

Local Plan Technical Report

2018/2019 Infrastructure Delivery Plan Appendices

Part 20B: Education – Hertfordshire County Council

Appendix 65 (Part B)

elsewhere. The highway authority may object unless full parking, picking up/dropping off is provided, due to the potential impact on traffic flows and safety on London Road.

Note: The site is too small to be able to accommodate a new primary school (including nursery) based on the area for an unrestrained site in a non-urban area (ie 1.99ha), although it could potentially accommodate a single storey building, car park, and possibly a hard play area, assuming a detached playing field located elsewhere.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The main planning and environmental constraints and considerations which would affect the potential use of the site for a new primary school are:

- Green belt designation
- Location in a Zone of Visibility across which there are views of the St Albans City Centre skyline

6.2 The site is of sufficient size to accommodate a new primary school (based on a 0.7ha site). In theory the site is also of sufficient size to accommodate a school based on a site area of 1.99ha (for an unconstrained site in a non-urban area) but existing site features, notably the trees, and the golf course car park on part of the site, may mean that this cannot be accommodated. If necessary more detailed site investigations would need to be undertaken to establish whether this might be possible. It is likely to be necessary for a detached playing field to be provided, whether the school is based on a 0.7ha or a 1.99ha site.

6.3 The site is likely to be in single ownership and is well located relative to the Core Area, which is the optimum location for a new school, although it is just outside the identified area.

6.4 The site is currently located in the green belt and so very special circumstances would need to be given to justify a new school on the site, although if the site were to be allocated for a new school and taken out of the green belt, this would not be required.

6.5 A new school would also need to be designed to minimise the impact on views of the City Centre Skyline, in particular the cathedral. A visual impact assessment will need to be undertaken to assess this impact. A single storey building would minimise this impact but a 0.7ha site would require a two storey building.

6.6 The Transport Assessment prepared by Pell Frischmann indicates that there may be significant difficulties providing a suitable access to the site and that a school may have an unacceptable impact on the highway network. However, the more recent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit indicates that a satisfactory access may be able to be provided, subject to resolving a number of detailed design issues. One of the issues identified in the safety audit assumed that full staff parking and dropping off /picking up facilities would be provided, which might not be possible due to the size of the site and what can physically be accommodated on the site.

- 6.7 In order to help establish whether or not full car parking and dropping off / picking up facilities can be provided and also establish whether a detached playing field is required it is suggested that a feasibility layout plan be prepared for the school. A topographical survey may be required to inform this exercise.
- 6.8 It is also suggested that discussions take place with the highway authority at the earliest possible opportunity to discuss the potential use of the site for a new primary school, and the implications for the highway network, although their view may be partly based on whether or not full car parking and dropping off / picking up facilities can be provided
- 6.9 The main physical and site constraints and considerations which would affect the potential use of the site for a new primary school are:
- Topography - sloping nature of the site
 - Woodland and mature trees on the site
- 6.10 The topography means that the site is likely to need to be terraced (which would affect any archaeology and retention of trees)
- 6.11 An access should be positioned to avoid or minimise the loss of trees on the frontage of the site which are important in the street scene. It should also take account of possible made ground and significant changes in level. (Note: The preliminary access drawing would result in a significant loss of trees, which might not be acceptable. It may also need to be revised to take account of made ground (which may not be stable) and also differences in levels).
- 6.12 If proposals for a school are to be progressed, following preparation of a feasibility layout plan and discussions with the highway authority, the following studies and technical investigations are likely to be required:
- Topographical survey
 - Landscape and visual impact assessment – in particular an assessment of the implications on Zone of Visibility and views
 - Tree survey
 - Ecological assessment
 - Geophysical / Geotechnical investigations (including contamination and ground stability issues)
 - Transport assessment (already completed, but may need update/revision)
 - Preliminary planning report
- 6.13 A suitable design for providing an access will also need to be provided and agreed with the highway authority – avoiding important trees (to be identified by tree survey).
- 6.14 In due course the following studies and technical investigations are also likely to be required:
- Archaeological desk based assessment
 - Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy
 - Alternative site assessment (based on this study) – if the site remains in the green belt
 - Utilities report

6.15 The following may also be required:

- Archaeological evaluation (excavations) – depending on results of geophysical survey

6.16 The overall conclusion is that the site is of sufficient size to accommodate a new primary school, based on the area for a constrained urban site (ie 0.7ha), with a detached playing field, and is likely to be in single ownership, which is an advantage. Although it is outside the Core Area it is only just outside the boundary and so is relatively well located relative to the area of greatest need. It is also slightly detached from nearby houses which would help to reduce the impact on residential amenities, which is an advantage.

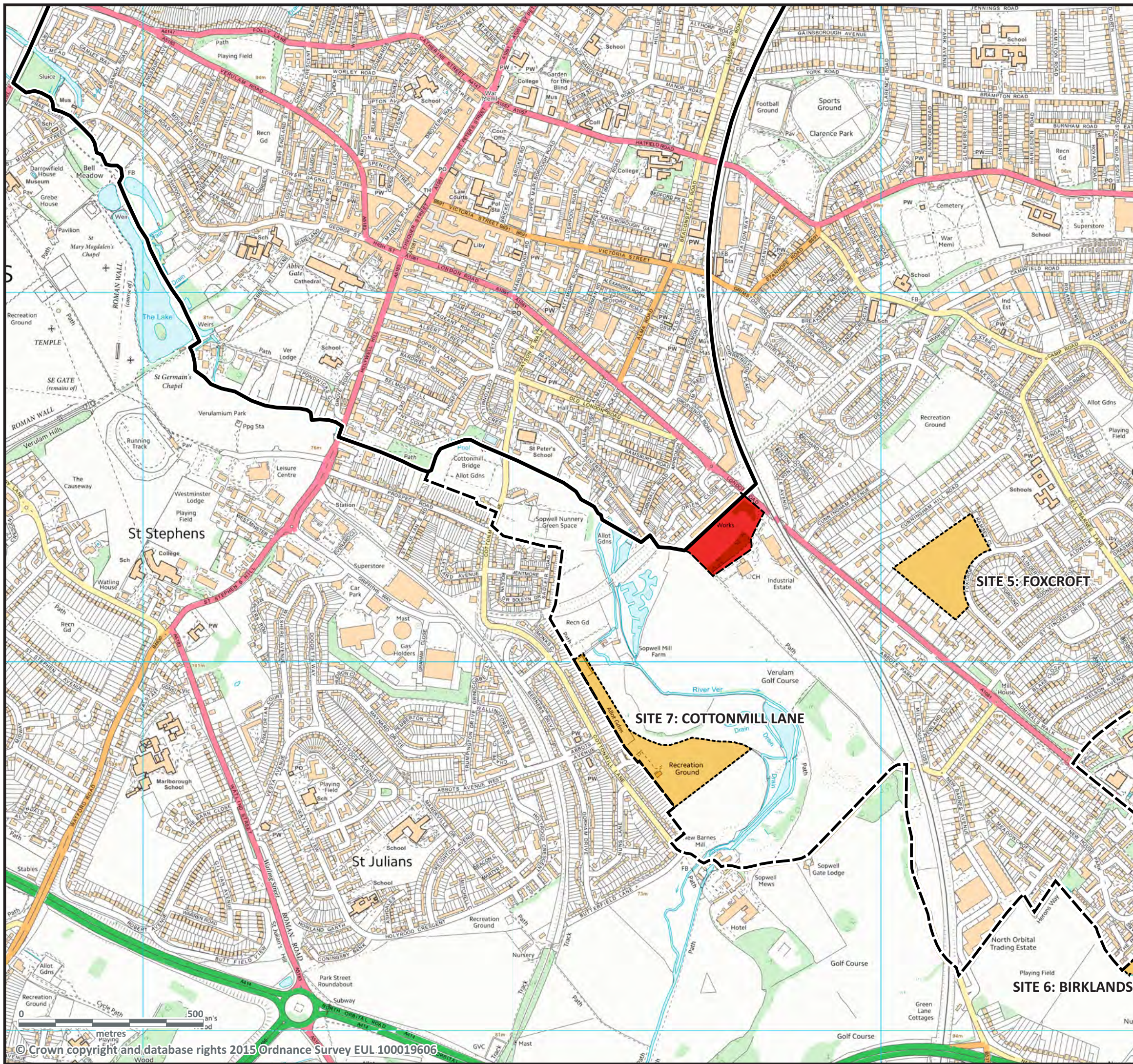
6.17 The main issue, as set out above, is likely to be the Green Belt location, and the need for very special circumstances to justify a school, including the need to demonstrate that there are no alternative non-green belt sites available which could accommodate the school (unless allocated within the Local Plan).




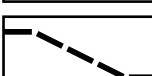
6.18 There may also be significant difficulties providing a suitable access to the site and the school may have an unacceptable impact on the highway network. As outlined above it is therefore suggested that a feasibility layout plan be prepared to help establish whether or not full car parking and dropping off / picking up facilities can be provided on site. This would also help establish whether or not a detached playing field is required. If one is required an exercise should be undertaken to identify where this playing field may be (it may need to make shared use of an existing public open space / playing field).

6.19 Discussions should also take place with the highway authority to establish whether access and highway issues are fundamental to the potential use of the site for a new primary school.

