this Plan provide a framework for securing a more sustainable pattern of development in the district and, thereby, improving quality of life. However, if this is to be achieved the Plan must be effectively implemented and the impact of its policies must be monitored to measure whether they are meeting their objectives. This chapter explains what actions will be taken to put the Plan into effect and to monitor its progress.

### **POLICIES**

#### **Role of the Council and Other Agencies in Implementation**

- 8.2 The successful implementation of the Plan will depend on the actions of a number of organisations and individuals. As the local planning authority the Council will have a major role. It will use its development control powers to grant or refuse planning permission for development and in doing so it will seek to determine proposals in accordance with the policies in the Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. Relevant and reasonable conditions will be attached to permissions, where necessary, to regulate the form and use of the development.
- 8.3 In addition, the Council can use its own resources of finance and land to facilitate development or bring about physical improvements. Where resources allow, the Council will commit expenditure to secure specific policy objectives.
- 8.4 However, it has to be recognised that the Council has limited resources and can only act within its statutory powers. Many services and proposals are the responsibility of other agencies or tiers of government. Therefore, a key role for the Council will be that of an enabler, working in partnership with these agencies to co-ordinate programmes and encourage investment to meet the needs of the community and help achieve the objectives and policies of the Plan. This may be on individual projects and area-wide or issue-based strategies.
- 8.5 The Council already has a number of partnerships established through which it will continue to work in this way. These include the Welwyn Hatfield Area Regeneration Partnership (WHARP), through which it is developing a regeneration strategy for Hatfield, and the Welwyn Garden City Town Centre Forum, through which the town centre strategy has been devised. Other issue-based strategies already exist, listed in the Introduction to the Plan (paragraph 1.17), which have been taken into account in preparing the Plan and demonstrate how the actions of other agencies will help to implement the Plan. During the course of the Plan period, some of these strategies will need to be reviewed and new ones drawn up, as mentioned in other policies in the Plan and to satisfy the Government's requirement for Community Plans and the Structure Plan's aspiration for comprehensive settlement appraisals. In all cases, the Council will expect the Plan to provide the framework for any land

use related proposals and investment decisions in these strategies and will expect other agencies' land use proposals to be led by this Plan.

### **Policy IM1 - Non-Land Use Strategies**

**The Council will, where appropriate, bring forward and work with other agencies to formulate strategies to assist in implementing the policies and proposals contained in this Plan. In all cases the Council will expect policies or proposals with land use implications in these strategies to accord with this Plan.**

### **Planning Obligations**

- 8.6 Private sector investment will remain the most significant means by which policies of the Plan are implemented, from small extensions through to major housing and employment developments. Some developments can result in social, environmental and infrastructure costs to the existing community, such as placing additional demands on transport services, schools, community facilities and so on. Where this is the case, government guidance in Circular 1/97 provides for the use of 'Planning Obligations', whereby a developer agrees with the local authority to contribute towards these costs. The Council considers it essential that a development provides for the infrastructure, facilities and amenities needed to support it and makes appropriate provision to mitigate any possible adverse environmental impact.
- 8.7 In assessing the type and scale of contribution required for a development, the Council will have regard to advice in Circular 1/97 and any subsequent guidance or legislation. This states that obligations should only be sought where they are necessary to the granting of planning permission, relevant to planning, related to the development permitted and reasonable. It also states that obligations can be provided either directly by the developer on or off site or by means of financial payment to the local authority to make the necessary provision.
- 8.8 The nature of any contribution or obligation will vary according to the scale and type of development proposed and will therefore need to be assessed at the time the application is made, in consultation with the relevant service providing agencies, and agreed through negotiation with the developer. However, as a general guide, the types of infrastructure or facilities for which the Council considers development should be obliged to provide include:
- (a) Transport infrastructure or services, including new or improvements to existing footpaths, cycleways, roads and bus services and their associated infrastructure, to link development to surrounding areas and ensure it is accessible by all modes of travel;
  - (b) Affordable and special needs housing where there is a proven local need;
  - (c) Education facilities to meet any expected shortage in school places arising from the development;
  - (d) Community facilities, including buildings and play or open space, where existing provision is inadequate to provide for the new development;

- (e) Environmental improvements where necessary to mitigate the impact of a development or integrate it with surrounding areas;
- (f) Training, local employment and other economic development initiatives to improve local access to any employment provided by a new development.

8.9 Developers must also provide necessary infrastructure for water supplies and sewage disposal, which is covered by other legislation. Proposals for the reform of the planning obligations system were published by the DTLR in December 2001. Should this result in changes to the legislation or guidance governing planning obligations, the Council may need to bring forward alterations to this section of the Plan.

### **Policy IM2 - Planning Obligations**

**In order to satisfy the sustainability aims of the Plan and secure the proper planning of the area, development will be required to provide for the infrastructure, services and facilities which are directly related to it and necessary to the granting of planning permission. Developers will be required to provide or finance the cost of all such provision which is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development, including:**

- (i) On-site facilities directly related to the proposed development in the interests of proper planning and to mitigate any possible adverse environmental impact;**
- (ii) Off-site improvements, services and facilities necessary as a result of the development in order to avoid placing an additional burden on the existing community and to mitigate any possible adverse environmental impact arising from the development; and**
- (iii) Affordable housing in accordance with Policy H7.**

**This will be implemented through planning conditions and obligations agreed between the Council and developers under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and any related or subsequent legislation.**

### **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

8.10 The policies and proposals set out in this Plan reflect the circumstances, issues and trends as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2000. However, the Plan runs until 2011 and inevitably there will be changes over this period which will have implications for Welwyn Hatfield. These may include changes in:

- (a) Environmental, economic, demographic and social trends at local, national or global levels;
- (b) Local, strategic, national or European policies and legislation.

8.11 It is essential that the Council continues to monitor these factors in order to ensure that the Plan is kept up to date and responds to change and new issues.

- 8.12 Irrespective of any changing circumstances, it is also important the Council keeps under review the effectiveness of the Plan in achieving its aims and objectives. The Council already has systems in place to monitor changes in housing, employment and retail development and works with the County Council and other district councils to monitor ecology and landscape issues. However, the strategy and policies of the Plan set out a clear framework for securing sustainable development in the district. Therefore, the Council will seek to monitor the Plan against a series of environmental, economic and social indicators at the district level, to see whether the Plan is being effective in securing a greater level of sustainability over time. This will be done in partnership with other agencies where necessary. Monitoring will be carried out regularly, following available best practice guidance. Annual Monitoring Reports will be published to explain any progress in or changes against the trends and indicators referred to above.
- 8.13 Where, as a result of monitoring, new policies or guidance are required, the Council will respond through publishing supplementary planning documents or informal policy reviews. Where more fundamental changes to the Plan are required, the Council will prepare Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents as required by the new measures in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

### **Policy IM3 - Monitoring and Review**

**The Council will monitor and review the policies in this Plan to assess their effectiveness in meeting the aims and objectives of the Plan for sustainable development and to identify any new issues for the Plan to address. Annual monitoring reports will be published indicating changes in national or strategic policy and in economic, social or environmental trends in the district against key indicators. Where necessary the Council will bring forward new policies or guidance through the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents or informal policy reviews. Where more fundamental changes to the Plan are required, limited alterations or a full review will be carried out.**

# **POLICIES FOR URBAN AREAS**

## **HOUSING**

### **INTRODUCTION**

9.1 This chapter is about housing in the district. One of the main objectives of the District Plan is to provide a strategy for residential development to provide for the housing needs of the local community, including those in need of affordable and special needs housing. Social, demographic and economic changes continue to create increasing pressure for land to be released for housing in the district. The Green Belt coverage of the rural part of the district makes opportunities for providing housing development in the district more limited and as a consequence sites must be identified and found within the built up areas.

### **ISSUES**

- 9.2 There are three main issues to be addressed in meeting the housing requirements in the district. Firstly, the identification of an adequate number of housing sites to meet the housing requirements for the district, identified in the Adopted Structure Plan. This must be achieved whilst maintaining a good environment and limiting residential development to the excluded settlements.
- 9.3 Secondly, to maximise the use of previously developed land in line with Government Guidance, to encourage urban regeneration and to limit the need for use of greenfield sites. The use of previously developed sites will ensure the concentration of development in the urban areas where opportunities should be taken for higher density development in more accessible areas to reduce car usage.
- 9.4 Whilst the strategic housing requirement sets down the number of units required, it does not specify for whom these are required. It is therefore an issue for the Plan to include policies to ensure that the needs of all members of the community are met, including those in need of affordable housing and those with special needs such as the elderly and disabled.

### **STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES**

- 9.5 The District Council's Objectives for residential development in the district are:
- (a) To meet the Structure Plan housing requirements for the district of 5600 dwellings between 1991 and 2011 in the most sustainable way, in order to meet the district's housing needs;
  - (b) To maximise the use of previously-developed land for housing and achieve as a minimum the Government target for 60% of all new dwellings to be built on previously-developed land;
  - (c) To provide for housing for local people whether private, affordable or special needs housing and for all sectors of the community;
  - (d) To locate new housing development in the most accessible areas, to reduce the use of the private car and encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

## **POLICIES**

### **Housing Land**

- 9.6 The Adopted Hertfordshire County Structure Plan Review 1991 - 2011 (April 1998), gives the County of Hertfordshire dwelling requirement for the period from 1991 to 2011 as 65,000. The Structure Plan allocates this requirement between the ten districts, with the allocation for Welwyn Hatfield as 5,600.
- 9.7 As this allocation runs from 1991, there have obviously been some completions since the beginning of the plan period and there are some outstanding commitments in the form of planning permissions. The subtraction of these completions and commitments from the allocation provides the remaining housing requirement for the period to 2011. The housing land supply situation as at April 2004 is shown in Appendix 5. The dwelling requirement figure for the remaining period to 2011 is therefore 813.
- 9.8 This figure must be met from new development. In identifying sites to meet the housing requirement, the Council has followed government guidance contained in PPG3. This sets out a list of criteria which local authorities should use to assess the potential and suitability of sites for development in allocating housing sites in local plans:
- The availability of previously-developed sites and empty or under-used buildings, including their suitability for housing use;
  - The location and accessibility of potential development sites to services and facilities by modes other than the car and the potential for improving such accessibility;
  - The capacity of existing and potential infrastructure to absorb further development and the cost of adding further infrastructure (infrastructure includes public transport, water and sewerage, and social infrastructure such as schools and hospitals);
  - The ability to build communities to support new physical and social infrastructure and to provide demand to sustain such levels of services and infrastructure;
  - The physical and environmental constraints on development of land e.g. level of contamination, stability and flood risk.
- 9.9 PPG3 also states that in identifying sites to be allocated for residential use in plans, local authorities must follow a search sequence, starting with the use of previously developed land and buildings identified by the Urban Capacity Study. The Council carried out an urban capacity study in 1998-1999, in conjunction with Llewelyn Davies. The purpose of the study was to identify any potential for housing through redevelopment, development on vacant land and re-use of land or conversion of buildings to residential use within the district's towns and specified settlements.
- 9.10 The study identified a number of sites which were then assessed for feasibility and suitability for development based on a number of factors. These included location, ownership, back gardens, current uses, access, the suitability of the site for other uses and any other physical constraints such as contamination, topographical or geological features.

- 9.11 A list of 23 sites is identified in Policy H1 below to meet the housing requirements of the district to 2011. Of these, one is the Hatfield Aerodrome site, 15 are sites identified in the Urban Capacity Study and 7 are sites that have come forward during the preparation of the Plan, after the completion of the study. Together these are estimated to yield 3182 dwellings.
- 9.12 The major site is the former British Aerospace site at Hatfield (site HS1 in the list), now known as the Hatfield Aerodrome site. Although a previously developed site, it was not identified through the Urban Capacity Study, but was already identified following its designation in the District Plan Alterations No. 1 for a mixed-use redevelopment including housing, to be brought forward in the context of a Masterplan. The site is the subject of Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance and it is estimated the figure for housing on the site will be 1,700. All the residential development is expected to be completed by 2008, within the Plan period.
- 9.13 An allowance for 'windfall' of 25 units per year has been made for the district in the past and the Council considers that this is an achievable and realistic figure to include in the future. Therefore in the period to 2011, it is estimated that 175 units will be developed on 'windfall' sites.
- 9.14 The number of dwellings proposed from windfall sites and the sites allocated for housing development in Policy H1 (excluding completions, units under construction and outstanding permissions) is therefore 175 + 1,455, i.e. 1,630, which meets the housing allocation figure of 813 to 2011. Therefore, the Council considers that there is no need to release Green Belt land nor the land reserved as an Area of Special Restraint at Panshanger Aerodrome, to meet the district's housing requirement up to 2011.
- 9.15 Other suitable previously developed sites, which come forward for development after the publication of this Plan, will be treated as windfall sites and considered in accordance with guidance in PPG3 and other policies in this chapter.
- 9.16 PPG3 states that the Council should include policies which allow for the release of sites over the plan period to control the speed and pattern of urban growth, ensure that new infrastructure is co-ordinated with development and deliver the recycling target.
- 9.17 However the Council considers that phasing of sites allocated in Policy H1 will occur naturally as a number of the sites are subject to constraints such as land assembly and the relocation of existing occupiers. These sites are therefore more likely to come forward in the later stages of the Plan period. The Council will work with the landowners to try to overcome these constraints. The Council considers that any more phasing of allocated sites will lead to an arbitrary phasing of development. However in order to prevent an oversupply of sites and to ensure the development of previously developed land first, the rate of windfall development will be monitored and phased if necessary, in accordance with policy H2.
- 9.18 Government guidance has set national guidelines for the proportion of new homes to be built on previously developed land at 60% over the next 10 years. Of the sites identified in Policy H1, approximately 90% of the proposed

units are on previously developed land. These are all sites within the district's towns and specified settlements.

- 9.19 The Council will use the 'plan, monitor and manage' approach for housing land; it has allocated sites on which it will monitor progress and it will manage further site allocations through future reviews of the plan.

### **Policy H1 - New Housing Development**

**In accordance with the approach of using previously developed sites and sites identified from an urban capacity study, the following sites defined on the Proposals Map are allocated for development during the plan period.**

<b>No</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Area (Ha)</b>	<b>Estimated No of Units</b>
HS1	Hatfield Aerodrome	44.4	1700
HS2	Creswick School Site, WGC	1.19	50
HS3	Land at Chequersfield, WGC	5.20	218
HS4a	Former Wellfield Works, Wellfield Road, Hatfield	1.50	60
HS4b	Adj. Factory Site, Wellfield Road, Hatfield	0.44	22
HS5	Peartree Redevelopment area, WGC	2.20	94
HS6	Godfrey Davis Garage Site, Welwyn	0.74	28
HS7	The Dairy, Homestead Lane, WGC	0.37	12
HS8	Garage and Depot , Lemsford Lane, WGC	0.45	24
HS9	Sea Cadet Hut, Lemsford Lane, WGC	0.46	22
HS10	Oaklands Campus, Lemsford Lane, WGC	0.43	23
HS11	SKB site, Ridgeway, WGC	3.07	128
HS12	Mount Pleasant Depot, Hatfield	2.72	73
HS13	Hilltop, High View, Hatfield*	1.87	75
HS14	Claregate, Great North Road, Little Heath	0.32	14
HS15	Howe Dell School, Hatfield	0	10
HS16	Former Allotments, Knella Road, WGC	0.67	22
HS17	Catomance Site, Bridge Road East, WGC	1.00	86
HS18	Knella Road Workshops, WGC	0.48	22
HS19	Hatfield Town Centre	3.80	165
HS20	The Forum, Hatfield Town Centre	0.74	84
HS21	Hatfield Aerodrome District Centre	6.0	200

<b>HS22</b>	<b>Welwyn Garden City Town Centre</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>50</b>
		<b>81.45</b>	<b>3182</b>

**Note: Area (Ha) – this is the reasonable developable area**

**\* Site HS13 is allocated for a mixed-use development to include housing, retailing and services and community facilities.**

### **Phasing and Location of Windfall Residential Development**

9.20 It is accepted that, whilst much of the housing allocation in the district will be met from the sites identified in Policy H1, there is an expectation that a small proportion of the dwelling numbers will come from windfall sites. Windfall sites are those sites which come forward which have not been identified in the Plan. They could be large, such as a factory closure site or small, such as a residential conversion or new flat over a shop. It is important that windfall sites on previously-developed land should be given priority over those on greenfield sites, except where the previously-developed site performs so poorly in relation to the following criteria, that it precludes the use of the site for housing before a greenfield site (see PPG3):

- The availability of previously-developed sites and/or buildings;
- The location and accessibility of the site to services and facilities by transport modes other than the car;
- The capacity of existing and potential infrastructure to absorb further development;
- The ability to build new communities to support infrastructure and provide demand for services and facilities;
- The physical and environmental constraints on development of land.

9.21 Whilst windfall applications for one dwelling may appear to have little impact on the infrastructure, the cumulative impact of a number of single dwellings may be significant. Similarly, larger windfall sites can have a significant impact and can help build new communities. There is a need to phase sites in order to ensure that development is co-ordinated with infrastructure improvements, to reserve sites for the later part of the plan period and to ensure the development of previously developed land.

9.22 At the same time there is a need to ensure that the approach adopted does not prevent suitable urban regeneration sites coming forward for development and does not conflict with the objectives of providing for affordable and other identified housing needs. The following policy will therefore be applied to windfall sites that come forward to ensure that there is not a significant oversupply of housing land within the district.

9.23 The Structure Plan requires 5600 additional homes in Welwyn Hatfield by 2011 (an annual average of 280 new homes). The Council considers that a situation of significant oversupply will have been reached when the district's dwelling requirement set by strategic guidance (allowing for demolitions) has been completed before the Plan period has expired.

- 9.24 In assessing whether a situation of significant oversupply has been reached, the Council will take into account the number and rate of dwellings that have been completed and are under construction, the state of the housing market, the number of outstanding permissions (allowing a contingency for non-implementation), and strategic and Government planning policy guidance.
- 9.25 Renewals of residential permissions should also be assessed against the criteria in the policy and those that do not meet the requirements should not be renewed.

### **Policy H2 - Location of Windfall Residential Development**

**All applications for windfall residential development will be assessed for potential and suitability against the following criteria:**

- (i) The availability of previously developed sites and/or buildings;**
- (ii) The location and accessibility of the site to services and facilities by transport modes other than the car;**
- (iii) The capacity of existing and potential infrastructure to absorb further development;**
- (iv) The ability to reinforce existing communities, including providing a demand for services and facilities; and**
- (v) The physical and environmental constraints on development of land.**

**The development of sites for over 10 units or 0.25 ha that are not listed in Policy H1 will not be permitted if they would result in a significant oversupply of housing in the district. Exceptions will be made in any of the following instances:**

- (i) The development provides for local affordable housing needs or other clearly identified local housing needs;**
- (ii) The development would contribute to regeneration or the town centre strategies;**
- (iii) The development comprises the conversion of an existing building;**
- (iv) The development would achieve a clear environmental gain;**
- (v) The development would assist in the construction or provision of improved community facilities over and above those that would be required to support the development itself.**

### **Loss of Residential Accommodation**

9.26 The district is under considerable pressure for new housing development to meet both local needs and general demand. The existing housing stock in the district represents a valuable resource which should be protected and enhanced. Therefore, the Council does not wish to see a net loss of dwellings in the district, unless there is a justifiable reason. This may include:

- (a) Where the design or location of the unit mean it is unsuitable for continued residential use, such as where it cannot provide adequate amenities or access; or
- (b) Where continued residential use would jeopardise the preservation of a Listed Building or a building in a Conservation Area.

### **Policy H3 - Loss of Residential Accommodation**

**Planning permission will not be granted for the redevelopment or change of use of premises which would result in a net reduction in the number of dwellings in the district unless:**

- (i) The design or location of the residential unit means that it is wholly inappropriate for continued residential use; or**
- (ii) The loss of the residential unit would be necessary for the long term preservation of a listed building; or**
- (iii) The development is to meet an identified and proven community need, which cannot be met elsewhere.**

### **Conversion of Residential Accommodation**

9.27 Because of the pressure for residential accommodation in the district, the Council wishes to make the best use of the existing stock. Where the size of dwellings makes them no longer viable for use as single dwellings or where applications are submitted for the conversion of large units to smaller units the Council will look favourably on conversion provided that the conversion can take place without a detrimental effect on the character of the area or on the amenity of the neighbours.

### **Policy H4 - Conversion of Residential Accommodation**

**In the towns and specified settlements the Council will grant planning permission for proposals for the conversion of large residential units to provide smaller self contained units, provided that:**

- (i) It would not adversely affect the visual appearance and character of the area, nor the amenity of neighbouring residential properties by overlooking or loss of privacy;**
- (ii) It would not result in increased disturbance from extra vehicular movements and car parking;**
- (iii) It would preserve the architectural merits of the building; and**
- (iv) Adequate usable amenity space can be provided.**

## **Conversion of Commercial or Vacant Buildings to Residential Accommodation**

- 9.28 Government guidance supports the conversion of commercial buildings and upper-floor space over shops to residential use particularly in town centres, where it will enhance the vitality and viability of the centre.
- 9.29 Where the proposal is in accordance with Policy EMP8, the Council will support the change of use of B1 offices outside the designated Employment Areas to residential use where the offices are no longer required, provided the conversion would not result in an over abundance of one land use type, i.e. the Council wishes to encourage mixed uses. Conversions will be supported in situations where the development is of a similar scale to existing activities, where it would not adversely affect residential amenity, and where safe and adequate parking, servicing and access is available.
- 9.30 The Council will also support the change of use of commercial buildings to residential use in existing residential areas where conversion would benefit the local area e.g. by the loss of a non-conforming use.
- 9.31 The Council will support and encourage initiatives for the residential use of upper floors of centrally located or accessible shops and offices. Whilst this will provide new residential units, it will also aid the vitality and viability of the towns. These initiatives are known as Living Over The Shop and Living Over The Office (see also Policies TCR8 and TCR18).

### **Policy H5 - Conversion of Commercial or Vacant Buildings to Residential Accommodation**

**The Council will support the change of use of B1 offices to residential in town and local centres.**

**Wherever possible a mix of uses should be retained.**

**For Class B1, B2 and B8 buildings not in town centres and outside designated employment areas, the Council will only grant planning permission for a conversion to residential where it can be shown that the development of the site for a “live-work” mixed use scheme would not be viable.**

**The Council will also support the change of use of other commercial and vacant buildings in existing residential areas where conversion would benefit the local community.**

**The Council will support the Living Over The Shop and Living Over The Office initiatives as set out in Policies TCR8 and TCR18.**

## **Increasing Densities**

- 9.32 Government guidance advises that local planning authorities should avoid the inefficient use of land. The level of land taken for residential use in the past has been historically very high with resultant low densities. Low density developments are less able to sustain facilities, services and public transport facilities. In line with the objectives of a sustainable plan, the Council wishes to see new developments built to make efficient use of the land. Density is related to the character of an area. Development of small terraced units may detract from the local distinctiveness of an area of predominately large

detached dwellings on detached plots; however, other forms of higher density development such as flats with similar massing to the large dwellings could be built without detracting from the character of the area. It is important that any residential developments close to town centres, or within an 800m walk-in catchment of the town centres, or sites that are accessible by modes of transport other than the car are built at a higher density to maximise the use of the land and help sustain vital services.

- 9.33 The average density of new housing development in the district between 1991 and 1998 was 35.46 dwellings per hectare. As part of the Urban Capacity Study, some of the sites identified had further work carried out to look at the possible densities if a design led approach to development were taken. The design led density solutions ranged from 20 to 75 dwellings per hectare, with most being between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare and within the most accessible sites densities of 50 dwellings per hectare and above were achieved. It should be noted that whilst lower density development often takes place in those parts of the district that are characterised by large dwellings on large plots (in the form of replacement dwellings, or 2 dwellings in place of 1) these are not densities which the Council wish to see replicated in other areas. The Council therefore supports the Government guidance of encouraging housing development which makes more efficient use of land i.e. with the density of development between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare. The Council will expect these density standards in all residential developments of 5 dwellings or more unless it would result in a detrimental effect on the character of the area. Within an 800m walk-in catchment area of the town centres and of neighbourhood centres with a good range of services and public transport accessibility, higher densities close to or exceeding 50 dwellings per hectare (above the district average of 35.46 dwellings per hectare) will be expected.

#### **Policy H6 - Densities**

**The Council will require all residential developments of 5 or more dwellings to be built at densities of 30 to 50 dwellings per hectare provided that the development will not have an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area and can satisfy the design policies of the Plan.**

**In central areas and areas with good accessibility by modes of transport other than the car, residential development will be expected to be close to or exceed 50 dwellings per hectare provided that the development will not have an adverse impact on the character of the surrounding area and can satisfy the design policies of the Plan.**

#### **Affordable Housing**

- 9.34 Housing costs in the district are amongst some of the highest in the country; this has resulted in an inability to find suitable and affordable accommodation for many residents in the district. Therefore within the towns and specified settlements the Council will expect all suitable proposals for residential development to contribute to meeting local housing needs.

- 9.35 Circular 6/98 on Planning and Affordable Housing defines affordable housing as both low-cost market and subsidised housing that will be available to people who cannot afford to rent or buy houses generally available on the open market, as both can play a part in providing for local needs. The Circular states that decisions on what types of affordable housing to build should reflect local housing need, as demonstrated by a housing needs assessment, and site suitability. In line with the Circular and PPG3 the Council commissioned a Housing Needs Survey of the district. The Survey found that the principal need was for subsidised rented accommodation as low cost market housing was beyond the reach of the majority of newly forming households and those in need. Less than 2% of newly forming households and concealed households expressed a preference for shared ownership.
- 9.36 It recommends that 30% of new dwellings on eligible sites should be subsidised. Whilst the Survey found that the scale of the need is far higher than 30%, it is considered that this is a realistic and achievable target to set for the provision of subsidised housing on eligible sites. RPG9 (2001) sets a higher target of 46-49% for affordable housing, however this figure includes provision for both subsidised rented and low cost market housing as defined by Circular 6/98 and PPG3.
- 9.37 Therefore with regard to new housing development the Council will expect a minimum of 30% of units on all eligible sites to be subsidised housing to meet local needs. This is a requirement on residential sites of 25 units or more, or on residential sites over 1ha in size. In assessing the suitability of proposed sites, the Council will have particular regard to the criteria set out in Section 10 of Circular 6/98. These criteria include the physical circumstances of the site, the prevailing and anticipated market conditions and whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in the development of the site.
- 9.38 Council will expect the affordable housing to incorporate a range of housing types and unit sizes to meet local need. For each eligible site, the Council will define a preferred mix for the affordable housing element. Shared ownership can help meet the needs of those who are unable to afford the whole cost of buying a property at that time, however the Housing Needs Survey identified that shared ownership only has a role to play for up to 100 households in the district. In addition the Survey demonstrates that there is a need in the district up to 2006, for 450 unsubsidised low cost market housing units to meet the needs of new forming households with income levels adequate to access the local market.
- 9.39 There is growing demand to make provision for key worker housing to ensure the delivery of essential public services and there is ongoing research to identify key workers and to quantify their need. The findings of the research will form the basis of a future Supplementary Planning Document. Sites that make provision for key worker housing in addition to the affordable housing requirement will be supported.
- 9.40 The management of affordable housing after development has taken place is generally expected to be carried out by transferring the affordable housing units to a Registered Social Landlord (RSL). In order to facilitate this, it is

important that developers involve the RSL at an early stage to ensure that the affordable units are of a standard to meet their requirements.

- 9.41 All affordable housing will be secured for both initial and subsequent occupiers, either through the initial involvement of an RSL, or through a planning obligation under Section 46 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 restricting occupation.

#### **Policy H7 - Affordable Housing**

**Within the towns and specified settlements, the Council will expect all proposals for residential development on sites of 1ha or more, or with 25 units or more, to include the provision of affordable housing to meet the needs of local people who cannot afford to occupy dwellings generally available on the open market. The Council will therefore seek through negotiation a proportion of affordable housing, which as a minimum should comprise 30% subsidised housing, on each suitable site. The proportion, type and mix of affordable housing will be based on information in the latest housing needs survey and the criteria in Section 10 of Circular 6/98.**

**Sites that make provision for key worker housing in addition to the affordable housing requirement will be supported.**

#### **Dwelling Type and Tenure**

- 9.42 It is important that new residential development in the district responds to the needs of local people, whether those needs are for private, affordable or special needs housing and whether the occupants are old, young, single or in couples, families, students, those with disabilities or others.
- 9.43 With affordable housing, negotiation usually takes place with the Housing Associations to provide what is an identified need, however with private residential development, the developers build what they know they can sell, which has recently resulted in unimaginative estates of various styles of detached housing.
- 9.44 The need for new residential accommodation is largely as a result of changes in the composition of households. Family structure is changing and there are greater numbers of elderly and young people living independently. The majority of the projected growth will be in one-person households. These groups of people all have different requirements in terms of homes, whether they are private or rented, small flats or executive style houses. PPG3 states that plans should incorporate a mix of dwellings to meet the changing composition of households in the area in the light of likely assessed need. The Housing Needs Survey, which was carried out in 1999, confirmed that there is a demand within the district for flats, bedsits and one and two bedroom properties to meet current needs and address the shortage in the existing stock, which is predominantly new town 3 bedroom units. It is therefore important that developers incorporate different dwelling types and unit sizes into their schemes to meet the future requirements within the district. However the precise range of dwellings on a site could be affected by the size of the site, its location in terms of access to facilities in the area, and the nature and character of its surroundings.

- 9.45 Within larger residential developments the requirement for affordable housing will result in mixed-tenure development. Where this takes place the Council, in line with Government Guidance, will expect the areas to be fully integrated, with the affordable housing dispersed throughout the site, thereby securing a better social mix and avoiding the creation of large areas of housing of similar characteristics.

#### **Policy H8 - Dwelling Type and Tenure**

**The Council will expect new residential developments to incorporate a range of dwelling types and sizes, where appropriate. The Council will expect a mix of dwelling types in developments to reflect the shortfall of flats, bedsits and one and two bedroom properties in the district. Dwellings of different tenure should be mixed on site to avoid the creation of large areas of housing with similar characteristics.**

#### **Special Needs Housing**

- 9.46 There are also a number of households who, for a variety of reasons, will require more specialist accommodation, either in its construction or management. This type of accommodation may include accommodation for elderly persons, those with physical disabilities, those with mental health problems, those with learning difficulties and young people at risk. Whilst some of these people will be housed in open market housing, many specialist forms of accommodation will only be provided if there is some form of subsidy, i.e. they will be affordable units.
- 9.47 The needs of these groups are becoming more important with the current emphasis on care in the community, the closure of long stay units for people with disabilities and the increasing number of elderly people. The Council considers it important that special housing needs are met in locations close to community facilities and services and in types of housing to fit their requirements. Priority should be given to this type of development on suitable sites. The Housing Needs Survey identified 12.5% of households in the area with a special need.

#### **Policy H9 - Special Needs Housing**

**The Council will grant permission for schemes which provide special needs accommodation particularly in town centres or in areas which are close to community facilities and services. Incorporation of special needs housing schemes in residential development in central areas will be encouraged.**

#### **Accessible Housing**

- 9.48 The Housing Needs Survey identified that only 23% of the wheelchair users in the district live in adapted property and that only 7.6% of dwellings have been adapted for use by a disabled person (only 2.4% of owner occupied households), whereas 12.5% of households contained somebody with a special need. The largest identified disabled group was those with walking difficulties. There is clearly a shortfall of adapted dwellings for these people.
- 9.49 The Council supports the 'lifetime homes' concept. Lifetime homes are those which allow for the changing needs of occupants over time i.e. they can

accommodate the majority of adaptations with maximum ease at minimum costs, so enabling the occupants to stay in the same neighbourhood. They do not necessarily lead to under-occupation as people do not have to stay in them, but at the same time they do not have to move if they do not want to. Lifetime homes can accommodate people with moderate disabilities.

- 9.50 In relation to new dwellings, Part M of the Building Regulations requires reasonable provision to be made so that disabled people can reach the principal or a suitable alternative entrance to the dwelling from the point of access and can have access into and within the principal storey of the dwelling. It also requires that sanitary accommodation is available at no higher storey than the principal storey. These provisions should ensure access by disabled people into new homes.

#### **Policy H10 - Accessible Housing**

**In all residential developments involving 5 or more dwellings the Council will seek to secure a proportion of dwellings to be built to lifetime homes standard. In each instance dwelling type, site location and topography will be taken into account.**

#### **Student Accommodation**

- 9.51 Student housing is an issue in the district as it is home to the University of Hertfordshire and The Royal Veterinary College, both of which have students who require accommodation. There is also a need for accommodation for some students who attend Oaklands College. This has a knock-on effect for private rented accommodation in the district. However, it is not practical for all accommodation for students to be provided on campus. There is therefore a need to strike a balance in terms of specific provision for students.
- 9.52 Where practical, the Council will support proposals by the University of Hertfordshire to provide accommodation for their students on campus to help ease the pressures on the private rented sector in Hatfield, freeing up more accommodation for local people. However, the development of the student accommodation should not be at the expense of the overall environment of the Campus or the amenity of communities living adjacent to the Campus. As the Royal Veterinary College is a Major Developed Site in the Green Belt any proposals for student accommodation must be considered in the light of Policy RA7 Royal Veterinary College in Chapter 15 Rural Areas.

#### **Policy H11 - Student Accommodation**

**The Council will approve proposals by the University of Hertfordshire to provide student accommodation on campus provided that the resulting development does not have an adverse effect on the environment of the campus or the amenity of adjacent communities.**

## **Travelling Showpeople's Accommodation**

- 9.53 Circular 22/91 requires Planning Authorities to consider the needs of travelling showpeople when preparing the Local Plan. Showpeople require sites for residential accommodation in the form of caravans and mobile homes, and for the storage of vehicles and fairground equipment. Whilst the sites have been traditionally used in the winter, there are some members of the group who will stay permanently e.g. older family members or children who are in full time education.
- 9.54 The circular urges local authorities to identify sites and include policies in the Plan for new sites if there is a need. There is one authorised travelling showpeople's site in the district at Welham Green, although this type of site would not normally be an appropriate use in the Green Belt.

### **Policy H12 - Travelling Showpeople's Quarters**

**The District Council will protect the existing established showpeople's site from other development proposals. Planning permission for new sites will only be allowed if it can be demonstrated that there is a local need and that all of the following criteria can be met:**

- (i) The site has good, safe and convenient access to the road network;**
- (ii) The site is conveniently located for schools and other community facilities;**
- (iii) The site is not within the Green Belt;**
- (iv) The site will not visually encroach into the open countryside;**
- (v) The site should either have substantial natural screening or be landscaped and screened with new planting;**
- (vi) The use of the site should not adversely impact upon the amenities of the adjoining residents, by reason of noise, fumes or dust arising from vehicular movements and the maintenance and testing of equipment;**
- (vii) The requirements of the appropriate design policies and guidance should be met.**

## **Gypsy Sites and Accommodation**

- 9.55 Gypsies are defined in Section 16 of the 1968 Act as 'persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin'. The term does not include members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such. Circular 1/94, states that local authorities should have regard to the accommodation needs of gypsies and identify suitable sites wherever possible; this is reinforced in PPG12, which states that the Plan should also identify current sites.
- 9.56 There is one County Council owned site in the district with 39 pitches, all of which are full, and one private site which has 9 pitches. There is no identified shortfall of pitches at present, however any application for a gypsy site must identify an unmet need. Whilst Circular 1/94 suggests that locations outside existing settlements may be considered for gypsy sites, they are inappropriate

uses for the Green Belt and therefore in this district applications for new gypsy sites should only be considered within the towns and specified settlements, in the light of the following policy.

### **Policy H13 - Gypsy Sites**

**Planning permission will be granted for small-scale gypsy sites where all of the following criteria can be met:**

- (i) The proposed site is not within the Green Belt, unless special circumstances exist which might exceptionally make such development acceptable;**
- (ii) The site has good, safe and convenient access to the road network;**
- (iii) The site is conveniently located for schools and other community facilities;**
- (iv) The site will not visually encroach into the open countryside;**
- (v) The use would not detract from convenient, safe and enjoyable use of a public right of way;**
- (vi) The site should either have substantial natural screening or be landscaped and screened with new planting;**
- (vii) The requirements of the appropriate design policies and guidance can be met;**
- (viii) Hardstandings can be provided and the site is capable of being provided with basic facilities including electricity, water supplies, sewage disposal and waste collections;**
- (ix) The site will be situated so that it neither affects the visual amenity or character of the area or nearby residents, nor is it affected by any environmental hazards which may affect the residents' health or welfare.**

## **OPEN SPACE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 10.1 It is vital that open space, which is important in creating a high quality of urban life, is protected from development pressures, which threaten the towns and settlements. Such areas may not necessarily be public nor need to be completely open. The importance of these areas is their undeveloped nature, which provides relief from the built form and assists in retaining a spacious and more open built urban structure. This land can take the form of parks, woodland, playing fields, landscaped and designed spaces and areas of wildlife or nature importance. In addition, it may not necessarily be a single, unbroken space but may be in the form of a series of smaller linked spaces. Furthermore, the size of the space does not necessarily define its importance within the built environment.
- 10.2 Government guidance, given in PPG17, supports the Council's view that there is a need to protect open space, which contributes to the natural and built heritage of an area, and recommends the inclusion of policies within local plans to achieve this. The guidance also recognises the valuable contribution urban open space makes to the quality of urban life and clarifies that the use of land as open space is of no lesser importance than any other use.

### **STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES**

- 10.3 The Council recognises the inherent quality of Welwyn Hatfield's open space and the strong traditions of design and master planning which created it. The primary objective must therefore be to protect the essential elements for future generations and improve the quality of those areas in which there is a deficiency. The Council will aim to achieve this through the following strategy:
- (a) To identify and protect areas of open land within the towns and specified settlements that make an important contribution to the urban form;
  - (b) To identify and protect playing pitches within the district, for which there is sufficient demand;
  - (c) To ensure that new residential developments, over a certain size, will incorporate play space schemes, if the development's impact would create a deficiency in play space provision in the area;
  - (d) To protect school playing fields from development pressures, and only allow ancillary development which will complement or improve the quality of the existing recreational purposes;
  - (e) To identify and protect allotments within the towns and specified settlements, unless it can be demonstrated that demand for the site is non-existent or a suitable alternative site can be made available to cope with the demand.