APPENDIX

DRAWINGS




-  THE SITE
-  OTHER SITES UNDER CONSIDERATION
-  CORE SEARCH AREA
-  WIDER SEARCH AREA

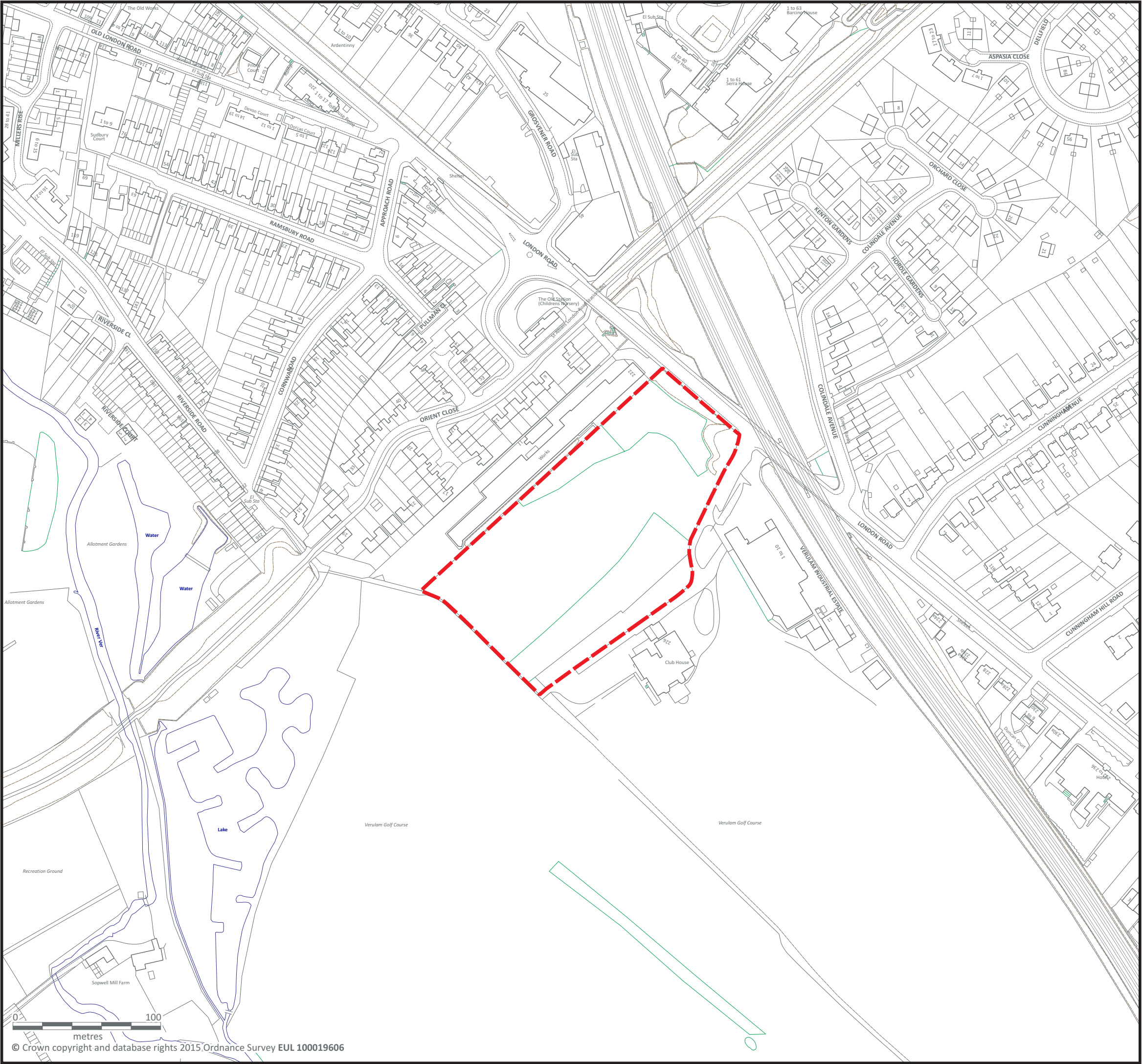
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PROJECT TITLE
St Albans Primary School
Site search

DRAWING TITLE
Site 4: WSE13 - Land north of
Verulam Golf Course
Site location

SCALE	DATE JANUARY 2016	CHECKED
1:10000	DRAWN HNA	DATE
PROJECT No. 5115		
	250	

VINCENT AND GORING
CHARTERED ARCHITECTS AND TOWN PLANNERS
STERLING COURT NORTON ROAD STEVENAGE HERTS
TELEPHONE: 01438 316331 FAX:01438 722035



SITE BOUNDARY
2.26ha 5.58ac

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PROJECT TITLE
**St Albans Primary School
Site search**

DRAWING TITLE
**Site 4: WSE13 - Land north of
Verulam Golf Course
Site identification**

SCALE	DATE	CHECKED
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	DRAWN	DATE
	HNA	

PROJECT No.					
5115	N		2	5	1

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 SITE BOUNDARY
2.26ha 5.58ac

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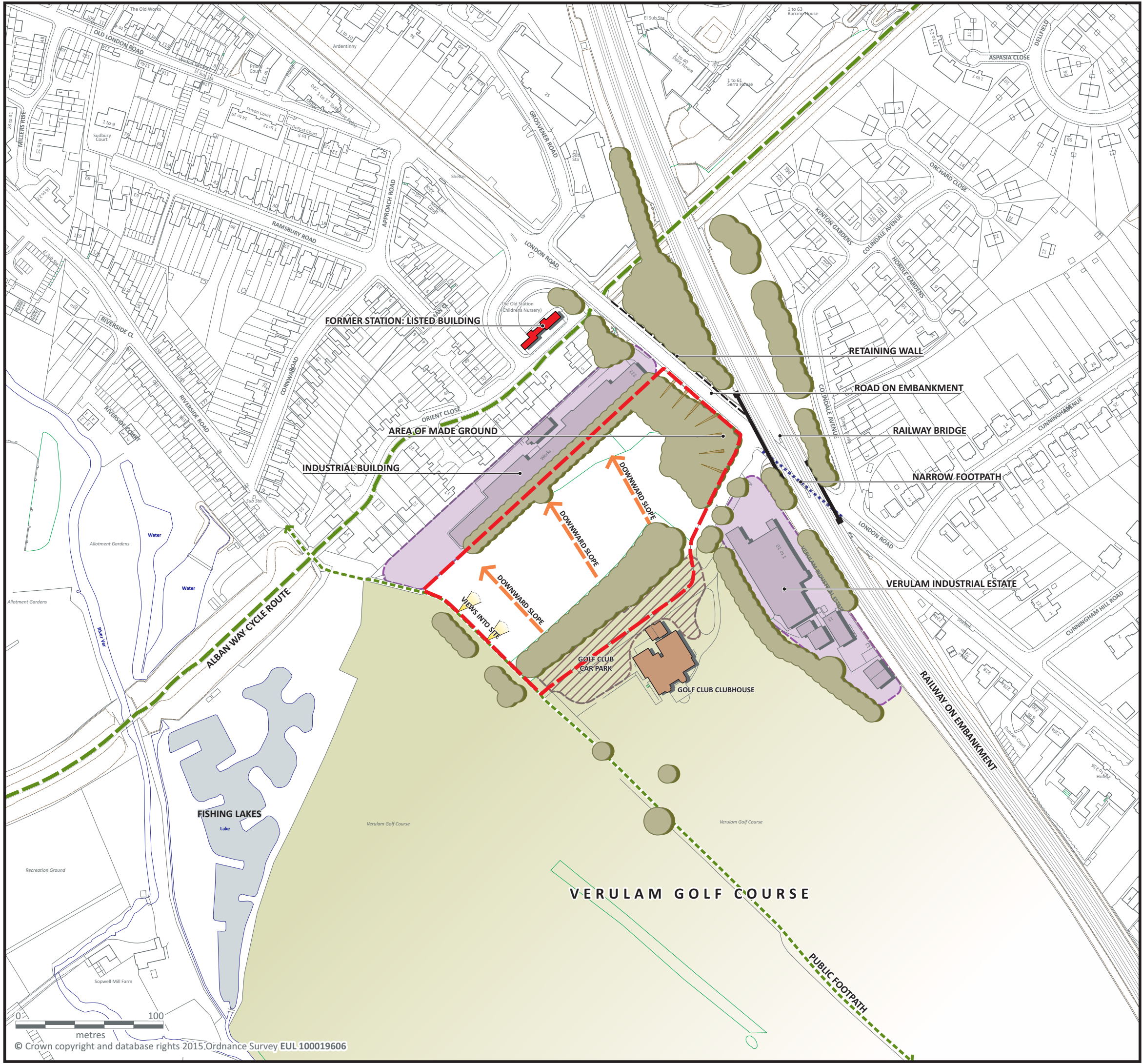
PROJECT TITLE
St Albans Primary School
Site search

DRAWING TITLE
Site 4: WSE13 - Land north of
Verulam Golf Course
Aerial photograph

SCALE	DATE JANUARY 2016	CHECKED
1:2500	DRAWN HNA	DATE

PROJECT No. 5115		252
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SITE BOUNDARY
2.26ha 5.58ac

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PROJECT TITLE
**St Albans Primary School
Site search**

DRAWING TITLE
**Site 4: WSE13 - Land north of
Verulam Golf Course
Site appraisal**

SCALE	DATE	CHECKED
1:2500	FEBRUARY 2016	
	DRAWN	DATE
	HNA	

PROJECT No.				
5115	N	2	5	3

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- SCHOOL SITE BOUNDARY
1.71ha 4.22ac
- REMAINDER OF SITE

NOTE:
Proposed access arrangement based on Pell Frischmann drawing Q30089-SK-015

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PROJECT TITLE
St Albans Primary School
Site search

DRAWING TITLE
Site 4: WSE13 - Land north of
Verulam Golf Course
Development principles

SCALE	DATE	CHECKED
1:2500	MARCH 2016	
	DRAWN	DATE
	HNA	

PROJECT No.				
5115	N	2	5	4

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ST ALBANS PRIMARY SCHOOL SITE SEARCH

PLANNING APPRAISAL REPORT FOR SHORT LISTED POTENTIAL NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL SITES

SITE 5: WE6 – LAND WEST OF FOXCROFT (FOXCROFT OPEN SPACE), ST ALBANS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This planning appraisal is for the following site which was short listed following a review of potential sites for a new primary school at St Albans:

- Land West of Foxcroft (known as Foxcroft Open Space), Foxcroft, St Albans

1.2 The site is located on the eastern side of St Albans, within the Wider Search Area, approximately 400m east of the Core Search Area.