## **POLICIES**

### **Urban Open Land**

10.4 In accordance with PPG17 and Hertfordshire County Council's Structure Plan, Policy 46, areas of urban open land, which are considered to be of such significance that they must not be developed other than for minor ancillary facilities, have been defined in the Council's Open Space Survey and are to be protected from development by Policy OS1. These areas have been identified as performing a key built environment function, in addition to any recreational, ecological, landscape or other amenity they provide, using the following criteria:

- (a) The land is vital to the form and character of the built-up areas; or
- (b) The land, in whole or part, provides an important visual and physical break within the built up area; or
- (c) The land contributes, in whole or part, to any wider green chain or open corridor; or
- (d) The land is important or could in future be important, in whole or part as a local amenity in terms of its landscape qualities, its wildlife or ecological value, or its use as an informal space for passive or active recreation; or
- (e) The land, in whole or part, is of notable wildlife significance; or
- (f) The land is already identified by the County Council as Common Land; or
- (g) The land is used as a formal space for active recreation.

### **Policy OS1 - Urban Open Land**

**The areas of land listed in Appendix 6 and defined on the Proposals Map are considered vital to the form, character and quality of the built-up areas of the district in terms of the urban open land criteria and are therefore defined as Urban Open Land. Planning permission for development within these areas will not be granted unless it would:**

- (i) Assist in the maintenance or reinforcement of their function as essential open areas;**
- (ii) Be of a scale which did not compromise the value of the Urban Open Land or use of the open space as defined in terms of its criteria; and**
- (iii) Not result in the loss or reduction in size of any playing pitches, if the open land is used for formal recreation purposes, subject to the consideration set out in Policy OS2.**

### **Playing Pitch Provision**

10.5 The District Council recognises the importance of maintaining its current level of outdoor sport provision and would wish to ensure that adequate and affordable provision is made in respect of new development. Standards for outdoor sport and children's play space are currently assessed against the

National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) guidelines, which recommend approximately 4 acres of outdoor facilities and 2 acres of children's play space per 1000 population; these are minimum standards. The District Council will also take into account evidence of local demand, accessibility to all user groups and the provision of 'all weather' surfaces that have a greater capacity than traditional turfed pitches. The requirement for outdoor sport provision is independent of the requirements for Open Space provision, although there may be some degree of overlap where provision will not significantly and adversely affect the character of the open space.

- 10.6 The Council's Leisure Strategy clearly identifies the positive impact that leisure activities can bring to an individual's quality of life and health. However, facilities must be accessible to all, affordable, and environmentally friendly. The Strategy sets out proposals for achieving these objectives.
- 10.7 In land use terms, the District Plan will seek to protect valuable facilities and ensure that new development makes an appropriate contribution to the provision of new facilities. A review of the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy has been undertaken, which highlights the close balance between playing pitch provision and local demand for facilities. If in exceptional circumstances a playing pitch facility is to be lost and replaced elsewhere, alternative provision must be made available, prior to the commencement of the development that involves the loss of the existing playing pitches. Policy OS2 will ensure this.

### **Policy OS2 - Playing Pitch Provision**

**The Council will seek to maintain its current level of playing pitch provision. Proposals involving the loss of any playing pitches will not be granted planning permission unless it can be clearly demonstrated that:**

- (i) The land does not meet the criteria set out for its designation as an area of Urban Open Land; or**
- (ii) There is no longer a current demand for such a facility or any real prospect of a demand arising within a realistic timescale; or**
- (iii) An alternative facility will be made available of equal or higher standard than the original. Any alternative provision must be made available before the commencement of development which involves the loss of the playing pitches and must be located in an appropriate location.**

**In areas where there is a lack of playing pitch provision substantial new developments (0.4 hectares and above) will be expected to contribute towards provision of new facilities.**

### **Play Space and Informal Open Space Provision**

- 10.8 The location, content and design of children's play space should be appropriate to the needs of the local population. The NPFA recommends four different types of play space to cater for the needs of children of different ages. They are as follows:

- a) *Local Area for Play (LAP)*  
Catering for the 4-6 age group, the LAP should ideally be within one minutes' walking time of home, and have an area of around 100 square metres.
- b) *Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP)*  
Catering for the 6-8 age group, the Leap should ideally be within five minutes' walking time of home, and have an area of 400 square metres.
- c) *Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP)*  
Catering for the 8-14 age group, the Neap should ideally be within 15 minutes walking time of home and have an area of 1000 square metres.
- d) *Other*  
In addition to the equipped play areas, consideration should be given to the needs of older children in the design of public play spaces, for instance through the provision of meeting places.

- 10.9 The Council will monitor the provision of children's play areas. Where standards of provision fall below those set out by the NPFA, and there is an identifiable need for play areas, the Council will seek to identify suitable sites for play area development in consultation with local residents, and then bring forward appropriate sites for implementation.
- 10.10 The Council will endeavour to ensure that an appropriate amount and type of children's play space is incorporated into substantial new developments (of 0.4 hectares and above) comprising family housing. The Council, in considering planning applications, will determine the most appropriate type of provision for a particular area. For instance, in certain instances the Council may prefer the combined provision of facilities for all age groups, in the interests of good management. The provision will then be made by the developer as part of the housing scheme. However, in areas where a deficiency of play space for older children arises, or a shortfall in outdoor sport facilities, the Council may accept commuted sums from several developers to provide such facilities itself. The Council will also require appropriate sums for the maintenance and upkeep of new play areas, before it will adopt such facilities.
- 10.11 In addition to formal playing fields and equipped children's play areas, there is a need for informal open space within easy reach of any residential community. This is reflected within the NPFA guidelines. Such spaces can be used for informal team games, children's play, passive recreation and to give a landscaped structure to new development. Such space can be provided in conjunction with playing fields or more formal children's play facilities. It is critical however, that any provision of such open space is easily accessible by pedestrians and cyclists and is designed to be a safe and secure environment for all people using or passing through the open space. Major new residential developments will be expected to provide such open space in line with the overall NPFA guideline figures.

## **Policy OS3 - Play Space and Informal Open Space Provision in New Residential Development**

**Substantial new residential development (of 0.4 hectares or above) will be expected to make a contribution to the provision of children's play space and informal open space, where the increased demands generated by the new households cannot be met by current levels of provision. The scale of any contribution will be in line with the number of new households in the development, and the type of facility to be provided will be based on meeting NPFA standards. Where new space is created it must be easily accessible by pedestrians and cyclists, and be designed to be a safe and secure environment for all people using the facility. Contributions will take the form of the direct provision of facilities on site or, where appropriate, the payment of a commuted sum by the developer to facilitate the provision of a facility elsewhere.**

### **Allotments**

- 10.12 The cultivation of allotments remains important for many people as they form a valuable informal recreational resource, which can have significant health and economic benefits, in particular for low income households. Demand for allotments varies over time, depending on economic trends and fashion, and between sites depending on their proximity to residential areas and the facilities on site. In line with the Leisure Strategy, the Council will seek to maintain an adequate supply of allotment plots within the district to meet current and future demands.
- 10.13 Occasionally the situation arises where allotments are unused or under-used. However short-term down-turns in demand will not be accepted as justification for the loss of allotment land. In addition, Annex C to PPG3, clearly defines allotments as land which is not 'previously used' and therefore such sites should only be considered for development when all other viable development opportunities have been exhausted. If there is clearly no demand for an allotment site over a long period, alternative open space uses should be investigated in the first instance. In addition, where allotments remain under-used in the long term, it may be appropriate to rationalise the allotment site, in order to free up land for other uses, whilst securing the future of the remaining plots. In the event of the redevelopment proposals, the criteria in paragraph 10.4 should be applied to ensure that recreational, ecological, protected species, landscape or any other amenity are preserved for the benefit of the community.

### **Policy OS4 - Allotments**

**Planning permission will not be granted for proposals resulting in the loss of allotments in any area where there is a reasonable expectation of continuing long-term demand. Should any allotment site remain unused or under-used in the long term, alternative open space or community uses should be considered first. Should the land not be required to meet open space needs, disused allotment land will only be considered for development in the context of a full evaluation of development land in the district taking into account its wildlife potential. Where allotment**

**sites are under-used, rationalisation of the sites may be acceptable to secure the long term future of the used plots, provided the Council is satisfied that all reasonable measures have been taken to increase their usage.**

## **COMMUNITY, LEISURE AND TOURISM**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 11.1 Good quality and easily accessible community and leisure facilities are a vital element contributing to the quality of life for local residents. This is recognised in the Planning Policy Guidance Note 17, together with other Central Government strategies for the delivery of health and education services. These facilities are diverse in nature and are therefore provided and run by a number of different agencies, each with their own strategies for delivery and their own set of objectives.
- 11.2 The provision of these facilities is also directly related to the characteristics of the population and their changing expectations. Some of the key population changes in recent years have been the reduction in children of school age, the growth in the number of elderly people, the increased number of single person households, a general rise in disposable income and increasing awareness of the benefits of active leisure activities on health. Over the plan period, it is expected that the number of children of school age will increase slightly, but the other trends will continue.
- 11.3 The District Plan can only deal with the land use element of the provision of these facilities. However, in view of the pressure to use urban land efficiently, it is vital that a strategy is put in place to secure existing facilities where still required and reserve land for the future needs of local communities.

### **ISSUES**

- 11.4 There are a number of diverse issues which the District Plan must take account of in developing a land use strategy for leisure, community and tourist facilities:
- The population of the district will continue to change over the Plan period, leading to changing demands for facilities;
  - The mechanisms for the delivery of many community facilities and services will be subject to change in the Plan period, with partnership arrangements and the most efficient use of buildings and facilities being a key element;
  - The provision of leisure, arts and cultural facilities will need to be dynamic to meet the changing needs and expectations of both local people and visitors to the district;
  - Changes in the way that health services will be delivered will need to be embraced, in particular the emphasis on primary care and the local delivery of services;
  - Changes in the school age population of the district will require the protection of educational facilities and guidelines for new development necessary to meet any shortfall;
  - The general growth in tourism must be met sustainably and, for the economic benefit of the district, by the provision of new facilities and the enhancement of existing attractions.

## STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES

- 11.5 The key objectives for the District Plan in formulating policies for community, leisure and tourism facilities are as follows: -
- (a) To facilitate the sustainable provision of facilities to meet the needs of local communities;
  - (b) To ensure that existing leisure, community and tourism facilities for which there will be a continuing demand during the Plan period are protected;
  - (c) In line with the Council's Leisure Strategy, to encourage the provision of leisure, arts and cultural facilities that improve the health and quality of life of local people;
  - (d) Ensure that health facilities and in particular primary care facilities in the district are accessible to all and are good neighbours;
  - (e) To ensure that new education facilities respect the local environment and existing facilities are used effectively;
  - (f) Encourage the provision of new facilities to meet the needs of pre-school children;
  - (g) To ensure that new tourist facilities are delivered in sustainable locations, for the maximum benefit of local people.

## POLICIES

### Protection of Existing Leisure Facilities

- 11.6 Leisure and recreational facilities are an important element in the life of residents and bring vitality and attractiveness to the district. It is essential that existing indoor and outdoor facilities are safeguarded and that maximum benefit is derived from them. The Council recognises that it cannot prevent the closure of privately run or commercial facilities but is concerned to ensure the provision of an appropriate range of suitably sited leisure opportunities. To this end the Council wishes to encourage new venues as well as protect existing facilities from loss to a non-recreational/community use.
- 11.7 The Council is also aware that some recreational activities may occupy premises which no longer meet, nor can reasonably be adapted to meet, current safety or other operational standards and will be mindful of these issues when considering proposals for the redevelopment of these premises.

### **Policy CLT 1 - Protection of Existing Leisure Facilities**

**Planning permission will not be granted for proposals involving the loss of any existing outdoor or indoor recreational or leisure facility unless:**

- (i) It can be clearly demonstrated that there is no longer a current demand for such a facility for either recreational, leisure or community use, or any real prospect of a demand arising within a realistic timescale; or**

**(ii) It can be clearly demonstrated that an acceptable alternative means of meeting any such demand is or will become available, before the loss of the existing facility; or**

**(iii) The new development consists of, incorporates or provides, an appropriate alternative recreational or community facility.**

**Demand should be assessed according to the nature of the existing recreational facility in question.**

### **New and Expanded Leisure Facilities**

- 11.8 The Council recognises the growing demand for leisure facilities, and will encourage proposals to develop new facilities in the district to meet leisure and cultural needs of the community. Leisure facilities attract visitors, and are capable of generating significant amounts of traffic. Siting these facilities in town centres, which are readily accessible to public transport, can help to reduce reliance on the car and can contribute to the vitality and viability of town centres, in particular by supporting the economy. The preferred location, therefore, for these facilities in the district will be in the town centres. In addition, specific provision is proposed as part of the District Centre on the Hatfield Aerodrome Site.
- 11.9 Where there are no suitable sites in these locations the Council will be prepared to consider edge of centre sites, or at the very least, sites that are highly accessible by public transport, provided that such developments do not undermine the vitality and viability of the town centres and where a need for such a facility in the district has been established.
- 11.10 The Council will only permit the development of new, or the expansion of existing facilities, where there will be no harmful impact on the character of the surrounding area or amenity of nearby residential properties and other uses. In addition, development will only be permitted where it will not cause unacceptable nuisance in terms of noise and traffic generation and will not result in the loss of land protected or designated for other uses in the Plan. When considering development proposals for leisure facilities the Council will also have regard to the scale and nature of the proposal and the convenience of access to the site from likely sources of demand.
- 11.11 Concerns have been raised about the lack of swimming facilities in Welwyn Garden City, however, research by Sport England in 1998 and 2001 concluded that there was more than sufficient water space in Welwyn Hatfield to meet anticipated future demand for swimming in the district. The Council recognises, however, concerns which have been raised about the lack of public swimming pool facilities in Welwyn Garden City. In the light of these concerns, a Swimming Development Proposal for Welwyn Hatfield was prepared for the Council in March 2003 to help guide policies in all aspects of swimming. One of the objectives of the Swimming Development Proposal is “to ensure that all residents of Welwyn Hatfield have easy access to well managed swimming pools offering a range of casual and programmed activities, sited in locations convenient for users”. At the Cabinet meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> June 2003, the Council agreed to work with the Welwyn Hatfield Leisure

Trust to assess provision levels in the district in line with the Swimming Development Proposal.

### **Policy CLT 2 - New and Expanded Leisure Facilities**

**The preferred location for new leisure facilities is in the district's two town centres. Where there are no suitable sites in the town centres, but there is a clear need for the facility, the Council may consider proposals in edge of centre locations, at district or neighbourhood centres or in other areas with high accessibility by public transport. In all cases the Council will only permit proposals for new or expanded leisure facilities where all of the following criteria are met:**

- (i) The facility would not adversely affect the vitality and viability of the two town centres;**
- (ii) There is no harmful impact on the amenities of nearby residential properties and other uses;**
- (iii) It will not cause unacceptable nuisance in terms of noise or traffic generation;**
- (iv) The development is in keeping with the scale and character of the surrounding buildings and area; and**
- (v) The site is easily accessible by passenger transport, walking and cycling.**

### **Stanborough Park**

11.12 Stanborough Park performs an important role within the district as a provider of formal and informal recreation opportunities. At present, other than open space, the park offers recreation in the form of a boating lake, a watersports centre and yachting lake and a nature reserve at its southern end. The Council will seek to preserve and enhance the wildlife and nature qualities of the park, whilst promoting and improving its potential for recreation. The park is located within the Green Belt and therefore only development for essential small scale facilities for outdoor sport and recreation or for other uses which preserve the openness of the Green Belt will be allowed. However, the park also contains the former Splashland Swimming Complex, which was an important built leisure facility for the district. It will therefore support proposals for the redevelopment of Splashland for new leisure facilities, provided they have no greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and do not occupy a greater footprint than or exceed the height of the existing buildings.

### **Policy CLT 3 - Stanborough Park**

**In Stanborough Park, as identified on the Proposals Map, the Council will seek to preserve and enhance the natural wildlife, whilst promoting and improving the recreational potential of the park. Development proposals will be considered against the policies in the Plan which define appropriate development in the Green Belt. In addition, the Council will grant planning permission for proposals for the redevelopment of the Splashland site, as separately identified on the Proposals Map, subject to the following criteria:**

- (i) It should have no greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including this land within it than the development which existed on the site at the time of the closure of the swimming complex;
- (ii) Any new buildings should not exceed the height of the buildings which existed on the site at the time of the closure of the swimming complex; and
- (iii) New buildings should not occupy a greater footprint of the site than the buildings which existed on the site at the time of the closure of the swimming complex.

### **Arts and Cultural Facilities**

11.13 Arts and cultural facilities cover a wide range of leisure activities, all of which play an important role in improving people's quality of life. In addition, they provide opportunities for lifelong learning, assist in reducing social and economic barriers, and support economic regeneration and prosperity. There are many organisations within the district providing valuable participation in these activities; the contribution of the voluntary sector is particularly important. However there is fierce competition from museums, theatres and other tourist attractions in London, St Albans and Stevenage. The Council recognises that there are gaps in the provision of art and culture and that there is a latent demand of people wanting to take up or do more arts related activities.

#### **Policy CLT 4 - Arts and Cultural Facilities**

**The Council will grant planning permission for proposals which will increase or improve the provision of arts and cultural facilities in the district, provided that:**

- (i) There is no harmful impact on the amenities of nearby residential properties and other uses;
- (ii) They will not cause unacceptable nuisance in terms of noise or traffic generation; and
- (iii) The site is easily accessible by passenger transport, walking and cycling.

### **Tourism Facilities**

11.14 Welwyn Hatfield is well placed to develop tourism both in terms of its location, its heritage and the number of visitor attractions already within its boundary. Many of these attractions are within the rural areas of the district. However, the urban areas offer other attractions for tourists such as shopping facilities, sports centres, arts and cultural facilities. There is also considerable untapped potential in terms of the heritage of the Garden City and the aviation heritage of the Hatfield Aerodrome site.

11.14 Tourism is important as a source of employment and aid to economic regeneration. The Council wishes to promote the development of tourism in the district and will encourage proposals to provide new or improved tourist attractions and facilities to accommodate tourists and visitors in the district.

When assessing development proposals the Council will have regard to their effects on the amenities of nearby residential properties and other uses, the character and appearance of the surrounding area, traffic and noise generation, proximity to public transport, and accessibility for people with disabilities.

### **Policy CLT 5 - Tourist Facilities**

**The Council will permit development proposals for new and improved tourist attractions and facilities in the district provided that they:**

- (i) Do not have a harmful impact on the amenities of nearby residential properties and other uses, and the character of the surrounding area;**
- (ii) Do not create unacceptable nuisance in terms of traffic or noise generation; and**
- (iii) Are easily accessible by passenger transport, walking and cycling.**

### **Hotels**

11.16 Whilst there are a number of hotels in the district, there is still a shortage of hotel bed-spaces, both to support business and tourist visitors. A site for a hotel has been identified in the master plan for the former Hatfield Aerodrome site. In addition, the Council will encourage the development of other hotels in the district, particularly where they are accessible by passenger transport. They should preferably be located in town centres, but where there are no suitable sites, edge of centre sites or other locations easily accessible by public transport may be considered. In all cases, proposals will be assessed against their impact on amenity, the environment and traffic generation.

### **Policy CLT 6 - Hotels**

**The Council will grant planning permission for proposals which increase and improve hotel accommodation within the district. The preferred locations for hotels are in the district's town centres and on the designated sites on the Hatfield aerodrome site. Where there are no suitable sites in the town centres, the Council may consider development proposals in edge of centre locations, at district or neighbourhood centres or in areas with high accessibility by public transport. In all cases the Council will only permit proposals for hotels where:**

- (i) There is no harmful impact on the amenities of nearby residential properties and other uses;**
- (ii) The development is in keeping with the scale and character of the surrounding area; and**
- (iii) The development is easily accessible by passenger transport, walking and cycling.**

### **Community Use of Schools/Educational facilities**

- 11.17 The Council recognises that educational facilities are a valuable community resource with potential for wider use for community purposes. The use of educational buildings and land to provide arts, entertainment and sports activities to the wider public can benefit the community, make more efficient use of resources, and help to strengthen links between educational establishments and the community they serve. The Council also recognises that the use of education playing fields by the wider public can be particularly beneficial in areas of open space deficiency. School buildings, playing fields and other school facilities are especially suited to multiple use, as they can be used in the evenings, at weekends and during school holidays.
- 11.18 The Council will encourage the multiple use of educational facilities and seek to ensure that new facilities are designed and sited to allow potential for multiple use. The multiple use of facilities will only be appropriate where it would be ancillary to the main education use, would not interfere with the normal schooling or educational activities of the establishment, and would not have a harmful impact on the character of the surrounding area and amenities of nearby residential properties and other uses.

#### **Policy CLT 7 - Community Use of Education Facilities**

**The Council will grant planning permission for the multiple use of existing and new educational facilities for community or leisure activities. Where new dual use facilities are proposed, they should:**

- (i) Be ancillary to the main use of the facility for education;**
- (ii) Not interfere with the delivery of the education service; and**
- (iii) Not have a harmful impact on the character of the surrounding area or amenities of nearby residential properties and other uses.**

#### **New Education Facilities**

- 11.19 Many County Council maintained schools in the district have little spare capacity. In addition, the demand for nursery, primary, secondary and further education places is expected to increase over the Plan period as a result of natural population growth, the required increase in new housing development in the district, the statutory requirement for reduced class sizes and government targets for post 16 years education. Proposals for large new housing developments, which are likely to place pressure on existing local schools, will be expected to contribute to the provision of new school places and facilities where this is demonstrated by the Local Education Authority (LEA). Any such contribution would be covered through the use of a Section 106 agreement.
- 11.20 Schools also generate significant levels of traffic. Where new facilities or extensions to existing schools are being proposed, the Council will expect that sufficient long term parking and safe setting down and pick up areas should be provided. Where possible journeys by private motor vehicles will be discouraged, in line with the Safer Routes to School initiative in the Local Transport Plan. However, it is recognised that the nature of the current education system, which allows for choice between schools, may lead to traffic generation from outside the locality. PPG13 on Transport states that policies should encourage the location of facilities which need to be near their

clients in residential areas or local centres so that they are accessible on foot or by bicycle. Such facilities include schools. To minimise the impact of traffic, new schools should be situated close to passenger transport services, provide opportunities for shared journeys, for example using school buses, and provide secure facilities for the storage of bicycles for all using the school.

- 11.21 During the District Plan period, it is possible that schools and colleges may find it necessary to use temporary classrooms to cope with short-term fluctuations in pupil/student numbers. The Council accepts that these can solve short-term problems but feels that they should not be used to hide deficiencies in permanent accommodation. Temporary planning permission for such buildings will therefore not normally be renewed. The Council will actively support the education provider in identifying a solution to permanent education deficiencies where the additional accommodation is required to meet the educational needs of the district. The Council will take into account the siting and the visual impact of such buildings and will expect the structures to be removed when the temporary period of consent expires.

#### **Policy CLT 8 - New and Extended Education Facilities**

**Proposals for new or extended facilities for schools or colleges will be granted planning permission provided:**

- (i) They are situated close to centres of population and passenger transport services;**
- (ii) They provide opportunities for shared journeys, for example by school bus;**
- (iii) They provide facilities for the secure storage of bicycles for students and staff;**
- (iv) The proposal complies with the Council's current car parking standards and there would be no adverse impact on the highway network including highway safety;**
- (v) Provision is made for the safety of students whilst being dropped off or picked up;**
- (vi) There would be no harmful impact on the amenity of nearby residential properties and other uses; and**
- (vii) There would be no significant impact on the character of the area.**

**Developers of housing schemes will be expected to contribute to the provision of school places or facilities where such schemes will lead to overcrowding in local schools or children having to travel unacceptable distances to obtain school places.**

**The Council will accept temporary buildings on existing school sites to meet short-term education needs, subject to their appearance and impact on the surrounding area. Conditions will be attached to ensure the buildings are only retained for a temporary period.**

#### **Use of Redundant Educational Facilities**

11.22 As such buildings are designed with the ability to accommodate large numbers of students, teachers and support staff, and they are often used by the community out of school hours, they are considered to be suitable, in principle, for occupation by community uses in general. Should an educational facility no longer be required for its original purpose, the Council will first review whether such facilities should be retained for community uses such as a community centre, arts centre or sports facility. Where the buildings are not suitable for community use, or where there is no identifiable need for community provision, other uses, such as housing, will be considered. Proposals for the reuse of part or all of a former school's playing field will be assessed against the open space policies of this Plan.

#### **Policy CLT 9 - Use of Redundant Education Facilities**

**The Council will grant planning permission for the redevelopment or re-use of redundant educational establishments that are surplus to educational requirements, for community, leisure or recreation purposes. Where applicants can demonstrate that the buildings are unsuitable for re-use or there is no local need for community, leisure or recreation facilities, other suitable alternative uses such as housing will be considered.**

#### **Nurseries and Childcare Facilities**

11.23 The LEA together with the Early Years Partnership (EYP) and through the Early Years Development Plan, has achieved universal provision of nursery places for 4 year olds throughout the county. The EYP is now developing policies which may lead to extended provision for 3 year olds. In addition, as more parents return to work, the demand for affordable childcare places is anticipated to rise. Pre-school childcare facilities are provided throughout Welwyn Hatfield by the public, private and voluntary sectors with playgrounds, full time nurseries, after school clubs and part time crèches all playing valuable roles. The scale of these uses can vary enormously, from using part of an existing residential property to a church hall or new building constructed specifically for the intended purpose. In the case of facilities being situated in residential buildings it is important that the scale of use remains subordinate to the residential character of the property, and the immediate area, and does not harm the amenities of residents. Conversion of a whole house will be resisted as will an over-concentration of nurseries, playgroups and other child care provision to prevent an unacceptable impact on the local area. Because of the young age of children attending these types of facilities, and the growing trend for parents to return to full or part-time employment, there tends to be a high level of car movements generated by these uses. It will therefore be important to ensure that safe setting down and picking up areas are provided, in addition to longer term parking for staff and parents.

#### **Policy CLT 10 - Nurseries and Childcare Facilities**

**Proposals for nurseries or childcare facilities will be granted permission provided that:**

- (i) **Proposals make adequate provision for car parking, safe dropping off and picking up areas and have no harmful impact on the highway network including highway safety;**
- (ii) **Proposals have no harmful impact on nearby residential properties and other uses or the character of the area;**
- (iii) **Proposals would not detract from the visual amenity of the area; and**
- (iv) **Where a proposal involves a residential property, the use remains subordinate to the main residential use of the dwelling.**

**Developers of housing schemes will be expected to make a contribution to the provision of nurseries or childcare facilities, where the development would result in overcrowding of existing facilities or young children having to travel unacceptable distances to obtain a place in a facility.**

### **Library Services**

11.24 The County Council and the District Council have discussed the adequacy of existing libraries in the district and have identified particular deficiencies in Hatfield. A new library facility will be provided as part of the redevelopment of the Hatfield Aerodrome site. However, the main focus for improvements will be in Hatfield Town Centre, where it is proposed that a new library be provided as part of a joint facility with a new health centre and community space within the town centre redevelopment scheme. Where new development results in a need for improved library facilities elsewhere in the district an appropriate contribution will be required towards the provision of such a facility.

#### **Policy CLT 11 - Library Services**

**The Council will support proposals to improve the library facilities in Hatfield town centre. All major developments which place additional demands on the existing library services and facilities will be required to make an appropriate contribution to the provision of new or enhanced libraries in the district.**

### **New Community Facilities**

11.25 Used by a wide spectrum of community groups and voluntary organisations, community centres and halls need to be located in areas close to the population they serve, and to be easily accessible by a range of transport options. Whilst community facilities are not universally operated or revenue funded by the Council, extensive investment has culminated in the provision of new and improved community facilities throughout the district.

11.26 The Council aims to encourage community facilities which serve a wide catchment to locate within central areas in towns, whilst provision geared to more local needs and demands is facilitated within local district centres and residential areas. This distribution is more efficient in terms of providing accessible community facilities, which can be reached by the use of public

transport and other alternatives to the private car, such as cycling and walking.

- 11.27 The Council is seeking to improve and enhance community facility provision and will therefore welcome applications, which it receives for such developments. The dual use of buildings for sustainable community provision is also to be encouraged, as this can extend the vitality of the local neighbourhoods into the evenings. In some instances the loss of residential accommodation may be negated by the need for a community facility, which genuinely requires a site in a particular locality. In such cases, applicants will need to demonstrate that, for example, a thorough search for alternative accommodation had proved unsuccessful, that there is a need for the facility in that area, and that the benefit of the facility would outweigh the loss of residential accommodation.

#### **Policy CLT 12 - New Community Facilities**

**Development of community facilities, which meet the needs of local residents will be granted planning permission in the following locations:**

- (i) Residential areas where the proposals would not harm the amenities of nearby residential properties;**
- (ii) New residential developments in areas where there is a deficiency, in terms of access to community facilities;**
- (iii) Where the demand for the facility in an area is sufficient for the catchment of the proposed facility.**

**The loss of residential accommodation will only be permitted where it is essential for the facility to be situated in that locality and cannot be provided in non-residential accommodation.**

#### **Loss of Community Facilities**

- 11.28 Given the finite amount of land available for development in the district it is possible that planning applications may be made which seek to replace community facilities with other forms of development. The District Council will not grant planning permission for any development which would result in the loss of any community facilities, unless it can be demonstrated that there is no longer a need for the building or site for any form of community use, or that there is an acceptable alternative means of meeting the demand, either within the new development or in another suitable location. If an alternative is suitable the Council may impose a condition on the planning permission or seek an obligation to be entered into, requiring that the new community facilities are completed and made available prior to the loss of the original facility. This also applies to redundant community buildings or sites, where planning permission will not be granted for any other use on the site unless it can be demonstrated that there is no longer a need for the function the site previously performed.

#### **Policy CLT 13 - Loss of Community Facilities**

**Planning permission will not be granted for proposals involving the loss of community facilities or the loss of land allocated for such purposes,**

**unless there is no longer a need for them, or there is an acceptable alternative means of meeting the need.**

### **Places of Worship**

11.29 The Council is aware of the growing number of religious groups who wish to meet, celebrate, and worship within suitable premises and sees multi-denominational buildings as the most effective solution. Sites which are large enough to accommodate new meeting halls and places of worship are rare. However, where opportunities arise, the Council will support such provision where it can be demonstrated that the use will serve a local community and not result in unacceptable levels of traffic nor disturbance to neighbouring properties. Sites should be accessible by a range of transport modes and should not lead to unacceptable levels of on-street parking.

#### **Policy CLT 14 - Places of Worship**

**The provision of new or extensions to existing places of worship will be granted planning permission where it can be demonstrated that the use and choice of location will only serve a local community and the site would be easily accessible by a range of transport options. In addition, proposals should:**

- (i) Make adequate provision for car parking and have no adverse impact on the highway network including highway safety;**
- (ii) Have no harmful impact on the amenities of nearby residential properties and other uses; and**
- (iii) Not detract from the visual amenity of the area.**

### **Health Centres and Surgeries**

11.30 The Council recognises that it is of great importance to patients if primary health care facilities such as doctors' surgeries are located near their homes. Where non-residential premises are unavailable, the general resistance to the loss of residential accommodation may be relaxed, provided that the service proposed genuinely requires such a location, and the proposal conforms with all other relevant policies in this Local Plan. One way of testing the need to locate on a residential site will be whether a substantial number of patients are within walking distance. If a service provides for a wider catchment area but would result in a net loss of residential accommodation or land then planning permission will not be granted.

#### **Policy CLT 15 - Health Centres and Surgeries**

**The provision of new or extended surgeries and other medical or health services will be granted planning permission provided that:**

- (i) There would be no loss of a satisfactory residential unit in accordance with relevant policies in this plan;**
- (ii) The applicant can demonstrate that the proposed development is essential for the delivery of a necessary local health service and that alternative premises are not available;**

- (iii) **The proposal complies with the Council's current car parking standards and there would be no adverse effect on the highway network including highway safety;**
- (iv) **There would be no harmful impact on the amenity of nearby residential properties and other uses;**
- (v) **There would be no significant impact on the character of the area; and**
- (vi) **The premises are well served by a range of transport alternatives.**

### **Queen Elizabeth II Hospital**

11.31 The QE II Hospital in Welwyn Garden City is the major provider of emergency facilities, acute and chronic medical care in the district and indeed the eastern part of Hertfordshire. The Council wishes to see these services retained and enhanced within the district and will therefore support the future improvement of facilities at the hospital.

11.32 However, the hospital draws patients and visitors from throughout northern and eastern Hertfordshire, as well as employing a large number of staff who commute to the site daily. This has a significant impact on the surrounding residential areas in terms of traffic and car parking. The Council wishes to see a long-term strategy to manage this problem effectively and measures taken to encourage staff and visitors to use alternative modes of travel. The Council will therefore work with the East Hertfordshire NHS Trust to prepare a master plan for the hospital site, which should include future development requirements, a green travel plan and a car parking management strategy. Any future development proposals for the site must be brought forward in the context of this master plan and should seek to minimise impact on the surrounding area.

### **Policy CLT 16 - QE II Hospital**

**The Council will support the provision and expansion of health care services at the QEII hospital, subject to its impact on the surrounding area in terms of traffic, noise, pollution, car parking and visual appearance. Proposals for new development will only be considered in the context of an overall master plan for the site, which should be subject to public consultation before being agreed with the Council. The master plan should contain proposals to reduce car traffic and manage car parking as part of any future development on the site.**

### **Care in the Community**

11.33 The Health Authority, County Council Social Services Department and District Council are committed to providing community based health and welfare facilities and services. With the move away from long-stay community care facilities, new community facilities are required, particularly for residential care, allowing people to live within the community while still receiving the support and care they require.

11.34 Although the precise land use implications of this policy are as yet unclear, they could be quite considerable as more local sites and premises will need to

be developed or converted for residential nursing homes for the elderly, the ill and handicapped. It is the Health Authority's policy to disperse community homes within the area and avoid concentrations of such uses. However, community homes must also be located where they are accessible to essential facilities such as shops and health centres. The Council, whilst supporting the aims of care in the community, will therefore apply the following policy to safeguard the amenity of local residents.

**Policy CLT 17 - Care in the Community**

**The Council will grant planning permission for the establishment or extension of residential homes falling within the relevant use class in existing residential areas, either by the development of vacant sites or by conversion of existing properties provided that:**

- (i) The scale of the proposal will not be detrimental to the established character of the surrounding residential area, nor the amenity of adjoining occupiers;**
- (ii) The proposal includes acceptable access and car parking provision, including visitors' parking;**
- (iii) The proposal is located so that it is accessible to essential facilities; and**
- (iv) The proposal does not result in a concentration of such facilities resulting in an overload of local facilities or a change in character of the residential area in which it is located.**

# **EMPLOYMENT**

## **INTRODUCTION**

- 12.1 The purpose of this chapter of the Plan is to establish planning policies which will help to ensure the local economy remains buoyant and offers good employment opportunities for local people, and which will guide the main employment generating uses to the most appropriate locations. It deals with issues affecting the type of business and manufacturing employment-generating floorspace which the district needs to satisfy job needs in the future.
- 12.2 Retail uses also form a major source of employment in the district, principally in town, village and neighbourhood centres, outside of the Employment Areas identified in this Chapter. The scale of retail employment is closely related to the amount of retail floorspace and is therefore dealt with in the Town Centres and Retailing Chapter. Leisure, health and education are also an important employment sector in the district. Their land use and development requirements are dealt with in the Community, Leisure and Tourism chapter.
- 12.3 Maintaining economic growth and employment is one of the four key objectives of the UK Strategy for Sustainable Development. The availability of jobs, goods and services is fundamental to people's quality of life. In turn their availability is dependent on the prosperity of the national and local economy. At the same time, economic development must be sustainable. It is no longer right to accept economic growth and development at any cost. The Council wants to encourage development which stimulates employment and prosperity in the area, but it must be clearly related to the needs of the area and respect the environmental limits of the locality and the global environment.

## **ISSUES**

- 12.4 The key role for the Plan in the development of the local economy is to manage the supply of land and floorspace for employment uses. The Structure Plan has established that there is already sufficient land and floorspace in the county to meet a predicted, continued growth in business and employment needs in Hertfordshire up to 2011, taking into account existing floorspace and land allocated in local plans for employment uses. This forecast trend applies at district level in Welwyn Hatfield. So the presumption is that there will not be a need to allocate any additional land for employment uses in the district, other than that already designated in the existing employment areas and on the Hatfield Aerodrome site. However, this balance between supply and demand for employment floorspace can only be maintained if pressure for other development such as housing, retail and leisure uses on employment land is resisted.
- 12.5 In terms of the quality of employment floorspace, research undertaken by Roger Tym & Partners in Hertfordshire in 1999 suggests that the three main areas where the current supply of floorspace is likely to fall short of demand are:
- (a) industrial space for relatively low technology operations;
  - (b) space for new and small businesses;
  - (c) development opportunities, in particular for offices in accessible locations.

- 12.6 Another known employment floorspace demand in the district is for uses such as car showrooms, 'on the spot' car repair garages (e.g. tyre and exhaust centres) and trade wholesalers, which combine a retail element with a predominantly business, industrial or storage use. These businesses represent a growing service market. However, given the planned nature of the two main settlements in the district, these uses often have difficulties finding appropriate locations.
- 12.7 There is a range of good quality sites within the district, notably at Shire Park and other sites within the Welwyn Garden City employment area, which offer further opportunities for new business floorspace. However, it is important that the district can continue to offer a range of opportunities for expansion of existing firms or new businesses.
- 12.8 The Hatfield Aerodrome site provides by far the largest opportunity for meeting the district's future business and employment needs. It is likely to provide the majority of new floorspace supply over the plan period. Due to the emphasis on the high quality of the development and its resultant rental levels, it is likely to attract employment uses with higher land values, such as financial and business services, software and IT, telecommunications, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals. The development will be required to provide some space for small businesses, but there will be sectors, particularly from lower-tech manufacturing and small businesses, for which the site may not provide space. Therefore, it is important that the existing Employment Areas in the district are retained, in order to maintain a supply of premises for the full range of business and industrial uses.
- 12.9 One of the key sustainability aims of the Plan is to encourage more balanced and self-contained communities, in order to reduce commuting and the need to travel. This requires maintaining a balance between housing and jobs. Travel-to-work figures show that almost half of the district's residents who are employed, work outside Welwyn Hatfield and that more people travel into the district to work than those commuting out. The right policy approach is required to ensure that these problems of in-commuting are not exacerbated by the development of the Hatfield Aerodrome site, where there is a significant amount of new employment floorspace proposed.
- 12.10 A range of planning, transport and economic development measures will be put in place to influence this. For example, on the Hatfield Aerodrome site over 1600 new dwellings are proposed, to give the opportunity for people gaining jobs on the site to live there and vice versa. Other measures include encouraging self employment and business start up through the availability of incubator space and related business support services; requiring incoming employers to run local recruitment campaigns, targeted at commuters; encouraging 'live-work' units in new housing or mixed-use developments to enable people to work or run businesses from home. These latter measures may provide opportunities for and encouragement to commuters to review their employment situation and consider working locally.
- 12.11 Another important factor in encouraging more people to live and work locally is to seek to match the jobs available with the skills of the local workforce. There are signs of possible skill mismatches in the district, evidenced by recruitment problems amongst local employers and the high levels of commuting into the district. However, it is likely that the high house prices or the lower rates of female participation in the labour force are also causes of

these problems. The Council's economic development policies are aimed at attracting firms to the district which can offer the type of employment required by local people. The District Plan supports this by the type of floorspace it allows and by encouraging the occupiers of new employment developments to recruit locally, offer skills training and provide childcare facilities. In doing so the Council will continue to work with its partners, including Hertfordshire Learning and Skills Council, the University of Hertfordshire and Oaklands College.