1.3 The site was visited on 2nd February 2016.

1.4 The site has an area of approximately 3.56ha. This appraisal assesses whether there is potential for the site to accommodate a 2fe primary school.

1.5 The following drawings accompany this report:

- Site Location Plan (drawing 5115/300)
- Site Identification Plan (drawing 5115/301)
- Aerial Photograph (drawing 5115/302)
- Site Appraisal (drawing 5115/303)
- Development Principles (drawing 5115/304)

1.6 The following report also accompanies this report (see Appendix):

- High Level Accessibility Appraisal (including drawing ST-2479-02) prepared by Stomor Civil Engineering Consultants.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 The site is located in the eastern part of St. Albans 100m north of London Road approximately 1,600m east of the centre of the City Centre (taken to be St Peter's Street).

2.2 It comprises a public open space / park with football pitch, basketball area (single net), and equipped children's playground and surrounding areas of informal open space with trees, mostly mature. It has a frontage to Foxcroft to the east and Ramsey Close to the north east.

2.3 The open space is overlooked by detached 1960's bungalows fronting Foxcroft to the east and two storey semi-detached 1950's houses fronting Ramsey Close to the north east. Further to the east is an estate of mainly two storey semi-detached houses dating from the 1950's and 60's.

2.4 **Access/Highways** – the open space does not have a formal vehicular access but has open unenclosed frontages to Foxcroft and Ramsey Close.

2.5 Stomor Civil Engineering Consultants have undertaken a high level transportation and accessibility appraisal for the site, which makes the following conclusions:

The site at Foxcroft is located in a residential area. Existing levels of traffic in the vicinity of the site are currently low, but modelling would be required to simulate the impact of school traffic on the local road network.

The most suitable location for the vehicular access is on the northern channel of Foxcroft and is likely to be via a simple T-junction. There is scope for a one way circulation feature which could utilise multiple access points, potentially via Ramsey Close if required.

Further works would be required for pedestrian facilities, including the construction of a new footway on the north side of Foxcroft as well as a new crossing point.

The main challenge for the site in terms of access is presented from on street parking on Foxcroft and neighbouring roads preventing free flow of two way traffic.

In order to achieve suitable visibility from the proposed access, a proposed pedestrian crossing and to enable reasonable vehicular circulation, fairly extensive parking restrictions will be required. Such restrictions are unlikely to be popular with existing residents who are currently able to park on the roads. It may also be necessary to introduce local road widening or laybys, which may locally mitigate the effect of additional traffic and reduce the extent of parking restrictions required.

A one way operation around Foxcroft would also reduce the extent of parking restrictions required and would avoid the need for road widening. Parking restrictions would be subject to a Traffic Regulation Order with its own supporting consultation process.

Some analysis of how larger vehicles serve the site would also be required, given the narrowness of the local roads.

It is unlikely that the Highway Authority will accept the principle of parents dropping off pupils on Foxcroft and surrounding roads within the public highway. Therefore, on site parking for parents as well as staff would be required. The Client has advised that to minimise the impact on the existing parkland, a proposed smaller school footprint may be considered. If this is the case, there is unlikely to be sufficient space for all the parking required.

The local public transport network is reasonable, providing a sustainable option for travel for accompanied pupils and staff.

Overall it would be possible to achieve a reasonably good level of accessibility for this site for a 2FE primary school, but this is likely to generate quite a substantial impact on the local residents in terms of the highway works required.

2.6 A copy of the report, and the accompanying drawing which illustrates the main conclusions, is attached at the Appendix.

2.7 **Pedestrian / cycle access** – the open space does not have a formal pedestrian / cycle access but has an open unenclosed frontages to Foxcroft and Ramsey Close which allows access along the full length of the frontages.

2.8 **Public transport** – there are no bus routes or bus stops in the immediate vicinity of the open space but London Road to the south is served by four routes – 84, 602, 658 and 714. The first three each generally run at least hourly between 0800 and 1800, Mondays to Fridays and the latter runs less often with limited stops. Cell Bares Lane to the north is served by two bus

routes – 84A and S1 (one way). S1 is a hopper bus service serving the Cell Barnes, The Camp, and the city centre area.

- 2.9 **Green Belt** – the site is not located in the Green Belt.
- 2.10 **Land ownership** – the land is owned by St Albans City and District Council.
- 2.11 **Flooding** – the Environment Agency website indicates that the site is not within an area at risk of flooding.
- 2.12 **Topography** – The site is generally level with a very gentle slope down from north west to south east.
- 2.13 **Listed buildings/conservation area** – there are no listed buildings on the site or in the vicinity of the site and the site is not within or near a conservation area.
- 2.14 **Archaeology** – the site is not located in an area of archaeological interest.
- 2.15 **Ecology** – there are no designated areas of nature conservation importance in the vicinity of the site. The site mainly comprises closely cut amenity grassland which is unlikely to have any ecological interest. Any ecological value is likely to be limited to the trees and areas of rough grassland adjacent to the rear boundaries to the west.
- 2.16 **Trees** – there are a number of trees on the site. Apart from a large oak tree at the centre of the open space they are mainly located on the frontages and rear boundaries of the open space.
- 2.17 **Tree Preservation Order** – there are two TPOs covering trees on the rear boundary of the open space. TPO 0015 (A1) on the north western corner of the site and TPO 1436 (G1) on the northern boundary.
- 2.18 **Agricultural land quality** – not applicable.
- 2.19 **Public Rights of Way** – There are no definitive public rights of way (i.e. footpaths or bridleways etc) crossing the site.
- 2.20 **Public access / Community Use** – the site is an unenclosed public open space with unrestricted access. It is not registered Common Land or Access Land.
- 2.21 **Noise sources** – there are unlikely to be any significant noise issues.
- 2.22 **Size / shape** – the site comprises a medium sized open space which is more than the minimum 0.7ha required by this study to accommodate a new primary school (excluding playing field) on a constrained urban site. It is also larger than the minimum 1.99ha site required by BB103 for a new 2FE primary school (including 60 place nursery and playing field) on an unrestrained site in a non-urban area.
- 2.23 **Other Matters** – the site is currently used as an open space and the proposed school would potentially result in the loss of a significant part of the open space. It may also result in the loss of a playing pitch, which Sport England may object to and necessitate a replacement pitch being provided nearby (or alternatively possibly enhancing existing pitches).

3.0 SUMMARY OF RELEVANT LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

- 3.1 The St Albans District Local Plan was adopted in November 1994 and covers the period 1981 to 2001. A number of policies have been 'saved'.
- 3.2 The Local Plan Proposals Map does not indicate any designations or allocations affecting the site or the immediately adjoining land apart from including them in the built up area of St Albans, which is one of two towns in the district which area excluded from the Green Belt.

Policy 2 Settlement Strategy advises that development will generally be concentrated in the towns, but proposals should not detract from their essential character, particularly in respect of a number of considerations, including green spaces within settlements (Policy 75).

- 3.3 The Local Plan contains the following 'saved' policies which are of relevance:

Policy 65 Education Facilities is particularly relevant to the current proposals, particularly part A which relates to proposals for new schools, extensions to existing schools and changes of use to schools within towns and specified settlements. It advises that proposals for new schools (and extensions or changes of use) will be assessed against the following criteria:

- (i) *Where a loss of dwellings is proposed, Policy 10 (iv) shall be complied with;*
- (ii) *The impact on the amenity of the surrounding area in terms of visual impact, design, noise and disturbance, road access and traffic generation;*
- (iii) *Sufficient on-site parking and servicing shall be provided;*
- (iv) *Provision shall be made for the setting down and picking up of pupils, by car or public transport, in a safe and acceptable manner.*

[Note: there are no dwellings on the site]

Policy 75 Green Space Within Settlements seeks to protect green space or re-provide it elsewhere if its loss would result in a deficiency of open space in the area. The policy would not permit development if it would destroy the character of any remaining green space. The policy identifies a number of considerations which will be taken into account in determining planning applications for the development of green space within towns. The accompanying explanatory text advises that urban green spaces consist of all open land, irrespective of ownership, which supports trees and other plants in built-up areas, including parks, playing fields, allotments, verges, waste land about public utilities and gardens.

Policy 69 General Design and Layout – seeks to ensure developments are to a high standard.

Policy 74 Landscaping and Tree Preservation – seeks to retain existing landscaping and provide new landscaping in developments

Policy 39 Parking Standards, General Requirements sets out the Council's car parking standards.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 As far as we have been able to establish from St Albans DC's on-line planning records there have been no planning applications for the site.

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL FOR NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Site

- 5.1 The open space has an area of 3.56ha, which is significantly more than the minimum 0.7ha size sought for a new 2FE primary school by this study to identify potential new primary school sites on a constrained site (excluding playing field). It would also be more than the minimum 1.99ha site required by BB103 for a new 2FE primary school (including 60 place nursery and playing field) on an unrestrained site in a non-urban area.

Acquisition of additional land

- 5.2 The open space is within the built up area and there is no undeveloped land adjoining which could be added.

Maximum height of development

- 5.3 Bearing in mind the location a single or two storey building would be appropriate.

Location relative to area of need

- 5.4 The site is located in the Wider Search Area approximately 400m east of the Core Search Area which is the optimum location for a new primary school, and so is a sub-optimal location. However, it may help meet needs within the Core Search Area.

Other considerations

- 5.5 The site is a relatively attractive public open space with children's play area and football pitch. The proposal would result in the loss of at least some of the open space – the amount depending on whether a 0.7ha school (excluding playing field) or a 1.99ha school (with playing field) would be accommodated. These represent 20% and 56% of the open space respectively. If part of the open space were to be used as a playing field for the 0.7ha school the open space would be further reduced (although there could possibly be shared use).
- 5.6 Local Plan Policy 75 seeks to protect Green Spaces, including parks, so there would be a policy objection to the loss of at least part of the open space. It may be necessary to undertake an assessment to establish whether there is adequate open space provision in the locality and what the implications of the loss of at least part of the open space would be. Depending on the outcome of such an assessment and the view of St Albans City and District Council towards the loss of part of the open space it may be necessary to enhance the remaining area of the open space / provide replacement open space elsewhere / enhance other open spaces to compensate for the loss.
- 5.7 Sport England may object to the loss of at least some of the open space, in particular the football pitch, and may require alternative replacement provision

to be provided nearby, or existing facilities to be enhanced to make up for the loss, although it might be possible to have shared use of a school pitch.

- 5.8 If this site is to be progressed as a location for a new primary school it is suggested that Sport England be consulted.

Development principles

- 5.9 The Development Principles drawing illustrates how a 2FE primary school could be accommodated on the site. This is based on a new primary school (including nursery) on an unrestrained site (1.99ha) in a non-urban area, and would be a single storey building rather than a two storey school on a constrained urban site (0.7ha), with a detached playing field, as this could be accommodated on the site, although it would result in the loss of more of the open space. However, a key consideration in deciding whether to accommodate a 1.99ha or 0.7ha sized school site is that the high level transportation and access appraisal advises that it is unlikely that the Highway Authority will accept the principle of parents dropping off pupils on Foxcroft and surrounding roads within the public highway and that therefore on site parking for parents (and dropping off / picking up) as well as staff would be required. This could not be accommodated on the smaller site.
- 5.10 The drawing also shows a number of the highway mitigation measures which are likely to be required in order to be able to accommodate a school, including road widening, footways, and one way traffic flows.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The main planning and environmental constraints and considerations which would affect the potential use of the site for a new primary school are:
- Loss of existing public open space and playing pitch
 - Impact on views of the open space from residential properties
- 6.2 The open space is of sufficient size to accommodate a new primary school (based on a 0.7ha site) or a school based on a site area of at least 1.99ha (for an unconstrained site in a non-urban area), but this would result in the loss of more of the open space.
- 6.3 The site is located outside the optimum location for a new school, but may help to meet needs within the Core Area, being located in the Wider Search Area. It is also owned by the District Council, which may be an advantage.
- 6.4 The site is relatively free of physical and site constraints and considerations (apart from loss of open space) which would affect the potential use of the site for a new primary school. The main constraint is:
- Existing trees, mainly on the frontage of the site which would need to be retained.
- 6.5 The high level transportation and accessibility appraisal advises that overall it would be possible to achieve a reasonably good level of accessibility for this site for a 2FE primary school, but this is likely to generate quite a substantial impact on the local residents in terms of the highway works required. This is

likely to include road widening, new footway and crossing, possible one way arrangement and parking restrictions.

- 6.6 If proposals for a school are to be progressed it is likely to be necessary to undertake an assessment to establish whether there is adequate open space provision in the locality and the implications of the loss of at least part of the open space. Discussion would need to take place with the Council and with Sport England at the earliest opportunity to establish whether they would object in principle to the proposals and whether replacement open space / playing pitch would need to be provided.
- 6.7 Assuming that proposals are to be progressed the following studies and technical investigations are likely to be required (in addition to the open space assessment):
- Topographical survey
 - Tree survey
 - Ecological assessment
 - Transport assessment
 - Preliminary planning report
- 6.8 A suitable design for providing a suitable access to the site and mitigating the impact of the school on the surrounding roads will also need to be provided and agreed with the highway authority – the access avoiding important trees (to be identified by tree survey).
- 6.9 In due course the following studies and technical investigations are also likely to be required:
- Archaeological desk based assessment
 - Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy
 - Geophysical / Geotechnical investigations
 - Utilities report
- 6.10 The following may also be required:
- Archaeological evaluation (excavations) – depending on results of geophysical survey
- 6.11 The overall conclusion is that although the site is relatively unconstrained, is owned by the District Council, and could help meet needs in the Core Area, it is in a sub-optimum location. However, the main issues are likely to be the loss of at least part of the open space and the implications of this for open space provision in the area and the attitude of the Council and Sport England to the loss, and the impact of the highway mitigation measures which would be likely to be required in order to accommodate a school.

APPENDIX

St Albans Primary School Site Search

High Level Accessibility Appraisal for Site at Foxcroft

This high level access appraisal is to consider the suitability of access for a new 2 Form of Entry (2FE) primary school to the north west of Foxcroft in St Albans. It is to be read in conjunction with Drawing ST-2479-02 attached to the end of this document and refers to site reference WE6.

1. Site Background

1.1 Location

The site is located on an area of existing parkland in the centre of a residential area of connected local access roads. It lies north west of Foxcroft and west of Ramsey Close. The site is situated in the south eastern part of St Albans. Pupils will travel from all directions, arriving at Foxcroft via small residential roads. Pupils from further afield will travel via London Road or Cell Barnes Lane. Discussions with the Client indicate that it is hoped that only part of the existing parkland will be required for the school footprint.

1.2 Local Road Network

Foxcroft is a 30mph looped Local Access Road while Ramsey Close is a small cul-de-sac which is accessed from Foxcroft via a simple T-junction. Both Foxcroft and Ramsey Close are approximately 4.8m wide. Foxcroft connects to Rodney Avenue at a simple T-junction 150m to the east of the site and to St Vincent Drive at a simple T-junction 185m to the south east of the site.

Rodney Avenue connects to Cell Barnes Lane, via Aldwick. Cell Barnes Lane is a 30mph Local Distributor Road, 300m to the east of the site. St Vincent Drive connects to the A1081 London Road at a signal controlled junction 250m to the south of the site and to Cell Barnes Lane to the east of the site. The A1081 is a 40mph Main Distributor Road which connects St Albans City Centre to the north of the site with the A414 North Orbital Road to the south.

1.3 Existing Access

There is no existing vehicular access onto the site and pedestrians are able to walk straight onto the existing parkland at any point along its boundary with Foxcroft or Ramsey Close.

1.4 Existing Conditions

Observations of transport conditions in the vicinity of the site were made in the AM peak period of 14th January 2016 between 8am and 9am. The weather was cold and generally dry. Traffic appeared to be mostly light in the vicinity of the site, although free flow was constrained by numerous parked cars on the narrow roads of Foxcroft and Rodney Avenue. This was also noticeable on Aldwick, linking Rodney Avenue with Cell Barnes Lane, where cars were observed to be parked along its entire length throughout the whole AM peak period.

Congestion was observed on Cell Barnes Lane around Cunningham Hill Junior School. This existing junior school is located 250m to the east of the proposed site and is accessed from Cell Barnes Lane

where a school crossing patrol is in operation. Hertfordshire County Council have confirmed that Cunningham Hill Junior School is a 2FE school which ordinarily has approximately 230 pupils aged 7-11, but temporarily has an additional class. The school morning session begins at 8.55am, but parents are able to drop pupils off from 8.40am onwards. There is a pedestrian access from Rodney Avenue to the south of the junior school, however there appeared to be minimal vehicular movements associated with this access.

Minor queuing onto the A1081 London Road was observed at the traffic signals on St Vincent Drive.

1.5 Existing Pedestrian/Cycle Provision

There is no pedestrian footway along the north side of Foxcroft (nor the western side of Ramsey Close) in the vicinity of the site, as the existing parkland runs to the edge of these roads. An approximately 2.4m wide footway, separated from the carriageway by a 2m wide grass verge, runs along the full length of the south side of Foxcroft and east side of Ramsey Close.

There are no pedestrian crossing facilities on any of the local access roads in the immediate vicinity of the proposed site. The A1081 London Road has pedestrian facilities at the signal controlled junction with St Vincent Drive. Cell Barnes Lane has a zebra crossing just north of Aldwick. There is no direct access to the site from Cunningham Hill Road to the north or London Road to the south west.

There appears to be no dedicated cycling provision in the immediate vicinity of the site, although a combined foot/cycleway runs alongside the A1081 London Road. The new St Albans Green Ring walking and cycling route, which forms a loop connecting all of St Albans, runs 600m to the north west of the site.

1.6 Public Transport

There are bus stops along the A1081 London Road on either side, approximately 250m to the south west. Route 84/84A, operated by Metrolink, connects St Albans and New Barnet, passing near the site four times per hour. The half-hourly Route 602, operated by Uno, connects Hatfield with Watford via St Albans and London Colney while the hourly Route 658, also operated by Uno, connects Borehamwood with St Albans via London Colney, also stopping on London Road.

A bus stop on Cell Barnes Lane, approximately 350m to the north east of the site serves the aforementioned route 84/84A as well as the local Route S1, operated by Uno, which has services to and from St Albans city centre every 20 minutes.

The nearest major Railway Station is St Albans City, approximately 1 kilometre to the north east of the site, which has regular connections with Harpenden, Luton, London and further afield. St Albans Abbey, an unmanned stop approximately 1.7 kilometres to the west of the site, has connections with Watford Junction approximately every 45 minutes.

2. Access Considerations

2.1 Network Capacity

Parking restrictions and possibly some road widening would be required along Foxcroft as it is a narrow road and two way flow is currently not possible in certain locations due to parked cars. Additionally, due to the tight curve of the road alignment, parked cars may prevent suitable vision from the proposed school access junction.

While Foxcroft is relatively narrow at 4.8m, there is plenty of scope for widening measures in the vicinity of the site due to the open boundary onto the existing parkland on its northern edge and wide verges on either side of the road. The amount of required widening could be reduced if a one way system were to be used along Foxcroft in the vicinity of the site. Analysis of how larger vehicles serve the site would also be required through swept path analysis.