- 12.12 The local community has expressed its concerns about the loss of major companies and the desire to avoid this in the future. The Council cannot control the commercial decisions of individual companies. However, through economic development and planning policies the Council can help to maintain the diversity of the local economy, to reduce its dependence on any one company or sector, so that the closure or contraction of large companies has less overall impact.
- 12.13 Whilst the economy is now more balanced, the Plan seeks to encourage it to continue to diversify. It can do this by influencing the type of business units developed, ensuring a range of unit sizes are provided in new developments or that flexible units are provided which can be used for a range of company types and sizes. It can also encourage diversification by supporting the development of small businesses through the provision of incubator units and small business accommodation.
- 12.14 In the light of the rapidly changing nature of the economy, the Council will continue to monitor changes in labour market skills, the sectoral composition of the industrial base, business and industrial floorspace requirements and other features of the economy.
- 12.15 The key employment issues that the policies in this chapter seek to address can be summarised as:
- The supply of employment land and floorspace;
  - The quality of employment floorspace;
  - The range of employment uses;
  - Achieving a better balance between jobs and housing;
  - The need to match skills to jobs;
  - Encouraging a diverse economy.

## **STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES**

- 12.16 The Council's Economic Development Strategy (EDS) provides a key local policy context for the District Plan. It is important for the Plan to be consistent with this strategy. The overall aim of the EDS is to promote sustainable economic development and to encourage the creation of a thriving local business community. Wealth creation is a means of enhancing quality of life in Welwyn Hatfield and of tackling social exclusion. Its aims and objectives for the district's economy form the basis of the objectives of the Plan for employment which are to:
- (a) ensure that there continues to be enough employment land and floorspace available in the district, in the right locations and of the right quality, to provide jobs for local people, maintain a diversity of

employment uses and accommodate the requirements of local businesses and firms seeking to locate in the area;

- (b) to bring about a better balance between the levels and types of housing and jobs in the district and between the skills of the local workforce and the skill requirements of the jobs created, in order to help in reducing commuting flows into and out of the district and thereby reduce the need to travel;
- (c) to encourage the development of small businesses, in order to stimulate more stable, indigenous economic development and increase the potential for living and working locally;
- (d) to maximise the opportunity for a range of business and employment opportunities on the former BAe site at Hatfield, and throughout the district, to meet local job needs.

## **POLICIES**

### **Employment Land**

- 12.17 There is adequate capacity to meet the district's current and future job requirements without the need to allocate any new land for employment use. This is supported by the Structure Plan Review. However, there remains pressure to release further employment land for housing or other uses. Policy H1 identifies a site on the edge of the Welwyn Garden City Industrial Area for residential development to assist in meeting the district's housing requirement. However, further release of land within the Employment Areas for other uses must be resisted if an adequate level of employment land is to be retained to meet business needs. Therefore, the Plan continues to designate the main Employment Areas in the district. In addition, the former Dynamics and Sports Ground Employment Areas on the Hatfield Aerodrome Site have been extended and amalgamated to form the Hatfield Business Park Employment Area, including the area of land identified for a business park in the master plan for the site.
- 12.18 Minor amendments have been made to the boundary of the Burrowfields Employment Area (EA2), in Welwyn Garden City, to incorporate the electricity transformer station. This means that should it become redundant, the electricity transformer station could be redeveloped for suitable employment uses, which would be appropriate in this location.

#### **Policy EMP1 - Employment Areas**

**The following areas of land as shown on the Proposals Map are designated as Employment Areas:**

	<u><b>Area (ha)</b></u>
<b>EA1 Welwyn Garden City Industrial Area</b>	<b>149</b>
<b>EA2 Burrowfields, Welwyn Garden City</b>	<b>15.6</b>
<b>EA3 Great North Road, Hatfield</b>	<b>3.9</b>
<b>EA4 Beaconsfield Road, Hatfield</b>	<b>5.3</b>

<b>EA5 Fiddlebridge Lane, Hatfield</b>	<b>1.6</b>
<b>EA6 Hatfield Business Park, Hatfield</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>EA7 Bishops Square, Hatfield</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>EA8 Travellers Lane, Welham Green</b>	<b>32.6</b>
<b>EA9 Sopers Road, Cuffley</b>	<b>3.8</b>

### **Acceptable Uses in Employment Areas**

- 12.19 Employment land is a very valuable resource. Policy 14 of the Hertfordshire Structure Plan Review 1991-2011 seeks to foster economic growth in existing employment areas through planned regeneration. It provides for the re-use of existing employment land and buildings for Class B uses. With regard to non-Class B uses, these will only be allowed where existing employment land and buildings are no longer required to meet future employment requirements and business and community needs. This is important in the context of the restraint arising from the location of the district within the Green Belt, which limits the amount of land available for employment. Accordingly, a cautious approach has been adopted by the Council, which generally resists uses other than those within Class B in designated Employment Areas.
- 12.20 In the context of this cautious approach, it is important to keep employment development in balance with potential housing supply and the available infrastructure. Employment development on a large scale may increase pressure for additional housing to be built within the district in order to attract an inflow of labour; there may also be circumstances where the scale of employment generated will, instead of attracting workers from the local area, attract commuters in to the district, resulting in an unsustainable increase in traffic and subsequent congestion.
- 12.21 The approach set out in paragraph 12.19 above provides clarity for existing occupiers and potential investors and thereby facilitates continued investment and the regeneration of the older parts of the Employment Areas, through the upgrading of existing building and facilities and through redevelopment. The Council will give favourable consideration to proposals for the redevelopment of existing employment sites, in the designated Employment Areas, which would update and improve the quality of the employment stock in the district.

### **Other Employment Generating Uses in Employment Areas**

- 12.22 Whilst the Council seeks to retain designated Employment Areas for uses within Class B, it is recognised that there is a need for some flexibility to meet the needs of uses such as tyre and exhaust centres, trade wholesalers, vehicle hire, plant hire and taxi vehicle depots, which are composite uses, combining a retail element with a predominately business, industrial or storage use, but which do not readily fit within Use Class B. Due to the planned nature of the district's two main towns, it is difficult to find suitable locations for these uses outside of the designated Employment Areas. Vehicles sales showrooms are a sui generis use and are dealt with separately in Policy EMP4.
- 12.23 In situations where it can be clearly demonstrated that existing land or premises are no longer required to meet future employment requirements and

business and community needs, the Council may grant planning permission for other, non-Class B, uses. In considering proposals for non-Class B uses in Employment Areas, the Council will also pay particular attention to the resultant employment density of the proposed development, the impact on the vitality and viability of the district's town centres, the effect on local transport infrastructure and the general impact on the environment of the area. Proposals for retail and leisure uses in the designated Employment Areas will also need to demonstrate that they accord with the sequential approach set out in Planning Policy Guidance note 6: Town Centres and Retail Developments or its successor.

### **Policy EMP2 - Acceptable Uses in Employment Areas**

**In the designated employment areas, proposals for development within Use Classes B1, B2 and B8 will be permitted, subject to the following criteria:**

- (i) The proposal would not, due to the scale of employment generated, have an unacceptable impact on the demand for housing in the travel to work area;**
- (ii) The proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on the local and/or strategic transport infrastructure;**
- (iii) The proposal would not harm the amenities of any nearby residential properties;**
- (iv) The development would provide adequate parking, servicing and access;**
- (v) Any retail element of the development would clearly be ancillary to the main business use.**

**Proposals for Class B8 development should also be well located in relation to the primary road network.**

**Proposals for any other uses in the designated employment areas should generally be resisted and will only be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that the existing land or premises are no longer required to meet future employment requirements and business and community needs. All such proposals will also be required to satisfy criteria (i) to (v) above and other relevant policies of the Plan relating to the use proposed.**

**In all cases, the proposed development must comply with the design policies contained in the Plan.**

### **Broadwater Road West**

12.24 This area of land is defined on the Proposals Map. It is part of the Welwyn Garden City Industrial Area (EA1) and, as such, is subject to the provisions of Policy EMP2. A significant portion of this highly accessible site, which is close to Welwyn Garden City town centre, has become disused. In the light of this, the site presents opportunities for planned regeneration for a mix of uses comprising primarily employment, housing, leisure and rail-related uses. To guide the future development of the site, a development brief will be prepared.

**Policy EMP3 – Mixed Use Development Site at Broadwater Road West**  
The site within Employment Area EA1 (as defined on the Proposals Map) is identified as an opportunity area of planned regeneration for mixed use development comprising primarily employment, housing, leisure and rail-related uses. Development of the site shall be in accordance with the criteria in Policy EMP2 and other relevant policies of the Plan relating to the uses proposed. Development shall also comply with a Development Brief to be approved by the Council as a supplementary planning document. The Development Brief shall include the minimum quantum of Class B floorspace to be provided on the site.

### **Car Sales and Showrooms**

- 12.25 The Council recognises that there is a demand for sites for car sales/showrooms within the district. The sale of motor vehicles is a *sui generis* use, that is, it does not fall within any specific use class, and as such, it is difficult to find suitable locations for such uses. In terms of the environmental impact of car sales/showrooms, in many ways, industrial areas are the most suitable location for them, as they are liable to generate significant levels of traffic and associated noise, for example, from delivery vehicles, repairs etc.
- 12.26 The Council seeks to protect the availability of and maximise the use of employment generating land within the district. Car sales showrooms tend to provide employment at the lower range of employment density and it is therefore necessary to restrict the amount of floorspace used for car sales within the Employment Areas. Therefore, on larger developments with a gross floorspace in excess of 235m<sup>2</sup>, the Council will limit the amount of car sales floorspace and ancillary office and/or storage space to 49% of the gross external floorspace. The remaining floorspace should be used for Class B uses, such as vehicle servicing and repairs.

### **Policy EMP4 - Car Sales and Showrooms**

**Car sales/showrooms will only be permitted in the designated Employment Areas. They will not be permitted in residential areas or in the town centres. Planning permission will only be granted for development which meets all of the following criteria:**

- (i) The proposal would not have any adverse impact on the amenity of residential areas;**
- (ii) The proposal would not adversely affect the highway network, including highway safety;**
- (iii) It would have adequate servicing facilities;**
- (iv) It would not have an adverse effect on the provision of employment land, in terms of the cumulative impact of similar uses in the locality.**

**In the case of any proposed development which has a gross external floorspace in excess of 235m<sup>2</sup>, no more than 49% of the floorspace shall be used for the sale and display of motor vehicles, and the sale and display of motor vehicle parts and accessories, including office or**

**storage floorspace ancillary to such sale or display. The remaining floorspace should be used for Class B uses such as vehicle servicing and repairs.**

**Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town And Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order, 1995, any grant of planning permission will be subject to the removal of permitted development rights in order to prevent the change of use of the building to Class A1 (shops).**

### **Mix of Unit Sizes and Small Business Accommodation**

- 12.27 The Council seeks to encourage small and medium sized enterprise (SMEs) to establish within the district, in order to broaden the employment base and to provide a more balanced and stable local economy. In this way, the Council can maintain the diversity of the local economy, in order to reduce its dependence on any one large company or sector, so that the closure or contraction of large companies will have less overall impact.
- 12.28 There is a requirement for the provision of additional small and medium sized business/industrial units within the district. This is supported by the findings of the report "Employment Needs in Hertfordshire" by Roger Tym and Partners in 1999 and by business enquiries handled by the Council's Economic Development Unit.
- 12.29 Expanding companies who have outgrown their small scale starter-units have reported difficulties in finding suitable medium sized units to move to within the district and are therefore having to remain in their existing premises, which is exacerbating the lack of availability of small starter units. Whilst the Weltech Centre in Welwyn Garden City provides serviced office accommodation for start-up business, there is no comparable provision for small, starter industrial units.
- 12.30 Small businesses are rarely able to be in a position to develop their own business units and the commercial property market rarely provides affordable units for small businesses because they may not be economically viable. Therefore, large employment sites over 2 ha will be required to provide a mix of unit sizes, including specific provision of small units. An exception will be made in the case of existing companies who are developing a large site for their own expansion, as the Council does not consider that it would be a reasonable requirement in this case.
- 12.31 The Council will also encourage the provision of small business/industrial units through the conversion of larger industrial premises. In addition, the Council will pursue initiatives such as the "Fledgling Business Scheme", which encourages larger firms with under-used floorspace, to let it out to small businesses seeking premises.
- 12.32 For the purposes of this policy, small units are defined as those up to 235m<sup>2</sup>; medium units are between 236m<sup>2</sup> and 1000m<sup>2</sup>; and large units as those over 1000m<sup>2</sup>.

### **Policy EMP5 - Mix of Unit Sizes**

In the designated employment areas a mix of unit sizes will be required. On development sites over two hectares in area, there will be a requirement for a minimum of 10% of the net floorspace area within the site to be developed for small and/or medium sized units for business or industrial uses within use Class B. This policy will not apply in the case of existing companies, which are developing large sites for their own expansion.

#### **Policy EMP6 - Small Business Units**

The provision of small business/industrial unit accommodation will be encouraged by the Council through measures such as:

- (i) The conversion or sub-division of larger buildings to form small units, provided that adequate servicing and access arrangements are provided; and
- (ii) The promotion of premises sharing through the 'fledgling business scheme'.

#### **Bad Neighbour or 'Dirty User' Industries**

- 12.33 There are some industries which due to the particularly adverse environmental impacts of their activities are considered to be bad neighbour or 'dirty user' industries, for example, scrap yards, car body workshops, recycling facilities and other uses which are considered to be offensive, hazardous or potentially polluting. Many of these uses previously came under the Special Industrial Groups B3-B7, which have now been abolished. Whilst these uses now come under either Class B2, General Industry, or are *sui generis* uses, they are also controlled under other legislation including the Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act, 1989 and the Planning (Hazardous Substances Act), 1990.
- 12.34 Planning applications for recycling facilities may be 'County Matters' and any proposals for these would therefore be determined by the County Council as the Waste Planning Authority. In addition, the identification of new sites for waste management facilities would also be dealt with by the County Council, through the review of the Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan.
- 12.35 The Council recognises that these uses may have an important function in the local economy and that in some cases they can contribute towards the aims of sustainable development, for example, when they involve recycling. However, because of the adverse environmental impacts of such uses, the Council does not wish them to be scattered throughout the Employment Areas or located on inappropriate sites. The Mater Dei site, Chequersfield, Welwyn Garden City, is located within a designated Employment Area. The Council considers that the Mater Dei site is a suitable site for bad neighbour industries, and will therefore require provision to be made for such industries on the site, when it is developed.

#### **Policy EMP7 - Provision for 'Dirty User' Industries**

**The Council considers that the Mater Dei Site, Chequersfield, Welwyn Garden City, is a suitable site for the location of bad neighbour/dirty user industries. The Council will expect the site to be developed in**

**accordance with a development brief, to be agreed by the Council. The development brief for the site will require part of the site to be allocated for bad neighbour/dirty users.**

### **Employment Development Outside of Employment Areas**

- 12.36 There is adequate capacity to meet the district's current and future job requirements without the need to allocate any new land for employment use. However, whilst new employment uses outside of the designated Employment Areas are generally inappropriate, the Council recognises that there are other existing employment sites scattered throughout the district, many of which are occupied by small businesses who provide valuable local services. These sites provide employment and services for local residents, which reduces their need to travel and thereby contributes to the aims of sustainable development. In addition, these sites provide a variety of affordable units. It is therefore important that these sites remain in employment use, unless they are causing particular environmental problems.
- 12.37 Careful control will need to be exercised over the extent of new development to be permitted on these sites, to safeguard environmental interests, such as residential amenity and traffic generation.
- 12.38 It is also recognised that some employment sites are inappropriately located because their scale or use has an adverse impact on the local environment or residential amenity or on highway safety through traffic generation, noise and general disturbance.
- 12.39 On employment sites that are inappropriately located, planning permission will be granted for live-work development schemes, in accordance with Policy EMP14. Only where it can be shown that the redevelopment of the site for live-work units would not be viable, will planning permission be granted for residential development.

### **Policy EMP8 - Employment Sites Outside of Employment Areas**

**On existing employment sites outside the designated employment areas, as shown on the Proposals Map, proposals for new employment development or redevelopment will only be permitted where all of the following criteria are met:**

- (i) The development would be of a similar scale to the existing activities on the site;**
- (ii) The development would not have any adverse effects on the residential amenities of any nearby properties;**
- (iii) The development would provide adequate parking, servicing and access arrangements and would not have an adverse impact on the highway network, including highway safety.**

**Only grant planning permission for residential development on employment sites where it can be shown that the development of the site for a 'live-work' mixed use scheme would not be viable.**

**On sites that are not currently used for employment purposes and outside the designated Employment Areas and town centres, as defined**

**on the Proposals Map, planning permission will not be granted for development for Class B uses, unless the development would form part of a 'live-work' mixed use scheme.**

## **Training**

- 12.40 One of the overall objectives of the Plan is the need to achieve a better balance between housing and jobs in the district, in order to reduce the need for people to commute out of the district to work. An important factor in encouraging more people to live and work in the district is to seek to match the jobs available with the skills of the local workforce. There are signs of possible skill mismatches in the district evidenced by local employers experiencing recruitment difficulties and the high level of commuting into the district. The Council will actively encourage developments which would provide training to help to alleviate this mismatch between jobs and skills.
- 12.41 The relatively low female economic activity rate in the district suggests that there is some scope for generating higher levels of participation in the labour market by encouraging women returners, for example, re-training for potential women returners to update their skills and the provision of childcare facilities.
- 12.42 Training falls within Class D1 of the Use Classes Order 1987; however, it is recognised that in certain circumstances it may be appropriate for the support and development of certain types of high-tech or knowledge based industries that require a suitably trained workforce, to allow the development of education/training facilities within the designated Employment Areas.
- 12.43 The Council will work with the Hertfordshire Learning and Skills Council, the local College of Further Education and the University of Hertfordshire, to provide training initiatives within the district to address identified local skill shortages in the labour market.

### **Policy EMP9 - Training**

**The Council will actively encourage the provision of employment training. Within the designated Employment Areas the Council will permit development or change of use that would provide employment training within Class D1(c) use, only where it is to address a specific skill requirement of the local workforce.**

## **Childcare Facilities**

- 12.44 The provision of childcare facilities is considered important in order to ensure that those with childcare responsibilities who wish to or need to find employment are not prevented from doing so. A major theme in Government policy is the encouragement of practices that facilitate the combination of employment with family responsibilities. The provision of childcare can also be beneficial to employers themselves by helping them to attract and retain staff, to reduce absenteeism, to overcome staff/skill shortages and to promote the public image of the company as a good employer. The Council will therefore seek the provision of childcare facilities as part of any large-scale employment development, through the use of Section 106 Planning Obligations, where appropriate. In addition, the Council will permit the

provision of childcare facilities within the designated Employment Areas, if a local need for such facilities can be demonstrated. Proposals for new childcare facilities must comply with Policy CLT10 in the Community, Leisure and Tourism chapter of the Plan.

#### **Policy EMP10 - Childcare Facilities**

**The Council will seek to ensure that any large-scale employment generating development provides childcare facilities for its employees, either within the development, or in the form of the support for the provision of childcare provision elsewhere. The Council will require developers to enter into Section 106 Planning Obligations to secure this aim, where necessary.**

**Within the designated Employment Areas, the Council will permit development or change of use to provide childcare facilities, only where it can be shown that these facilities would support the local workforce.**

#### **Local Recruitment**

12.45 Nearly half of the district's population of working age and in employment work outside the Welwyn Hatfield District. There may be opportunities to encourage a proportion of those who currently commute out of the district to seek local employment, for example, the Council will encourage major employers moving into the district or existing employers that are expanding to run local recruitment campaigns, targeted at commuters.

#### **Policy EMP11 - Local Recruitment**

**The Council will seek to ensure that any large-scale employment generating development runs effective programmes to recruit local people. This should include the provision of:**

- (i) On-site recruitment and/or training facilities;**
- (ii) Targeting recruitment on the local unemployed;**
- (iii) Targeting recruitment on local commuters.**

**The Council will enter into Section 106 Planning Obligations to secure programmes of local recruitment, where appropriate.**

#### **University of Hertfordshire**

12.46 The University of Hertfordshire represents a major employer within the district and is a major asset. The Council wishes to encourage the continued success of the university, which is seen as being a critical resource for the development of a 'knowledge based' economy and is already a major direct contributor to the local economy.

12.47 The university plans to eventually relocate nearly all of its facilities across the county within Hatfield by 2003. The site allocated for the university will contain two new academic facilities and a Learning Resource Centre. There is the potential for a further faculty and the university's administration block to be accommodated on the site. This development will increase the number of university employees in the district from 1,500 to 1,800 and the number of students will increase from 9,000 to 13,000.

- 12.48 Students are increasingly becoming a component of local labour markets as they seek part-time employment to fund their studies. The increasing number of students may be a means of addressing some of the recruitment difficulties arising from the low unemployment levels within the district.
- 12.49 The Council recognises that the university needs to rationalise and update its existing facilities and buildings on the College Lane site. The Council also recognises the university's aspirations to utilise part of Angerland Common for car parking. However any further development will need to be treated with sensitivity to the amenities of nearby residential properties and the issue of parking and reflect the location of Angerland Common in the Green Belt. It is therefore proposed that a Masterplan be prepared, in partnership with the university, to guide future development.

#### **Policy EMP12 - University of Hertfordshire**

**The university is developing a new campus facility on a 12 hectare site at Hatfield Aerodrome. Any development by the university must accord with the approved supplementary planning guidance for the aerodrome site.**

**Any further proposals for development on the university's sites in College Lane and Angerland Common shall accord with a Masterplan to be approved by the Council for those sites.**

#### **Design Criteria for Employment Development**

- 12.50 Good design is an integral part of sustainable development. The Council's aim is to raise the quality of design for all new development and therefore all employment generating proposals will be expected to be built to a high standard of design, including landscaping, to have adequate servicing and manoeuvring space and appropriate levels of car parking provision. Employment development has a potential to cause greater harm to the environment than residential development, if poorly designed, due to the larger building masses usually involved and the inherent problems of nuisance caused by heavy traffic movements and the processes carried out, e.g. noise, fumes and vibration. The Council will therefore carefully consider the environmental impact of any proposals, and will seek to ensure that proposals do not harm the environment or local infrastructure.
- 12.51 In many parts of the designated Employment Areas, there are a wide variety of architectural designs, with no overall defined character. These areas provide an opportunity for employment development of an innovative, modern, sustainable design that may be more difficult to readily assimilate in the street scene elsewhere.
- 12.52 The Council will seek to minimise the level of car traffic generated by employment development and will seek opportunities to promote alternative modes of transport other than private motor vehicles. Further guidance is contained in the Movement chapter of the Plan.
- 12.53 The Use Classes Order 1987 permits certain changes of use within the B Use Classes. B1 and B8 uses are interchangeable when no more than 235m<sup>2</sup> is involved. B2 uses are free to change to B1, or to B8 where no more than

235m<sup>2</sup> is involved. The Council considers that in order for companies to be able to take advantage of the flexibility offered by the B1 use class, and to be able to respond to changes in the local and national economy, buildings within the B1 use class should be designed with a flexible internal layout and external elevations that would allow the building to be readily adapted for differing purposes within the B1 use class.

### **Policy EMP13 - Design Criteria for Employment Development**

**The Council will expect all proposals for development within Classes B1, B2 and B8 to reach a high standard of design and site layout. The scale, massing and height of the proposed development should relate to that of adjoining buildings, the topography of the area, the general pattern of heights in the area and to public views, vistas and any landmarks.**

**Attention should be paid to the use of detailing and materials as part of the integral design of the building. Landscaping should be part of the fundamental design of the scheme. Buildings for proposed development within Class B1 should be designed with a flexible internal layout and external elevations that would allow the building to be readily adapted for differing purposes within Class B1, unless it can be demonstrated that such flexibility would be impracticable in the particular circumstances of the development proposed. All proposals for employment development should be designed to:**

- (i) Incorporate the principles of sustainable development, including energy efficiency and waste minimisation;**
- (ii) Promote alternative modes of transport other than the private motor vehicle;**
- (iii) Provide adequate servicing and access arrangements; and**
- (iv) Not harm the amenities of any nearby residential properties.**

### **Live-Work Schemes**

- 12.54 The planned nature of the two new towns in the district has traditionally resulted in separate areas being 'zoned' for employment and residential use, on the basis that this was the best way to promote good conditions for living, working and recreation. Whilst this approach may have been justified in the past when business uses consisted largely of manufacturing and heavy industry, which were incompatible with residential uses, modern business uses are often compatible with residential use and can be permitted in mixed use 'live-work' schemes.
- 12.55 Such schemes can contribute towards the aims of sustainable development. They provide local employment and thus reduce the need to travel, provide increased activity and hence natural surveillance, thereby improving safety and security. They also provide a variety of different building types which can create visual interest in the street scene.
- 12.56 A live-work scheme can either be in the form of a mixed use development, incorporating residential development and employment development on the same site or it can take the form of the mixed use of buildings themselves,

such as studio/office homes, which incorporate an office/studio/workshop on the ground floor and domestic accommodation on the floor/s above. These units can be built clustered in yards or mews style developments. The type of employment activity will require careful control in order to ensure that there is no harm to residential amenity caused by extra parking, noise, fumes, external storage or refuse. The Council will therefore remove permitted developments rights if necessary to ensure this.

- 12.57 The Council will encourage the development of live-work schemes on suitable sites. These sites are likely to be on existing employment sites outside of the designated Employment Areas or on sites which abut both residential areas and designated Employment Areas and which are readily accessible by means other than the private motor vehicle.

**Policy EMP14 - Live-Work Schemes**

**The Council will grant planning permission for the development of live-work schemes on suitable sites. Live-work schemes would be most appropriately located on existing employment sites that are situated outside of the designated Employment Areas, or on sites which abut both residential and designated Employment Areas.**

**Live-work schemes should be developed in locations that are readily accessible by means other than the private motor vehicle.**

**The Council will remove permitted development rights, as necessary, to control the uses on such developments.**

## **RETAILING AND TOWN CENTRES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 13.1 Welwyn Hatfield experienced considerable changes in its shopping patterns during the period of the last District Plan. Since the mid-1980s a large amount of new shopping floorspace has been built in the district, both at new out-of-town locations and within existing centres. Developments at Oldings Corner and The Galleria on the edge of Hatfield and The Howard Centre in Welwyn Garden City have all extended the range and choice of shopping available in the district. However, at the same time older town centres like Hatfield have suffered decline.
- 13.2 These changes have been the result of national trends, particularly increasing consumer expenditure and the growth in car travel, but government policy has also been a major influence. During the 1980s and 1990s national planning policies allowed out-of-town shopping as part of the drive to increase market competition. However, guidance has now changed. The revised PPG6 recognises the important role that town centres play in sustaining communities and the need to give them priority in the location of new retail and leisure development.
- 13.3 During the life of this Plan there are likely to be further changes in retailing and associated services. It is important that the district's town and local centres are able to accommodate these changes, if they are to remain viable and sustainable in the face of competition from out-of-centre shopping and other shopping centres in this part of Hertfordshire. This chapter provides the policy framework to enable the district's centres to manage this change and continue to meet the needs of their communities. It is mainly concerned therefore with those uses falling within Classes A1 (Retail), A2 (Financial and Professional Services) and A3 (Food and Drink) of the Use Classes Order, but it also deals with other uses where they occur within the town and local centres.

### **ISSUES**

- 13.4 Welwyn Hatfield has a wide range of shopping and service facilities. Welwyn Garden City town centre is the main centre in the district and serves as a minor sub-regional centre for Hertfordshire. Hatfield town centre, despite its problems, still provides important shopping and community facilities for Hatfield and supports the district's two markets. There are 22 established village and neighbourhood centres in the district which provide for the everyday shopping and service needs of local residents. The district also has two large out-of-town facilities, which provide different forms of retailing to complement the role of the town centres - the retail park at Oldings Corner provides a large food superstore and the main 'bulky goods' shopping facilities in the district; and The Galleria provides for 'factory outlet' shopping, as well as leisure. These are supplemented by two free-standing, out-of-centre units - Safeway and B & Q in Welwyn Garden City - that broaden the district's retail offer further.
- 13.5 Despite this range of provision, during the Plan period forecasts suggest that there is likely to be a need for additional retail floorspace in the district as

consumer expenditure increases. If the district's two town centres are to survive, it is vital that where there are development opportunities, additional retail floorspace is concentrated there, to prevent the leakage of trade to out-of-centre facilities or other nearby centres.

13.6 Other trends in the retail market are occurring, which are likely to require changes in the mix of uses within the district's town and local centres:

- Shopping is increasingly being seen as a leisure activity and the most successful centres are those which can offer a diversity of uses, such as cafes, pubs, restaurants and other leisure or 'tourist' attractions, combined with longer hours of opening, to broaden the leisure 'experience' and increase their attractiveness;
- As a result of this and the revisions to PPG6, town centres are taking on greater importance in the provision of leisure facilities, such as cinemas, night clubs and health & fitness;
- Banks and building societies, which traditionally have been an important complementary activity in town centres, are reducing their number of high street outlets - a trend that is likely to continue with the restructuring in financial services and the growth of electronic banking.

13.7 At the same time the district's centres each have their own particular needs:

- (a) Hatfield town centre has experienced decline and, as one of the first new town centres, has an ageing physical infrastructure. Despite recent investment in a new Asda store, it requires more comprehensive redevelopment to provide new shopping and community facilities for Hatfield;
- (b) Welwyn Garden City has a broad 'retail offer', but has gaps in its provision both for comparison and convenience shopping, which must be addressed if it is to remain competitive. In addition, given its role as the main centre in the district, it is lacking in cafes, restaurants, pubs and other leisure facilities;
- (c) The district's village and neighbourhood centres provide vital local shopping and community facilities, which are easily accessible for everyday needs. These must be protected, particularly their core retail activities, in the face of competition from out-of-town shopping.

13.8 With regard to the district's out-of-town and out-of-centre shopping facilities referred to in paragraph 13.4 above, it is recognised that these are important in providing different forms of retail outlets, which complement the services available in the town and local centres, and help to broaden the district's overall retail offer. Whilst these facilities will also continue to need to compete and remain viable, it is important that they are not permitted to expand at the expense of town and local centres.

## **STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES**

13.9 The overarching strategy of the Plan is to provide for sustainable development in the district. In terms of retailing and services, the key to achieving this will be in maintaining and enhancing the role of the district's existing town, local and village centres, which act as the focal point for their

communities. Therefore, the purpose of the policies in this section of the Plan will be to provide opportunities for the development of new retailing and services within the district's existing centres, in a way which enables them to be more competitive but maintains their community focus. Therefore, the main objectives for retailing and services in the district are:

1. To concentrate new retail development within the district's town centres, village centres and neighbourhood centres, in order to maintain and enhance their vitality and viability and thereby the sustainability of the communities they serve.
2. To enable the comprehensive redevelopment of Hatfield town centre for new shopping, community, leisure, residential and other uses, as part of the strategy for the regeneration of Hatfield.
3. To enhance the vitality and competitiveness of Welwyn Garden City town centre, as the district's main shopping centre, through opportunities for new retail development, by increasing the diversity of uses, particularly for the early evening economy, and by improving the pedestrian environment.
4. To protect and enhance the local shopping and service functions of the district's neighbourhood and village centres.

## **POLICIES**

### **Hierarchy of Shopping Centres**

13.10 The district has a hierarchy of shopping and service centres each of which perform different functions as follows:

#### Minor Sub-Regional Centre

*Welwyn Garden City* - defined as a minor sub-regional centre in the Structure Plan, it provides the main centre for comparison goods shopping facilities in the district, serving a catchment area beyond the district boundaries, and contains the district's main cultural, community and civic facilities.

#### Town Centre

*Hatfield* - defined as a town centre in the Structure Plan, it provides both convenience and comparison shopping plus community and leisure facilities, serving Hatfield in the main.

#### Neighbourhood Centres

These are local centres situated in residential areas throughout Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield, which complement the district and townwide role of the two main centres by providing a range of convenience shopping and service outlets to meet people's day-to-day needs, near to where they live so reducing the need to travel. The larger centres also contain local community facilities such as surgeries, community halls and places of worship. They are divided into large and small centres:

#### Large Neighbourhood Centres



a particular location which may be deficient or may require strengthening, such as a town, village or neighbourhood centre.

- 13.14 In preparing the Plan, the Council commissioned an assessment of the need for additional retail floorspace in the district likely to arise over the period of the Plan (Assessment of Retail Floorspace Requirements 2001-2011, by Vincent and Gorbing 2002). In overall quantitative terms, purely as a result of forecast growth in population and consumer expenditure up to 2011, the study estimated that there will be a need for an additional 14,900 square metres gross of retail floorspace, broken down as follows:

Convenience goods (eg food)	300m <sup>2</sup>
Bulky comparison goods (eg DIY, electrical, furniture)	7,300m <sup>2</sup>
Non-bulky comparison goods (eg clothes, shoes)	7,300m <sup>2</sup>

A full re-assessment of the quantitative need for additional retail floorspace in the district will be carried out as part of an early review of the Plan.

- 13.15 The Council has also commissioned studies of both Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City town centres, which have made a 'market' assessment of the demand and opportunities for new and additional retail floorspace within the two centres. The studies involved consultation with residents, the main property owners and retailers in the two town centres and the local community, and have confirmed that:

- (a) Both town centres have gaps in their retail offer, representing qualitative and quantitative needs for comparison and convenience goods floorspace, which need to be addressed if they are to be competitive in the future. These are set out in more detail in paragraphs 13.28, 13.43, and 13.44;
- (b) There are retailer requirements to satisfy the need for additional comparison goods retail floorspace and convenience goods retail floorspace within the two town centres;
- (c) There are development sites where these requirements can be satisfied.

- 13.16 In addition, as part of the planning of the redevelopment of the Hatfield Aerodrome site, the Council has identified a specific requirement for up to 1,670 sq.metres of retail floorspace as part of the proposed local centre to meet the day-to-day shopping needs of the future residents of the site.

- 13.17 Together, the Council considers that these studies provide a clear assessment of the quantitative and qualitative need for additional retail floorspace within the district over the Plan period. At this stage no other specific retail needs have been identified, although it is possible that others could arise during the Plan period as trends change. It is expected that all proposals for retail development will be compared against this assessment of need.

### **The Location of New Retail Development**

- 13.18 In identifying locations for this additional retail floorspace, government planning guidance makes it clear that the Council should adopt a sequential

approach as set out in PPG6. This states that the first preference should be for town centre sites, where suitable sites are available, followed by edge-of-centre sites, district and local centres, and only then out-of-centre sites in locations that are accessible by a choice of means of transport.

- 13.19 In preparing the Plan the Council has followed this sequential approach. This is reflected in the strategy which seeks to concentrate new retail development into the district's town centres, village and neighbourhood centres in order to maintain their vitality and viability.
- 13.20 The studies undertaken for Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City town centres assessed the realistic potential of sites within the two town centres for retail development. As a result the following two sites have been identified for retail development, to accommodate the main need in the district for additional comparison goods retail floorspace and to address particular needs within the two town centres:
- (a) *Land at eastern end of Hatfield town centre* - bounded by Robin Hood Lane, The Common, Wellfield Road, Queensway and The Arcade.
  - (b) *Land on the north side of Welwyn Garden City town centre* - between John Lewis and The Howard Centre, bounded by Wigmores North, Bridge Road, Stonehills, Osborn Way and Stonebank.
- 13.21 In addition, two sites have been identified in Welwyn Garden City town centre which provide opportunities for additional convenience goods retail floorspace, to address the needs of the centre for an improved quality of food retail offer, which is outlined in more detail in paragraph 13.28;
- (a) *Land at Campus East in Welwyn Garden City town centre* - on the north side of Bridge Road, incorporating the existing Waitrose supermarket and the car parks to the rear.
  - (b) *Land at the southern side of the town centre* – between Church Road and Parkway, incorporating the existing Sainsbury's supermarket and car park.
- 13.22 The sites are identified on the Town Centre Insets on the Proposals Map and in Policies TCR4, TCR5, TCR6 and TCR14. It is the Council's view that these sites provide adequate capacity and opportunities to accommodate the retail floorspace needs of the district identified in paragraphs 13.14 and 13.15 above. They will help to maintain the future vitality and viability of the two town centres and are accessible by a choice of means of transport. Therefore, the Council will promote schemes for retail development here to meet the district's needs within the Plan period and any speculative retail development proposals will be directed towards these sites. Further information justifying their selection and guidance on the process for implementation and the form of development considered appropriate on these sites, including the mix of uses and design, is given in the policies and paragraphs on Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City town centres below.
- 13.23 In addition, there is a specific need for up to 1,670 sq.metres of retail floorspace as part of the local centre on the Hatfield Aerodrome site, to meet the requirements of that site. Therefore, a site has been identified to satisfy

this need in the master plan for the aerodrome site, as defined in Policy HATAER4 and shown on the Hatfield Aerodrome Inset Map 3.

- 13.24 The Council will also support proposals for retail development within the district's existing village or neighbourhood centres, which are appropriate to those centres in terms of their size and scale and help to maintain their viability and enhance their local shopping and service function.
- 13.25 Proposals for retail development elsewhere in the district will be expected to demonstrate the following:
- a need for the additional retail floorspace over and above that set out in paragraphs 13.14 & 13.15 above;
  - that the sequential approach has been applied in selecting the site and the floorspace cannot be accommodated within the district's town, village or neighbourhood centres;
  - that it would not harm the vitality and viability of these existing centres, either on its own or cumulatively; and
  - that it would not harm the development plan strategy, particularly for the town centres.
- 13.26 In applying the sequential approach the Council expects developers to be flexible about the format, design and scale of proposed retail development. The fact that available sites or premises within existing centres may not suit precisely the format and scale of the operation required by the applicant, should not necessarily mean that the floorspace could not be provided satisfactorily in another format.

**Policy TCR1 - Retail Development in Town Centres and Edge of Town Centres**

**New retail development must be located in accordance with the sequential approach set out in government guidance on retailing and town centres.**

**The preferred location for retail development is within the district's town centres on the sites identified in Policies TCR4, TCR5, TCR6 and TCR14. Other locations within the primary retail cores of the two town centres will be considered where this accords with the town centre strategies.**

**Retail development on sites on the edge of the two town centres will be considered where there is a clear need, where no sites within the primary retail cores are suitable, and where it would not conflict with the town centre strategies and specifically not harm the vitality and viability of the primary retail cores.**

## **Policy TCR2 - Retail Development in Village and Neighbourhood Centres**

**Proposals for retail development will be permitted within the district's village and neighbourhood centres, where they would meet all of the following criteria:**

- (i) Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the centre;**
- (ii) Enhance the centre's local shopping and service function;**
- (iii) Be in scale with the size of the centre and its surroundings;**
- (iv) Not harm the vitality and viability of other nearby centres; and**
- (v) Not give rise to any significant harmful environmental impacts, such as unacceptable traffic generation.**

## **Policy TCR3 - Out Of Centre Retail Development**

**Proposals for new retail development in out-of-centre locations, including the extension of existing retail stores, will not be granted unless all of the following criteria can be satisfied:**

- (i) There is a need for the additional retail floorspace which cannot be met within any of the district's town, village or neighbourhood centres;**
- (ii) The sequential approach has been applied in selecting the site;**
- (iii) It would not harm the vitality and viability of the district's town, village or neighbourhood centres, either on its own or cumulatively taken with other recent similar developments;**
- (iv) It would be accessible by a choice of means of transport;**
- (v) It would not generate unacceptable levels of car traffic nor prejudice road safety;**
- (vi) It would not have an adverse environmental impact on its surroundings;**
- (vii) It would not take land which is designated for other uses in the Plan; and**
- (viii) It would not harm the strategy of the District Plan, in particular the strategies for the town centres.**

## **Welwyn Garden City Town Centre**

### Town Centre Strategy

13.27 Welwyn Garden City town centre is the main shopping and service centre for the district with over 62,000 sq. metres of retail floorspace. It acts as a minor sub-regional centre for Hertfordshire, drawing customers from a wide catchment area, and provides a number of important civic, cultural, leisure and community facilities for the district. It is well served by bus and rail, making it a very accessible location.

13.28 Its strength is in its primary shopping function, particularly for comparison goods, and in the quality of its environment. However, it does have a number

of weaknesses. There are gaps in the quality and range of its retail 'offer', which have been identified through research and consultation with retailers and the public. In particular, the range of fashion and lifestyle retailers is limited in comparison to the quality of its main anchor retailers. Currently, this is persuading people to shop in centres outside of the district, resulting in leakage of expenditure from the town centre. This loss of potential trade is not limited to the fashion sector. Visits to other centres for clothes shopping will often lead to other purchases which might otherwise have been made in Welwyn Garden City. Therefore a better selection of such unit shops is required if the town centre is to remain competitive and maintain its position in the retail hierarchy. In terms of its convenience goods offer, whilst the town centre has a number of small supermarkets, it does not possess a foodstore which is large enough to offer the range of goods necessary, to compete effectively in the food retail market and with superstores in out-of-centre locations. Extensions to both the existing Waitrose and Sainsbury's foodstores in the town centre would address this weakness and would increase the vitality and viability of the town centre, enabling it to attract more linked shopping trips. In addition, the centre is lacking in cafes, restaurants, pubs and other leisure activities, which would complement its shopping function and extend the life of the centre into the early evening. Although the town centre is accessible by a number of modes of transport, there are conflicts between pedestrian and vehicular movements within the centre, which need to be resolved. Despite the quality of its landscape, some of the town centre's public spaces require improvement and restructuring to generate more activity and to make them more usable.

- 13.29 In consultation with local residents, retailers and landowners, the Council has developed a strategy for Welwyn Garden City town centre to address these concerns, for which the policies in this Plan are a key to its implementation. The overall aim of the strategy is to maintain and enhance the commercial, social and environmental success of the town centre. Specifically, the objectives for the town centre are to:
- (a) Provide opportunities for new retail development in the town centre and other associated uses, to increase its offer and commercial viability and maintain its role as a minor sub-regional shopping centre;
  - (b) Increase the diversity of uses in the centre, in particular cafés, restaurants and pubs, but also residential, offices and leisure, so enhancing its attractiveness as a centre, extending its life into the early evening and providing a broader range of services to local people;
  - (c) Revitalise the southern side of the town centre through opportunities for new development and a greater mix of uses;
  - (d) Maintain the centre's important civic, cultural and community functions, which should remain focused in The Campus area;
  - (e) Improve movement and access within the centre, giving priority to pedestrians and cyclists;
  - (f) Enhance the quality of its environment, its open spaces and public realm as part of the strategy to improve its attractiveness as a centre.

#### Town Centre Boundary and Sub-Areas

13.30 The town centre comprises a retail core, surrounded by areas of mixed commercial, cultural, community and civic uses, which act as a transition zone to adjoining residential areas. The overall boundary of the town centre is defined on Inset Map 2. Within this boundary there are a number of sub-areas, each of which contains a different range of uses and serves a particular function within the town centre:

1. Primary Retail Core - bounded by Church Road, Parkway, the railway line and Bridge Road (but including the Waitrose building and associated car parks immediately to the north of Bridge Road). This is the core of the town centre, the main function of which is for shopping. However, it is also important for a number of complementary uses, including restaurants, cafes and pubs, banks, building societies and other financial and professional services and, at first floor level, Class B1 offices and residential uses which help to support the shopping function. It is also the hub for the town's passenger transport services, including the railway station, bus station and taxi rank. This area is the preferred location for retail uses, but other uses within Classes A2, A3, B1(a) and C3 will be acceptable in line with the policies below. The area is defined on Inset Map 2.
2. The Campus - the area surrounding The Campus on its north and east side contains the main civic, cultural and community buildings and uses in the town, including the Council Offices, Oaklands College campus, Campus West theatre and library complex. It also contains a number of car parks which serve the town centre as a whole, particularly for long stay parking. This mix of uses functions well on the edge of the town centre, close to the shopping core and to the bus and railway stations, allowing linked trips to be made. The Council wishes to see this area retained for civic, cultural and community uses. Therefore, should any existing uses become redundant, the Council would allow change of use or redevelopment involving a mix of offices, leisure, food & drink, cultural, community, education and residential uses (Classes A3, B1(a), C3, D1 and D2). The only exception to this is on the Campus East site, where, in accordance with the sequential approach, the Council has identified an opportunity for mixed use development, including convenience retail uses to assist in meeting the qualitative need to improve the quality of the convenience goods (food) retail offer in the town centre for a food superstore. To this end, the existing Waitrose foodstore, which is located within the primary retail core, should be extended to meet this need. The reasons for this are set out in paragraph 13.31(b).
3. Parkway - properties on the western side of Parkway, including Rosanne House and 8-22 (evens) Parkway. These contain office and surgery uses, which function well on the edge of the town centre adjacent to the residential area further to the west. They are important buildings fronting Parkway and within the Conservation Area. Therefore, the Council will support conversion or change of use for uses falling within Classes D1 and B1(a).
4. Church Road - properties on the southern side of Church Road, including a church, public house and offices. Again this is a transition zone

between the retail core of the town centre and residential areas on the south side of the centre and the buildings are important within the Conservation Area. The Council will therefore support conversions or changes of use to uses within Classes D1 and B1(a).

### **Town Centre Development**

13.31 Paragraphs 13.20 and 13.21 allocate three sites in the town centre for new retail development to improve the viability and competitiveness of the town centre and help meet the future retail floorspace needs of the district. Each of these sites satisfies the sequential test to site selection set out in PPG6 and subject to satisfying the criteria in Policies TCR4, TCR5 and TCR6 the Council supports retail development on all three sites. The sites are identified on the Town Centre Inset Maps as follows:

- (a) *Land at Town Centre North* - this is the preferred site for additional comparison goods floorspace, given its location within the primary retail core of the town centre and the potential for linkages with the Howard Centre and John Lewis. It has the capacity to accommodate up to 9,300 sq.metres (100,000 sq.feet) of additional retail floorspace. It is possible that a larger site could be assembled, but any scheme at a larger scale would need to be considered in terms of its impact on the town centre and its infrastructure.
- (b) *Land at Campus East* - this is one of two locations for additional convenience goods retail floorspace in the town centre. The site has good pedestrian linkages, is close to the bus station and contains a number of car parks serving the town centre as a whole. It contains an established supermarket, which could either be extended or redeveloped to provide a larger store which would help to address the need to improve the quality of the convenience goods retail provision in the town centre explained in paragraph 13.28. Its location on the edge of the main civic/cultural/leisure area of the town centre means that it is in a strong position to generate linked trips which would, in the Council's view, make it suitable for a mixed-use development, including residential and office uses, which could enhance the sustainability and vitality of the centre.
- (c) *Land at the southern side of the town centre* – the other opportunity for additional convenience goods floorspace, which has emerged following consultation on the first deposit version of the Plan. It includes an established food store, which could be extended to provide a larger store to help address the need to improve the quality of the convenience goods retail provision in the town centre. It may also provide for a mix of other uses including cafés and restaurants and its development would assist in anchoring and revitalising the end of the town centre, in accordance with the town centre strategy.

13.32 All sites require careful treatment in terms of their design, access, and servicing and should ensure appropriate car parking provision is made. In terms of design, the sites identified are located in the Welwyn Garden City Conservation Area, at a prominent entrance to the town centre and would as such need to preserve and enhance the appearance of the area. The

development of the Anniversary Gardens site would need to ensure the provision of new public space within the site. In terms of access and servicing, any schemes would need to provide good pedestrian links with the rest of the town centre, make provision for public transport and provide for any necessary alterations to the surrounding highway network to maintain vehicular movement around the town centre. Developments would need to provide for additional parking commensurate with the scale of additional retail floorspace and other accommodation, which is easily accessible and in accordance with adopted parking standards. The Campus East site must also continue to provide strategic car parking requirements for the town centre as a whole. Planning briefs will be required for the Campus East and Town Centre North sites, and may be required for the site identified by TCR6, dependent on the scale and nature of the development proposed, to address these issues and provide more detailed guidance on the form of development and precise mix of uses. These will be subject to public consultation and be adopted by the Council as supplementary planning guidance. The Council will seek to bring forward these sites during the Plan period.

#### **Policy TCR4 - Town Centre North Development Site**

**Land at Town Centre North in Welwyn Garden City, as defined on Inset Map 2, is identified for a major retail development scheme, in particular for comparison goods. Development should only be carried out in accordance with a Planning Brief for the site, to be subject to public consultation and approved by the Council as supplementary planning guidance, which will give detailed guidance on matters such as the quantity of floorspace, design, access and servicing, landscaping and open space.**

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

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

- (i) Preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area;**
- (ii) Create a new entrance to the town centre on its north side;**
- (iii) Enhance the public realm and landscape within the town centre and achieve a strong visual linkage between the town centre and the Campus East Development Site;**
- (iv) Achieve good pedestrian access and linkage with the rest of the town centre;**
- (v) Ensure efficient vehicle movement on surrounding roads;**
- (vi) Provide adequate car parking to meet the needs of the development;**
- (vii) Seek to improve passenger transport provision in the town centre; and**

- (viii) Provide a range of retail units, which should enhance the quality of the retail provision in the town.

#### **Policy TCR5 - Campus East Development Site**

Land at Campus East in Welwyn Garden City, as defined on Inset Map 2, is identified for a mixed use development comprising retail, office and residential uses. The retail element shall be for convenience goods floorspace only, to address the qualitative requirement for convenience goods floorspace in the town centre identified in the plan. The site will be developed in a comprehensive manner, according to a Planning Brief to be subject to public consultation and approved by the Council as supplementary planning guidance.

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

- (i) Preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area, in particular to preserve the mature trees within and around the site;
- (ii) Achieve good pedestrian access and linkage with the rest of the town centre;
- (iii) Seek to improve passenger transport provision in the town centre;
- (iv) Maintain efficient vehicle movement on surrounding roads; and
- (v) Provide adequate parking to meet the needs of the development and the strategic parking needs of the town centre as a whole.

#### **Policy TCR6 - Land at the Southern Side of the Town Centre**

Land fronting Church Road at the southern side of Welwyn Garden City town centre, as defined on Inset Map 2, is identified as an opportunity for development, including additional convenience goods retailing, together with cafés and restaurants and other uses in accordance with the town centre strategy.

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

- (i) Preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area;
- (ii) Enhance the public realm and landscape within the town centre;
- (iii) Achieve good pedestrian access and linkage with the rest of the town centre;
- (iv) Ensure efficient vehicle movement on surrounding roads; and
- (v) Provide adequate car parking to meet the needs of the development.

#### Acceptable Uses within the Primary Retail Core

13.33 The strategy for Welwyn Garden City town centre seeks to increase the diversity of uses in the town centre, in order to strengthen its role as a shopping centre and improve its potential for leisure. Whilst it is important that

the primary retail function of the town centre is not compromised, the centre requires more restaurants, cafés, pubs and other leisure activities, which would complement its shopping function, increase its vitality throughout the day and extend the range of services available to local people. At the same time, there are residential areas close to the centre and any changes in the use of the centre must respect the residential amenities of residents living nearby.

- 13.34 In August 2001 floorspace at ground floor level within the primary retail core of the town centre comprised 72% Class A1 Retail use, 15.6% Class A2 Financial and Professional Services and 9.5% Class A3 Food and Drink. There is therefore some scope to allow further non-retail uses in the primary retail core, without prejudicing its essential retail function. The town centre also has limited leisure, arts, and cultural activities, which are mainly located at Campus West. These uses may also be appropriate within the retail core.
- 13.35 Some non-retail uses such as banks and building societies provide services which are frequently used by shoppers. They generate high levels of pedestrian activity and therefore do not detract from the vitality of the centre, and in some cases can enhance it. All day uses, such as coffee shops, cafes and restaurants are more beneficial in maintaining the vitality of the town centre throughout the day and into the evening. Other uses, such as estate agents provide a more specialised service and generate less pedestrian activity than most retail uses. Similarly some hot food takeaway shops only open in the evenings and present an effectively 'dead' frontage during the daytime, when the rest of the shops are open. Therefore, whilst these latter types of use are appropriate in the town centre, their numbers need to be controlled, to ensure that the vitality and viability of the town centre is not harmed.
- 13.36 In determining any proposals for new development and/or changes of use of ground floor premises within the retail core, the Council will take into account the degree of customer attraction to the proposed use and the hours of opening, in assessing its impact on the vitality of the centre. In cases where the vitality of the town centre would be harmed by the granting of planning permission for change of use of a unit to a Class A3 use that would remain closed during normal shopping hours, planning conditions may be imposed controlling the hours of opening and type of A3 use, where this is necessary to avoid refusing permission.
- 13.37 The principal function of the retail core is to enable the retail trade to serve customers with a wide range of goods. However, no town centre is complete without a variety of service uses catering for other needs of shoppers and town centre workers, such as banks and cafés. Whilst these add interest and vitality to the town centre, a proliferation can result in 'dead' frontages, and can harm the essential retail function of the town centre. The Council therefore needs to strike a balance between the protection of the predominant retail function of the primary retail core and the need to encourage a lively mix of other uses. Two types of ground floor frontage have therefore been designated within the primary retail core:
- (a) Retail Frontages - where the predominant use is Class A1 Retail and planning permission for changes of use to non-retail uses will be more

strictly controlled. To maintain their predominant retail function, a minimum of 70% of these frontages (as a proportion of the length of frontage) must remain in Class A1 use. These frontages are:

30-50 & 52-66 (evens) and 31-49 & 51-63 (odds) Howardsgate;  
26-36 (evens) and 7-13 & 21-33 (odds) Stonehills;  
21-37 (odds) Wigmores North;  
4-42 (evens) Church Road;  
2-44 (evens) and 37-51 (odds) Fretherne Road;  
John Lewis, Bridge Road;

- (b) *Mixed Use Frontages* - which, due to their location within the retail core, are more suitable for a mixture of uses, and where greater flexibility for non-retail uses will be allowed. Whilst retail will still be their predominate use, 50% of the frontage (as a proportion of the length of the frontage) should remain within Class A1 use and other non-retail uses will also be permitted, including leisure and cultural facilities, providing that they do not harm the vitality and viability of the town centre nor the amenities of surrounding residential areas. These frontages are:

2-24 (evens) and 1-19 (odds) Howardsgate;  
3-5 (odds) Stonehills;  
34-54 (evens) and 41-53 (odds) Wigmores North;  
4-16 (evens) and 7-17 (odds) Wigmores South.

#### **Policy TCR7 - Retail Frontages in Welwyn Garden City Town Centre**

**Within the designated Retail Frontages in the primary retail core of Welwyn Garden City town centre, as defined on Inset Map 2, a minimum of 70% of any one linear frontage must remain in Class A1 Retail use. Therefore, planning permission will be granted for changes of use from Class A1 to Class A2 or A3 uses up to a maximum of 30% of any one linear frontage.**

**In Retail Frontages where already less than 70% of the linear frontage is in Class A1 use, planning permission will not be granted for change of use to non-retail uses. The only exceptions to this will be if the proposal is for a Class A3 use which would provide an 'eat-in' restaurant or café facility for shoppers, which would:**

- (i) Contribute to the overall attractiveness of the town centre; and**
- (ii) Not undermine the retail function of the frontage.**

**For changes of use to Class A3, the Council may grant planning permission for a specific use within Class A3 or impose other conditions to control the use of the premises, where planning permission would otherwise be refused.**

**Planning permission will only be granted where the proposal would not harm the amenities of nearby residential properties.**

#### **Policy TCR8 - Mixed Use Frontages in Welwyn Garden City Town Centre**

**Within the designated Mixed Use Frontages in the primary retail core of Welwyn Garden City town centre, as defined on Inset Map 2, planning permission will be granted for changes of use to Class A1, A2 and A3 uses and for uses which provide community, leisure and cultural facilities. A minimum of 50% of any one linear frontage must remain in Class A1 retail use and a minimum of 80% in uses within Class A.**

**In a Mixed Use Frontage where less than 50% of the linear frontage is in Class A1 Retail use, planning permission will not be granted for change of use to non-retail uses.**

**For changes of use to Class A3, the Council may grant planning permission for a specific use within Class A3 or impose other conditions to control the use of the premises, where planning permission would otherwise be refused.**

**Planning permission will only be granted where the proposal would not harm the amenities of nearby residential properties.**

- 13.38 The vitality and viability of town centres depends upon securing a mixture of uses, which can reinforce each other through their complementary nature. Welwyn Garden City town centre contains a variety of uses at first floor level in the form of offices, residential and ancillary storage for the retail units. The residential and office accommodation is important in maintaining activity in the town centre throughout the day. Office workers and residents will use the shops and services in the town centre and so will add to its vitality. Residential accommodation in town centres has been promoted through the national initiative 'Living Over The Shop'. Not only does it help to maintain the life of the town centre after shop and office hours, but also it is compatible with the aims of sustainable development, reducing the need to travel. It is also an important part of the district's overall housing stock. For these reasons, the Council wishes to encourage the retention of both office and residential uses at first floor level within the primary retail core of the town centre.

**Policy TCR9 - First Floor Uses in Welwyn Garden City Town Centre**  
**Within the primary retail core in Welwyn Garden City town centre, as defined on Inset Map 2, the Council will support the retention of existing office floorspace and residential accommodation. Proposals for change of use of first floor accommodation to residential will be permitted, provided that it would accord with the housing and design policies elsewhere in the Plan.**

#### Acceptable Uses outside of the Primary Retail Core

- 13.39 Outside of the primary retail core are areas of mixed commercial, leisure, cultural, community and civic uses, defined in paragraph 13.30 as The Campus, Parkway and Church Road. These serve to reinforce the vitality and viability of the town centre, complement its shopping function and help to reduce the need to travel by enabling linked trips and providing important facilities where they are accessible. They also act as a buffer between the retail core and the residential areas which adjoin the town centre, helping to reduce noise and disturbance for nearby residents. For these reasons, it is

important that these sub-areas and the mix of uses within them are retained. Therefore the following policies will apply.

**Policy TCR10 - Acceptable Uses outside of the Primary Retail Core (The Campus)**

**In The Campus area of Welwyn Garden City town centre, outside of the primary retail core as defined on Inset Map 2, the Council will encourage the retention of existing civic, cultural, community and leisure uses. Where an existing use is no longer required, the Council will permit conversion and change of use or redevelopment for mixed use schemes involving offices, leisure, cultural, community, education and residential uses (Use Classes B1(a), C3, D1 and D2), provided that the proposal would:**

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

**Where the site currently provides car parking which serves the needs of the town centre as a whole, this must be replaced within any redevelopment.**

**Policy TCR11 - Acceptable Uses outside of the Primary Retail Core (Parkway and Church Road)**

**In the Parkway and Church Road areas of Welwyn Garden City town centre, outside of the primary retail core as defined on Inset Map 2, the Council will allow proposals for the conversion and change of use of buildings for office, community, cultural and residential uses (Use Classes B1(a), C3 and D1), provided that the proposal would:**

- (i) Preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area; and**
- (ii) Not harm the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential areas.**

**Proposals for the redevelopment of existing buildings in these areas will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the new building would enhance the character of the Conservation Area.**

Accessibility to the Town Centre

- 13.40 One of the objectives of the town centre strategy is to improve access and movement within the town centre, giving priority to pedestrians. This is important to increase its attractiveness as a shopping and leisure destination.

Currently access by car, bus and train into the centre is very good and this must be maintained. However, there are conflicts in particular locations between vehicular and pedestrian movement. The Council and the Town Centre Forum will identify measures which can be taken to resolve these conflicts and give priority to pedestrians. In addition, access for disabled people needs to be enhanced. Development schemes will be expected to contribute to such measures and significantly enhance the pedestrian environment.

- 13.41 The town centre has a good level of parking provision which is conveniently located and accessible to the main shopping areas, particularly for short-stay visitors. The town centre is also very accessible by public transport. In order to maintain the town centre's attractiveness to shoppers and visitors, all new development will be required to provide additional parking, in line with Policy M14 in the Movement chapter and the car parking standards. In addition, all new development will be expected to make a contribution to passenger transport provision, in accordance with Circular 1/97 (Planning Obligations) and Policy IM2. The Council will produce a parking strategy for the town centre which will identify measures to manage parking and co-ordinate it with the use of passenger transport.

#### **Policy TCR12 - Transport Infrastructure in Welwyn Garden City Town Centre**

**The Council will require development proposals in Welwyn Garden City town centre to contribute to improving the infrastructure and services for pedestrian, cycle and passenger transport access to and within the town centre in accordance with Circular 1/97 (Planning Obligations) and Policy IM2 of the Plan and to accord with the Council's Car Parking Strategy.**

#### Quality of the Environment

- 13.42 One of the strengths of Welwyn Garden City town centre is the quality of its environment. The formal design of its buildings and landscape give the town centre a unique character, recognised by its designation as a Conservation Area. It should be noted however, that some elements of the town centre, such as street furniture, are not the sole responsibility of the Council. Those who are responsible for the maintenance of the town centre must ensure that its appearance is not harmed by inappropriate street furniture. Whilst the town centre must change to compete and maintain its viability, this should not be at the expense of its environment. Rather all development will be expected to respect the architectural style and characteristics of the town centre and wherever possible enhance the quality of the public realm, both its buildings and landscape. The design of shop fronts and advertisements can have a particularly harmful impact if not carefully designed. These will be subject to the specific guidelines in the Design Chapter and Supplementary Design Guidance. As part of the town centre strategy the Council will also take measures to enhance the environment.

#### **Policy TCR13 - Environment of Welwyn Garden City Town Centre**

**The Council will seek to maintain and enhance the unique architectural character of, and the quality of the environment in, Welwyn Garden City town centre. All new development must be designed to respect the architectural style of the town centre and enhance the public realm. The design of shopfronts and adverts must accord with the policies in the Design chapter and Supplementary Design Guidance.**

## **Hatfield Town Centre**

### Strategy and Vision

- 13.43 Hatfield Town Centre has, over the years, experienced significant decline in its fortunes. It has suffered competition from new shopping developments in nearby towns and from out-of-town food stores and retail warehouses, which have diverted trade and resulted in vacant units. It has also suffered from problems with its physical environment, in particular its ageing infrastructure and an 'inward-looking' design which gives it a poor presence and raises security and safety fears.
- 13.44 Despite these problems, the town centre remains as an important focus for the community of Hatfield. It provides 'essential' shops and services for the needs of its residents and a range of community and leisure facilities. It also supports the district's two markets, both a regular weekly market and the monthly farmers market. The Council has invested in improvements to the environment of the town centre in the past, but recognises that the centre now requires comprehensive redevelopment, investment in its infrastructure, a stronger retail offer and a greater diversity of other uses, if it is to maintain its role as the main centre for Hatfield. The 'market' assessment study of Hatfield has identified opportunities where this can occur and a strategy for bringing it forward.
- 13.45 At the same time, any future plans for the town centre must address its relationship with The Galleria and the proposed local centre on the Hatfield Aerodrome site on the edge of Hatfield. The Galleria currently provides factory outlet retailing and leisure facilities, which serve Hatfield but also draw on a catchment beyond the district boundaries. The new local centre will provide local convenience retailing and some leisure facilities to serve the residential development on the Hatfield Aerodrome site. The town centre along with The Galleria will provide the higher order shopping and leisure facilities to serve the aerodrome development. The future vision is that the three centres should work together to serve Hatfield. Therefore, it is important that their services complement each other and that they are well linked by transport.
- 13.46 In partnership with the local community, retailers and other agencies, the Council has developed a strategy for the regeneration of Hatfield town centre, the aim of which is to re-establish it as the focus for the local community. The objectives of the strategy are to:
- (a) Secure new shopping development in the town centre, in order to enhance the quality of retail provision;
  - (b) Encourage a greater mix and diversity of uses in the town centre, including leisure, restaurants/pubs/cafes and residential;

- (c) Provide new community facilities, such as for health and library services;
- (d) Improve access for pedestrians and cyclists within and to the centre;
- (e) Integrate public transport facilities within the town centre;
- (f) Enhance the environment of the centre;
- (g) Create dedicated transport links with The Galleria and new district centre on the Hatfield Aerodrome site and enable the three centres to work together in providing services for Hatfield.

#### Definition of Town Centre Boundary and Sub-Areas

13.47 Hatfield Town Centre comprises several areas - a retail core focused around its pedestrianised precinct, and on its edge some areas of mixed office, residential, community and leisure uses. Together these provide a broad range of services and facilities and fulfil a function as a focus for the community. The overall boundary of the town centre is defined on Inset Map 1. Within this boundary the sub-areas are defined as follows:

1. Primary Retail Core - the area bounded by Queensway, Wellfield Road, The Common and Lemsford Road. This is the core of the town centre, the main role of which is for shopping. It also supports a mixture of other services, including restaurants, takeaways, a pub, banks and building societies, which support the retail function, and, at first floor level and above, offices and residential accommodation. The centre also provides important community facilities serving the whole town, including a library and health centre. This area is the preferred location in the town centre for retail uses, but other uses within Classes A2, A3, B1(a), C3, D1 and D2 will be acceptable in line with the policies below. The area is defined on Inset Map 1.
2. Lemsford Road - the area on the western side of Lemsford Road has traditionally been an important location in Hatfield for leisure and cultural facilities, containing the swimming pool and the site of the former Forum theatre. Such uses are important for the future vitality and viability of the town centre and function well on the edge of the town centre, complementing its retail function by bringing people into the centre and generating linked trips. The Council will therefore continue to support leisure, cultural and community uses within this area, subject to Policy TCR19. On the Forum site it will support redevelopment for uses within this range.
3. The Common - the area on the northern side of The Common contains a mixture of offices, flats, surgeries and community buildings. These function well in this location, acting as a buffer between the retail core and the residential area to the north and helping to support the retail function of the town centre by bringing people into the centre and generating linked trips. Therefore, the Council will support the continuation of these uses, plus hotel uses which are considered appropriate in this area, in line with Policy TCR20. Located at the western end of The Common, at the junction with Lemsford Road, is a parade of shop units in a mixture of A1, A2 and A3 uses, with a bingo hall - nos. 38-54 (evens) The Commons. This serves as a local shopping centre for the residential areas to the west and north and

is designated in the Plan as a small neighbourhood centre, where future uses will be considered against Policy TCR27.

#### Redevelopment within the Primary Retail Core

- 13.48 In line with the strategy for the town centre, the Council will encourage the redevelopment of land within the primary retail core to provide new retail floorspace, but also for other uses appropriate to the town centre and which can complement the main shopping function of this area, such as food and drink, leisure, community, office and residential uses.
- 13.49 The major opportunity for redevelopment is the land at the eastern end of the town centre, including White Lion Square and Kennelwood car park, bounded by Robin Hood Lane, The Common, Wellfield Road, Queensway and The Arcade. This area of the town centre contains the majority of the vacant property and development here would act as a counterbalance to the Asda store at the western end. Therefore, the Council wishes to see this site brought forward as the priority.
- 13.50 The Council wishes to see the site developed as a whole, in a comprehensive manner, in order to secure a major scheme in the region of 11,000 sq.metres (120,000 sq.feet) of retail floorspace (a net increase of 65,000 sq.feet), which can attract new retailers into the town and anchor this end of the town centre. The Council would not wish to see this site developed in a piecemeal way for a number of smaller schemes, since it does not consider this would create the 'critical mass' to regenerate the town centre.
- 13.51 The land for this site is currently owned by a number of different interests, including the Council and English Partnerships. It is the Council's intention, in conjunction with English Partnerships and a private sector development partner, to bring the site forward for redevelopment. To achieve this it intends to publish a development brief setting out the detailed requirements for the site and select a development partner to develop the scheme. In order to assemble the site it is the Council's intention, in conjunction with English Partnerships and the chosen development partner to negotiate with owners for the purchase of their interests.
- 13.52 The precise mix of uses and the form of the development will be defined in the development brief which will be published as supplementary planning guidance. In broad terms, it is expected that the scheme will be predominantly for retail floorspace, but include provision for residential, leisure and community uses.
- 13.53 The scheme must be designed to a high standard to enhance this end of the town centre. It must also give priority to access for pedestrians, cyclists and buses and satisfy car parking requirements.
- 13.54 Proposals for the redevelopment or refurbishment of other areas of the primary retail core will also be encouraged. Whilst retail uses should predominate, it is important that the town centre provides a diversity of other uses both to serve the needs of the local community and to create life and activity outside of shopping hours. Therefore, food and drink, offices, residential, leisure and cultural uses will also be permitted.

## **Policy TCR14 - Redevelopment of Land at Eastern End of Hatfield Town Centre**

**Land at the eastern end of Hatfield town centre, as defined on Inset Map 1, is identified for comprehensive redevelopment for a mixed-use retail-led scheme. Development should only be carried out in accordance with the adopted planning brief for the site approved by the Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance, which provides detailed guidance on the amount of floorspace, mix of uses, design, access and servicing.**

## **Policy TCR15 - Redevelopment elsewhere in the Primary Retail Core of Hatfield Town Centre**

**The Council will encourage proposals for the redevelopment or refurbishment of other buildings or sites within the primary retail core of Hatfield town centre, as defined on Inset Map 1, for retail, food and drink, office, residential, community, cultural and leisure uses.**

### Acceptable Uses within the Primary Retail Core

- 13.55 It is important to continue to maintain and enhance Hatfield Town Centre's role as a shopping centre, during the interim period before the comprehensive redevelopment scheme proposed for the town centre takes place. The primary function of the retail core is to enable the retail trade to serve customers with a wide range of goods, but one of the objectives of the strategy for the town centre is to encourage a greater mix and diversity of uses. No town centre is complete without a variety of service uses catering for other needs of shoppers and town centre workers such as banks, post office facilities and cafés. Whilst these add interest and vitality to the town centre, a proliferation of non-retail uses can result in 'dead' frontages and harm the essential retail function of the town centre. The Council therefore seeks a balance between the protection of the predominant shopping function of the retail core and the need to encourage a lively mix of other uses.
- 13.56 There are a number of issues affecting Hatfield Town Centre that need to be addressed. The relative decline of the town centre as a shopping centre has led to high levels of vacant shops in some frontages within the retail core. In these frontages, the Council will exercise a flexible approach in permitting non-retail uses, whilst still seeking to retain the retail character of the centre as a whole. The Council has therefore designated Mixed Use Frontages, where although retailing will still be the predominant use, other non-retail uses will also be permitted, provided that they do not harm the vitality and viability of the town centre as a whole.
- 13.57 Hatfield Town Centre continues to experience pressures for change of use of shop units to non-retail uses, particularly to Class A3 hot food takeaways. Whilst a degree of flexibility is needed, PPG6 recognises that over-concentrations of single uses, such as hot food takeaways, can have cumulative effects that cause local problems. The balance and mixture of uses that is necessary for a healthy and vibrant town centre can thus be undermined. On the other hand, the town centre lacks the provision of cafés and coffee shops that are open during shopping hours. These would be welcomed by shoppers and would enhance the town centre's attraction as a

shopping destination. Therefore, within the primary retail core, the Council will consider granting planning permission for specific uses within Class A3, such as for 'sit-down' cafés/coffee shops or imposing other planning conditions to control the use of the premises, where planning permission would otherwise be refused. In addition, the Council will place a time limit condition of only one year for implementation on any A3 planning permissions granted. This will prevent a 'backlog' of unimplemented planning permissions occurring in the town centre and will enable a much better planned and controlled provision of A3 uses. Benefiting the applicant (in terms of improved clarity of situation) and the Council (in terms of its management and control of uses in the town centre).

- 13.58 The vitality and viability of the individual shopping frontages varies greatly within the retail core. Asda provides a key focal point at the western end of what is effectively the 'High Street' and the main shopping frontages are located in the area between Asda and White Lion Square. These frontages form an important gateway to the rest of the town centre. Similarly, the market and the retail units surrounding it form an important retailing area which acts as an 'advertisement' for the rest of the town centre that, due to its 'inward looking' design, is not visible to passing traffic from the road. Together with The Arcade, these frontages are the hub of the town centre's retail core and form the main shopping axis. The Council will therefore seek to retain the predominant retail function of these frontages.
- 13.59 The designation of Retail and Mixed Use frontages within the retail core is as follows:
- (a) *Retail Frontages* - where to maintain their retail function, a minimum of 70% of the frontage (as a proportion of the length of the frontage) must remain in Class A1 use:
- 68 - 88 (evens) and 19 - 47 (odds) Town Centre;
  - 1 - 35 (odds) Market Place (ground floor);
  - 2 - 14 (evens) and 1 - 21 (odds) The Arcade;
  - Asda, Queensway.
- (b) *Mixed Use Frontages* - the remaining frontages within the primary retail core are designated as Mixed Use Frontages where only 50% of the frontage (as a proportion of the length of the frontage) must remain in Class A1 use and other non-retail uses will also be allowed, including leisure, social and cultural uses:
- 10-66 (evens) Town Square;
  - 1-17 (odds) Town Centre;
  - 2-34 (evens) Market Place (first floor)

### **Policy TCR16 - Retail Frontages in Hatfield Town Centre**

**Within the designated Retail Frontages in the primary retail core of Hatfield town centre, as defined on Inset Map 1, a minimum of 70% of any one linear frontage must remain in Class A1 retail use. Therefore, planning permission will be granted for changes of use from Class A1 to Class A2 or A3 uses up to a maximum of 30% of any one linear frontage.**

**In Retail Frontages where already less than 70% of the linear frontage is in Class A1 use, planning permission will not be granted for change of use to non-retail uses. The only exceptions to this will be if the proposal is for a Class A3 use which would provide an 'eat-in' restaurant or café facility for shoppers, which would:**

- (i) Contribute to the overall attractiveness of the town centre; and**
- (ii) Not undermine the retail function of the frontage.**

**For changes of use to Class A3, the Council may grant planning permission for a specific use within Class A3 or impose other conditions to control the use of the premises, where planning permission would otherwise be refused.**

**Planning permission will only be granted where the proposal would not harm the amenities of nearby residential properties.**

**Proposals for change of use which are acceptable in terms of the policy will be granted permission subject to a one year time limit for implementation.**

**Within the redevelopment area proposals for changes of use will only be permitted where it would not prejudice the aims and objectives of policy TCR14.**

#### **Policy TCR17 - Mixed Use Frontages in Hatfield Town Centre**

**Within the designated Mixed Use Frontages in the primary retail core of Hatfield town centre, as defined on Inset Map 1, planning permission will be granted for changes of use to Class A1, A2 and A3 uses and for uses which provide community, leisure and cultural facilities. A minimum of 50% of any one linear frontage must remain in Class A1 Retail use and a minimum of 80% in uses within Class A.**

**In a Mixed Use Frontage where less than 50% of the linear frontage is in Class A1 Retail use, planning permission will not be granted for change of use to non-retail uses.**

**For changes of use to Class A3, the Council may grant planning permission for a specific use within Class A3 or impose other planning conditions to control the use of the premises, where planning permission would otherwise be refused.**

**Planning permission will only be granted where the proposal will not harm the amenities of nearby residential properties.**

**Proposals for change of use which are acceptable in terms of the policy will be granted permission subject to a one year time limit for implementation.**

**Within the redevelopment area proposals for changes of use will only be permitted where it would not prejudice the aims and objectives of policy TCR14.**

13.60 At first floor level and above within the primary retail core, there are also a significant number of offices and residential units. These make an important contribution to the vitality and viability of the town centre, by bringing people into the centre, both during the daytime and evening. Both are also compatible with the Plan's overall aims for sustainable development, helping to bring uses closer together and reduce the need to travel. The Council will therefore continue to support residential and office uses at first floor level in the retail core of the town centre. The only exception to this are the units at first floor level in Market Place (nos. 2-34) which are designated as a Mixed Use frontage and serve an important function for A1, A2 and A3 uses.

### **Policy TCR18 - First Floor Uses in Hatfield Town Centre**

**Within the primary retail core of Hatfield town centre, as defined on Inset Map 1, apart from the units at 2-34 Market Place, the Council will grant planning permission for conversion and change of use of buildings at first floor level and above to B1 offices (except where this would result in the loss of residential accommodation) and residential uses.**

**Within the redevelopment area proposals for changes of use will only be permitted where it would not prejudice the aims and objectives of policy TCR14.**

### Acceptable Uses outside of the Primary Retail Area

13.61 Outside of the primary retail core, there are two sub-areas which function as part of the town centre, but provide a range of leisure, community, office and residential uses. These are defined in paragraph 13.47 as on the western side of Lemsford Road and on the northern side of The Common. These areas function together with the primary retail core to maintain the vitality and viability of the town centre as a whole, by providing a greater diversity of uses and bringing more people into the town centre. In addition, they contribute to a more sustainable pattern of development by providing facilities close to each other, where they are more easily accessible, enabling linked trips to be made and reducing the need to travel. There are also residential areas adjacent to these sub-areas, which would be sensitive to any increase in the intensity of use and activity there. For these reasons it is important that the mix of uses in the Lemsford Road and The Common sub-areas of the town centre are retained.