Consideration will also need to be given to increased two-way flows on Aldwick and Rodney Avenue through some localised widening.

Vehicular access to the site would only be possible at Ramsey Close if it was part of a one way circulation feature as the cul-de-sac is too narrow to accommodate two way flow without extensive parking restrictions or widening. There is unlikely to be any advantage in using Ramsey Close for vehicular access as school related vehicles will need to negotiate Foxcroft in any event.

It is unlikely that the Highway Authority will accept the principle of parents dropping off pupils on Foxcroft and surrounding roads within the public highway. Therefore, on site parking for parents as well as staff would be required. The Client has advised that to minimise the impact on the existing parkland, a proposed smaller school footprint may be considered. If this is the case, there is unlikely to be sufficient space for all the parking required.

2.2 General Improvements

A new school development would require a new footway to be constructed on the north side of Foxcroft in the vicinity of the pedestrian access(es). This should be linked into existing footways on the north side of Foxcroft on either side of the site. A pedestrian crossing facility would also be required, with consideration given to the limited vision around the bend of Foxcroft.

There may also be scope to widen footways along the south west section of St Vincent Drive and south east section of Foxcroft to provide a cycle link to the existing cycleway on London Road, if desire line analysis suggests this would be beneficial.

2.3 Proposed Access

The vehicular access point could be at a number of different points along Foxcroft, possibly with a one way internal circulation feature. The access would require a simple T-junction onto the northern channel.

It is likely that pedestrian access to the site would be from Foxcroft.

3. Conclusion

The site at Foxcroft is located in a residential area. Existing levels of traffic in the vicinity of the site are currently low, but modelling would be required to simulate the impact of school traffic on the local road network.

The most suitable location for the vehicular access is on the northern channel of Foxcroft and is likely to be via a simple T-junction. There is scope for a one way circulation feature which could utilise multiple access points, potentially via Ramsey Close if required.

Further works would be required for pedestrian facilities, including the construction of a new footway on the north side of Foxcroft as well as a new crossing point.

The main challenge for the site in terms of access is presented from on street parking on Foxcroft and neighbouring roads preventing free flow of two way traffic.

In order to achieve suitable visibility from the proposed access, a proposed pedestrian crossing and to enable reasonable vehicular circulation, fairly extensive parking restrictions will be required. Such restrictions are unlikely to be popular with existing residents who are currently able to park on the roads. It may also be necessary to introduce local road widening or laybys, which may locally mitigate the effect of additional traffic and reduce the extent of parking restrictions required.

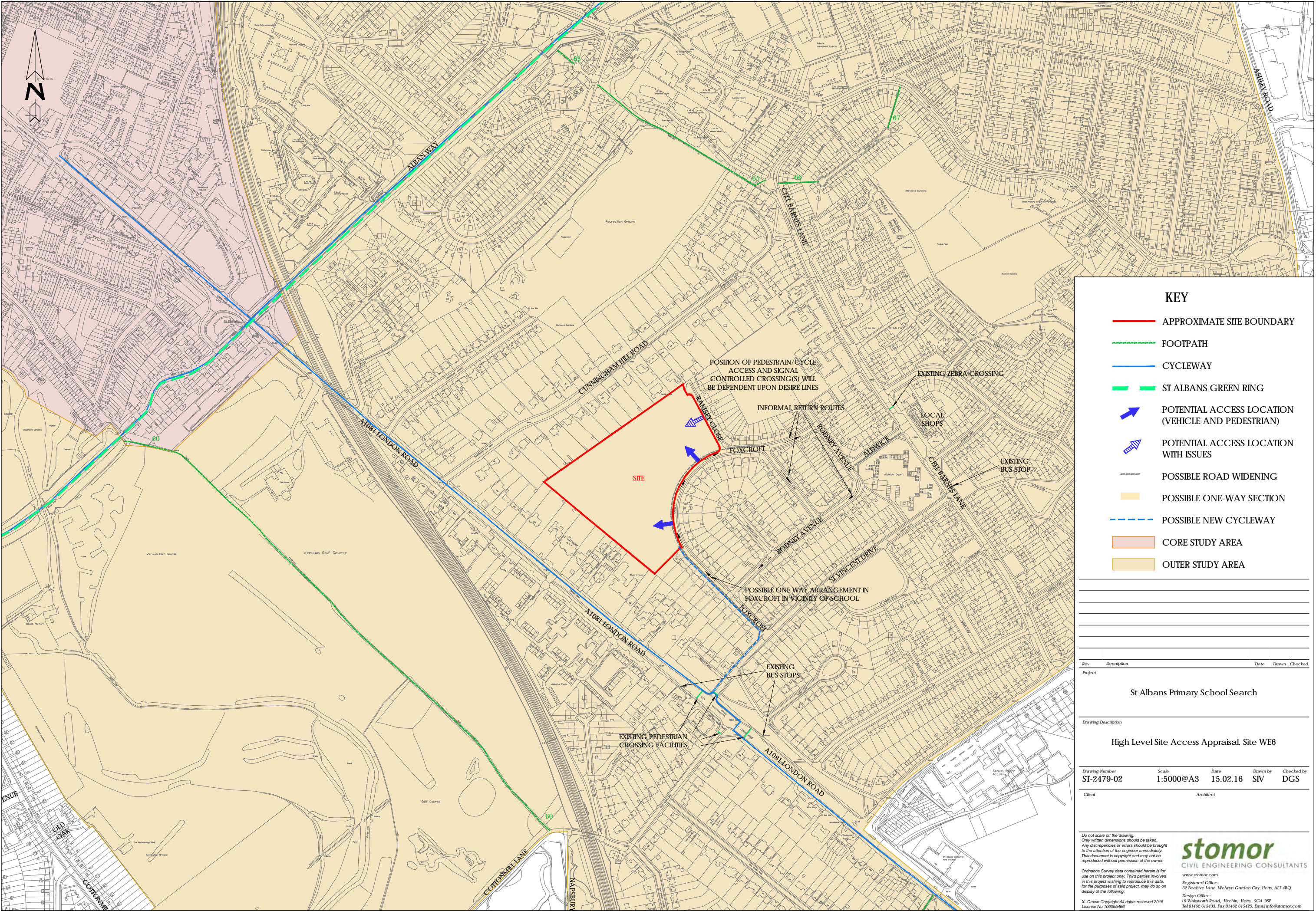
A one way operation around Foxcroft would also reduce the extent of parking restrictions required and would avoid the need for road widening. Parking restrictions would be subject to a Traffic Regulation Order with its own supporting consultation process.

Some analysis of how larger vehicles serve the site would also be required, given the narrowness of the local roads.

It is unlikely that the Highway Authority will accept the principle of parents dropping off pupils on Foxcroft and surrounding roads within the public highway. Therefore, on site parking for parents as well as staff would be required. The Client has advised that to minimise the impact on the existing parkland, a proposed smaller school footprint may be considered. If this is the case, there is unlikely to be sufficient space for all the parking required.

The local public transport network is reasonable, providing a sustainable option for travel for accompanied pupils and staff.

Overall it would be possible to achieve a reasonably good level of accessibility for this site for a 2FE primary school, but this is likely to generate quite a substantial impact on the local residents in terms of the highway works required.



KEY

- APPROXIMATE SITE BOUNDARY
- FOOTPATH
- CYCLEWAY
- ST ALBANS GREEN RING
- POTENTIAL ACCESS LOCATION (VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN)
- POTENTIAL ACCESS LOCATION WITH ISSUES
- POSSIBLE ROAD WIDENING
- POSSIBLE ONE-WAY SECTION
- POSSIBLE NEW CYCLEWAY
- CORE STUDY AREA
- OUTER STUDY AREA

Rev	Description	Date	Drawn	Checked
Project				

St Albans Primary School Search

Drawing Description

High Level Site Access Appraisal. Site WE6

Drawing Number	Scale	Date	Drawn by	Checked by
ST-2479-02	1:5000@A3	15.02.16	SIV	DGS