13.62 Within the Lemsford Road sub-area, the Forum site has potential for redevelopment. This formerly contained a theatre, which due to structural problems in the building is being demolished. The site is currently designated for temporary office and community uses, but the Council wishes to see its redevelopment for a permanent new facility for community, cultural or leisure uses, which will help the regeneration of the town centre. This site fronts onto the strategic link between the town centre and The Galleria and Hatfield Aerodrome site, via St. Albans Road West. It is vital that any redevelopment of the site maintains and enhances that link.

### **Policy TCR19 - Acceptable Uses outside of the Primary Retail Core (Lemsford Road)**

**Within Hatfield town centre, on the western side of Lemsford Road, outside of the primary retail core, as defined on Inset Map 1, the Council will support proposals to enhance existing and provide new leisure, cultural and community facilities (for uses within Classes D1 and D2), which will assist the regeneration of the town centre and not harm the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential areas. Consideration will also be given to hotel, office and residential uses as part of any development scheme where these will help to provide leisure, cultural or community facilities.**

**Any proposals for the redevelopment of the Forum site in this area must maintain and contribute to the strategic link between the town centre and The Galleria and Hatfield Aerodrome site.**

**Policy TCR20 - Acceptable Uses outside of the Primary Retail Core (The Common)**

**Within Hatfield town centre, on the northern side of The Common (except for nos. 38-54 (evens) The Common), outside of the primary retail core, as defined on Inset Map 1, the Council will allow proposals for changes of use or redevelopment for office, residential, hotel and community uses (falling within Use Classes B1(a), C1, C3 and D1), subject to the following criteria. They will:**

- (i) Assist the regeneration of the town centre and enhance its vitality and viability;**
- (ii) Not harm the amenities of the occupiers of nearby residential areas.**

Transport Infrastructure

13.63 The strategy for the town centre aims to make it more accessible by bus, walking and cycling. This includes both access from surrounding residential areas in Hatfield and the links between the town centre, The Galleria and the new local centre on the Hatfield Aerodrome site. Proposals include new pedestrian crossings over the 'ring road' which surrounds the town centre, enhancing the footpath and cycleway routes to The Galleria and providing a bus interchange within the town centre so there is a single drop-off and pick-up point. The redevelopment of the Hatfield Aerodrome site will make a major contribution to this infrastructure, but the Council will expect that redevelopment schemes within the town centre should also contribute to these proposals. The centre is already very accessible by car, with a number of free surface level car parks. However, new development will require the introduction of a new parking management strategy, linked to public transport improvements including the provision of a new bus interchange, to avoid parking overspilling into surrounding residential areas.

**Policy TCR21 - Transport Infrastructure in Hatfield Town Centre**

**The Council will require development proposals in Hatfield town centre to contribute, in accordance with Policy IM2, to improving the infrastructure and services for pedestrian, cycle and passenger transport access to and within the town centre and to accord with the Council's Car Parking Strategy.**

## Town Centre Environment

- 13.64 As a first generation new town, Hatfield town centre has an ageing infrastructure which in many places requires renewal and enhancement. The 'inward-looking' design of the town centre also gives it a poor presence and raises safety and security fears. The proposal to redevelop the eastern end of the town centre presents an opportunity to radically improve the appearance of this part of the centre and accordingly the Council will expect the new buildings to be of a high quality design. This also applies to any redevelopment schemes elsewhere in the town centre.
- 13.65 However, there are also opportunities to improve the public realm elsewhere in the town centre, including landscaping, enhancements to key squares and buildings and new street furniture. The Council will seek to secure public and private sector funds to implement these improvements, but development schemes within the town centre will also be expected to contribute to these schemes and the improvement of the wider public realm.

### **Policy TCR22 - Town Centre Environment**

**The Council will seek to enhance and renew the environment of Hatfield town centre through the design of new buildings and environmental improvement schemes. It will require new development to be of good quality design in accordance with the design policies in the plan and to contribute to schemes to improve the wider public realm in the town centre.**

## Hatfield Market and Farmers' Market

- 13.66 Hatfield Market and the Farmers' Market are considerable assets to the town centre and make an important contribution to the life and viability of the centre, drawing trade from a wider area. The Council wishes to see the markets retained and enhanced. As part of any redevelopment scheme, consideration will be given to the best possible location for the two markets.

### **Town Centre Strategies**

- 13.67 The Council supports the principle of town centre management and recognises that a co-ordinated approach can also benefit smaller shopping centres, such as the large village centres. Many town centres have appointed a full-time town centre manager to promote their town, to assist visitors and act as a point of contact for local businesses and the community. However, the resources of the Council are limited, and benefits can still be obtained by the Council having an enabling role in the co-ordination of private and public sector partnerships.
- 13.68 The Council will therefore work with and co-ordinate the activities of the relevant groups and agencies to develop strategies for the district's town centres and other shopping centres. In preparing such strategies, the Council will seek to actively involve local businesses and the community. These strategies will be reviewed regularly and will provide supporting supplementary guidance to the District Plan.

13.69 The Council has already set up the Welwyn Garden City Town Centre Forum, and the Welwyn Garden City Town Centre Strategy has been an important element in shaping the planning policies in the District Plan.

### **Neighbourhood Shopping Centres**

13.70 The Neighbourhood Centres are local centres situated in residential areas of Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City. They vary in terms of their size, function and the range of shops and services that they provide. The hierarchy of centres in paragraph 13.10 above defines two broad categories - Large Neighbourhood Centres and Small Neighbourhood Centres.

13.71 These centres play an important role in local shopping provision within the district's two main towns. They provide for a range of convenience shopping and service outlets, which meet people's day-to-day needs, complementing the district-wide role of the two town centres. They are closer to where people live and so are more easily accessible, in particular for the less mobile, including elderly people, parents with young children, people with disabilities and people who do not have access to a car. In terms of sustainability, they make a very positive contribution in reducing the need to travel. These centres are large enough to provide a good range of everyday shopping facilities, but are under increasing pressure from service and specialist uses. Whilst it is important that they provide a mix of shopping, services and community facilities, their future viability depends on a predominance of shopping. Therefore, the Council wishes to retain the provision of shopping in these locations, but recognises that it may be appropriate to accommodate some non-retail uses in these centres.

13.72 In considering proposals for non-retail uses, the Council will take into account the degree of customer attraction to the proposed use, and the hours of opening, in assessing their impact on the vitality of the centre. For instance, in terms of Class A3 uses, hot food takeaway shops often open only in the evenings, and present an effectively 'dead' frontage during the daytime, when the rest of the shopping parade is open. All day A3 uses, such as cafes are therefore more beneficial in terms of maintaining the vitality of local shopping parades. In cases where the vitality of a shopping centre would be harmed by the granting of planning permission for change of use of a unit to a use that would remain closed during the day, a planning condition may be imposed controlling the hours of opening or the type of A3, where this is necessary to avoid refusing permission. Similarly, the customer attraction of Class A2 uses varies and, where appropriate, the Council will impose conditions to ensure that an A2 use provides a service directly related to a shopping trip, such as a bank or building society. Other non-retail uses, such as surgeries or other community and leisure uses may be considered if it can be demonstrated that they would meet a local community need.

13.73 It is recognised that some of the neighbourhood shopping centres may require updating in the future and that this may involve their comprehensive redevelopment. Proposals for the redevelopment of any of the neighbourhood shopping centres should be carried out in accordance with a development brief for the site, which has been subject to public consultation and adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance. The development brief must ensure

that the primary retail function of the centre is retained in any new development.

### Large Neighbourhood Centres

13.74 The following centres are identified in the retail hierarchy as Large Neighbourhood Centres - Woodhall, Hall Grove, Haldens and Moors Walk in Welwyn Garden City and Highview in Hatfield. These provide a range of everyday convenience shopping and service facilities for local people which the Council will seek to retain. In order to maintain their predominant function for shopping, a minimum of 60% of the frontage (as a proportion of the number of units) should remain in Class A1 uses.

#### **Policy TCR23 - Large Neighbourhood Centres**

**In the Neighbourhood Centres of Moors Walk (ground floor level), Woodhall, Hall Grove, and Haldens in Welwyn Garden City and in Highview, Hatfield, the Council will seek to retain the provision of a range of everyday convenience shopping and service facilities for local people. A minimum of 60% of the total frontage of the parade should remain in Retail Class A1 use. Where less than 60% of the frontage of the parade is in retail use, planning permission will not be granted for further loss of retail units.**

**In addition, proposals for changes of use from Retail Class A1 use, to non-retail, Class A2 or A3 use will only be permitted if all of the following criteria are met:**

- (i) The proposal would not harm the vitality and viability of the centre;**
- (ii) Together with existing uses and extant planning permissions for change of use to non-retail, it would not lead to an over-concentration of non-retail uses in any parade;**
- (iii) The presence of vacant units indicates a lack of demand for retail use;**
- (iv) The proposal would not harm the amenities of any nearby residential properties;**
- (v) The proposal would not be detrimental to the highway network including highway safety.**

**Other non-retail uses may be permitted, subject to the above criteria, where it can be demonstrated the use would meet a particular local community need.**

**The Council may grant planning permission for a specific use within Classes A2 or A3, or for a specific leisure, social or cultural use, or may impose conditions to control the use of the premises where planning permission would otherwise be refused.**

### Old Hatfield

13.75 Old Hatfield has a unique retail function. Whilst retaining some of the characteristics of a Large Village Centre, it does not perform exactly the same functions because it serves the local business community, as well as local residents, and as such displays a mix of specialist and service uses. These

uses are not located in one frontage, but are dispersed within the centre, being based both in and around Salisbury Square. The Council recognises that Old Hatfield has suffered from pressures for change of use from convenience retail uses to either specialist retailing uses, or non-retail uses, such as service and hot food outlets, and that this has eroded the provision of local, convenience shopping. It is therefore considered important to maintain and, if possible, improve the provision of convenience retail uses. Old Hatfield also acts as a local centre for office employment and therefore proposals for B1 office uses may be considered subject to the criteria in Policy TCR26.

#### **Policy TCR24 - Old Hatfield**

**Within Old Hatfield the council will permit proposals for Class A1 uses, particularly for convenience goods shopping. Proposals for change of use to Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services) and Class A3 (Food and Drink) will only be permitted where this would not result in the loss of a Class A1 retail unit.**

**Proposals for change of use to Class B1 Business use will be permitted provided that:**

- (i) The proposal would be at first floor level or higher; and**
- (ii) It would not lead to the loss of a Class A1, A2 or A3 use; and**
- (iii) It would not involve the loss of residential accommodation.**

#### Small Neighbourhood Centres

13.76 The following centres are defined in the retail hierarchy as Small Neighbourhood Centres - Shoplands, Hollybush, Peartree Lane and Handside in Welwyn Garden City and St.Albans Road East, Crawford Road, Roe Green, Manor Parade, Harpsfield Broadway, Birchwood and The Common in Hatfield. Within these centres, there are fewer units and it is therefore essential that they provide a range of local functions and are not allowed to change to non-retail uses that would be more appropriately located in a larger centre and would encourage travel. Local functions include everyday convenience shopping and in some instances services related to a shopping trip such as banks and cafés.

#### **Policy TCR25 - Small Neighbourhood Centres**

**In the Small Neighbourhood Centres, changes of use from Class A1 Retail use to Class A2 or A3 will not be permitted unless all of the following criteria can be met:**

- (i) The loss of the shop would not seriously diminish the provision of local shopping facilities;**
- (ii) The proposed use would add to the vitality and viability of the centre;**
- (iii) The centre would remain predominately in Class A1 Retail use;**
- (iv) It can be demonstrated that the unit has remained vacant for over a year and documentary evidence has been provided that all reasonable attempts to sell or let the premises for continued use as**

a shop have failed, and/or the presence of vacant units in the parade indicates a lack of demand for retail use;

- (v) The proposal would provide adequate highway access and servicing arrangements and would not be detrimental to the highway network, including highway safety.

Other non-retail uses may be allowed, subject to the above criteria, where it can be demonstrated it would address a particular local need.

## **Village Shops and Services Centres**

### Large Village Centres

13.77 The Large Village Centres in the district are defined in the retail hierarchy as - Welwyn, Welham Green, Brookmans Park and Cuffley. They are important in that they meet the needs of local residents living both in the settlements in which they are located and in the surrounding rural communities, providing a focus for the community and reducing the need for people to travel. These centres are large enough to provide a good range of everyday shopping facilities, but are under increasing pressure from service and specialist uses. Whilst it is important that they provide a mix of shopping, services and community facilities, their future viability depends on a predominance of shopping. Therefore, the Council wishes to retain the provision of shopping in these locations, but recognises that it may be appropriate to accommodate some non-retail uses in these centres. A minimum of 60% of the frontages of these centres (as a proportion of the number of units) should remain in Class A1 uses.

### **Policy TCR26 - Large Village Centres**

**In the Large Village Centres of Welwyn, Welham Green, Brookmans Park and Cuffley, the Council will seek to retain the provision of a range of everyday convenience shopping and service facilities for local people. A minimum of 60% of the total frontage within each centre should remain in Retail Class A1 use. Where less than 60% of the frontage is in retail use, planning permission will not be granted for further loss of retail units.**

**In addition, proposals for changes of use from Retail Class A1 use, to non-retail, Class A2 or A3 use will only be permitted if all of the following criteria are met:**

- (i) The proposal would not harm the vitality and viability of the centre;
- (ii) Together with existing uses and extant planning permissions for change of use to non-retail, it would not lead to an over-concentration of non-retail uses in any parade;
- (iii) The presence of vacant units indicates a lack of demand for retail use;
- (iv) The proposal would not harm the amenities of any nearby residential properties;
- (v) The proposal would not be detrimental to the highway network, including highway safety.

**Other non-retail uses may be permitted, subject to the above criteria, where it can be demonstrated the use would meet a particular local community need.**

**The Council may grant planning permission for a specific use within Classes A2 or A3, or for a specific leisure, social or cultural use, or may impose conditions to control the use of the premises where planning permission would otherwise be refused.**

### Small Village Centres

13.78 The following centres are defined in the retail hierarchy as Small Village Centres - Woolmer Green, Oaklands and Mardley Heath and Digswell. These have a limited number of local shops and services. However, like the Large Village Centres they are important in serving the needs of both their surrounding urban and rural communities. Therefore, the Council wishes to protect these facilities, and, given the already limited provision of local shops and services in these locations, does not consider that further loss of local shops and services should be permitted.

#### **Policy TCR27 - Small Village Centres**

**In the Small Village Centres of Woolmer Green, Oaklands and Mardley Heath and Digswell, changes of use from Class A1 Retail to Class A2 or A3 uses will not be permitted unless all the following criteria are met:**

- (i) **The loss of the retail shop would not seriously diminish the provision of local shopping facilities;**
- (ii) **The proposed use would add to the vitality and viability of the parade;**
- (iii) **It can be demonstrated that the unit has remained vacant for over a year and documentary evidence has been provided that all reasonable attempts to sell or let the premises for its existing use have failed and/or the presence of long-term vacant units in the parade indicates a lack of demand for retail use;**
- (iv) **The proposal would provide adequate highway access and servicing arrangements and would not be detrimental to highway safety.**

**Other non-retail uses may be allowed, subject to the above criteria, where it can be demonstrated it would address a particular local need.**

### **Individual Shops**

13.79 The change of use of individual shops, not located in a parade, to non-retail use, will only be permitted where suitable alternative shopping facilities are available in the immediate locality.

#### **Policy TCR28 - Loss of Individual Local Shops**

**The loss of individual local shops in Class A1 Retail use will not be permitted unless all the following criteria are met:**

- (i) **There is another shop of a similar use available for customers within a convenient walking distance; and**

- (ii) **The alternative use would complement the character and function of the area.**

**In the absence of such an alternative, the Council may permit a change of use to non-retail provided that it can be demonstrated that the unit has remained vacant for over a year and documentary evidence has been provided that all reasonable attempts to sell or let the premises for continued use as a shop have failed.**

## **Markets**

- 13.80 Markets are a popular form of retailing and there are two represented in the district - the twice-weekly general market and the monthly Farmers' and Craft Market, both held in Hatfield Town Centre. The Farmers' Market has been a great success since its launch in September 1999. It has brought people into Hatfield who would not otherwise shop there and has also reintroduced local people to the town centre. It has assisted small businesses as well as town centre regeneration.
- 13.81 Whilst markets can be held up to 14 times in any one calendar year, without requiring planning permission, there has been some pressure to allow an additional regular market within the district, which would require planning permission.
- 13.82 The environmental consequences of markets taking place in unsuitable locations can be harmful, in terms of the impact of traffic generation, parking problems and disturbance to local residents. Moreover, an additional market may harm the existing general market and Farmers' Market held in Hatfield, and thus undermine the vitality and viability of Hatfield Town Centre itself. Therefore, in considering proposals for new markets, the following policy will be applied.

### **Policy TCR29 - Markets**

**Planning permission for a market will only be granted where all of the following criteria can be met:**

- (i) It would not harm the vitality and viability of existing markets and retail centres in the district;**
- (ii) It would not harm the residential amenities of any nearby properties, in terms of noise and disturbance;**
- (iii) The proposal would not be detrimental to highway safety;**
- (iv) It would provide adequate access and parking for market traders.**

## **Car Boot Sales and Other Forms of Temporary Sales**

- 13.83 Car boot sales and other temporary forms of sales can also be held for up to 14 days in any one calendar year, provided that the land in question is not within the curtilage of a building. In many cases, car boot sales offer a valuable form of fund raising for local schools and charities, where from time to time the public can sell surplus second hand items. However, they may sometimes be of a different, more commercial nature, attracting professional traders together with hot food and drink stands. By their very nature, car boot

sales attract high levels of car-borne traffic and as a result can cause traffic congestion, high levels of on-street parking, noise and general disturbance to nearby residents. Car boot sales which are located in the Green Belt can have a harmful effect on the landscape and the character of the area.

### **Policy TCR30 - Car Boot Sales and Other Temporary Sales**

**Proposals for car boot sales and other forms of temporary sales will only be permitted where the following criteria are met:**

- (i) The proposal would not have an adverse impact on the local transport infrastructure, due to the level of traffic generation, congestion, on-street parking and unauthorised parking that would result;**
- (ii) The vitality and viability of nearby markets and shopping centres would not be harmed;**
- (iii) The proposal would not harm the residential amenities of any nearby properties;**
- (iv) The proposal would not harm the visual amenity of the area; and**
- (v) The proposal would not harm the ecology of the site.**

**Within the Green Belt and on Urban Open Land, as shown on the Proposals Map, planning permission will not be granted for such proposals, unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated that warrant an exception.**

## **Amusement Centres**

- 13.84 Amusement centres and games arcades are a *sui generis* use and will therefore require planning permission. Depending on the type of facility proposed and the likely customers, amusement centres may cause noise and disturbance, and be of concern because of their impact on the amenity of the local area.
- 13.85 Planning Policy Guidance Note 6, "Town Centres and Retail Developments" (HMSO, 1996) provides guidance on the planning considerations to be taken into account in determining applications for amusement centres. It states that they are unlikely to be acceptable in primary shopping areas, close to housing, or near schools, churches, hospitals and hotels. In the light of this advice, the Council considers that they are not acceptable in the retail frontages of Welwyn Garden City or Hatfield town centres.
- 13.86 Amusement centres often generate public concerns regarding possible 'anti-social' behaviour of their customers. Whilst questions of social disorder are matters for the police to deal with, the issue of noise and disturbance that may result is a material consideration in the determination of a planning application for an amusement centre.
- 13.87 If granting planning permission, the Council will give careful consideration to the nature and extent of any planning conditions that may be needed, in order to mitigate any adverse effects of the proposal. These may include conditions limiting opening hours and conditions to limit noise, for example noise attenuation measures such as insulation, self-closing doors, the enclosure of the front of the premises and the prohibition of external loudspeakers.

### **Policy TCR31 - Amusement Centres**

**Amusement centres will not be permitted in the retail frontages in Welwyn Garden City or Hatfield town centres.**

**Elsewhere, proposals for amusement centres will not be permitted where the proposed use would:**

- (i) Harm the amenities of nearby residential properties, by reason of noise and disturbance; or**
- (ii) Be located near schools, places of worship, hospitals or hotels; or**
- (iii) Harm the established character or the visual amenity of the area.**

**In all cases, applicants will be required to provide details of any proposed new shopfront with an application for change of use, in order to enable the Council to consider whether noise attenuation measures would be possible, and to assess the impact of the proposal on the character and visual amenity of the area.**

## **Petrol Filling Stations**

- 13.88 Most proposals for new petrol filling stations include the provision of a building for retail sales. These can provide a wide variety of goods, either directly related to the use as a petrol filling station, such as vehicle accessories, or general retail goods, such as groceries and newspapers. In rural areas, some fulfil the function of a local shop, or small supermarket. Whilst the important

role of these shops is recognised, they should clearly remain ancillary to the main use as a petrol filling station.

- 13.89 New foodstores, small supermarket or fast-food outlets are sometimes proposed as part of the redevelopment of a petrol filling station. Such developments will only be approved where they would not undermine the shopping role of nearby centres or local village shops. Development that is of a scale that is likely to adversely affect other shopping facilities will not be permitted.
- 13.90 Petrol filling stations can be visually intrusive because of their dominant canopies and tendency to brash, corporate advertising. Care must therefore be taken in their design, in order to avoid them appearing visually intrusive in the street scene and harming the established character of the area.
- 13.91 Considerations of traffic safety are fundamental for a use that generates a very large number of vehicle movements. One problem that can arise is that of vehicles obstructing the highway while waiting to be served, which may occur at peak times.
- 13.92 Petrol filling stations can cause harm to the amenities of nearby residents by reason of noise and disturbance. The Council will therefore impose planning conditions to control the hours of opening, when this is necessary to protect residential amenity.

#### **Policy TCR32 - Petrol Filling Stations**

**Planning permission will only be granted for new petrol filling stations or extensions to existing petrol filling stations where all the following criteria are met:**

- (i) The proposal would not harm the residential amenities of nearby properties;**
- (ii) It would provide adequate servicing and access arrangements and would not be detrimental to highway safety;**
- (iii) It would not appear visually intrusive in the street scene nor harm the established character of the area;**
- (iv) Any retailing element would be ancillary to the main use as a petrol filling station and would not harm the vitality and viability of any nearby shopping centres.**

#### **Shop Design – Advertisements, Shopfronts and Accessibility.**

- 13.93 The Council wishes to promote good quality design in new shopfronts, including easy and dignified access for the disabled and mobility impaired. Proposals for advertisements and new shopfronts must therefore comply with the Supplementary Design Guidance.

## **HATFIELD AERODROME SITE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 14.1 The Hatfield Aerodrome site is the biggest area of redundant industrial land in Hertfordshire. Following the closure of the British Aerospace aircraft manufacturing plant in 1993 and the closure of the associated runway in 1994, the future use of the site has been determined through the Local Plan process and then in more detail through a masterplanning exercise.
- 14.2 A masterplan for the site was adopted by Welwyn Hatfield Council in November 1999. This masterplan, and any subsequently adopted revisions, will provide the detailed guidance for determining planning applications for the redevelopment of the site in future years.
- 14.3 This section of the Plan sets out the key principles for the site's development, lays down the primary matters to be covered by any masterplan for the site, and confirms the current land use allocations for the site, as defined on Inset Map 3 of the Proposals Map.

### **BACKGROUND**

- 14.4 The Hatfield Aerodrome site extends to some 322 hectares (800 acres). Located on the western edge of Hatfield, the majority of the site lies within Welwyn Hatfield District. However, at the southern end of the site, some 56 hectares (140 acres) falls within St.Albans District. This Plan therefore excludes those proposals of the masterplan which are within St.Albans District. In addition the Green Belt boundary effectively divides the site, with 188 hectares of the site being designated as Green Belt, as shown on Inset Map 3.
- 14.5 The site is generally flat and due to the presence of the former runway has few significant areas of trees apart from the southern boundary of the site and Home Covert, which is an area of Ancient Woodland found in the Green Belt part of the site.
- 14.6 The recently developed areas of the Hatfield Business Park and Bishops Square border the site to the north west and south east respectively. The land to the north of Hatfield Avenue was used for industrial purposes, and associated sports ground and informal open space. The land to the south of Hatfield Avenue was the location for the aircraft manufacturing plant and associated runway. In overall terms the Inset area, excluding the Green Belt, is considered to be previously developed land.
- 14.7 There are a number of Listed Buildings on the site. Within Welwyn Hatfield District these comprise: -
- The Flight Test Hanger – Grade 2\*
  - The Administration Building, Canteen and Gatehouse – Grade 2
  - Astwick Manor – Grade 2
- 14.8 The majority of the area of the Masterplan site within the Green Belt is identified within the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan as a Preferred Area for Mineral Extraction. The site is identified in the Hertfordshire County Council

Waste Local Plan as an Area of Search for the siting of permanent facilities for materials recovery. An opportunity for a Material Recovery Facility is identified within the Business Area on the Hatfield Aerodrome site in the Section 106 Agreement accompanying the outline planning permission. It is also part of the Watling Chase Community Forest as defined within the District Plan and the Community Forest Plan.

## **STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES**

14.9 The objectives for the development of the site have evolved over many years. These reflect local concerns which have been identified through public consultation on both the District Plan and the masterplan. They also reflect national, regional and other strategic planning policy as it applies generally to new development and the specific considerations of development in this location. The list of objectives is as follows:

1. The development should be sustainable.
2. The site should provide employment including an element to meet local needs.
3. The site should provide land for housing including an element to meet local needs.
4. The site should provide scope for the presence of the University of Hertfordshire.
5. The development should be well integrated with Hatfield and surrounding towns, with good pedestrian, cycle and public transport links.
6. The development should contain an aero-based heritage facility.
7. The development should provide high standards of environment, open space and leisure facilities.
8. The retention and provision of social and community facilities should be achieved.
9. The Green Belt should be enhanced and made more accessible. The Green Belt boundary will remain fixed.

## **POLICIES**

### **Sustainable Development of the Site**

- 14.10 Within the context of Central Government Policy, regional policy and the policies of the approved County Structure Plan, the redevelopment of such an important and large site such as the Hatfield Aerodrome, must be led by principles of sustainability. This should apply to all aspects of the development, starting from the overall mix of uses, through the construction processes, to the detailed layout and design of individual buildings and parcels of open land and landscaping.
- 14.11 Sustainability principles have been used to guide the preparation of the currently adopted masterplan for the site. The masterplan was subject to a

Sustainability Appraisal during its preparation. It is critical that in any subsequent revision of the masterplan the same principles apply.

- 14.12 The principles and sustainability tests established during that process were subsequently incorporated into the masterplan, and will be used in order to assess whether individual planning applications for development of the site meet those sustainability objectives.

#### **Policy HATAER1 - Sustainable Development of the Site**

**The development of the whole of the Inset Area will be based on the principles of sustainability. This will apply to all aspects of the development including layout, mix of uses, orientation and design of buildings, energy efficiency and the need to provide an integrated transport system. The sustainability tests and principles which were developed to assess the content of the Hatfield Aerodrome masterplan, will be used to assess whether individual planning applications are in conformity with this policy.**

#### **Mixed Use**

- 14.13 One of the key principles of sustainable land use planning is the juxtaposition of housing with employment and community services, in order to afford the maximum opportunity for trips to be made on foot, bicycle or on public transport. This objective of creating mixed-use developments is emphasised in particular in PPG1 and PPG13, together with other Government Guidance on sustainable development.
- 14.14 The Hatfield Aerodrome site is of a scale where it is possible to achieve a true mix of development, notwithstanding the site's strategic role for employment development. Creating a mixed-use development is therefore a primary objective for the site.
- 14.15 One of the components of the mixed-use development of the site is the new campus for the University of Hertfordshire. The university is a major factor in the local economy, and the new campus has enabled the university to consolidate in Hatfield, whilst also meeting some of the deficiencies of the existing campus in terms of facilities and residential accommodation.
- 14.16 However, given the site's location on the western edge of Hatfield, and the need to protect and enhance the vitality of the existing Town Centre and the Galleria shopping complex, this site is not considered suitable for retail development, other than that to meet the local needs of people living or working on the site.

#### **Policy HATAER2 – Mixed Use**

**The redevelopment of the Hatfield Aerodrome Inset Site, outside the Green Belt, should provide for a variety of land uses. The principal uses of the site will be for employment, housing and educational purposes, in the form of a new university campus. Other uses and proposals, including aviation heritage, community facilities, leisure and sports facilities, public open space and securing public access to the Green Belt, will also form an integral part of the development. Any retail and**

**leisure development shall be located within the local centre for the site and will be limited in scale to that necessary to meeting local needs.**

### **Requirement for a Masterplan**

- 14.17 Given the scale and complexity of the redevelopment of the Hatfield Aerodrome site, there is a need for both detailed guidance in terms of what development will be acceptable, how development and the provision of facilities and infrastructure will be co-ordinated, and specific design guidance to ensure a high quality environment is achieved. In a development of this scale there is also a need to clearly set out the basis for establishing the range and content of planning obligations. It is not the role of the District Plan to provide such detailed guidance. The role of the District Plan should be to set out the guiding principles that will govern the development of the site, both during and beyond this Plan period.
- 14.18 The more detailed level of guidance required is best provided in the form of a masterplan for the site. In order to give weight to the masterplan and to ensure that there is a clear and consistent approach taken to individual planning applications for development of the site, it will be a requirement of the District Plan that the masterplan for the site be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance, as set out in PPG12.
- 14.19 In order to be effective the guidance should:
- (a) Set out in detail the sustainable principles and tests which will be used to assess all development on the site;
  - (b) Clarify the quantum of development and use of each part of the site;
  - (c) Identify the infrastructure required to service the specified quantum of development;
  - (d) Ensure that the site is designed in a cohesive and comprehensive manner;
  - (e) Identify key elements of phasing of the development of the site;
  - (f) Set out the key design principles which set the overall quality of design;
  - (g) Give specific guidance on the form development will take within each sub-area of the site;
  - (h) Identify clearly those matters for which development contributions will be sought.
- 14.20 As PPG12 sets out, in order for the status of Supplementary Planning Guidance to be achieved, any guidance must be subject to public consultation. The masterplan will also be prepared jointly by the relevant landowners and the Local Planning Authorities.
- 14.21 Whilst the first masterplan for the site has been prepared and was adopted by the Local Planning Authorities in November 1999, it is recognised that there will be a need to keep the masterplan up to date and review it formally. Whilst the masterplan should be sufficiently flexible to deal with minor changes, should there be a significant change of circumstances of relevance to the development of the site, for instance as the result of changes in national,

regional or structure planning guidance, there will be a need to carry out a formal review of the masterplan.

**Policy HATAER3 - Requirement for a Masterplan**

**The development of the Hatfield Aerodrome site should be in accordance with the adopted masterplan which expands on the objectives, policies and proposals of the District Plan. The masterplan has been prepared jointly by the Local Planning Authority and the relevant landowners.**

**Any subsequent reviews of the masterplan will be subject to public consultation prior to adoption by the Council.**

**Alterations to the masterplan of a minor nature will only be allowed at the discretion of the Local Planning Authority.**

**Land Use Proposals**

14.22 The Masterplan, which was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in November 1999, sets out the amount and disposition of each major land use proposed for the site. The Land Use Plan which sets out this disposition of uses has been incorporated into the District Plan, and can be seen in the Hatfield Aerodrome Inset of the Proposals Map.

14.23 It is appropriate that the major land use areas are set out in the District Plan, together with an indication of likely floorspace.

**Policy HATAER4 – Land Use Proposals for the Hatfield Aerodrome Site**

**The land use proposals for the development of the Hatfield Aerodrome site are set out in Inset Map 3 of the Proposals Map.**

**The land use proposals are as follows: (see over for table)**

## Land Use Proposals for the Hatfield Aerodrome Site

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Area (Acres)</b>	<b>Area (Hectares)</b>	<b>Quantum</b>
<b>Residential Area (north)</b>	<b>45.1</b>	<b>18.3</b>	
<b>Residential Area (south)</b>	<b>57.6</b>	<b>23.3</b>	
<b>Residential Area (adjacent to District Centre)</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>2.8</b>	
<b>Employment</b>	<b>115.0</b>	<b>46.5</b>	<b>191,000m<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>Local Centre</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>9.8</b>	
<b>Primary School</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>2.4</b>	
<b>University</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>12.1</b>	
<b>Budget Hotel</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>0.8</b>	
<b>Business Hotel</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>2.4</b>	
<b>Aviation Heritage Centre</b>	<b>2.55</b>	<b>1.0</b>	
<b>Infrastructure and strategic landscaping</b>	<b>25.9</b>	<b>10.5</b>	
<b>Green Belt (north)</b>	<b>18.5</b>	<b>7.5</b>	
<b>Green Belt (south)</b>	<b>304.0</b>	<b>123.7</b>	<b>Remaining area within St.Albans District</b>
<b>Bishop Square (existing employment)</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>6.4</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>800.0</b>	<b>323.8</b>	

# POLICIES FOR RURAL AREAS

## **RURAL AREAS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 15.1 The rural areas in this district are as important to the quality of life of its residents as the urban areas. 60% of the land in Welwyn Hatfield is rural, providing support for both economic and community life and sustaining many of the district's identified wildlife habitats. The rural area also provides an important informal source of recreation for all the district's residents.
- 15.2 The Rural White Paper published in November 2000 gives a comprehensive view of the Government's policy agenda for the rural areas. The overall vision includes the following aims:
- improving rural services to tackle rural deprivation and exclusion;
  - making better use of the planning system to provide more affordable homes in rural settlements;
  - reduce reliance on the car and the overall need to travel, with improvements in public transport and other modes of travel;
  - reform of the Common Agricultural programme to allow farmers to adapt to a competitive world market while following practises which conserve and enhance the landscape and wildlife;
  - encouraging farm diversification;
  - conserving and enhancing the countryside, including protecting diversity and character;
  - restoring and maintaining biodiversity;
  - increasing access for everyone to enjoy the countryside.

The policies and objectives in this chapter reflect the overall vision of the White Paper.

- 15.3 All of the district's rural areas are designated as Green Belt. Whilst this has been very helpful in restricting the spread of urban areas it also places restraints on development in rural areas. The changing nature of agriculture and the world economy means that alternative ways of making a living are needed to retain a viable and sustainable rural economy.

### **STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES**

- 15.4 The objectives of the Plan for the district's rural areas are:
- a) to preserve the openness and distinctiveness of place of rural areas by maintaining the Green Belt;
  - b) to safeguard the distinctiveness of the district's variety of landscapes;
  - c) to protect wildlife, trees and hedgerows and encourage biodiversity;
  - d) to encourage a thriving rural village life and retain a social mix of people, by enabling villages to offer employment, shops and services, community facilities and a mix of housing, including affordable homes;

- e) to encourage good quality design which reflects the character of rural areas;
- f) to maintain a sustainable rural economy, protecting the best quality land for agriculture, whilst encouraging diversification which is appropriate;
- g) to improve rural passenger transport services, in order to make rural areas more accessible and enable a reduction in car traffic and congestion;
- h) to promote leisure uses which are appropriate to the countryside;
- i) to restrict development which introduces noise and visual intrusion into the rural areas.

## **POLICIES**

### **Development in the Green Belt**

15.5 The whole of the district's rural area lies within the Green Belt. Government guidance in PPG2 and Policy 5 in the Structure Plan confirm the general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt except in very special circumstances. It will be for the applicant to justify why permission should be granted. However there are some forms of development which are acceptable in the Green Belt and these are dealt with in the following policies.

#### **Policy RA1 - Development in the Green Belt**

**Within the Green Belt, as defined on the Proposals Map, except for development referred to in Policies RA2, RA3, RA4, RA5, RA6, RA7, RA8, RA9 and RA16 or in very special circumstances, permission will only be given for development for the following purposes:**

- (i) Agriculture, forestry or mineral extraction;**
- (ii) Small scale essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation or for cemeteries and for other uses of the land which preserve the openness of the green belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;**
- (iii) The re-use of buildings in accordance with policy RA17.**

### **Development Within Settlements in the Green Belt**

15.6 Settlements within the Green Belt are subject to general presumption against inappropriate development. Paragraph 4.13 defines two categories of Green Belt settlements. The first of these categories of settlement are Essendon, Northaw, Newgate Street and Lemsford which have a number of facilities with a degree of self sufficiency. The Council considers these settlements have local needs that may justify exceptional development. In accordance with Policies 5 and 6 of the Structure Plan the following policy will apply in these settlements.

#### **Policy RA2 - Development in Settlements within the Green Belt**

**Apart from the exceptions in Policy RA1, within the Green Belt settlements of Essendon, Newgate Street, Northaw, and Lemsford development will only be permitted to accommodate the specific needs of the settlement and the surrounding local rural area for housing, employment, local facilities, services and leisure.**

### **Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt**

- 15.7 The Council is concerned about the impact created by extensions to existing dwellings on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 15.8 The extension of a dwelling may be an appropriate development in the Green Belt provided that it would not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original dwelling. The impact of the development on the character of the area, which may vary between different parts of the Green Belt, will also be a significant factor. As a general principle no extension will be approved that would either by itself or taken together with outstanding permissions and previous extensions to the property, make the property more prominent or visually obtrusive.
- 15.9 This policy will also cover those outbuildings of a size and scale that require planning permission (e.g. stables, kennels, garages etc.), because the curtilages of dwellings have an important role in maintaining the openness of the Green Belt.

### **Policy RA3 – Extensions to Dwellings in the Green Belt**

**Permission for extensions to existing dwellings within the Green Belt will be allowed only where all the following criteria are met:**

- (i) The proposal would not individually or when considered with existing or approved extensions to the original dwelling, result in a disproportionate increase in the size of the dwelling;**
- (ii) It would not have an adverse visual impact (in terms of its prominence, size, bulk and design) on the character, appearance and pattern of development of the surrounding countryside.**

**This policy also applies to those outbuildings for which planning permission is required.**

### **Replacement of Dwellings in the Green Belt**

- 15.10 The overriding presumption is against inappropriate development within the Green Belt. There are however certain circumstances where the Council considers that it is acceptable to allow the replacement of an existing dwelling. For example, the dwelling may be structurally unsound or incapable of habitation.
- 15.11 In order to safeguard the Green Belt, any replacement dwelling should have no greater impact on the surrounding area than the original. The attractiveness of the rural landscape and local distinctiveness of the area can be harmed by inappropriate urban or suburban design. Therefore, any replacement dwelling should reflect its rural setting in terms of scale, design, materials and location.

- 15.12 Where the original dwelling has already been extended permitted development rights will normally be removed and any subsequent proposals for extensions to the replacement dwelling will be considered against Policy RA3.

#### **Policy RA4 - Replacement of Dwellings in the Green Belt**

**Permission for replacement dwellings within the Green Belt will not be granted unless all of the following criteria are met:**

- (i) The replacement dwelling would not materially exceed the size of the original dwelling in terms of its floorspace, height and volume (existing outbuildings (including detached garages) will not contribute to the calculation of the size of the replacement dwelling except in very exceptional circumstances);**
- (ii) The proposed dwelling would have no greater visual impact in terms of prominence, bulk and design on the character, appearance and pattern of development of the surrounding countryside;**
- (iii) The proposed dwelling is designed to reflect the character and distinctiveness of its rural setting and to accord with the design policies elsewhere in the plan and the supplementary design guidance.**

**Permitted development rights may be removed from the replacement dwelling where its volume is similar to that of the original dwelling and the original dwelling has already been extended.**

#### **Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt**

- 15.13 PPG2 defines major developed sites in the Green Belt, whose buildings and uses predate the Green Belt designation and which require special policies to limit their future development. There are five such major developed sites within the district, all of which are large research or educational establishments. They are:

The Frythe, Welwyn;

New Barnfield Resources Centre, Hatfield;

Queenswood School, Brookmans Park;

The Royal Veterinary College, North Mymms;

Monks Walk and Tewin Water School, Welwyn Garden City.

The boundaries of these sites are shown on Inset Maps 4 to 8. The Royal Veterinary College is also dealt with under policy RA7 because of the special circumstances relating to its development.

- 15.14 Where the existing uses on these sites are successful there is pressure to expand, alter or intensify development. If, at some future point, the facilities on any of these sites are no longer required there will be pressure for redevelopment. All such sites remain subject to restrictive Green Belt development control policies. However, the Council recognises that limited infilling may be acceptable at the sites, which are in continuing use, in order

to retain jobs, but without prejudicing the Green Belt further. Alternatively the complete or partial redevelopment of major developed sites may offer opportunities to improve the environment of the area, without adding to their impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

- 15.15 However, due to the scale of the Major Developed Sites, it is important that any infilling or redevelopment does not occur in an unplanned, incremental way over time, which, taken cumulatively, could have a harmful effect on the Green Belt. Therefore, the Council requires any development to be dealt with comprehensively and brought forward in the context of a master planning brief for each site. The briefs should cover the essential details of planning policy, a Green Travel Plan (if required in accordance with Policy M3) and car parking management scheme, the operational requirements for the site, the principles to guide development, the proposed future layout of the site, any phasing of development, future planning controls and detailed landscaping proposals reflecting landscape character and dealing with rights of way improvement. The briefs will serve as supplementary planning guidance for development control purposes. Therefore, they must be the subject of public consultation, approved by the Council and kept up to date.

**Policy RA5 - Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt (Limited Infilling)**

**Limited infilling within the Major Developed Sites shown on Inset Maps 4 to 8 will be permitted subject to the following criteria:**

- (ii) The proposal will have no greater impact on the purposes of including land within the Green Belt than the existing development;**
- (iii) The proposal should not exceed the height of the existing buildings;**
- (iv) The proposal should not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site;**
- (v) The proposal should be brought forward in the context of a master planning brief for the site as defined in paragraph 15.15;**
- (vi) Any new development must be acceptable in terms of its impact on the highway network, including highway safety.**

**Policy RA6 - Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt (Redevelopment)**

**Complete or partial redevelopment will be permitted within the boundaries of the Major Developed Sites, as shown on Inset Maps 4 to 8, subject to the following criteria:**

- (i) Proposals should have no greater impact than the existing development on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of land including land within it, and wherever possible should have less impact;**
- (ii) Proposals should make a positive contribution to achieving the objectives for use of land in the Green Belt set out in paragraph 4.7;**

- (iii) **Proposals should not occupy a greater footprint of the site than the existing buildings, excluding temporary buildings, open spaces with direct external access and areas of hardstanding, unless this would achieve a height reduction to the benefit of visual amenity;**
- (iv) **Buildings should not exceed the height of the existing buildings;**
- (v) **The proposal should be brought forward in the context of a master planning brief for the site as defined in paragraph 15.15;**
- (vi) **The preparation of a Green Travel Plan when required under Policy M3, to include measures to control vehicle movement and increase travel to and from the site by alternative modes of transport; and**
- (vii) **Any new development must be acceptable in terms of its impact on the highway network, including highway safety.**

### **The Royal Veterinary College**

- 15.16 A Major Developed Site has been defined at the Hawkshead Campus of the Royal Veterinary College (RVC) in recognition of the scale of development which currently exists on the site. It is recognised that the RVC is an important higher education institution. It is one of only six veterinary colleges in the country and has an international reputation as a centre of excellence for education. There is an increasing demand for vets in this country, which is reflected in the growing student numbers of the RVC. In addition, as a result of the increasingly sophisticated clinical needs of the profession, together with the changing responsibilities of the profession in terms of food safety, hygiene and animal diseases, there is a need to provide more sophisticated and comprehensive teaching, research and related facilities for the College.
- 15.17 Whilst the RVC is located within the Green Belt, where new development would usually be considered inappropriate, it is recognised that the RVC does have a claim to having exceptional circumstances which will be taken into consideration when assessing development proposals. The present campus was established many years ago and is now the only location for the College's essential rural operations. As a veterinary college, it is necessary that it is situated in a location with immediate access to farmland and suitable accommodation for all types of animals. In addition, as a higher education institution, the provisions of Annex C of PPG 2 should be taken into consideration; as the majority of the RVC's landholdings are within the Green Belt, and there is no reasonable alternative site outside the Green Belt, some reflection of this situation must be made in considering proposals for new development.
- 15.18 The Council will therefore consider carefully any proposals for further development by the RVC, especially in terms of their impact on the appearance and amenity of the Green Belt and the traffic and travel implications of development. Wherever possible, new development should be within the currently defined Major Developed Site boundary. Proposals for development outside this boundary will need to demonstrate that they meet the test for very special circumstances as set out in PPG2. The Council would

expect new development to contribute to the enhancement of the visual amenity of the Green Belt.

- 15.19 However, due to the scale of the site, it is important that any development does not occur in an unplanned, incremental way over time, which, taken cumulatively, could have a harmful effect on the Green Belt. Therefore, the Council requires any development proposals to be dealt with comprehensively and brought forward in the context of a master planning brief for the site. The brief should cover the essential details of planning policy, a Green Travel Plan, when required under Policy M3 and car parking management scheme, the operational requirements for the site, the principles to guide development, the proposed future layout of the site, any phasing of development, future planning controls, a landscaping framework reflecting landscape character and any rights of way improvements. The brief will serve as planning guidance for development control purposes. Therefore, it must be the subject of public consultation, approved by the Council and kept up to date.

### **Policy RA7 - Royal Veterinary College**

**Proposals for new development at the Royal Veterinary College's Hawkshead Lane campus will be permitted if they fulfill the criteria set out in Policies RA5 and RA6. Any new development must be proposed in the context of a master planning brief for the site as defined in paragraph 15.19. Wherever possible new development should take place within the Major Developed Site boundary. Proposals for new development outside the Major Developed Site boundary must meet the test of very special circumstances set out in PPG2.**

### **Brookmans Park Transmitting Station**

- 15.20 The Brookmans Park Transmitting Station lies within the Green Belt. It is recognised however, that because of the advantages of concentrating telecommunications development at the existing site where technical infrastructure is already in situ, very special circumstances may exist which justify further telecommunications development at this site.
- 15.21 In view of the station's location within the Green Belt, the Council has sought to strictly control such development and to see appropriate landscaping introduced to screen the technical installations from view. In 1995, the Council therefore adopted, in conjunction with the BBC, a master plan covering the future expansion of telecommunications development at the site. This master plan also included a landscaping scheme to screen the site. This was the subject of public consultation and has been adopted as supplementary planning guidance. It now forms the basis for determining planning applications for further telecommunications development at the Brookmans Park Transmitting Station, supplemented by Policy R21.
- 15.22 In recent years there has been an increased demand for telecommunications development on the site, in terms of the number of operators wanting to use the site, the scale of overall development and the size of the individual component parts. The supplementary planning guidance for the site, in the form of the master plan, must be accorded due weight in determining

planning applications, but the guidance needs to be updated in the light of recent development. Given that the site is located in the Green Belt it is also necessary to achieve a balance between the use of the site for telecommunications, incorporating latest government guidance, and the visual impact of such development on the Green Belt. In the light of continuing changes in telecommunications technology, it is proposed to review and update the masterplan.

### **Policy RA8 - Brookmans Park Transmitting Station**

**Telecommunications and other related development at the Brookmans Park Transmitting Station will only be permitted where it is in accordance with the adopted masterplan and Policy R21 of the Plan.**

## **Cemeteries**

15.23 There may be a need for provision for additional burial space in the district within the Plan period. The existing cemeteries in Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield are nearly full and there is no land identified within the towns and specified settlements for either extensions to existing cemeteries or new ones. Cemeteries are considered an appropriate Green Belt use and the Council will therefore consider the provision of new cemeteries in the Green Belt where they preserve its openness. The visual impact of any ancillary buildings and memorial stones on the surrounding landscape needs to be carefully considered. Cemeteries should be well located in relation to the road network and public transport facilities. Other types of burial site such as for woodland and green burials may also be acceptable.

### **Policy RA9 - Cemeteries and Memorial Gardens**

**Proposals for cemeteries, memorial gardens and sites for woodland and green burials may be permitted within the Green Belt only where:**

- (i) The site uses the existing landform and does not require re-contouring of the landscape;**
- (ii) The design of the site respects the character of the surrounding landscape, and appropriate landscaping and screening is provided to preserve the openness of the Green Belt and to prevent long views into the site;**
- (iii) The site is well located in relation to the road network, public transport links and near to existing settlements;**
- (iv) Associated buildings and memorial stones are small scale and unobtrusive.**

## **Landscape**

15.24 The character of the landscape in the district is especially valuable for the people who live there and reflects the historical and ongoing changes in the use of the land influenced by land ownership. Therefore, it is important that the character and the quality of the landscape are preserved.

15.25 To achieve this the 1993 District Plan and the 1998 Alterations identified Landscape Conservation Areas to protect areas of higher landscape quality.

However, the Structure Plan approved in 1998 proposes a new policy approach in line with the Landscape Strategy for Hertfordshire. This defines six broad Landscape Regions in the county as a framework for more detailed policies in local plans to protect distinctive landscape features and habitats. Welwyn Hatfield is located within two regions, the Central River Valley and the South Herts Plateau. A landscape character assessment of the district has been undertaken and landscape character areas defined as part of Volume 2 of the Landscape Strategy for Hertfordshire. The boundaries of the Landscape Character Areas are shown on the Proposals Map. The assessment of the character areas took as its starting point the six Hertfordshire Landscape Regions and introduced a finer grained analysis of the character of the rural areas. This analysis was based on physical influences such as topography, geology and soil type, vegetation and wildlife, as well as historical and cultural influences relating to land cover and land use. This analysis was then refined following stakeholder and community consultation. The methodology is set out in detail in the Hertfordshire Landscape Strategy Volume 2. The full landscape character assessment will be published as the Welwyn Hatfield Landscape Character Assessment. Proposals for development within the rural areas should be designed to conserve, maintain or enhance the local landscape character, as appropriate.

#### **Policy RA10 - Landscape Regions and Character Areas**

**Proposals for development in the rural areas will be expected to contribute, as appropriate, to the conservation, maintenance and enhancement of the local landscape character of the area in which they are located, as defined in the Welwyn Hatfield Landscape Character Assessment.**

#### **Watling Chase Community Forest**

15.26 Watling Chase Community Forest is one of 12 Community Forests being established in the country. Initiated by the Countryside Agency and the Forestry Commission, the aim of the project is to achieve major environmental improvements around towns and cities through the creation of a mosaic of wooded landscapes, leisure enterprises, areas for nature and public open spaces. The Watling Chase Community Forest is located in the south of Hertfordshire and covers an area of 72 square miles. It extends over the southwest part of Welwyn Hatfield covering approximately 9% of the district, including the Hatfield Aerodrome site. The Forest Plan was approved by government in March 1995. This was reviewed after 5 years, as the Forest Plan Review 2001, together with additions to the Forest Plan Landscape Assessment which was approved in February 2001. The more recent Landscape Character Appraisal contained in Volume 2 of the Landscape Strategy for Hertfordshire updates the Landscape Assessment for the Community Forest. These documents should be considered together and provide a full explanation of the Community Forest proposals. The main aims of Watling Chase Community Forest are:

- To increase tree planting to 30% cover for non urban areas;
- To produce a supply of home grown timber;

- To offer an alternative to agricultural use of land;
- To contribute to rural employment;
- To create attractive sites for people to enjoy;
- To enhance the natural beauty of the countryside;
- To create wildlife habitats;
- To reduce atmospheric pollution by absorbing pollutant gases.

15.27 PPG2 states that a Forest Plan may be a material consideration in preparing development plans and deciding planning applications and that any development within community forests in the Green Belt should be subject to normal Green Belt controls on development. The Council supports this advice and where relevant will take account of the Forest Plan in considering development proposals within its boundaries.

### **Policy RA11 - Watling Chase Community Forest**

**The boundaries of the Watling Chase Community Forest are as shown on the Proposals Map. Within the boundaries of the forest, the Council will seek to achieve the objectives of the Forest Plan in terms of planting, leisure and landscape improvement, where this accords with Green Belt policies. The Council will treat the Forest Plan as a material consideration in determining planning applications within its boundaries. Proposals for the provision of improved access to the forest and appropriate outdoor leisure and small scale recreational facilities will be permitted and will be required to be accompanied by substantial landscaping, including, where appropriate, woodland planting.**

### **Village Appraisals and Design Statements**

15.28 The involvement of local people in the way their village may or could change to retain or encourage a more thriving village life is crucial. A number of local community based environmental initiatives are well established such as Parish Maps, Village Appraisals and Village Design Statements. Village Appraisals are a comprehensive way of assessing what is important in village life to local people and provide a framework for the future. They cover all aspects of the village and are produced by the local community.

15.29 On the other hand, Village Design Statements can be approved as supplementary planning documents, provided they are produced using an appropriate methodology. They describe the visual, architectural and historical character of a village and show how the most important aspects of this character can be protected, enhanced and reflected in any new development that may occur. They are advisory documents, produced by the local community not the local planning authority and can help to influence how new development fits into a village. The Rural White Paper has re-emphasised this approach by encouraging villages to produce village plans, the design and land use aspects of which can be adopted as supplementary planning documents.

- 15.30 The Council will encourage local communities to produce Village Design Statements and village plans where they are prepared using an appropriate methodology and are subject to public consultation. Where appropriate the Council may adopt such statements and plans as supplementary planning documents.

## **Village Shops and Services**

### Protection of Village Facilities

- 15.31 The retention in rural areas of facilities such as shops, post offices, public houses, village halls, churches, and doctors' surgeries is of vital importance to local communities and to the aims of sustainable development. Without facilities it is difficult to prevent villages becoming dormitories for the main urban areas in the district.
- 15.32 Small villages in particular often have few or no facilities and have suffered from pressures for change of use from convenience retail uses to either specialist retailing uses, or non-retail uses, such as services, hot food outlets and in some cases, to residential use. In addition, high residential property prices combined with changes in the brewing industry have led to pressure to convert village pubs to residential use.
- 15.33 It is essential that villages provide a range of local facilities and that the remaining shops are not allowed to change to non-retail uses that can be provided elsewhere and which encourage travel. The Council will seek to retain the remaining retail function of these rural villages. The change of use of individual shops, not located in a parade, to non-retail use, will only be permitted where suitable alternative shopping facilities are available in the immediate locality.

### **Policy RA12 - Protection of Village Facilities**

**In the Green Belt settlements proposals that would result in the loss of local shops, public houses and other services and facilities will not be permitted unless the following criteria can be met:**

- (i) The existing use is proved to be no longer viable; the Council will expect the applicant to demonstrate, if requested, that the premises has remained vacant for over a year and to submit documentary evidence that all reasonable attempts to sell or let the premises for its existing use have failed; and**
- (ii) The loss of a local shop would not seriously diminish the provision of local shopping facilities, i.e. that there is another shop of a similar use available for customers within convenient walking distance; and**
- (iii) The alternative use would complement the character and function of the area, and would provide facilities to meet local needs.**

### Mixed Uses in Villages

- 15.34 In addition to protecting existing village facilities of settlements in the Green Belt, as defined in paragraph 4.13 of the Green Belt and Settlement Pattern chapter, the Council will encourage the provision of new local facilities. The

dual use of buildings for sustainable community provision will therefore be supported, as this can improve the vitality of villages. Examples of mixed uses in villages include the provision of a sub-post office and/or shop in a local pub, the provision of a shop at a local school and the use of a local pub as a community meeting place.

- 15.35 In some instances, the loss of residential accommodation may be outweighed by the need for a local facility and the benefits that such a use would bring, in terms of reducing the need to travel and improving the vitality of the village. In such cases, applicants will be required to demonstrate that a thorough search for an alternative location had proved unsuccessful, that there was a proven need for the facility in the area and that the benefit of the provision of the facility would outweigh the loss of residential accommodation.

### **Policy RA13 - Mixed Uses in Villages**

**The Council will permit development for the mixed use of existing buildings that provides services and facilities which meet the needs of local residents, within the Green Belt settlements where there is a proven need and it accords with the Green Belt policies.**

**Acceptable uses include local shops, post offices, public houses and meeting halls for social, cultural and religious uses, provided that the proposal would not harm the amenities of nearby residential properties and other uses.**

### **Rural Exceptions Sites**

- 15.36 PPG3 Annex B sets out guidelines for rural exceptions sites. It states that local planning authorities can include policies for rural exceptions sites where there is a demand for affordable housing. The Housing Needs Survey identified a requirement for a large number of affordable housing units which may not be met within the excluded settlements. As 79% of the district is covered by the Green Belt, the Council considers that a Rural Exceptions Policy should be included in the Plan where it can be justified for any site within and adjoining any Green Belt settlement. Each proposal for such a site will be assessed on its merits, including whether there is an identified local need (from an up-to-date housing needs survey) and on its ability to meet local needs where the benefits pass not only to the initial occupants but to the subsequent occupants as well. The site must also comply with other policies in the Plan and in particular the Green Belt policies. By local, the Council means village or parish level. The Council will not accept proposals for general market housing or mixed tenure site developments in the Green Belt being developed to cross-subsidise affordable housing on exceptions sites.

### **Policy RA14 - Rural Exceptions Sites**

**Outside the towns and specified settlements, permission may exceptionally be granted for small-scale affordable housing schemes to meet local needs on land within and adjoining any Green Belt settlements where development would usually be refused. The schemes will only be allowed where there is an identified local need from an up-**

**to-date housing needs survey and must respect the character and local distinctiveness of the settlement. Before planning permission is granted for a rural exceptions scheme, secure arrangements must be in place to ensure that all initial and subsequent occupiers of the properties have a specified identified need for local accommodation and that the benefits of affordability remain in perpetuity.**

### **Agricultural Land**

- 15.37 There are continuing changes in agriculture, especially with the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union and the effect of globalisation of the economy. There will be a shift away from paying direct subsidies for growing certain crops towards the idea of producing food in a more environmentally sensitive way.
- 15.38 Whatever these changes, there will be a need to retain the best quality agricultural land and soils for current and future generations. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has classified agricultural land into five grades. The best and most versatile land is made up of grades 1, 2, and 3a. This land offers the best opportunity for food production or forestry and should be safeguarded for the future. DEFRA requires to see all applications which would result in the loss of more than 20 hectares of the highest grade of agricultural land, or where it is likely that loss of less than 20 hectares would lead to further cumulative losses of greater than 20 hectares. If new uses or development are proposed they should be directed towards the lowest grade.

#### **Policy RA15 - Agricultural Land**

**Planning permission will not be granted for any form of development not associated with agriculture or forestry on the best and most versatile land (defined as Grades 1, 2 and 3a) unless there is special justification for development that overrides the need to protect such land. Where there is special justification for development, it should be directed towards the lowest grade of land suitable for development.**

### **Rural Employment and Diversification**

- 15.39 The Council's main approach to employment in the district is set out in the Employment section. Rural employment is part of the overall economic activity of the district. The changes in agriculture have meant that farmers have looked to diversify into other activities. These may include arts and crafts, hobby farming, general light industrial use, tele-working, furniture making, computers, woodland management and farm based leisure activities, including rural tourism. Diversification will be supported but will be judged in terms of its sustainability, its contribution to the local economy, and its impact on the rural area. The use has also to be appropriate development in terms of Green Belt policy. Proposals for diversification, which would harm the overall viability of the unit will be resisted.

#### **Policy RA16 - Rural Employment and Diversification**

**Proposals for appropriate rural diversification will be permitted subject to the following criteria:**

- (i) The development should contribute to the viability of the unit and must be compatible with continued farming operations;**
- (ii) It would provide employment and contribute to the local economy;**
- (iii) It would be sustainable in terms of its impact on rural traffic and the surrounding environment; and**
- (iv) It would accord with Green Belt policies.**

### **Re-use of Rural Buildings**

- 15.40 Diversification may involve the re-use of existing rural buildings. PPS7 on 'Sustainable Development in Rural Areas' supports the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside where this would meet sustainable development objectives. Re-use for economic development purposes will usually be preferable, but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations and for some types of building. There are many acceptable types of business activity, including tourism, but the main concern is that the proposal should not result in over-intensification of the site, which would not be sustainable in a rural area, due to its impact on travel, traffic generation, and the character of the countryside. Rural buildings may also be of importance for biodiversity, for example old barns are often used by bats. Re-use should be sympathetic to these and other protected species, and help to meet the targets and priorities set out in the local Biodiversity Action Plan.
- 15.41 The re-use of buildings should not require substantial alterations to enable a new use, for example, building walls to an open-sided barn. Some existing buildings are unsuitable for retention because their siting, design and building materials have an adverse effect on the visual amenity of the area. Re-use of such buildings will not usually be acceptable.
- 15.42 There are concerns about buildings constructed under agricultural permitted development rights being converted to a new use without having ever been used for agriculture. In this case the Council would require evidence that the building was used for agriculture for a reasonable time and why it is no longer required.
- 15.43 Some rural buildings are of historical interest in that they are listed or form part of a group or historic farmyard or are within a registered Historic Park or Garden. These are dealt with in the Resources section of the Plan.

### **Policy RA17 - Re-use of Rural Buildings**

**The change of use or adaptation of rural buildings will be permitted provided that:**

- (i) The proposed use and any proposed extensions or alterations is are in accordance with Green Belt policies;**
- (ii) The intensity of use of the site does not substantially increase;**
- (iii) Any increase in traffic generated from the site is acceptable in environmental and highway terms;**

- (iv) **There would be no adverse effects on protected species, identified in Policy R16 or other species, identified in the local Biodiversity Action Plan, which use such buildings;**
- (v) **The new activity is in sympathy with its surroundings and there is no adverse effect on the amenity of nearby residential properties and other uses;**
- (vi) **The existing structure is of a permanent nature and is not in such poor repair that it could only be brought back into use by complete or substantial reconstruction;**
- (vii) **Any proposed alterations would be in accordance with the design policies in the plan and the Supplementary Design Guidance; and**
- (viii) **In cases of agricultural buildings erected recently as a result of permitted development rights, clear evidence must be given to establish why the building is no longer suitable for agricultural use.**

**Residential re-use will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated by the applicant that business re-use would be inappropriate and unviable. In addition, consideration will be given to the contribution made by the existing use to the rural economy and whether its loss would prejudice village vitality.**

### **New Agricultural Buildings**

15.44 Part of the attractiveness of the rural landscape is the way that buildings can enhance it. Development needs to respect its setting and the local context in terms of scale, design, materials and location and should contribute to a sense of local identity. The use of village design statements and the classification of landscape character will be helpful. Some agricultural buildings do not require planning permission; those that do are defined in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. There is a requirement on farm units of five hectares or more that the farmer or other developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether their prior approval is needed for certain details. There are also stricter limitations on permitted development on small agricultural units of less than five hectares but greater than 0.4 hectares in area.

### **Policy RA18 - New Agricultural Buildings**

**Where planning permission is required for new agricultural buildings, consent will only be granted where:**

- (i) **The proposal would not harm the character of the surrounding landscape in terms of its siting, design and appearance;**
- (ii) **It would accord with the design policies of the Plan and the Supplementary Design Guidance;**
- (iii) **It would have no adverse impact on the amenities of nearby residential properties and other uses.**

**Where prior approval is required, approval will only be given if the proposal meets criteria (i) and (ii).**

### **Temporary Agricultural Accommodation**

- 15.45 PPS7 advises that although normally agricultural workers should live in nearby towns or villages, there may be situations where the work concerned may require a full time worker to live on site. Although the Council has no wish to restrict genuine new agricultural or forestry businesses, the objectives of the Green Belt would be compromised by a proliferation of dwellings in rural areas. Therefore, applicants must be able to demonstrate that the enterprise is viable and requires an on-site worker before a permanent dwelling will be considered.
- 15.46 Temporary dwellings will therefore be strictly controlled and applications will be investigated to establish recent land uses and whether, for example, any dwellings have recently been sold separately from the farm holding, indicating evidence of lack of agricultural need. Temporary permission for accommodation will not be granted where a permanent dwelling would not be permitted.

### **Policy RA19 - Temporary Agricultural Accommodation**

**Temporary residential accommodation in association with new agricultural or forestry enterprises will only be permitted where:**

- (i) It can be demonstrated by the applicant that the functional needs of the enterprise require on-site residential accommodation and that the enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis;**
- (ii) It can be demonstrated that there is no other suitable existing accommodation available for workers on-site or in the surrounding area;**
- (iii) The proposed temporary accommodation meets the Design policies in the Plan and the Supplementary Design Guidance;**
- (iv) The need for new accommodation is not as a result of the loss of the existing dwelling through sale or fragmentation of the land.**

**Only one temporary consent will be issued for a period not exceeding three years, following which further temporary consents will not be permitted. Any temporary accommodation should be removed at the end of the consent period.**

### **Permanent Agricultural Dwellings**

- 15.47 All applications for permanent agricultural dwellings will be carefully considered to avoid abuse of the planning system. The Council accepts that some small extensions to existing buildings may be necessary and that changes in agriculture or forestry may result in a demand for replacement or new residential buildings.

15.48 Proposals for permanent accommodation must demonstrate a continuing functional requirement following a temporary permission. In addition the enterprise needs to be financially viable and should provide evidence of this. There should be no need for a large house in the Green Belt and the size of the dwelling should be consistent with the need to house a worker and his or her immediate family. The requirements of occupancy will be implemented through the use of planning conditions or Section 106 agreements. Where the requirement for agricultural occupancy is no longer needed, before granting planning permission the Council will need to be satisfied that the accommodation cannot contribute towards an identified need for local affordable housing.

#### **Policy RA20 - Permanent Agricultural Dwellings**

**Permanent accommodation in association with agricultural or forestry enterprises will only be permitted where:**

- (i) the enterprise can demonstrate a continuing functional requirement for a worker or workers to be on site at all times;**
- (ii) the enterprise can demonstrate that it is financially viable;**
- (iii) the size of the proposed dwelling relates directly to the needs of the agricultural holding;**
- (iv) the proposed accommodation is in accordance with the Design policies in the Plan and the Supplementary Design Guidance.**

**Planning permission will be granted for the removal of any agricultural occupancy condition only in exceptional circumstances. Evidence must be submitted to prove that there is no longer any agricultural or forestry demand for the dwelling either by any associated or unassociated holding in the locality, or failing this it is unable to satisfy an identified need for local affordable housing.**

#### **Leisure and Tourism in the Countryside**

15.49 The use of the countryside for leisure is important to many people's quality of life in the district. Leisure activities and tourism can also provide another form of diversification from agriculture. There has to be a balance between the use of the countryside for recreation and protecting its character and environmental assets, which can include landscape, tranquillity and ecology. Leisure activities range from traditional country pursuits such as fishing, hunting, shooting and walking to banger racing, motor cycling, water sports, golf, paint ball games, mountain biking and horse riding. Tourism may also become more important in the rural areas following diversification. In addition the location and development of leisure and tourism uses in rural areas must be considered in terms of their sustainability and opportunities need to be available within and near settlements. New leisure uses should also show how they relate to the needs of the local community.

#### **Policy RA21 - Leisure and Tourism in the Countryside**

**Proposals for recreational development, which may include changes of use in the countryside will be permitted where:**

- (i) **The proposed use is in accordance with Green Belt policies;**
- (ii) **The proposed use would not have an adverse effect on the amenity of neighbouring properties, nor the character and other environmental assets of the countryside;**
- (iii) **The proposal would be accessible by means of passenger transport, cycleways, footpaths and bridleways;**
- (iv) **Existing buildings are re-used if possible;**
- (v) **New buildings that are permitted in accordance with (i) should reflect the local rural character in terms of design, massing and materials; and**
- (vi) **Any new development must be acceptable in terms of its impact on the highway network, including highway safety.**

### **Golf Courses**

15.50 Golf is a popular sport and this district has been seen as particularly suitable for golf course development. Although courses can be seen as an acceptable use in the Green Belt they can substantially change the rural landscape and bring with them pressure for ancillary development. The need for land contouring should be minimised and on-site material should be used. The importation of materials will not be permitted, except for specialist materials which may need to be imported for the construction of bunkers, greens and water features. Golf courses are best located in the urban fringes where there are public transport links rather than in isolated countryside. The environmental effects of courses must also be considered especially in terms of their effect on natural habitats and their requirement for substantial amounts of water. The need for water consumption should be minimised, and as far as possible measures should be identified to store water on site during winter in order to provide for irrigation in the summer. Small pitch and putt courses and driving ranges are best located in the urban area. New 18-hole golf courses will require an Environmental Impact Assessment under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999. The EIA should include the following information; a landscape survey and appraisal of the site, a wildlife habitat appraisal, and a preliminary archaeological assessment, details of existing Public Rights of Way, and a balance sheet of gains and losses resulting from the development of the golf course. Within the Watling Chase Community Forest area a substantial area of new tree planting should be included as part of the design of any new course.

### **Policy RA22 - Golf Courses**

**Planning permission for golf courses will only be granted where all of the following criteria are met:**

- (i) **New development necessary for the operation of the golf course should be small scale and ancillary to the use of the golf course; the re-use of existing redundant buildings should be considered first; no residential accommodation will be permitted;**

- (ii) The development (including any buildings) will not have an adverse effect on the appearance and character of the local rural area including its landscape features and its historical and archaeological interest;
- (iii) The design of the course retains existing landscape features and the need for land contouring is minimised - importation of materials to the site will not be permitted, except for the construction of bunkers, greens and water features;
- (iv) The design and landscaping of the course should enhance biodiversity by retention of existing natural habitats, creation of appropriate new habitats and by taking into account the objectives of the local Biodiversity Action Plan;
- (v) Any new development must be acceptable in terms of its impact on the highway network and highway safety. A transport assessment will be required in accordance with Policy M2 which will include the accessibility of the site by a choice of modes of transport;
- (vi) The site for the course is large enough to accommodate, as a minimum, a full nine-hole course and will not include any driving ranges or additional recreational uses unconnected with golf; and
- (vii) The course design and choice of grass and tree species should minimise water use and alternative water supplies to abstraction from the aquifer or river should be provided to service the course.

The proposal will be expected to be in accordance with the Design policies in the Plan and the Supplementary Design Guidance. Floodlighting will not normally be acceptable.

### **Noisy Recreational Activities**

15.51 Noisy sports such as motor sports, clay pigeon shooting and paintball games are increasingly popular in the countryside and there is a particular demand for motor cycle scrambling. The siting of such uses is very sensitive because of the environmental problems they can create, including damage to the landscape, natural habitats and noise problems. They also need to be well located in relation to public transport routes and should be sited where the background noise level is already high. The impact of such development also needs to be minimised by appropriate screening and landscaping.

### **Policy RA23 - Motor Sports and Other Noisy Recreational Activities**

Planning permission will only be granted for motor sports and motor cycle scrambling facilities, clay pigeon shooting, paintball games and other noisy or intrusive recreational activities where all of the following criteria can be met:

- (i) The activity will not harm the amenity of any residential property;
- (ii) The activity will not prejudice the functioning of any agricultural enterprise;

- (iii) **The activity will not have an adverse effect on the appearance and character of the local rural area including its environmental assets, landscape qualities and historical interest;**
- (iv) **The activity will not harm the amenity value of the area for informal recreation;**
- (v) **The activity will not harm the biodiversity of the area;**
- (vi) **It will not generate any demand for new buildings; and**
- (vii) **It is in accordance with Policy RA28 New Development using Rural Roads and will not prejudice safety and convenience of road, bridleway and footpath users.**

### **Riding and Livery Stables**

15.52 Riding is an important leisure activity in the district and there is continuing demand for development of stabling facilities. Riding and livery stables can have a detrimental impact on the countryside, in terms of the number and scale of buildings they introduce, creation of maneges, frequent over-grazing of pastures and the fragmentation of land holdings that can occur. There may also be potential adverse impacts on nearby sites of wildlife importance. New buildings should therefore be small scale. They should also be located so as to minimise the potential for conflict on the roads between cars and horse riders, wherever possible having direct links into the bridleway network.

#### **Policy RA24 - Riding and Livery Stables**

**Planning permission will be granted for small scale riding and livery stables, subject to the following criteria:**

- (i) **The impact on the Green Belt;**
- (ii) **The number, size, height and materials of buildings proposed;**
- (iii) **Their relationship to existing buildings and the surrounding area reflecting the rural character and landscape;**
- (iv) **Their effect on neighbouring properties i.e. smell and noise;**
- (v) **Their effect on environmental assets such as wildlife habitats; and**
- (vi) **Consideration of the standards for the safety and comfort of horses recommended by the Countryside Agency and The British Horse Society.**

**New residential accommodation needed for the maintenance of the stables will not be permitted.**

**Proposals will not be permitted unless local roads are able to accommodate the anticipated additional vehicular traffic and links are provided from the site which give riders direct access to the bridleway network where appropriate. The implementation of these requirements will be achieved through the use of planning conditions or Section 106 agreements.**

### **Access to the Countryside**

- 15.53 The Council wishes to promote informal leisure for everyone in the countryside while restricting traffic growth. This is important for people's health and quality of life. Footpaths, bridleways and cycleways provide a healthy alternative to the car. There can be conflicts between users and landowners, with a disregard by users of the countryside code and obstructions by some landowners. The County Council is now primarily responsible for maintenance of public rights of way. The County Council has produced a Good Practice Guide for Rights of Way which gives guidance of standards required which developers should adhere to. The District Council wishes to promote a positive approach to maintaining rights of way and supports the County Council in conjunction with the Countryside Management Service in its aim to define, waymark, maintain and improve the public rights of way network.
- 15.54 Although the Council is not directly responsible for the rights of way network it can control the design of development in relation to rights of way. The setting of an existing footpath usually adds to the enjoyment of the users and this can be badly affected by unsympathetic development. The Council will resist development that adversely affects the setting and amenity of existing definitive rights of way and where appropriate will seek improvements through planning conditions and S106 agreements in order to compensate for the increased use of public rights of way resulting from new development.

#### **Policy RA25 - Public Rights of Way**

**The Council will work with other organisations to promote the maintenance and improvement of the public rights of way network in the district. Planning permission will not be granted for development in the countryside which adversely affects the convenience, safety, setting and amenity of an existing definitive public right of way. The diversion of a public right of way will only be supported where the new route is as least as attractive, safe and convenient for public use. The implementation of these requirements will be achieved through the use of planning conditions or Section 106 agreements.**

#### **Horse Riding and Bridleways**

- 15.55 Horse ownership levels are significant and the popularity of riding as a leisure activity is increasing. Where riders use ordinary roads there is potential conflict with motor vehicles. Narrow lanes with limited visibility and little room for manoeuvre can be hazardous and inexperienced riders are particularly vulnerable. The Council therefore supports the improvement and extension of the bridleway network. Proposals for farm diversification or the use of land and buildings to provide new riding or livery stables should not add to potential conflict on the roads. Instead they can provide an opportunity to create further links in the network of bridleways. A London Orbital Bridle Route (the 'H25') is being created and will cross the southern boundary of the district. This is not an entirely new route but is being made up by linking existing bridleways. It will provide a regional link for the local network, which the Council supports.

## **Policy RA26 - Bridleways**

**Proposals which support the improvement and extension of the bridleway network in the district, including the creation of a London Orbital Bridle Route, will be permitted subject to other policies in the Plan.**

## **Greenways**

15.56 Dual or multiple use of cycleways for horse riding can help to increase the network of safe routes open to riders. However, dual use of cycleways can create conflict between users and requires different surface treatments. In addition, legally horse riders may not use cycleways. However, there are off-road routes where dual use is workable and the Council would support the expansion of this network of routes. One particular initiative is the 'Greenways' initiative, being developed by the Countryside Agency, the aim of which is to create a network of largely car-free off road routes for shared use by walkers, bikers and riders. One of the aims of the Watling Chase Community Forest is to improve access into the area of the forest and a pilot 'Greenways' scheme is taking place there in Hertsmere borough. There may be opportunities to extend the scheme into that part of the forest within Welwyn Hatfield District subject to resources.

## **Policy RA27 - Greenways**

**Proposals which support the development of a 'Greenways' network in the district, to enable shared use of off-road routes by walkers, cyclists and horse riders, will be permitted subject to other policies in the Plan.**

## **Sustainable Transport in Rural Areas**

15.57 Rural areas have specific traffic management problems and other movement issues but they have traditionally not received the priority given to transport in urban areas. This deficiency is being addressed in the Sustainable Transport in Rural Areas Project (STRAP). STRAP is a research and development project by Hertfordshire County Council and the Countryside Agency, which covers the rural area bounded by Welwyn Garden City, Hatfield, St. Albans and Harpenden. The boundary of the STRAP area is shown on the map in Appendix 8.

15.58 The long term aims of the project put forward in STRAP's Rural Transport Strategy are to:

- Reduce commuter traffic passing through the area by better management of the road networks;
- To improve access for people without cars to travel to, and within the village area and to outside locations;
- To investigate the opportunities for land use planning and service provision, through the better location of developments and associated facilities, to reduce the need to travel;
- To seek to secure a personal commitment from individual residents to reduce their car travel.

15.59 The Hertfordshire Rural Transport Partnership consists of the Countryside Agency, Hertfordshire County Council Passenger Transport Unit and the Community Development Agency for Hertfordshire. Its main aims are enhancing rural transport services to secure a long term improvement in access to services and facilities for rural people, and to develop transport choices with a range of accessible passenger and sustainable community based transport and sustainable alternatives to the use of the car. The Council will work with the County Council and the Countryside Agency in support of STRAP and the Hertfordshire Rural Transport Partnership in order to gain understanding of and introduce improvements to rural transport in the district.