Client	Architect

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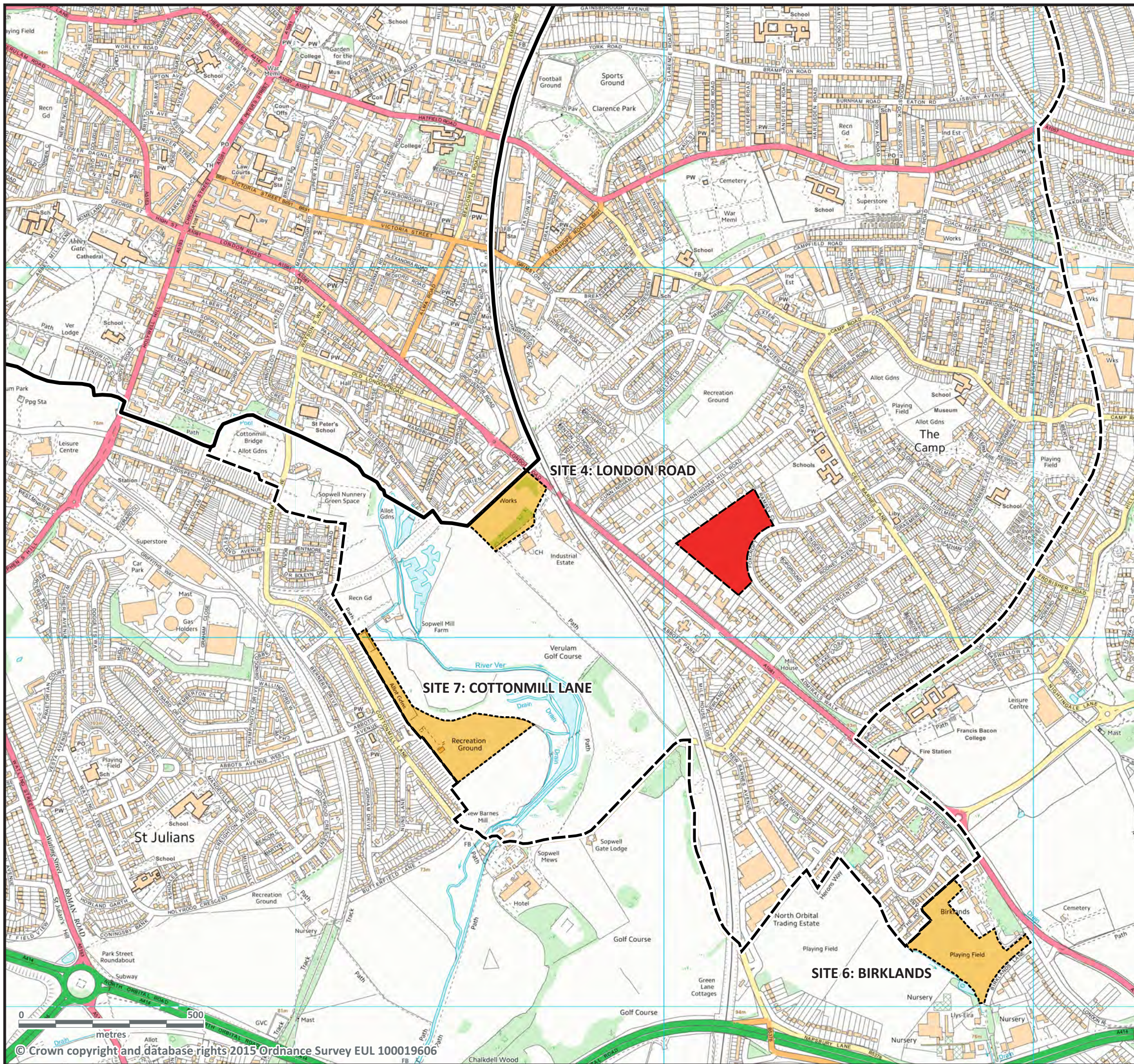
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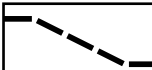
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DRAWINGS



-  THE SITE
-  OTHER SITES UNDER CONSIDERATION
-  CORE SEARCH AREA
-  WIDER SEARCH AREA

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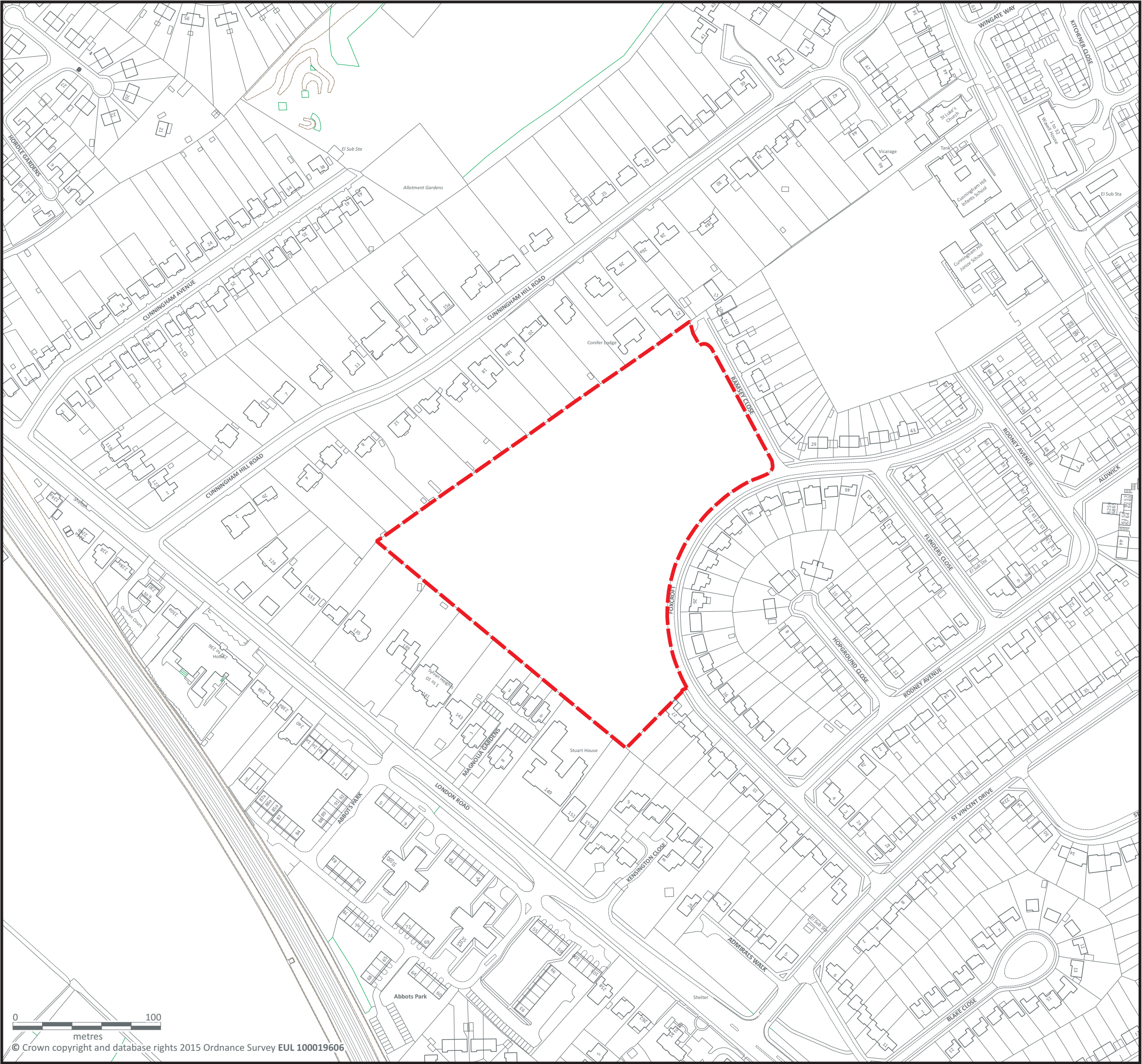
PROJECT TITLE
**St Albans Primary School
Site search**

DRAWING TITLE
Site 5: WE6 - Foxcroft Open Space

SCALE	DATE JANUARY 2016	CHECKED
1:10000	DRAWN HNA	DATE

PROJECT No. 5115		300
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CHARTERED ARCHITECTS AND TOWN PLANNERS
STERLING COURT NORTON ROAD STEVENAGE HERTS
TELEPHONE: 01438 316331 FAX:01438 722035



SITE BOUNDARY
3.56ha 8.79ac

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PROJECT TITLE
**St Albans Primary School
Site search**

DRAWING TITLE
**Site 5: WE6 - Foxcroft Open Space
Site identification**

SCALE	DATE JANUARY 2016	CHECKED
1:2500	DRAWN HNA	DATE

PROJECT No.					
5115		3	0	1	

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 SITE BOUNDARY
3.56ha 8.79ac

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PROJECT TITLE
St Albans Primary School
Site search

DRAWING TITLE
Site 5: WE6 - Foxcroft Open Space
Aerial photograph

SCALE	DATE JANUARY 2016	CHECKED
1:2500	DRAWN HNA	DATE

PROJECT No. 5115		302
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TELEPHONE: 01438 316331 FAX:01438 722035



SITE BOUNDARY
3.56ha 8.79ac

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PROJECT TITLE
**St Albans Primary School
Site search**

DRAWING TITLE
**Site 5: WE6 - Foxcroft Open Space
Site appraisal**

SCALE	DATE JANUARY 2016	CHECKED
1:2500	DRAWN HNA	DATE

PROJECT No.	5115	N	303
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TELEPHONE: 01438 316331 FAX:01438 722035



- SCHOOL SITE BOUNDARY
2.58ha 6.37ac
- REMAINDER OF SITE

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PROJECT TITLE
St Albans Primary School
Site search

DRAWING TITLE
Site 5: WE6 - Foxcroft Open Space
Development principles

SCALE	DATE MARCH 2016	CHECKED
1:2500	DRAWN HNA	DATE

PROJECT No.	5115	N	304
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ST ALBANS PRIMARY SCHOOL SITE SEARCH

PLANNING APPRAISAL REPORT FOR SHORT LISTED POTENTIAL NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL SITES

SITE 6: O14 – BIRKLANDS DETACHED PLAYING FIELD, LONDON ROAD, ST ALBANS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This planning appraisal is for the following site which was short listed following a review of potential sites for a new primary school at St Albans:

- Birklands Detached Playing Field, London Road, St Albans

1.2 The site is located on the south eastern side of St Albans outside but immediately adjacent to the Wider Search Area.

1.3 The site has been visited on a number of occasions, the most recent being on 2nd February 2016.

1.4 The site has an area of approximately 4.20ha. This appraisal assesses whether there is potential for the site to accommodate a 2fe primary school.

1.5 The following drawings accompany this report:

- Site Location Plan (drawing 5115/350)
- Site Identification Plan (drawing 5115/351)
- Aerial Photograph (drawing 5115/352)
- Site Appraisal (drawing 5115/353)
- Development Principles drawing (5115/354)

1.6 The following drawings, also accompany this report:

- Site Appraisal (drawing 4768/003)
- Illustrative Layout: 2 Form of Entry Primary School (drawing 4768/014)

1.7 These drawings were originally prepared in 2009, and were submitted to St Albans City and District Council in support of proposals for the development of the site for either residential development or a primary school. The Site Appraisal drawing is more detailed drawing which incorporates topographical survey information. The Illustrative Layout plan illustrates how a 2FE primary school could be accommodated on the site.

1.8 The site was originally acquired by Hertfordshire County Council for educational use to provide playing fields for the former Birklands College which adjoined the site and has since been converted and developed for housing. The former detached playing field remained in County Council ownership following the disposal of the remainder of the site and has been identified as a potential 2FE primary school site to serve the southern side of St Albans on a number of occasions. A number of technical studies and investigations have been undertaken, the most recent being in 2009. The following paragraphs incorporate the main findings of these investigations.

Note: the site boundary used in earlier stages of this study were based on the area originally identified by LSH. However, the boundary has been slightly adjusted to reflect the more precise boundaries which were given in studies undertaken in 2009 and shown in representations submitted to St Albans City and District Council.

1.9 The following report also accompanies this report (see Appendix):

- High Level Accessibility Appraisal (including drawing ST-2479-04) prepared by Stomor Civil Engineering Consultants.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The Birklands site is located on the south-eastern edge of St Albans and comprises an area of land used informally as open space and has a sign at its entrance from The Poplars calling it Birklands Meadow. It is broadly rectangular in shape with projections to the north east and south east extending towards London Road. The south eastern extension meets the old London Road, which lies as short distance to the west of the current London Road, where there is a pedestrian entrance. It comprises an area of rough grassland to the centre, with scattered mature trees and recent tree planting around its perimeters.
- 2.2 It is located adjacent to but outside the Wider Search Area, approximately 1.7km from the Core Area of Search, and approximately 2.7km from the centre of the town (taken to be St Peter's Street).
- 2.3 The northern part of the site is more wooded, with a number of mature ornamental trees amongst more recent woodland, an overgrown tennis court and a filled in and overgrown outdoor swimming pool.
- 2.4 The southern part of the site comprises another area of woodland with a large dead oak tree and an attractive pond and weir.
- 2.5 Immediately to the north-west is an area of bungalows, and two storey detached and terraced 1960's houses.
- 2.6 Immediately to the north-east is a mixture of two and three storey flatted residential development known as Birklands Park (conversion and new build) in a parkland setting, which was the former Birklands College.
- 2.7 Immediately to the east is the old London Road, with the current London Road further to the east and a cemetery and farmland beyond.
- 2.8 Immediately to the south-east is an area of low density residential development fronting Birklands Lane.
- 2.9 To the south is a large garden centre, pet centre and shed outlet, occupying a former garden centre, and beyond these the A414 North Orbital dual carriageway, which separates the settlements of London Colney and St Albans.
- 2.10 To the south-west is an area of unused open land known as Napsbury Fields, which is crossed by a number of public footpaths, with an informal access to the site.

- 2.11 **Access/Highways** – the site has a short frontage to old London Road to the east, which provides a connection to London Road a short distance further to the east.
- 2.12 Stomor Civil Engineering Consultants have undertaken a high level transportation and accessibility appraisal for the site, which makes the following conclusions:
- The site is located on the southern edge of St Albans and it is likely that the majority of pupils will travel from the north. It is suggested that the most suitable option for vehicles to access the site is from Old London Road to the east of the site, while pedestrians could be provided with an additional access via New House Park and/or The Poplars to the north of the site. A northern pedestrian access may lie on the main pupil desire line to and from the school.*
- Whilst availability of on-street parking in the area is better than some sites, it will not be sufficient to serve a new school development, especially given its edge of town location south of the town. Therefore, on site parking for parents is required in addition to that provided for staff.*
- Minimal highway works should be required at the site consisting of the construction of the access road itself, road markings and the possible introduction of some parking restrictions. It may be that further studies show a longer ghost island would be beneficial on the A1081 London Road, although it may be difficult to achieve much change, given the proximity of the London Road Cemetery access road.*
- The existing footpath from The Poplars should be improved unless a new footway link is provided from New House Park. Depending upon results of desire line analysis, a new signal controlled crossing may be required on the A1081 to link the foot/cycleway to the east side of London Road to the cycleway on the west side.*
- The main challenge for the site is the impact of existing heavy traffic flows on the A1081 London Road which are likely to be increased by school traffic. This encourage parents to use a northern entrance, if provided.*
- If a single vehicular access from Old London Road is deemed insufficient, an additional drop off and circulation facility could be provided within the north of the site, formed by a one-way loop joining New House Park and The Poplars. A combination of accesses from New House Park/The Poplars, Old London Road and a possible park and stride via Birklands Lane could result in well distributed traffic, minimising the impact in any one location.*
- The local public transport network is reasonable and offers options for staff and accompanied pupils to use these sustainable travel modes.*
- Overall the site appears to offer good opportunities for suitable access for a 2FE primary school, if the measures set out above are implemented. It is recommended that it is sufficiently suitable in transport terms to warrant further more detailed investigation for such a use.*
- 2.13 A copy of the report, and the accompanying drawing which illustrates the main conclusions, is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.14 **Pedestrian / cycle access** – the site is crossed by a number of informal paths, with pedestrian access points into the site from The Poplars to the north and old London Road to the east. There are also informal pedestrian access points along Birklands Lane to the south east and Napsbury Fields to the south west.
- 2.15 There is a segregated foot/cycleway running along the western side of London Road to the north of the site which terminates at the northern end of old London Road, just to the north of the Birklands site access.

- 2.16 A further foot/cycleway is located alongside Highfield Park Drive to the north which links to residential and other areas east of St Albans.
- 2.17 **Public transport** - London Road is served by four bus routes – 84, 602, 658 and 659, with four bus stops within 200 to 300m of the site. St Albans City railway station is located approximately 2.5 miles north of the site. The bus services running along London Road stop at the station
- 2.18 **Green Belt** – the site is located in the Green Belt in the relatively fragmented gap between St Albans and London Colney.
- 2.19 **Land ownership** – as mentioned above the site the site was originally acquired by Hertfordshire County Council to provide playing fields for the former Birklands College, which has since been disposed of and developed for residential use, but the former playing fields remain in County Council ownership. Signage indicates that the site is owned by the County Council and is not public open space but it is used informally by the public.
- 2.20 **Flooding** – a flood risk assessment was prepared for the site in 2009 which advises that the Environment Agency Indicative floodplain map of the area indicates that the site lies within an area not considered to be at risk from flooding, with less than a 1 in 1000 chance of occurrence in any one year. The assessment found that there is very little chance of the site experiencing fluvial flooding and recommended incorporating a number of sustainable drainage features, including swales, in any proposals for the site.
- 2.21 **Topography** – a topographical survey was completed for the site in 2009 which indicates that the site slopes down from 82.58m in the north to 76.35m in the southern corner, with the majority of levels around the centre of the site are in the region of 77.5m and 80.0m. The southern part of the site is relatively flat with levels varying between about 77.8m AOD and 78.4m AOD.
- 2.22 **Listed buildings/conservation area** – Newhouse Park Farm House, Newhouse Lane (now known as Lys Eira, Birklands Lane) immediately south of the site is a Grade II listed building. There are no other listed buildings, or conservation areas, in the vicinity of the site.
- 2.23 **Archaeology** – the site is not located in an area of archaeological interest.
- 2.24 **Ecology** – an ecological survey (including data survey and field survey) was undertaken in 2009. This indicated that the site is a County Wildlife Site and that there are records of great crested newts, slow worms and grass snakes in the study area in the vicinity of the site. It notes that the central part of the site is semi-improved neutral grassland surrounded by broad leaved woodland.
- 2.25 The County Wildlife Site citation for Birklands Fields is as follows:
“Semi- improved neutral grassland with a good range of indicator species. The sward is typically Red Fescue, Meadow Foxtail, Sweet Vernal – grass and Yorkshire Fog with Lady’s Bedstraw, Blue Knapweed, Pignut, Yarrow, Field Wood rush, Meadow and Bulbous buttercup. Only the edges show a decrease in diversity. The pond in the southern corner provides a valuable additional habitat along with a small stream and scrub. There are some scattered Oak trees and bluebell beneath. The site supports a good invertebrate population. Wildlife site criteria: 15 general grassland indicator species.”
- 2.26 The main conclusions of the field survey are:

- There is semi-improved grassland in the north-west corner of the site and around the main entrance
- The woodland supports trees of varying ages from over-mature examples to naturally regenerated stock and recent plantings
- The pond on the south-western boundary is overshadowed by mature oak trees which are causing heavy shading, contributing to the paucity of aquatic plant growth. However, it is considered to have suitable aquatic and adjacent habitat for great crested newts and a newt survey is recommended.
- The hedge along the north-eastern boundary does not meet the criteria for importance set out in the hedgerow Regulations (Note: possibly means NW boundary)
- There are no nationally rare or nationally scarce plant species on the site
- The grassland and scrubby margins to the woodland are good foraging habitats for lizards, slow worm and grass snake and a further reptile survey is recommended.
- A number of trees on the site are suitable for roosting bats and a further bat survey would be required; a separate tree survey is recommended
- All habitats on the site are suitable for breeding birds and site clearance should be undertaken outside the breeding season.

2.27 **Trees** – a tree survey was undertaken in 2009 which found that:

- All the significant tree groups are located around the site boundaries with several large mature specimen trees within Birklands Place but close to the site boundary
- An intermittent row of Lombardy poplars is found along the southern boundary however these are now approaching the end of their useful life and have collapsed
- Several tree groups exist around the pond some of which are worthy of retention
- In total there are seven significant tree groups and two areas of mixed woodland. There are three tree groups of low quality and three groups are of high quality.

2.28 **Tree Preservation Order** – a TPO (ref: TPO 1636) covers a number of individual trees and wooded areas on the northern and southern parts of the site and the adjoining Birklands Park which was confirmed in 2013. A further TPO covers a belt of trees on the boundary with Napsbury Fields to the south (mainly on Napsbury Fields).

2.29 **Agricultural land quality** – the land is not in agricultural use and does not appear to have been in agricultural use for very many years. Agricultural land classification maps indicate that the general area is classified as Grade 3 (average) agricultural use.

2.30 **Public Right of Way** – a public footpath runs along Birklands Lane immediately south of the site. A number of other public footpaths cross Napsbury Fields to the west.