### **Rural Roads**

15.60 The narrow winding nature of rural roads is a major contribution to the character and quality of the countryside. There may be conflicts however between different users, for example agricultural vehicles and commuter traffic, and problems with the volume of traffic on these roads. There are complementary methods of dealing with these problems. The County Council's initiative to implement a programme for the introduction of 30mph speed limits for all settlements with 10 or more properties along a rural route should give relief from noise and vibration and greater safety for local people. In planning terms the Council intends to restrict new development and the expansion of existing development which would have an adverse impact on rural traffic and would require road improvements which would substantially alter the character of the rural roads.

#### **Policy RA28 - New Development using Rural Roads**

**The Council, in association with the County Council, will not permit developments which are expected to increase or to change the type of traffic on local rural roads where:**

- (i) The road is poor in terms of width, alignment or structural conditions; or**
- (ii) The increased traffic would have an adverse effect on the local environment, either to the rural character of the road or the residential properties along it.**

## GLOSSARY

**Affordable Housing:** This term is used to encompass both low cost market and subsidised housing (irrespective of tenure, ownership - whether exclusive or shared - or financial arrangements) that will be available to people who cannot afford to occupy houses generally available on the open market.

**Area of Special Restraint:** An area of land within which no development will be permitted until such time as a review of the District Plan determines that the land is required for development.

**Ancient Monument:** Nationally important archaeological sites designated by the Secretary of State for the Environment under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

**Article 4 Direction:** A special power which the Council may exercise to control development in sensitive areas not normally subject to planning control (Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995).

**Agriculture/Agricultural:** Includes horticulture, fruit growing, seed growing, dairy farming, the breeding and keeping of livestock (including any creature kept for the production of food, wool, skins or fur, or for the purpose of its use in the farming of land), the use of land as grazing land, meadow land, osier land, market gardens and nursery grounds, and the use of land for woodlands where that use is ancillary to the farming of land for other agricultural purposes (as defined in Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990).

**Agricultural Building:** Any building on agricultural land comprised in an agricultural unit reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit.

**Agricultural Land:** Land in use for agriculture for the purpose of trade or business and excluding any dwelling house or garden.

**Agricultural Unit:** Agricultural land which is occupied as a unit for the purpose of agriculture, including:

- a) any dwelling or other building on that land occupied for the purpose of farming the land by the same person as occupies the unit; or
- b) any dwelling on that land occupied by a farmworker.

**Bad Neighbour Uses:** these are uses such as blood-boiling, abattoirs and car paint spraying. They are likely to produce noxious smells and generally unpleasant disturbance to adjacent uses/areas.

**Best Practical Environmental Option (BPEO):** Defined by the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution as “the outcome of a systematic consultative and decision making procedure which emphasises the protection and conservation of the environment across land, air and water. The procedure establishes the option that provides the most benefits or the least damage to the environment, as a whole, at acceptable cost, in the long term as well as in the short term.

**Biodiversity:** biological diversity in an environment as indicated by the presence of numbers of different species of plants and animals.

**Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP):** A framework for achieving the conservation of biodiversity based on the targeting of resources towards protecting priority habitats and species.

**Brownfield Land:** (see Previously Developed Land)

**Bridleway Network:** means bridleways, byways, quiet roads, and tracks used by horse riders and other non-motorised modes.

**Circular:** (see Government Circulars)

**Comparison Shopping/Floorspace:** shopping involving the purchase of non-food goods, where the customer will compare the same products in different shops before purchasing e.g. clothes, footwear, electrical goods, furniture.

**Community Forest:** National programme initiated by the Countryside Commission. The main aims of the Forest are to protect and improve the landscape, increase access, recreation and art opportunities, protect areas of and for nature conservation, provide educational opportunities and encourage timber production.

**Commuted Sum:** this is a sum of money paid to a Local Authority by a developer (often under a Section 106 Agreement) to effect provision of facilities or improvement connected with a development. It is often found as a 'commuted sum for parking' - money paid by a developer to provide parking elsewhere, when parking connected with a development is inadequate.

**Conservation Area:** an area of special architectural or historic interest defined by the Local Authority. It is an area deemed to be worthy of preservation or enhancement due to its special character or appearance (see S.69 and 70 of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

**Convenience Shopping/Floorspace:** superstores, supermarkets and shops selling food, newspapers, confectionery and other similar goods for daily use.

**Countryside Management Service:** this service seeks to find practical solutions to problems in the countryside. It enables organisations and groups to liaise and work towards a better management of the countryside and to promote the service aims of providing 'countryside for all'.

**County Structure Plan:** strategic plan prepared by Hertfordshire County Council showing the proposed future pattern of land use and broad planning policies for Hertfordshire. Each County is required by Central Government to prepare a Structure Plan.

**Curtilage:** the area of enclosed land associated with the use of a building, such as the garden of a house, but excluding any fields, paddocks, etc.

**dB(A):** - Unit of noise measurement which expresses the loudness in terms of decibel (dB) scale and the frequency rating factor (A).

**DEFRA:** Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

**Development Brief:** (see Planning Brief)

**Development Plan:** The development plan for an area consists of the approved Structure Plan, the Local (or District) Plan and any Minerals or Waste Plans which are in force for that area (see Section 54 Town and Country Planning Act 1990).

**Estate Management Scheme:** the Estate Management Scheme which operates in Welwyn Garden City was taken over by Welwyn Hatfield Council in 1978, from the Commission for the New Towns. The scheme consists of a number of covenants and controls which exceed normal planning powers. This is to safeguard the detailed design and landscaping features found in Welwyn Garden City from even small alterations which might harm the overall character of an area.

**EU:** European Union.

**Examination in Public:** the public inquiry held to discuss representations made during public consultation on the Structure Plan. Only invited parties may speak at the EIP which is held before a panel of people chosen by the Secretary of State for the Environment.

**G.P.D.O:** The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. Statutory Document from Central Government giving rules and definitions regarding development of land for the Local Planning Authority.

**General Industrial Development:** this is industrial and manufacturing development which broadly falls within Class B2 of the Use Classes Order.

**Government Circulars:** provide Central Government guidance on a wide range of planning issues to supplement the Town and Country Planning legislation (also see PPGs and PPSs).

**Green Belt:** (sometimes known as the Metropolitan Green Belt) the area of open land and countryside around London which is designated as 'Green Belt' and which has a number of functions:

- to restrict urban sprawl
- to protect the countryside from development
- to keep neighbouring settlements separate
- to preserve historic towns
- to help in the regeneration of urban areas.

**Gross Floorspace:** The total floorspace of the building measured to the outside of all external walls including staircase, lobbies, porches and circulation space.

**Habitat:** A term used in describing the location and characteristics of sites particular to different species of plants and animals.

**Hectare (Ha):** A metric measurement of area equal to 2.47 acres.

**Horticulture:** (see Agriculture)

**Housing Association:** Independent non-profitmaking organisations for managing building and renovating housing. Funded by Central Government through the Housing Corporation they can also receive funds from Local Authorities.

**Leq (16 hour) dB(A):** Daytime index for aircraft noise, measured between the hours of 7am and 11pm.

**Listed Building:** a building which has been identified by the Secretary of State for the Environment as being of special architectural or historic interest and is entered on the Listed Building Schedules under S.1 of The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and as such are subject to special planning control. Listed Building Consent is required for alterations or demolitions. The buildings are classified in Grades to show their relative importance:

Grade I	Buildings of exceptional interest (less than 5% of all Listed Buildings)
Grade II*	Buildings of Special Interest and of Particular Importance
Grade II	Buildings of Special Interest.

**Landscape Conservation Area:** An area which has been assessed as having significant scenic beauty to warrant particular measures to retain its character (broadly assessed and defined in the County Structure Plan).

**Local Agenda 21:** Sustainable development strategy developed by and for the local community.

**Local Housing Needs:** A term used to describe the range of housing requirements arising from the existing population including different types of ownership and house type.

**Local Nature Reserve:** Under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (as amended), Local Authorities have powers to establish Local Nature Reserves in consultation with English Nature. Such reserves are intended to provide significant opportunities for public involvement in nature conservation at a small-scale local level.

**Non-Conforming Use:** for the purpose of this Plan, a use which does not conform with surrounding land uses and is therefore not appropriate in its present location.

**ODPM:** Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

**Permitted Development Rights:** these allow certain types of development to occur without needing planning permission. The types of development are described in the G.P.D.O.

**Planning Brief:** a document designed to give planning guidance for a particular site; it may outline any desired uses which the Council feels are appropriate to the site's location e.g. elderly persons dwellings in the town centre.

**PPGs:** Planning Policy Guidance notes produced by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to provide guidance on planning policies in a simpler and more accessible form than Government circulars. Current PPGs are listed in Appendix 9.

**PPS:** Planning Policy Statement issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Current PPSs are listed in Appendix 7.

**Previously Developed Land:** land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), and associated fixed surface infrastructure. The definition covers the curtilage of the development. It may occur in both built-up and rural settings. It includes defence buildings and land used for mineral extraction and waste disposal, where provision for restoration has not been made through development control procedures. The definition excludes land and buildings currently in use for agriculture or forestry, and land in built-up areas which has not been developed previously (e.g. parks, recreation grounds and allotments - even though these areas may contain certain buildings). Also excluded is land that was previously developed but where the remains of any structure or activity have blended into the landscape and where there is a clear reason that could outweigh the re-use of the site (*definition taken from Annex C to PPG3*).

**Private Finance Initiatives:** Also known as 'Public Private Partnerships' are a mechanism set up by Central Government to enable private sector capital to fund what were previously regarded as public sector responsibilities e.g. road building and hospitals.

**RPGs:** Regional Planning Policy Guidance Notes produced by the ODPM to provide planning guidance at a regional level. This district is currently covered by RPG9 for the South East.

**Section 106:** Legal agreement under planning law to secure elements of development that cannot be controlled by planning conditions.

**Sequential Test:** A test to be applied in the selection of sites that directs new retail and leisure development to town centres where possible. First preference for sites should be the town centre, where suitable sites are available, followed by edge-of-centre sites, district and local centres, and only then by out-of-centre sites in locations that are, or can be made, accessible by a choice of means of transport. Edge-of-centre sites may be defined as those within walking distance (200-300 metres) of the main town centre shopping area. Out-of-centre sites are those which are clearly separate from the town centre itself, but which are not necessarily outside the urban area.

**SERPLAN:** the London and South East Regional Planning Conference. An organisation dealing with strategic planning and transportation issues in the South East established in 1962.

**Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs):** these are notified by English Nature under the provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). They comprise land of special interest because of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features, but not managed as a reserve.

**Specified Settlements:** settlements (i.e. towns and villages) which are excluded from the Green Belt.

**Special Area of Conservation:** These are designated under the EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats Directive) and are Nature Conservation Sites of European Importance.

**Strategic Housing Requirements:** number of new houses identified in the Structure Plan as being required to meet the district's contribution to general housing requirements in the county.

**Strategic Road Network:** these are the important national and county through-routes of regional significance which link major centres of population. These include motorways, major trunk roads and some principal 'A' roads.

**Sui Generis:** a legal term, used in planning law, to describe a use which falls outside of the defined uses in the Use Classes Order, and therefore does not qualify for the rights given to uses falling within those classes.

**Use Classes:** Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, a statutory document defining different categories of use of land and buildings for planning purposes.

**Vitality and Viability of Town/Local Centres:** Vitality is a measure of how busy a centre is. Viability is a measure of its economic health and its capacity to attract continuing investment.

**Wildlife Site:** Local sites identified by locally-developed criteria which are the most important non-statutory sites for wildlife.

**Windfall Housing Sites:** Unexpected sites which become available for new housing.

# **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX 1

### WILDLIFE SITES

List of Sites referred to in Policy R15 and defined on the Proposals Map

Ref. No. on Map	Name of Wildlife Site	ID No. from Habitat Survey
WS1	Shaw's Corner	42/019
WS2	Ayot St Lawrence Churchyard	42/036
WS3	Round Spring Wood	43/001
WS4	Sandybottom Wood	43/003
WS5	Singlers Marsh, Fulling Mill Meadow	43/005
WS6	Lockleys Wood Meadow	43/007
WS7	Hurstling's Wood	43/008
WS8	Dowdell's Wood, Bladder Wood, Warren Wood	43/009
WS9	Puttockhill Wood	43/010
WS10	Foxley Grove and Hazel Grove	43/011
WS11	Ninning's Wood	43/013
WS12	Stockings Springs Wood	43/014
WS13	Mardley Heath	43/015
WS14	Danesbury Park	43/016
WS15	Lockleys Chalk Bank, Harmer Green	43/017
WS16	Lockleys Wood	43/023
WS17	Lockleys Farm Woodland	43/025
WS18	Grassland East of Danesbury Hospital	43/028
WS19	Link Road, Grange Hill Road Banks	43/030
WS20	Legs & Stockings Wood	43/031
WS21	Old North Road & Central Reservation, Lockleys	43/032
WS22	Danesbury Icehouse	43/034
WS23	Reynard Spring, Arnold's Spring, Reynard Road Wood	43/035
WS24	Digswell Meadows South	43/039
WS25	Rectory Wood	43/046
WS26	Rolls Wood	43/054
WS27	Scrub Slope east of Digswell	43/055
WS28	Ayot Bury, Ayot St. Peter	43/061
WS29	Harmergreen Wood/Whores Wood	44/014
WS30	Cooks Wood	44/022
WS31	Cave Wood	44/023
WS32	Barnes Green	44/030
WS33	Harmer Green Pond, Pennyfathers House	44/036
WS34	Robbery Bottom Lane Railway Embankment & Scrub	44/046
WS35	Harmer Green House	44/050
WS36	Harmer Green Lane (House)	44/052
WS37	Pasture North of Lockleys Wood	44/055

WS38	Datchworth Green, Green Lanes	44/059
WS39	Barnes Wood	44/063
WS40	Harmergreen Wood Pastures	44/064
WS41	Coleman Green, Green Lane	56/001
WS42	Fletcher's Wick	56/003
WS43	Wet Grove	56/004
WS44	Titnol's Wood	56/005
WS45	Symondshyde Great Wood	56/006
WS46	Colemangreen Spring and Kents Dell	56/025
WS47	Copse south of Symondshyde Great Wood, Beech Farm (Sutton Farm)	56/057
WS48	Ayot St Peter Churchyard	57/001
WS49	Lemsford Mead	57/003
WS50	Stanborough Reed Marsh	57/004
WS51	Lemsford Springs	57/006
WS52	Digswell Lake	57/007
WS53	Woodhall Farm Meadows	57/008
WS54	Saul's Wood	57/009
WS55	Sherrardspark Wood	57/010
WS56	Brocket Park	57/011
WS57	Ayot Greenway	57/012
WS58	Homer's Wood	57/014
WS59	Benstead's Wood	57/016
WS60	Malm's Wood	57/017
WS61	Digswell Place Park	57/018
WS63	Furzefield Wood	57/021
WS64	Long Spring and Long Grove Plantation, Spring Grove	57/029
WS65	Marsh west of Stanborough Yachting Lake	57/033
WS66	Wood south of Woodhall Farm	57/034
WS67	Wagon and Horses Pond, Ayot Green	57/035
WS68	Temple Wood Vale Open Space	57/040
WS69	Valley Road Open Space	57/041
WS70	Digswell Place Meadow	57/045
WS71	Creswick Plantation South	57/046
WS72	Pastures south of Malms Wood & north of Digswell Place Farm	57/047
WS73	Dismantled Railway East of Sherrardspark Wood	57/048
WS74	Little Hocketts Wood	57/050
WS75	Long Spring	57/051
WS76	Mitchell's Wood	57/052
WS77	Great Captain's & Holwell Park Wood	58/015
WS78	Rolls, Blackthorn and Howick's Woods	58/020
WS79	The Commons (Wood)	58/023
WS80	Blackfan Fen & the Commons Meadow	58/037
WS81	Blackfan Valley	58/039
WS82	Tewin Water Mimram Valley	58/040
WS83	Bushey Leys	58/043
WS84	Home Covert and Round Wood	68/009
WS85	Howe Dell/Stream Woods	69/005

WS86	Oxleys Wood	69/006
WS87	Grassland Strip near Butterfield Cottage, Marsh Moor	69/007
WS88	Bush Wood	69/009
WS89	Millward's Park	69/010
WS90	Meadow north of Peplins Wood	69/012
WS91	Hazel Grove	69/013
WS92	Home Park, Hatfield Estate	69/014
WS93	Chantry Lane Wood and Dene Hole	69/015
WS94	Skimpans Farm	69/017
WS95	Coombe Wood	69/021
WS96	Copse at Nast Hyde	69/022
WS97	Hatfield House and Palace	69/023
WS98	New Barnfield Meadow	69/035
WS99	Marshmoor Lane Grassland Strip	69/038
WS100	Grasslands North of Parsonage Road	69/040
WS101	Southway – Southern Road Verge	69/046
WS102	Hornbeam Lane	70/001
WS103	Pope's Pondholes & Deeve Wood	70/003
WS104	Woodside Green Road Verge	70/004
WS105	Grubs Lane Marsh	70/005
WS106	Ox Wood	70/007
WS107	Home Wood	70/008
WS108	Warren Wood	70/009
WS109	Kentish Lane Farm Wood	70/010
WS110	Backhouse Wood	70/011
WS111	Nine Acre wood	70/012
WS112	Wildhill Meadows	70/016
WS113	Green Street	70/020
WS114	Wood south of Woodside Green	70/024
WS115	Larkinhill Grove	70/029
WS116	Essendon Brook Pasture	70/031
WS117	Long Wood	70/033
WS118	Wood south of Harefield Wood	70/035
WS119	Wood by Belvedere Farm	70/036
WS120	Essendon Place Farm Meadow	70/045
WS121	Berkhamsted Lane Plantation	70/047
WS122	Panther's Wood	70/049
WS123	Woodfield Lane Roadside Verge	70/053
WS124	Hell Wood	70/059
WS125	Meadow near Ponsfall Farm	70/067
WS126	Woodland west of Ponsfall Farm	70/070
WS127	Meadow south of Tyler's Causeway	70/078
WS128	Chestnut Farm Meadows	70/080
WS129	Meadows at Essendon Place	70/083
WS130	Essendon Glebe Meadow	70/085
WS131	The Legg	70/088
WS132	Wild Hill	70/090
WS133	Grassland & Track east of Deeves Wood	70/093
WS134	Woodland east of Deeves Wood	70/094

WS135	Pasture west of Essendon Place	70/095
WS136	Grassland south of Essendon Pinetum	70/096
WS137	Harefield Wood Green Lane	70/097
WS138	Wormley Wood	71/004
WS139	The Warren, Newgate Street	71/012
WS140	Scrub by Ponsbourne Brook	71/083
WS141	Walsingham Wood	78/008
WS142	Cangsley Grove	78/010
WS143	Mimms Wood, (Redwell, Hawkshead & Mymmshall)	78/011
WS144	Brick Kiln Wood	78/016
WS145	Potterells Wood	78/020
WS146	Peplin's Wood	78/021
WS147	Scrubby Grassland by Frederick's Wood	78/031
WS148	Potwells	78/043
WS149	Grasslands by Abduls House	78/045
WS150	Moffats Meadows	78/065
WS151	Spring Wood	78/069
WS152	Hawkshead Lane Pond and Verge	78/074
WS153	North Mymms Park	78/079
WS154	North Mymms House	78/084
WS155	North Mymms Stable	78/085
WS156	North Mymms Icehouse	78/086
WS157	Hawkshead Wood Swallowholes	78/093
WS158	Gobions Wood	79/001
WS159	Northaw Marshes, Northaw Brook Pastures	79/002
WS160	Northaw Brick Kiln	79/004
WS161	Northaw Great Wood	79/005
WS162	Home Wood	79/007
WS163	Queenswood Home Farm Grove	79/010
WS164	Hook Wood	79/011
WS165	George's Wood	79/012
WS166	Leggatts Park	79/013
WS167	Fritillary Meadow	79/014
WS168	The Dell, Cuffley, Colesdale Farm	79/017
WS169	Cattlegate Wood	79/018
WS170	Hook Copse	79/022
WS171	Grassland by Hook Copse	79/023
WS172	Fir and Ponds Woods Nature Reserve	79/024
WS173	Five Acre Wood	79/026
WS174	Well Wood	79/027
WS175	Kentish Lane Pastures	79/030
WS176	Woodland area south east of Little Heath Farm	79/033
WS177	Meadow east of Park Road, Northaw	79/043
WS178	Woodland south west of Northaw Brook Pastures	79/044
WS179	Wood north of Postern Gate	79/047
WS180	Woodland strip north of School Camp	79/048
WS181	Chequers Mead Meadows & Pond	79/051
WS182	Park Road Pastures	79/058
WS183	Cuffley Station Embankment	80/010

WS184	Old Manor Cottage, Newgate Street	80/011
WS185	Tolmers Park	80/064
WS186	Hempstall Spinney	44/049
WS187	Sprite Field Spring	56/029
WS188	Bath Wood	70/037
WS189	Tollgate Wood	69/019
WS190	The Vineyard, Nyn Park	79/063
WS191	Linces Bank	43/066
WS192	Ayot Barns, Ayot St. Lawrence	42/069
WS193	Sleeve Hall Wood	68/034
WS194	Deerswood Avenue Allotments	69/049
WS195	Hatfield Park Buildings	69/023
WS196	Ayot Green	57/002
WS197	Watch Mead Disused Railway	58/054
WS198	Dalewood Allotments	58/057
WS199	Twentieth Mile Bridge Allotments	57/055
WS200	Ascots Farm Pond	57/056
WS201	North Mymms Churchyard	78/082
WS202	Travellers Lane Grasslands and Ponds	69/008
WS203	Nyn Park Pond	79/003
WS204	Nyn Park House Area	79/064
WS205	Hook Lane	79/060
WS206	Knella Road Allotments	58/022

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **LISTED BUILDINGS**

#### **GRADE I LISTED BUILDINGS**

New St. Lawrence Church, Ayot St. Lawrence  
Parish Church of St. Etheldreda, Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
Hatfield House, Hatfield Park, Old Hatfield  
The Palace, Hatfield Park, Old Hatfield  
Brocket Hall, Marford Road, Lemsford  
North Mymms Park with adjoining garden walls and ha ha, Tollgate Road,  
North Mymms

#### **GRADE II\* LISTED BUILDINGS**

Welwyn Railway Viaduct, Bessemer Road, Welwyn Garden City  
Old St. Lawrence Church, Ayot St. Lawrence  
Ayot House, Bride Hall Lane, Ayot St. Lawrence  
Shaw's Corner, Bride Hall Lane, Ayot St. Lawrence  
Church of St. Mary the Virgin, High Road, Essendon  
The Flight Test Hangar, Offices, Fire Station and Control Tower, British Aerospace,  
off Comet Way, Hatfield  
Old Mill House Museum and Mill Green Mill, Mill Green, Hatfield  
Torilla, Wilkins Green Lane, Hatfield  
Gatehouse to Hatfield House with Porters Lodge and the 2 adjoining cottages on the  
south, Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
Goodrich House, 12 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
Hill House, 38 Park Street, Old Hatfield  
Gates, lodges and screen wall at south-east entrance to Brocket Hall, Marford Road,  
Lemsford  
Bridge over the lake at Brocket Hall, Marford Road, Lemsford  
The Temple, Brocket Hall, Lemsford  
Northaw Place, Cooper's Lane, Northaw  
The Dower House, Cooper's Lane, Northaw  
Parish Church of St. Thomas a Becket, Northaw Road West, Northaw  
The Folly Arch, Hawkshead Road, Little Heath  
Moffats Farmhouse, 65, Moffats Lane, Brookmans Park  
Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Tollgate Road, North Mymms  
Guessens, 6 Codicote Road, Welwyn  
Sherrardswood School, Lockleys, Hertford Road, Welwyn  
Templewood School, Pentley Park, Welwyn Garden City

#### **GRADE II LISTED BUILDINGS (BY AREA)**

## **Ayot St. Lawrence**

Old Hall, Farm Cottage, Ayot St. Lawrence  
Cunliffe Cottages, Ayot St. Lawrence  
Ayot Farmhouse, Bibbs Hall Lane, Ayot St. Lawrence  
Stable Block on east side of Ayot House, Bridge Hall Lane, Ayot St. Lawrence  
The Manor House Bride Hall Lane, Ayot St. Lawrence  
Outbuilding 3m north of Ayot Manor House, Bride Hall Lane, Ayot St. Lawrence  
Barn about 30m north-west of Ayot Manor House, Bride Hall Lane,  
Ayot St. Lawrence  
The Lodge, Bride Hall Lane, Ayot St. Lawrence  
Walled garden on north side of Ayot Manor House, Bride Hall Lane, Ayot St.  
Lawrence  
Ayot Cottage, Bride Hall Lane, Ayot St. Lawrence  
The Brocket Arms PH, Bride Hall Lane, Ayot St. Lawrence  
Former Ayot Post Office Cottage immediately west of the Brocket Arms P.H. Bride  
Hall Lane, Ayot St. Lawrence  
Tudor Cottage, Bride Hall Lane, Ayot St. Lawrence  
Telephone Kiosk, Bride Hall Lane, Ayot St. Lawrence  
The Old Rectory, Ayot St. Lawrence

## **Ayot St. Peter**

The Waggoners P.H. Brickwall Close, Ayot Green, Ayot St. Peter  
Ayot Green Cottage, 4 Ayot Green, Ayot St. Peter  
Former Ayot Green Post Office, 6 Ayot Green, Ayot St. Peter  
Nos. 8, 10, 12, Ayot Green, Ayot St. Peter  
14 Ayot Green, Ayot St. Peter  
16 Ayot Green, Ayot St. Peter  
Wall, railings, gate piers and gate to No 16 Ayot Green, Ayot St. Peter  
Nos. 13 & 15 Ayot Green, (including four gate piers) Ayot St. Peter  
Nos. 19, 21 & 23 Ayot Green, Ayot St. Peter  
31 Ayot Green, Ayot St. Peter  
37 Ayot Green, Ayot St. Peter  
Manor Farm, Ayot Little Green, Ayot St. Peter  
The Old Rectory, Ayot St. Peter  
Ayot Bury, Ayot St. Peter  
Former bakehouse, Ayot Bury, Ayot St. Peter  
Barn 20m south-east of Ayot Bury House, Ayot St. Peter  
St. Peter's Church, Ayot St. Peter  
Hornbeam House and Saul's Wood Cottage, Ayot St. Peter  
Ayot Place, Ayot St. Peter  
Garden wall on south and east side of house, Ayot Place, Ayot St. Peter  
Pigeon Loft in farm courtyard Ayot Place, Ayot St. Peter  
Linces Farm Farmhouse, Kimpton Road, Ayot St. Peter  
Barn south-west of farmhouse, Linces Farm, Ayot St. Peter  
Former granary east of farmhouse, Linces Farm, Ayot St. Peter  
Farmhouse at Melbourne Stud, Waterend Lane, Ayot St. Peter  
Barn on north side of courtyard at Melbourne Stud, Waterend Lane, Ayot St. Peter

## **Essendon**

Essendon Mill, Essendon  
Essendonbury Farmhouse, Essendon  
Barn on east side of farmyard at Essendonbury Farm, Essendon  
The Salisbury Crest P.H., Essendon  
Sherwoods, Beggars Roost & Norcott, Essendon  
Wheatsheafs, Essendon  
Belvedere Farm, Essendon  
Bedwell Park, Essendon  
Ice House near road at Bedwell Park, Essendon  
London Lodge at Bedwell Park, Essendon  
Bedwell Lodge, Essendon  
Farmhouse at Cucumber Hall Farm, Essendon  
Essendon Place, High Road, Essendon  
Entrance Gates and Walls to south entrance of Essendon Place, Essendon  
Essendon Manor, 11 & 13 High Road, Essendon  
The Limes, High Road, Essendon  
Garden Walls at The Vines, High Road, Essendon  
57 High Road, Essendon  
Elms, 59 High Road, Essendon  
Essendon Close, High Road, Essendon  
Barn on south side of Essendon Close, High Road, Essendon  
Dimsdale Tomb in Churchyard of Church of St Mary the Virgin, High Road, Essendon  
Brown Tomb in Churchyard of Church of St. Mary the Virgin, High Road, Essendon  
Cornwallis Tomb in Churchyard of Church of St. Mary the Virgin, High Road, Essendon  
Presley Tomb in Churchyard of St. Mary the Virgin, High Road, Essendon  
1-7 Church Cottages (consec.), High Road, Essendon  
Wytmead, High Road, Essendon  
The Manor House, High Road, Essendon  
Pond Cottage, 50 High Road, Essendon  
Bedwell Park Farmhouse, School Lane, Essendon  
2 Barns at Bedwell Park Farm, School Lane, Essendon  
Essendon School, School Lane, Essendon  
Upper West End Farm, West End, Essendon  
Flint Cottage, West End, Essendon  
Corner Cottage, West End, Essendon  
Gate Lodges and Gates to Camfield Place, Wildhill, Essendon  
Camfield Farmhouse, Wildhill, Essendon  
Barn at Camfield Farm, Wildhill, Essendon  
Holwell Manor, Essendon

## **Hatfield**

The Comet P.H., Barnet By-Pass, Hatfield  
British Aerospace Gatehouse, Comet Way, Hatfield  
British Aerospace Offices, Comet Way, Hatfield

British Aerospace Staff Mess, Comet Way, Hatfield  
Church of St John the Evangelist, Highview, Hatfield  
Nos. 23-41 (odd), 43-67 (odd), 69, 71-79 (odd) The Ryde, Hatfield  
Mill Cottages, 3, 4 & 5 Bush Hall Lane, Hatfield  
Bush Hall Hotel, Chequers, Mill Green, Hatfield  
The Cottage, Chequers, Mill Green, Hatfield  
Holly Cottage, Chantry Lane, Hatfield  
Holwell Court, Hatfield Road, Hatfield  
Milepost to West of Comet Roundabout, Hatfield Road, Hatfield  
Saw Mill Cottage, Hertford Road, Hatfield  
Church of St. John the Evangelist, Highview, Hatfield  
Riding School at Warren Wood, Kentish Lane, Wildhill, Hatfield  
Farmhouse at Barber's Lodge Farm, Kentish Lane, Wildhill, Hatfield  
Symondshyde Farmhouse, Hammond's Lane, Hatfield  
Woodhill House, Kentish Lane, Wildhill, Hatfield  
Howe Dell School, Old Rectory Drive, Hatfield  
St. Luke's Church, (including Cemetery wall and gate) St. Albans Road East,  
Hatfield  
Pope's Farm, West End, Hatfield  
Garden Cottage, Wild Hill, Hatfield  
Boulters Cottage and 31 Wild Hill, Hatfield  
60 & 62 Wild Hill, Hatfield  
Brewhouse Cottage, 68 Wild Hill, Hatfield  
Brewhouse Farmhouse, (including red brick wall) Wild Hill, Hatfield  
Barn and former stables at Brewhouse Farm, Wild Hill, Hatfield  
Great Nast Hyde, (including front garden wall) Wilkins Green Lane, Hatfield  
The Cottage at Great Nast Hyde, Wilkins Green Lane, Hatfield  
Nast Hyde Farmhouse, Wilkins Green Lane, Hatfield  
Barns on north and west sides of farmyard at Nast Hyde Farm, Wilkins Green Lane,  
Hatfield  
The Cottage, Woodside, Hatfield  
St. Michael's, Woodside, Hatfield  
Stable block at The Old Stables, Woodside, Hatfield  
Pair of farm cottages on south side of farmyard at Woodside Place Farm, Woodside,  
Hatfield  
Barn at Woodside Place Farm, Woodside, Hatfield  
Milking Parlour at Woodside Place Farm, Woodside, Hatfield  
Lower Woodside Farm Farmhouse, Woodside, Hatfield  
4 Woodside Green, Hatfield  
6 Woodside Green, Hatfield  
Gate Lodges and gates at south-east entrance to Hatfield Park (Pepper Pot),  
Woodside, Hatfield

### **Coopers Green**

Old Forge Cottage, Coopers Green Lane, Coopers Green  
Farmhouse and small barn at Sutton's Farm, Coopers Green Lane  
Astwick Manor, Coopers Green Lane, Hatfield

### **Lemsford**

12 Cromer Hyde, Lemsford  
 14 Cromer Hyde, Lemsford  
 16 and 18 Cromer Hyde, Lemsford  
 Upper Cromer Hyde Farmhouse, Cromer Hyde, Lemsford  
 Gosmoor, Green Lane, Lemsford  
 20 Lemsford Village, Lemsford  
 22 and 24 Lemsford Village, Lemsford  
 Mill Cottages, 34 Lemsford Village, Lemsford  
 Lemsford Mill, Lemsford Village, Lemsford  
 The Mill House, 38 Lemsford Village, Lemsford  
 3 outbuildings to north-north-west of Lemsford Mill, Lemsford Village, Lemsford  
 Bridge over River Lea, Lemsford Village, Lemsford  
 Bridge House, Lemsford Village, Lemsford  
 The Sun Inn, Lemsford Village, Lemsford  
 37 Lemsford Village, Lemsford  
 The Old Cottage, 49 Lemsford Village, Lemsford  
 Church of St. John the Evangelist, Lemsford Village, Lemsford  
 The Stables, Brocket Hall, Marford Road, Lemsford  
 Former Laundry House, Brocket Hall, Marford Road, Lemsford  
 Former Laundry block and pump house, Brocket Hall, Marford Road, Lemsford  
 'The Gardens': house and three walled gardens including octagonal greenhouse,  
 Marford Road, Lemsford  
 Gates and screen of Brocket Park to south-west of Brocket Hall, Marford Road,  
 Lemsford  
 Brocket Lea, Marford Road, Lemsford  
 Farmhouse and adjoining barns at Warren Farm, Marford Road, Lemsford  
 Granary at Warren Farm (25m north-east of farmhouse), Marford Road, Lemsford

### **Old Hatfield**

St. Etheldreda's Church Hall, Church Street, Old Hatfield  
 St. Etheldreda's Churchyard gates, gate piers and flanking walls, on north side of  
 churchyard, Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 Chest Tomb to James Wilson 40 metres south of west tower in St. Etheldreda's  
 Churchyard, Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 Monument to Cecil family in burial ground on east side of St. Etheldreda's  
 Churchyard, Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 Tomb of 3rd Marquess of Salisbury in Cecil burial ground, St. Etheldreda's  
 Churchyard, Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 Walls and gates on east side of Cecil family burial ground, St. Etheldreda's  
 Churchyard, Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 The Rectory, 1 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 Morton House, 3 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 Stable block to rear of 3 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 5, Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 7 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 Barn at west end of rear garden of 7 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 9 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 11 Fore Street, Old Hatfield

13 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 17 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 19 (and rear barn) Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 21, 23 & 25, Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 2 & 4 Fore Street (comprising The Chaplains House, flats 1,2,3,4 & 5, and east wall)  
     Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 10 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 14 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 The Garden House, 16 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 Outbuilding to rear of 16 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 18 & 20 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 22 & 24 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 26 & 28 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 32 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 34 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 Peta Shaw, 38 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 40 & 42 Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 44 & 46 Fore Street (part of The Eight Bells P.H.), Fore Street, Old Hatfield  
 Gates, screen and 4 gate posts to Hatfield Park, Great North Road, Hatfield  
 Statue of the 3rd Marquess of Salisbury, Great North Road, Old Hatfield  
 North Place, 82 Great North Road, Old Hatfield  
 The Red Lion Hotel, 88 Great North Road, Old Hatfield  
 The Wrestlers P.H., Great North Road, Old Hatfield  
 2, 4 and 6 Church Street, Old Hatfield  
 8 and 10 Church Street, Old Hatfield  
 24 Church Street, Old Hatfield  
 30 Church Street, Old Hatfield  
 5 Church Street, Old Hatfield  
 Garden Walls on east side of Hatfield House, Hatfield Park, Old Hatfield  
 Gates, walls and pavilions on south side of Hatfield House, Hatfield Park,  
     Old Hatfield  
 Walls and gates on north and west sides of Hatfield House, Hatfield Park,  
     Old Hatfield  
 Garden walls and gates on the west side of Hatfield House, joining The Palace,  
     Hatfield Park, Old Hatfield  
 Real Tennis Court and Exhibition Centre, Hatfield Park, Old Hatfield  
 The Great Stables, The Harness Room Shop, The Donkey Stables, Hatfield Park,  
     Old Hatfield  
 The Lodge House, Home Park, including The Deer Larder, Hatfield Park,  
     Old Hatfield  
 Wall and gate piers at The Lodge House, Home Park, Hatfield Park, Old Hatfield  
 Walls and pavilions on south side of The Vineyard, including The Vineyard and  
     Cottages, Hatfield Park, Old Hatfield  
 Walls bounding north sides of The Vineyard in Home Park, Hatfield Park,  
     Old Hatfield  
 Pavilion in the Vineyard, Home Park, Hatfield Park, Old Hatfield  
 Orchard House, Hatfield Park, Old Hatfield  
 1,3 & 5 Park Street, Old Hatfield  
 The Old Coach House, 7, 9 & 11, Park Street, Old Hatfield  
 The Horse & Groom P.H., 21 Park Street, Old Hatfield

The Eight Bells P.H., 2 Park Street, Old Hatfield  
Signpost on pavement in front of 2 Park Street, Old Hatfield  
4,6,8 & 10 Park Street, Old Hatfield  
40 Park Street, Old Hatfield  
44 Park Street, Old Hatfield  
Gate Lodges and gates at south-east entrance to Hatfield Park, Old Hatfield

### **Stanborough**

The Old Cottage, Green Lane, Stanborough

### **Cromer Hyde**

The Crooked Chimney P.H., Marford Road, Cromer Hyde

### **Mill Green**

The Green Man P.H. Mill Green Lane, Mill Green  
1-6 Mill Green Lane, Mill Green  
Woodhall Farm: Cottage south of farmhouse, Mill Green Lane, Mill Green  
Telephone kiosk, junction of Bush Hall Lane, Mill Green Lane and Mill Green

### **Newgate Street**

Green Lodge, Newgate Street  
Catsford Cottage, 43 Newgate Street Village, Newgate Street  
Church of St. Mary Ponsbourne, Newgate Street Village, Newgate Street  
Front wall to Church of St. Mary Ponsbourne, Newgate Street Village,  
Newgate Street  
The Coach and Horses P.H., Newgate Street Village, Newgate Street  
Former Tolmers Park Hospital, Carbone Hill, Newgate Street

### **Crews Hill**

Cattlegate Farmhouse, Cattlegate Road, Crews Hill

### **Northaw**

Northaw House, Cooper's Lane, Northaw  
Stable block at Northaw House, Cooper's Lane, Northaw  
Garden Walls at Northaw Place, Cooper's Lane, Northaw  
Former Stables at The Dower House, Cooper's Lane, Northaw  
Springfield, Cooper's Lane, Northaw  
Reception and Offices at Middleton Motors, Cooper's Lane, Northaw  
The Grange, Cooper's Lane, Northaw  
Holly Frindle Cottage, Cooper's Lane, Northaw  
The Hook House, Cooper's Lane, Northaw  
Nyn Manor Farm, Handpost Hill, Northaw  
Barn and wall on east side of farmyard at Nyn Manor Farm, Handpost Hill, Northaw  
Stable on south side of farmyard at Nyn Manor Farm, Handpost Hill, Northaw

Telephone Kiosk, outside Post Office, Northaw Road West, Northaw  
Vernons House, Northaw Road West, Northaw  
The Sun Public House, Northaw Road West, Northaw  
Two Brewers Public House, Northaw Road West, Northaw  
9 (The Old Bakery) and 9A Northaw Road West, Northaw  
Ivy Cottages 2, 4, 6 & 8, Northaw Road West, Northaw  
Muscombes Cottage, 10 & 12 Northaw Road West, Northaw  
16, 18 & 20 Northaw Road West, Northaw  
Barn on south side of farmyard at Park Farm, Northaw Road West, Northaw  
Coal Duty Marker at junction with Well Road, The Ridgeway, Northaw  
The Old Vicarage, Vineyards Road, Northaw  
8 Vineyards Road, Northaw  
Spinney Cottage, Well Road, Northaw

### **Bell Bar**

Lower Farm Farmhouse, Bell Lane, Bell Bar  
Carpenter's Cottage, 48 Bell Lane, Bell Bar  
56 Bell Lane, Bell Bar

### **Welham Green**

Skimpans Farm, Bulls Lane, Welham Green  
Granary at Skimpans Farm, Bulls Lane, Welham Green  
47 Dixons Hill Close, Welham Green  
The Hope and Anchor Public House, Station Road, Welham Green  
9 Station Road, Welham Green  
Fairview, 15 Station Road, Welham Green  
Woodbine Cottage, 27 Station Road, Welham Green  
31 Station Road, Welham Green  
Crawford Cottages, 42, 44, 46 & 48 Station Road, Welham Green  
Walled gardens and adjoining house at Potterells, Station Road, Welham Green

### **Little Heath**

Milestone about 30m north of Little Heath Farm, Great North Road, Little Heath  
London Coal Duty Marker, Heath Road, Little Heath

### **Water End**

Hawkshead Farm, Hawkshead Lane, Water End  
Abdale House and Northside, Warrengate Road, Water End  
Abdale Cottage, 24 Warrengate Road, Water End  
Colne Cottage, 49 Warrengate Road, Water End  
The Old Maypole Public House, Warrengate Road, Water End  
The Woodman Inn, Warrengate Road, Water End

### **Brookmans Park**

The White House (62), and Moffats (64), Moffats Lane, Brookmans Park

Granary at Moffats Farmhouse, 65 Moffats Lane, Brookmans Park  
Mymwood School, Shepherd's Way, Brookmans Park  
Mymwood Lodge, Shepherd's Way, Brookmans Park

### **North Mymms**

The Stable Block at North Mymms Park, Tollgate Road, North Mymms  
The Ice House at North Mymms Park, Tollgate Road, North Mymms  
Main gates, octagonal lodge, walls, East Lodge and service gates to North Mymms Park, Tollgate Road, North Mymms  
Bridge to main entrance to North Mymms Park, Tollgate Road, North Mymms  
Gate and screen to north-east entrance to North Mymms Park adjoining Churchyard, Tollgate Road, North Mymms  
Gausson Tomb in Churchyard of Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Tollgate Road, North Mymms  
Kemble Tomb in Churchyard of Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Tollgate Road, North Mymms  
Tomb on south side of Chancel of Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Tollgate Road, North Mymms  
Tomb south-east of Chancel of Church of St. Mary the Virgin, near Church Cottage, Tollgate Road, North Mymms  
The Old Vicarage, Tollgate Road, North Mymms

### **Welwyn**

Mill Cottage, Digswell Lane, Welwyn  
Outbuildings to south-west of Digswell Bridge, Digswell Lane, Digswell Water, Welwyn  
Digswell Bridge, Hertford Road, Digswell Water, Welwyn  
Quatermans, Digswell Lane, Digswell Water, Welwyn  
Digswell Farmhouse (and attached garage) 51 Hertford Road, Welwyn  
Parish Church of St. Mary, Church Street, Welwyn  
Walls, railings and gates to Churchyard of St. Mary's Parish Church, Church Street/Codicote Road, Welwyn  
4 Church Street, Welwyn  
The Rose and Crown Public House, 14 Church Street, Welwyn  
Former Coach House on north side of car park, rear of Rose and Crown P.H., Church Street, Welwyn  
Rose Cottage, 22 Church Street, Welwyn  
24 Church Street, Welwyn  
The Old Chequers, 28 Church Street, Welwyn  
Milepost, Church Street, Welwyn  
9 Church Street, Welwyn  
13 Church Street, Welwyn  
15 Church Street, Welwyn  
17 Church Street, Welwyn  
Thody's of Welwyn, 21 Church Street, Welwyn  
Garden Wall and Barn at 1 Codicote Road, Welwyn  
The Grange, 3 Codicote Road, Welwyn  
Milestone on pavement abutting front wall near northern end of range at Guessens,

6 Codicote Road, Welwyn  
 Milepost just north of Fulling Mill Lane, Codicote Road, Welwyn  
 44 Codicote Road, Welwyn  
 The Old House, 12 Danesbury Park Road, Pottersheath, Welwyn  
 Ivy Cottage, 1 Forge Lane, Welwyn  
 Carlton Cottage, 36 Fulling Mill Lane, Welwyn  
 Barn opposite farmhouse on north-east side of farmyard at Lockleys Farm, Great North Road, Welwyn  
 Barn about 50 metres west-north-west of farmhouse at Lockleys Farm, Great North Road, Welwyn  
 Milepost, Great North Road, Oaklands, Welwyn  
 Welwyn North Railway Station and Bridge, Harmer Green Lane, Welwyn  
 South Portal of Welwyn Tunnel, Harmer Green Lane, Welwyn  
 The Cottage, 55 Harmer Green Lane, Harmer Green, Welwyn  
 Pennyfathers, 78 Harmer Green Lane, Harmer Green, Welwyn  
 Maran Cottage, 56 Hertford Road, Digswell Water, Welwyn  
 Alder Cottage, Hertford Road, Digswell Water, Welwyn  
 Annexe and adjoining garden wall north of Sherrardswood School, Lockleys, Hertford Road, Welwyn  
 2 High Street, Welwyn  
 4 High Street, Welwyn  
 10 High Street, Welwyn  
 Bridge House, 26, High Street, Welwyn  
 28 & 30 High Street, Welwyn  
 The Wellington Inn Hotel, 1 High Street, Welwyn  
 Bakery, 3 High Street, Welwyn  
 11A High Street, Welwyn  
 29 High Street, Welwyn  
 Surgery, 41 High Street, Welwyn  
 Oakleigh, 45 High Street Welwyn  
 4 Hobbs Hill, Welwyn  
 The Rectory, 6 Hobbs Hill, Welwyn  
 4 London Road, Welwyn  
 Little Chequers, 7 London Road, Welwyn  
 The Vineyard, 8-14 (even) Mill Lane, Welwyn  
 The White Horse Public House, 30 Mill Lane, Welwyn  
 32 Mill Lane, Welwyn  
 40 & 42 Mill Lane, Welwyn  
 13 & 15 Mill Lane, Welwyn  
 21 Mill Lane, Welwyn  
 23 & 25 Mill Lane, Welwyn  
 Mill House, 31 Mill Lane (and garden wall), Welwyn  
 Appletrees, 50 Mill Lane, Welwyn  
 Parkside 52 Mill Lane, Welwyn  
 6-12 (even) Mimram Road, Welwyn  
 Ebenezer Strict Baptist Church, Mimram Walk, Welwyn  
 New Place (and garden walls), New Place, Welwyn  
 Danesbury Hospital (Front Block) North Ride, Welwyn  
 2, 4 & 6 Orchard Road, Welwyn  
 The White Hart, 2 Prospect Place, Welwyn

6, Prospect Place, Welwyn  
The Manor House and West Manor, 9 School Lane, Welwyn  
The Lodge, 33 School Lane, Welwyn  
The White House, 2 School Lane, Welwyn  
Little Manor Cottage, 4 School Lane, Welwyn  
Badger Cottage, White Hill, Welwyn

### **Woolmer Green**

7 London Road, Woolmer Green  
Church of St. Michael and All Angels, London Road, Woolmer Green  
The Old Cottage, 10 London Road, Woolmer Green  
Milepost, London Road, Woolmer Green  
Barn on south side of Mardleybury Farm near road, Mardleybury Road,  
Woolmer Green  
Mardleybury Manor, Mardleybury Road, Woolmer Green  
Payne's Farmhouse, New Road, Woolmer Green

### **Harmer Green**

The Thatched House, 3 Pennyfathers Lane, Harmer Green

### **Welwyn Garden City**

The Barn Theatre, Barn Close, Welwyn Garden City  
Handside Farmhouse, Barn Close, Welwyn Garden City  
The Beehive Public House, Beehive Lane, Welwyn Garden City  
Ludwick Hall, Hall Grove, Welwyn Garden City  
Ludwick Corner, 16 Beehive Green, Welwyn Garden City  
The Old Cottage, 39 Bridge Road, Welwyn Garden City  
Roche Products Factory, Broadwater Road, Welwyn Garden City  
Nabisco Shredded Wheat Factory, Bridge Road, Welwyn Garden City  
1-4 (consecutive) Digswell Park Road, Welwyn Garden City  
Bailiff's Cottage, Digswell Park Road, Welwyn Garden City  
Digswell Park Lodge, Digswell Park Road, Welwyn Garden City  
Digswell Lodge, Welwyn Garden City  
The Backhouse Room, Handside Lane, Welwyn Garden City  
Holwellhyde Farmhouse, Holwellhyde Lane, Welwyn Garden City  
Digswell House, Monks Rise, Welwyn Garden City,  
The Parish Church of St. John, Monks Rise, Welwyn Garden City  
Digswell Place, Rectory Road, Welwyn Garden City  
Attimore Hall, Ridgeway, Welwyn Garden City  
Granary and barn to Attimore Hall, Ridgeway, Welwyn Garden City  
82-102 (even), 83-103 (odd), 104-124 (even), 105-125 (odd) Knightsfield,  
Welwyn Garden City

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **HISTORIC PARKS AND GARDENS**

#### **Registered Historic Parks and Gardens**

Ayot House, Ayot St. Lawrence	Grade II
Brocket Hall, Lemsford	Grade II
Gobions (Gubbins), Brookmans Park	Grade II
Hatfield House, Old Hatfield	Grade I

#### **Unregistered Historic Parks and Gardens**

Astwick, Coopers Green Lane  
Attimore Hall, Ridgeway, WGC  
Ayot Bury, Ayot St Peter  
Ayot Place, Ayot St Peter  
Barvin Park, Northaw  
Bedwell Park, Essendon  
Camfield Place, Wildhill  
Danesbury, Welwyn  
Digswell Place, WGC  
Essendon Place, Essendon  
Hatfield Hyde, WGC  
Hatfield Parsonage (Old Rectory), Hatfield  
Holwell Hyde, WGC  
Hornby Hall, Marford Road, Lemsford  
Leggatts Park, Potters Bar  
Lower & Upper Barvin Park  
Lower Woodside, Hatfield  
Ludwick Hall, WGC  
Mardley Bury Manor, Woolmer Green  
Millers/Millwards (part of Hatfield Great Park)  
Northaw/North Hall  
Northaw Place, Northaw  
North Mymms Place & Park  
Popes Farm (part of Hatfield Great Park)  
Potterells, North Mymms  
Sherrardspark Wood, WGC  
Parkway and The Campus, WGC  
Welwyn Rectory, Welwyn  
Wood Hall, Hatfield (farm)  
Wood Hill, Essendon

## APPENDIX 4

### AREAS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

List of sites referred to in Policy R29 and defined on the Proposals Map:

<b>No.</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Description</b>
AAS1	Ayot St. Lawrence	Ayot St. Lawrence is a medieval village recorded in the Domesday Book as 'Aiete'. The parish church of St. Lawrence dates from the 12th Century but is now in ruins.
AAS2	Cropmarks, Bottom Farm	Cropmarks of enclosures together with associated ditches and a trackway of unknown date are known from aerial photographs
AAS3	Cropmarks, Lord Mead Lane	Cropmarks of enclosures of unknown date and a ploughed-down prehistoric burial mound are known from aerial photographs
AAS4	Cropmarks and Round Barrow, Hill Farm	Cropmarks of ditched features which probably date to the Roman period are known from aerial photographs. The area also includes the site of a prehistoric round barrow, which was partially excavated by the Lockleys Archaeology Society in 1971
AAS5	Cropmark, Linces Farm	A cropmark of a ditched feature which probably dates to the late Iron Age is known from an aerial photograph
AAS6	Possible Roman Settlement, Rollswood	Finds of Roman coins, pottery and building materials suggest that a Roman settlement lies within this area.
AAS7	Welwyn	A substantial late Iron Age and Romano-British settlement lies at Welwyn. A Late Iron Age cremation cemetery including two Chieftain's burials was discovered close to the Civic Centre in the early years of the century. The nucleus of a Romano-British settlement, possibly a village or a small town, is known to lie to the north of the Manor House, and a Romano-British cemetery lies to the east of the River Mimram. Two Roman villa sites are known at Lockleys and Dicket Mead. Both are Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Welwyn is also a medieval village recorded in Domesday Book as 'Wilye'. The parish church of St. Mary dates from the 13th Century.
AAS8	Cropmarks, Oaklands	Cropmarks of a rectangular enclosure and part of a Roman road lie within the area.
AAS9	Welches Farm	A large late Iron Age settlement lies within the

		area. A large boundary ditch also lies at Perry's Grove. It is probably late Iron Age in date and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
AAS10	Cropmarks, Stanborough	Extensive cropmarks of ditches and enclosures revealed from aerial photographs probably represent ancient settlements and field systems.
AAS11	Stanborough School	Excavation in advance of school building work has revealed evidence of an Iron Age/Romano-British settlement and burials. It is likely that the area of settlement extends beyond the excavated area.
AAS12	Cropmark, Great Braitch Lane	A cropmark of a large, ditched enclosure has been revealed from aerial photographs
AAS13	Iron Age/Romano-British Settlement, Waterside	Excavations in advance of building work revealed evidence of a late Iron Age/Romano-British settlement site.
AAS14	Iron Age enclosure, Panshanger Golf Course	The presence of a large late Iron Age ditched enclosure has been revealed from excavation, geophysical survey and an aerial photograph.
AAS15	Iron Age/Romano-British Occupation, Panshanger	Excavation in advance of building work revealed evidence of a late Iron Age cremation cemetery including a Chieftain's burial, and extensive late Iron Age and Romano-British occupation.
AAS16	Medieval Moated Site, Astwick Manor	A medieval moated site lies at Astwick Manor
AAS17	Old Hatfield and Hatfield House	Hatfield dates from at least the 10 <sup>th</sup> century when it is recorded in a 10th Century charter of Ely Abbey. It is referred to in the Domesday Book as 'Hetfelle'. The parish church of St. Etheldreda dates from the 13th Century. Excavation in Hatfield has produced evidence of medieval residential and industrial occupation. Hatfield House is one of the finest Jacobean mansions in England.
AAS18	Medieval Village, Essendon	Essendon is a medieval village. The parish church of St. Mary dates from the 15th Century.
AAS19	Medieval Occupation and Cropmarks, Popes Farm	Excavations at Popes Farm have produced evidence of Medieval domestic and industrial occupation probably relating to an early manorial centre. Cropmarks of linear features are also known from the area.
AAS20	Post-medieval pottery kiln, Pigbournes Lane	The remains of a post-medieval pottery kiln lie at Pigbournes Lane
AAS21	Medieval moated site, Coldharbour Farm	The remains of a medieval moated site lie at Coldharbour Farm. The moated site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
AAS22	Deserted Medieval Village, North Mymms	There is documentary evidence for a Deserted Medieval Village at North Mymms. The parish

		church of St. Mary dates from the 13th Century.
AAS23	Mesolithic and Neolithic Occupation, Thorntons Farm	Excavation has revealed occupation sites of the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. A number of casual finds of Mesolithic and Neolithic flint implements have also been made in the area.
AAS24	Iron Age/Romano-British Occupation, Lemsford Village	Excavations carried out during the construction of the A1(M) revealed evidence of occupation dating to the late Iron Age and Romano-British periods. It is likely that the occupation extends beyond the excavated area.
AAS25	Iron Age/Romano-British Occupation, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City Golf Course	Excavations carried out on the site of the A1(M), revealed evidence of late Iron Age and Romano-British occupation. It is likely that the occupation extends beyond the excavated area. Four late Iron Age cremation burials are also known from Attimore Road.
AAS26	Iron Age Occupation, Church Road	Evidence of late Iron Age occupation including a ditch, pottery and animal bone, was found during the digging of a sewer trench in Church Road. Although the area has been partly built over, it is likely that it still contains some archaeological potential.
AAS27	Late Iron Age Occupation, Pentley Close	Excavations carried out on two garden plots in Pentley Close revealed evidence of late Iron Age occupation, and a Romano-British cemetery. It is likely that the evidence extends beyond the excavated area.
AAS28	Late Iron Age Pottery, Waterend Lane, Ayot Green	Finds of late Iron Age pottery indicate that an occupation site probably lies within the area.
AAS29	Medieval Manorial Site, Woodhall Farm	Evidence from documentary records suggests that an important medieval and post-medieval manorial site lay at Woodhall Farm.
AAS30	Late Iron Age/Romano-British Occupation, Peartree	Evidence of late Iron Age and Romano-British occupation has been found at Salisbury Gardens, Shortlands Green and Heronswood School. Although the area is now a residential site it is likely that it still contains some archaeological potential.
AAS31	Late Iron Age Occupation, Woodhall	Evidence of late Iron Age occupation has been found at Hatfield Hyde and Woodhall Lane. Although the area is now a residential site it is likely that it still contains some archaeological potential.
AAS32	Cropmarks, Hillend Farm	Cropmarks of an enclosure, linear features and a ploughed-down prehistoric burial mound lie within the area.
AAS33	Cropmarks, Moneyhole Park	Cropmarks indicating the presence of, as yet undated, archaeological remains.

AAS34	Cropmarks, Mardley Heath	Cropmarks indicating the presence of, as yet undated, archaeological remains.
AAS35	Cropmarks, Wych Elm Farm	Cropmarks of enclosures, linear features and the ploughed-down remains of a prehistoric burial mound, indicating the presence of archaeological remains.
AAS36	Cropmarks, Lockleys Farm	Cropmarks of an enclosure and a ploughed-down prehistoric burial mound indicating the presence of archaeological remains.
AAS37	Cropmarks, Cattlegate Farm	Cropmarks indicating the presence of, as yet undated archaeological remains.
AAS38	Medieval Occupation, Mardleybury	There is documentary evidence and earthwork remains for medieval and post-medieval occupation at Mardleybury. Mardleybury Manor also dates from the 17 <sup>th</sup> century.
AAS39	Northaw	The historic settlement of Northaw contains evidence for medieval and post-medieval settlement
AAS40	Nyn Manor Farm	The historic farm of Nyn Manor has Listed Buildings dating from the 17 <sup>th</sup> century and contain potential for medieval and post medieval archaeological remains
AAS41	Park Farm, Northaw	The historic farm of Park Farm has a Listed Building dating from the 17 <sup>th</sup> century and contains potential for medieval and post medieval archaeological remains
AAS42	Northaw House	Northaw House dates from the 17 <sup>th</sup> century and contains potential for post medieval archaeological remains
AAS43	Northaw Place	Northaw Place is a Listed Building dating from the 17 <sup>th</sup> century and contains potential for post medieval archaeological remains
AAS44	Site of Nyn Manor and Hall	The area contains the site of Nyn medieval manor and the site of the medieval hall and 17 <sup>th</sup> century mansion of Nyn Hall, demolished in the 19 <sup>th</sup> century.
AAS45	Newgate Street	The historic settlement of Newgate Street contains archaeological evidence from the medieval period and it has several Listed Buildings dating to the 17 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> centuries.
AAS46	Ponsbourne	The area contains the site of the medieval manor of Ponsbourne and the 15 <sup>th</sup> century manor house.
AAS47	Coldharbour Farm	The historic farm site of Coldharbour Farm contains the remains of fishponds dating to the medieval or post medieval period and has

		potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains.
AAS48	Woodhill House & Farm	The area has potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains. Woodhill House dates from the 17 <sup>th</sup> century.
AAS49	Lower Woodside Farm	Lower Woodside Farmhouse dates from the 16 <sup>th</sup> century and the area has potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains.
AAS50	Lower Woodside	Cropmarks of linear features of unknown date and function are known from the area.
AAS51	Woodside Place Farm	The farm buildings at Woodside Place Farm date from the 16 <sup>th</sup> century and the area contains potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains
AAS52	Stanborough Bury Farm	Cropmarks of a trackway and linear ditches of unknown date, and ploughed-down prehistoric burial mounds are known from the area.
AAS53	Symondshyde Farm	The farm buildings at Symondshyde Farm date from the 17 <sup>th</sup> century and the area contains potential for post-medieval archaeological remains.
AAS54	Rolls Wood	Rolls Wood and Blackthorn Wood contain earthworks of an enclosure of prehistoric or Roman date and a trackways which dates from the medieval period.
AAS55	Crackendell Wood, Brocket Hall	Remains of an Iron Age settlement are known from the area.
AAS56	Brocket Hall	Remains of a Roman settlement are known from the area. Brocket Hall dates from the 18 <sup>th</sup> century and is the site of a 16 <sup>th</sup> century manor.
AAS57	Ayot Green	The historic settlement of Ayot Green dates from the 17 <sup>th</sup> century or earlier and contains potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains.
AAS58	Manor Farm Ayot Little Green	The farm buildings at Manor Farm date from the 17 <sup>th</sup> century and the area contains potential for post-medieval archaeological remains.
AAS59	Ayot Place	The buildings at Ayot Place date from the 15 <sup>th</sup> century and the area contains potential for medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains.
AAS60	Ayot Bury	The building at Ayot Bury dates from the 18 <sup>th</sup> century and the area has potential for post-medieval archaeological remains.
AAS61	St Peter's Church	The area contains the site of St Peter's church and graveyard.
AAS62	South of Linces Spring, Ayot St. Peter	Cropmarks of an enclosure and linear feature of unknown date and function are known from the

		area.
AAS63	The Frythe	A Roman burial is known from the area. Some buildings at The Frythe are of historic importance.
AAS64	Lockleys Farm	The buildings at Lockleys Farm date from the 17 <sup>th</sup> century and the area has potential for post-medieval archaeological remains.
AAS65	Bedwell Park Farm	Cropmarks of linear features of unknown date and function are known from the area. Bedwell Park Farm is of historic interest.
AAS66	Bedwell Lodge Farm	A late Iron Age site of national importance is known from the area.
AAS67	Camfield Place and Farm	The buildings at Camfield Farm date from the 17 <sup>th</sup> century and the area contains potential for post-medieval archaeological remains.
AAS68	Bedwell Park	The buildings at Bedwell Park date from the 18 <sup>th</sup> century and the area contains potential for post-medieval archaeological remains.
AAS69	Belvedere Farm	The area contains cropmarks of linear features of unknown date and function.
AAS70	North Mymms Park	The area contains the site of a medieval manor. The house at North Mymms Park dates from the 16 <sup>th</sup> century.
AAS71	Whitehill Farm	Whitehill farm is an historic farm site dating from the 18 <sup>th</sup> century.
AAS72	Brewhouse Farm	The historic farm of Brewhouse Farm has a Listed Buildings dating from the 17 <sup>th</sup> century and contains potential for medieval and post medieval archaeological remains.

## APPENDIX 5

### HOUSING LAND SUPPLY

**Table 1: Strategic Land Requirement and Supply 1991-2011**

Requirement

Structure Plan Requirement April 1991 - April 2011	5600
Add demolitions	
- completed	350
- outstanding	40
- estimated	70
 <b>Total Requirement 1991-2011</b>	 <b>6060</b>

Supply

Completions to April 2004	4141
Under construction at April 2004	525
Outstanding permissions not yet started	581
 <b>Total Supply at April 2004</b>	 <b>5247</b>

**Table 2: Housing Land Requirement 1st April 2004 to 31st March 2011**

Total Requirement April 1991 - April 2011	5600
Add demolitions	
- completed	350
- outstanding	40
- estimated	70
Minus completions April 1991 - April 2004, under constructions and outstanding permissions	5247
 <b>Total Requirement from 2004 to 2011</b>	 <b>813</b>

**Table 3: Potential Supply 1st April 2004 to 31st March 2011**

Windfall Allowance (7 years @ 25/year)	175
Estimate for Allocated sites identified in District Plan (excluding Outstanding Permissions, completions and constructions)	1455
 <b>Total Potential Supply 2004 to 2011</b>	 <b>1630</b>

## **APPENDIX 6**

### **URBAN OPEN LAND**

#### **Woolmer Green**

- UOL1        Bridge Road
- UOL2        Mardley Hill/London Road Junction

#### **Mardley Heath and Oaklands**

- UOL3        Mardley Heath

#### **Welwyn**

- UOL4        The Crescent
- UOL5        Broomfield Road
- UOL6        School Lane
- UOL7        Hawbush Rise
- UOL8        Glebe Road
- UOL9        Blakes Way
- UOL10       Welwyn Playing Fields
- UOL11       Guessens, Codicote Road
- UOL12       Lockleys Drive/Orchard Road
- UOL13       Woods off Roman Road

#### **Digswell**

- UOL14       Adele Ave/New Road Junction
- UOL15       New Road
- UOL16       Mornington

#### **Welwyn Garden City**

- UOL17       Haymeads/Harwood Hill
- UOL18       Sewells LAP
- UOL19       Viaduct Way/Nursery Hill
- UOL20       Nursery Gardens
- UOL21       Rowans opposite Flexley Wood
- UOL22       Land behind Rowans Wood
- UOL23       Lumbards
- UOL24       Postfield
- UOL25       Sloansway/Mundells Junction
- UOL26       Blythway, behind Cloverfield
- UOL27       The Swallows
- UOL28       Black Fan Road
- UOL29       Oakdale
- UOL30       Oakdale
- UOL31       Willow Grove
- UOL32       Digswell Park Road
- UOL33       Knightsfield Verge
- UOL34       Orchard Lawn Tennis Club
- UOL35       Digswell Road Bridge

UOL36	Vineyard Dell
UOL37	Mandeville Rise/Pentley Park Junction
UOL38	Templewood School Playing Fields/Pentley Park
UOL39	Templewood Green Chain
UOL40	Monkswood
UOL41	Crossway
UOL42	Crossway
UOL43	Malmsdale Dell
UOL44	Oakdale
UOL45	Monks Walk
UOL46	Digswell Park and Cricket Ground
UOL47	Harwood School Playing Field
UOL48	Great Dell
UOL49	Sherrards Park Way
UOL50	Black Fan Park
UOL51	Daniells
UOL52	Little Rivers and Daniells
UOL53	Springmead Junior Playing Fields/Hilly Fields
UOL54	Hocklands
UOL55	Hayfields/Hardings
UOL56	Brooksfield
UOL57	Brooksfield
UOL58	Sir Freds. Playing Fields/Panshanger Drive
UOL59	Moors Walk/ Panshanger Drive Corner
UOL60	Little Hardings
UOL61	The Campus, Parkway & Howardsgate
UOL62	Roundwood Drive
UOL63	Roundwood Drive/Reddings Junction
UOL64	Dellcott Close/Dognell Green Tennis Courts
UOL65	Russellcroft Road/Valley Road Junction
UOL66	Handside Green
UOL67	Guessens Road
UOL68	Parkway Close
UOL69	Barleycroft Green
UOL70	Barn Close/Handside Lane Junction
UOL71	Applecroft JMI Playing Fields/Applecroft Road
UOL72	Peartree JMI Playing Fields
UOL73	Peartree Lane/ The Spinney
UOL74	Knella Road/Mill Green Road Junction
UOL75	Furzefield Road
UOL76	Ludwick Nursery and Holwell Junior and Infant School/Holwell Road
UOL77	Cranbourne Gardens Green
UOL78	Land off Ludwick Way
UOL79	Shortland Green
UOL80	Herns Wood/Disused Railway Line behind Knella Road
UOL81	Ridgeway
UOL82	Thumbswood Infants/Blackthorn Junior – Blackthorn Road
UOL83	Lowerfield Green
UOL84	Sweet Briar/Whitehorn Junction
UOL85	Wheatley Road/Wheatley Close Junction

UOL86	Cowper Road
UOL87	Moss Green
UOL88	Ridgeway/Heronswood Road Junction
UOL89	Bushey Ley and open ground on Black Fan Road
UOL90	Goose Acre
UOL91	Leigh Common
UOL92	Raymonds Plain
UOL93	Raymonds Close
UOL94	Hollybush Lane/Hunters Way Green
UOL95	South Ley
UOL96	Hollybush Lane Cemetery
UOL97	Howlands
UOL98	Howlands/Beehive Lane Junction
UOL99	Extension to land off Howlands
UOL100	Howlands/Ascots Lane Junction
UOL101	Howicks Green
UOL102	Bennett Close
UOL103	Verges and green on Hyde Valley
UOL104	Chequers Woodhall Park
UOL105	King George V Playing Fields
UOL106	Bushey Ley/Great Ganett Junction
UOL107	Little Ganett
UOL108	Cole Green Lane Roundabout
UOL109	Beehive Green
UOL110	Hall Grove/Autumn Grove Green
UOL111	Archers Ride
UOL112	Great Ganett
UOL113	Sylvandale
UOL114	Handside Sports Ground
UOL115	Stanborough Green
UOL116	Cole Green Lane Green Finger
UOL117	The Commons
UOL118	The Commons
UOL119	Hillside off Moorlands
UOL120	Howlands Green Fingers
UOL121	Old Drive Green
UOL122	Handside Lane/Lemsford Lane Junction
UOL123	Stanborough School Playing Field/Lemsford Lane
UOL124	Stanborough Road Roundabout
UOL125	Broadwater Road Roundabout
UOL126	Stanborough School Playing Fields/Stanborough Road
UOL127	Police Headquarters Playing Fields/Stanborough Road
UOL128	Panshanger Primary School
UOL129	Watchlytes JMI School
UOL130	Our Lady's JMI School
UOL131	Hillyfields
UOL132	Guessens Court
UOL133	Brockett Close
UOL134	Farm Close
UOL135	Bushey Green

UOL136 Ingles  
UOL137 Digswell Road  
UOL138 Green in Carve Ley  
UOL139 Ingles

### **Hatfield**

UOL140 Long Mead/Cornerfield Junction  
UOL141 Comet Way  
UOL142 Warren Close  
UOL143 Birchwood Close  
UOL144 Birchwood Playing Fields  
UOL145 Drovers Way  
UOL146 Hillfield  
UOL147 The Ryde  
UOL148 Churchyard/Church Street  
UOL149 Recreation Ground/Cranbourne Road  
UOL150 Countess Anne Primary School Playing Fields  
UOL151 Cemetery  
UOL152 Public Gardens/Wellfield Road  
UOL153 Harmony Close  
UOL154 Mount Pleasant Woods  
UOL155 Alban Way  
UOL156 Queensway Park  
UOL157 Manor Road Shops  
UOL158 Stream Woods JMI Playing Fields/Woods Avenue  
UOL159 St Philip Howard Primary School Playing Fields/Woods Avenue  
UOL160 Travellers Lane/Southdown Road  
UOL161 Acacia Street Rec Ground  
UOL162 Old Leys/Brickfield  
UOL163 Travellers Lane  
UOL164 Five Oaks Primary & Nursery Playing Fields/Travellers Lane  
UOL165 Sycamore Avenue  
UOL166 Eagle Way  
UOL167 Roe Green Playing Fields  
UOL168 Oaklands College Annex, New Briars JMI & Bishops Hatfield Girls  
School Grounds  
UOL169 Howe Dell School Playing Fields  
UOL170 Onslow St. Audreys School Playing Fields & Howe Dell  
UOL171 Skips Grove  
UOL172 Oxlease Green Chain  
UOL173 St Albans Road West/Cavendish Way Junction  
UOL174 The Dell/Oak Grove  
UOL175 Vigors Croft  
UOL176 College Lane  
UOL177 The Dell/Roe Green Close  
UOL178 Hazel Grove  
UOL179 Hazel Grove JMI Playing Fields/Hazel Grove  
UOL180 Bishops Rise  
UOL181 Coppice Close  
UOL182 The Downs

UOL183 Minster Close/Bishops Rise  
UOL184 Bishops Rise / South Way  
UOL185 Thrush Avenue  
UOL186 Bradshaws  
UOL187 Chennels  
UOL188 Chantry Lane Dell  
UOL189 Hazel Grove  
UOL190 Redhall Lane Park & Angerland Common  
UOL191 Millwards Open Space  
UOL192 Bishops Rise/Northdown Road  
UOL193 St John's Church, Bishops Rise  
UOL194 Cloverland  
UOL195 Green Lanes School  
UOL196 Birchwood Avenue JMI School  
UOL197 The Ryde School

### **Welham Green**

UOL198 Knolles Crescent  
UOL199 Dixons Hill Road/Station Road Junction  
UOL200 Dixons Hill Road  
UOL201 Somers Road  
UOL202 Puttocks Drive

### **Brookmans Park**

UOL203 Bradmore Green  
UOL204 Brookmans Park Primary Playing Fields/Peplins Way  
UOL205 Peplins Way

### **Cuffley**

UOL206 The Driveway/Hill Rise  
UOL207 Brookside Crescent Homewood Avenue  
UOL208 Brookside Crescent

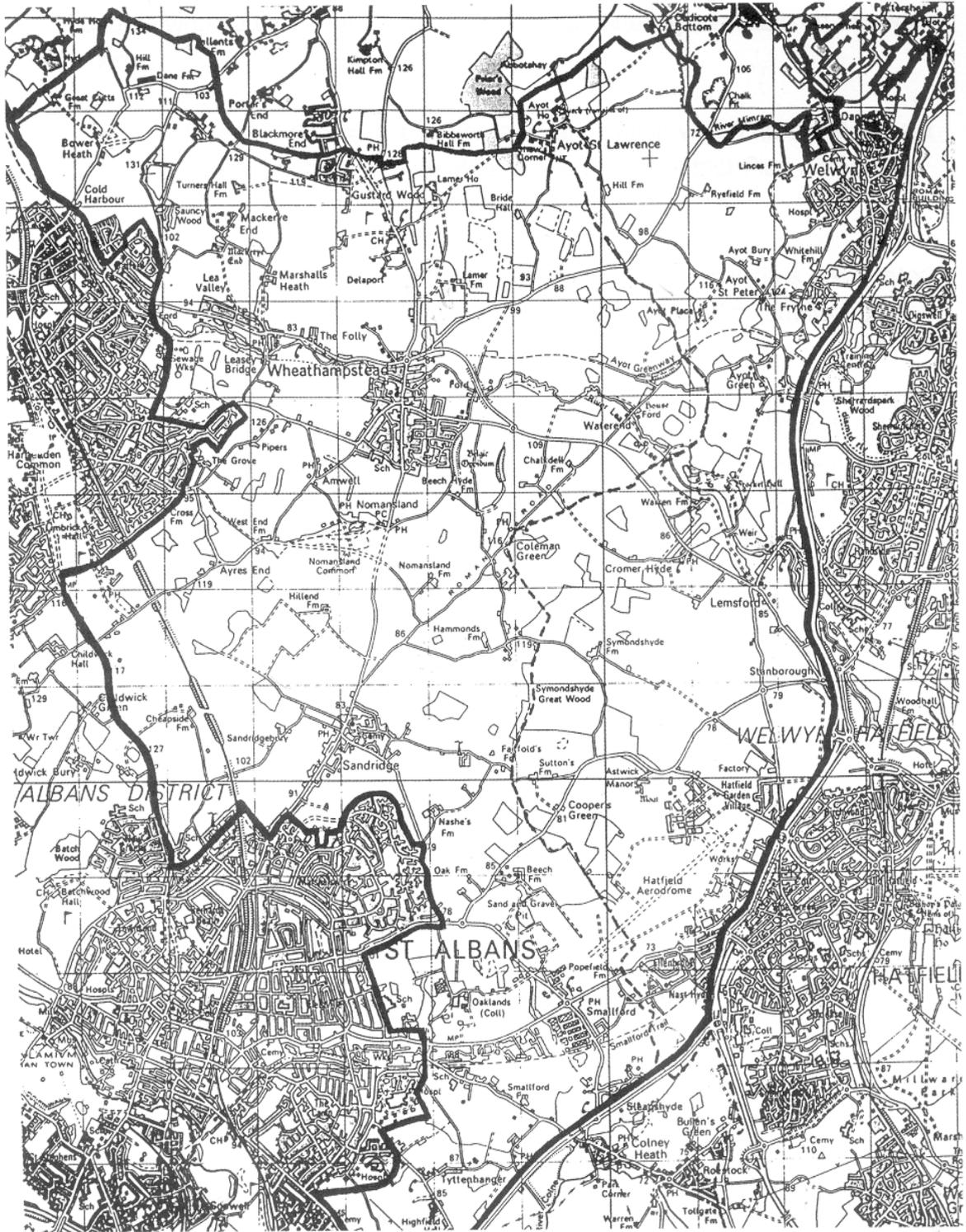
## APPENDIX 7

### PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE NOTES AND PLANNING POLICY STATEMENTS

PPG1 (Revised)	General Policy and Principles
PPG2 (Revised)	Green Belts
PPG3 (Revised)	Housing
PPG4	Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms
PPG5	Simplified Planning Zones
PPG6 (Revised)	Town Centres and Retail Developments
PPS7	Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
PPG8 (Revised)	Telecommunications
PPG9	Nature Conservation
PPG10	Planning and Waste Management
PPS11	Regional Spatial Strategies
PPS12	Local Development Frameworks
PPG13 (Revised)	Transport
PPG14	Development on Unstable Land
PPG14A	Annex 1: Landslides and Planning
PPG15	Planning and the Historic Environment
PPG16	Archaeology and Planning
PPG17	Sport and Recreation
PPG18	Enforcing Planning Control
PPG19	Outdoor Advertisement Control
PPG20	Coastal Planning
PPG21	Tourism
PPS22	Renewable Energy
PPS22	Companion Guide to PPS22
PPS23	Planning and Pollution Control
PPG24	Planning and Noise
PPG25	Development and Flood Risk

# APPENDIX 8 STRAP AREA MAP

## STRAP Area Map



———— STRAP Area Boundary      - - - - District Boundary