2.31 **Public access / Community Use** – the site is not identified as an area of Registered Common Land or Open Access Land. It is used by the public as open space and is crossed by a number of informal paths. We are aware that local residents treat it as a public open space. As noted earlier signage

indicates that the site is owned by the County Council and is not a public open space. In March 2014 it was designated an Asset of Community Value and is referred to as Birklands Meadow.

- 2.32 **Noise sources** – the site is relatively close to the North Orbital Road, which is a source of traffic noise on the site, but this should not be a significant issue bearing in mind the separation.
- 2.33 **Size / shape** – the site comprises a large rectangular parcel of land which is significantly more than the minimum 0.7ha required by this study to accommodate a new primary school (excluding playing field) on a constrained urban site. It is also much larger than the minimum 1.99ha site required by BB103 for a new 2FE primary school (including 60 place nursery and playing field) on an unrestrained site in a non-urban area.
- 2.34 **Other Matters** – geo-environmental investigations (including boreholes) were undertaken in 2009 which indicated that ground conditions comprise mainly made ground to depths of between 0.3m and 0.5m. A contamination survey was also undertaken which identified some contaminants on parts of the site, which it recommended should be removed. It also recommended further gas monitoring to evaluate the ground gas regime.

3.0 SUMMARY OF RELEVANT LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

- 3.1 The St Albans District Local Plan was adopted in November 1994 and covers the period 1981 to 2001. A number of policies have been ‘saved’.
- 3.2 The Local Plan Proposals Map indicates the following ‘saved’ designations/policies affecting the site:

Policy 1 Green Belt – the usual presumption against inappropriate development applies.

Policy 143 Land Use Proposals Within the Upper Colne Valley – the site is identified as one of a number of sites in the Upper Colne Valley where the Council will encourage other uses. It is identified as UCV.6 Birklands Playing Field and advises that it is proposed to be used as public open space if vacated by the County Council.

- 3.3 The Local Plan Proposals Map indicates the following ‘saved’ designations/policies adjoining the site:

The adjoining Napsbury Fields are also identified as one of a number of sites in the Upper Colne Valley where the Council will encourage other uses (**Policy 143 Land Use Proposals Within the Upper Colne Valley**). It is identified as UCV.5 Land at Napsbury Lane and advises that it is proposed to be used as low and medium intensity leisure uses compatible with the amenity of nearby residential uses.

- 3.4 The Local Plan also contains the following ‘saved’ policy which are also relevant:

Policy 65 Education Facilities is particularly relevant to the current proposals, particularly part B (iii) which relates to proposals for new schools in the Green Belt, stating that *‘New schools will be permitted only if very special*

circumstances can be demonstrated. It must be shown that no suitable location is available in areas excluded from the Green Belt and that there is an overriding need for the proposal to cater primarily for children living within the District’.

Policy 69 General Design and Layout – seeks to ensure developments are to a high standard.

Policy 75 Green Space Within Settlements seeks to protect green space or re-provide it elsewhere if its loss would result in a deficiency of open space in the area. The policy would not permit development if it would destroy the character of any remaining green space. The policy identifies a number of considerations which will be taken into account in determining planning applications for the development of green space within towns. The accompanying explanatory text advises that urban green spaces consist of all open land, irrespective of ownership, which supports trees and other plants in built-up areas, including parks, playing fields, allotments, verges, waste land about public utilities and gardens.

Policy 74 Landscaping and Tree Preservation – seeks to retain existing landscaping and provide new landscaping in developments

Policy 39 Parking Standards, General Requirements sets out the Council's car parking standards.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 As far as we have been able to establish from St Albans DC's on-line planning records that there have not been any recent planning applications for the site, apart from a vehicular crossover, although the site was included in the application sites for a number of planning applications in the mid 1980's / early 1990's for the development of other land (Napsbury Fields and the former Napsbury Hospital) which involved taking an access road from the developments across the site to London Road. These proposals were either refused, appeals dismissed, or withdrawn.
- 4.2 Representations were submitted by V&G, on behalf of the County Council, in October 2009, in response to the City and District Council's Emerging Spatial Strategy which was then being prepared as part of their former Local Development Framework. Two options were put forward for the development of the site – one for residential development of 77 units on approximately 1.7ha of the site, with public open space on remaining areas, and the second option for a 2FE primary school. A copy of the illustrative layout plan which accompanied the representations, which indicates how a 2FE primary school could be accommodated accompanies this report.

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL FOR NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

- 5.1 The site has previously been assessed as suitable for accommodating a 2FE primary school and has been promoted for this use – mainly to meet the primary educational needs of the southern side of St Albans.
- 5.2 As far as we are aware the last time it was put forward for this use was in 2009. However, since this date there have been a number of changes:

- The current study to identify a potential location for a new 2FE primary school is based on needs arising from the town centre and the area east of the town centre, rather than needs from the southern part of the St Albans.
- Since 2009 the former Francis Bacon Secondary School, which is approximately 400m to the north of the site, has become an academy, has been rebadged as The Samuel Ryder Academy, and has become an all-through school, with a new two storey primary school block added. This would have met some of the primary school needs of the surrounding area, including the site.
- The site was designated an Asset of Community Value in 2014.

Site

- 5.3 The site has an area of over 4.08ha, which is significantly more than the minimum 0.7ha size sought for a new 2fE primary school by this study to identify potential new primary school sites (excluding playing field). It would also be significantly larger than the 1.99ha site required by BB103 for a new 2FE primary school (including nursery) on an unrestrained site in a non-urban area.
- 5.4 Even allowing for the significant areas of the site which contain trees and are wooded the site would be likely to be large enough for a BB103 based primary school (including playing field).
- 5.5 The site is located in the green belt and a new school would be contrary to green belt policy. In order to justify a new school in this location, very special circumstances would need to be justified to override the usual presumption against development in the green belt, in particular it would need to be demonstrated that there are no alternative non-green belt sites available which could accommodate the school. It would also be necessary to demonstrate that the impact on the green belt has been minimised.

Acquisition of additional land

- 5.6 There is open land to the south west, comprising Napsbury Fields, but this should not be necessary.

Maximum height of development

- 5.7 Bearing in mind the green belt location the buildings should be kept as low as possible and preferably limited to single storey in height, in order to minimise the impact on the green belt and views. However, if the site is removed from the Green Belt two storey school building would be likely to be acceptable.

Location relative to area of need

- 5.8 The site is located on the south eastern side of St Albans just outside the Wider Search Area, approximately 1.7km from the Core Area of Search, which is the area of greatest need, and is approximately 2.7km from the centre of the town (taken to be St Peter's Street). It is therefore relatively remote from the area of need.

Development principles

- 5.9 The Development Principles drawing illustrates how a 2FE primary school could be accommodated on the site. This is based on a new 2FE primary school (including nursery) on an unrestrained site (1.99ha) in a non-urban area, rather than a two storey school on a constrained urban site (0.7ha), with detached playing field.
- 5.10 The drawing incorporates a new access road from old London Road. It does not include vehicular accesses from roads from the north or a dropping off / pick up and circulation area on the northern part of the site, which is identified in the high level transport and access appraisal, due to the impact on existing mature trees and nearby residential properties.
- 5.11 The accompanying illustrative layout plan at the Appendix indicates, in more detail, how a 2FE primary school could be accommodated on the site. However, it should be noted that this drawing was based on the former BB99 standards which have been replaced by the present BB103 standards. The former standards were higher and it was usual for sites of 2.5ha to be identified for a 2FE primary school, rather than the present day 1.99ha.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The main planning and environmental constraints and considerations which would affect the potential use of the site for a new primary school are:
- Green belt designation
 - Tree Preservation Order on a number of trees
 - Designation as an Asset of Community Value and use (informally) as open space
- 6.2 The site is of sufficient size to accommodate a new 2FE primary school based on either a 0.7ha site (excluding playing field) for a constrained urban site or a 1.99ha site for an unconstrained site in a non-urban area. Although there are a large number of trees on the site there is sufficient room to accommodate a new school and retain the most important trees.
- 6.3 The site is owned by the County Council and was originally purchased for use for educational purposes, and has previously been promoted for use for a new primary school. In theory it is therefore a suitable site for a new primary school. However, although it is located just outside the Wider Search Area it is relatively remote from the Core Area, which is the area of greatest need, and so is not well located to serve these needs, which is the purpose of this site search study, although it is well located to serve needs in the south eastern part of St Albans
- 6.4 The site is located in the green belt and so very special circumstances would need to be given to justify a new school on the site. It would also need to be demonstrated that there are no suitable non green belt locations available, although if the site were to be taken out of the green belt and allocated for a new school in the Local Plan, these justifications would not be required.
- 6.5 A number of trees are covered by a TPO, but as the larger trees are only located around the perimeter it is unlikely that they would significantly affect

the location of a school on the site. However, it is suggested that details of the TPO be obtained.

6.6 In addition to these issues the site is used by the public as if it were open space and it is designated an Asset of Community Value, although a school use may not conflict with this designation. If proposals for a school on this site are to be progressed we recommend that this issue be investigated to see whether there would be a conflict.

6.7 The main physical and site constraints and considerations which would affect the potential use of the site for a new primary school are:

- Woodland and mature trees on the site

6.8 The high level transportation and accessibility appraisal advises that overall the site appears to offer good opportunities for suitable access for a 2FE primary school, if the suggested measures are implemented. It recommends that it is sufficiently suitable in transport terms to warrant further more detailed investigation for such a use.

[Note: one of the possible mitigation measures set out in the appraisal is a dropping off / pick up and circulation area on the northern part of the site, with vehicular accesses from the roads to the north. However, these are unlikely to be acceptable due to the impact on existing trees and nearby residential properties.]

6.9 A number of studies and technical investigations were undertaken in 2009 and are adequate for the purposes of the current assessment. However, if it is decided to progress the site these will need to be reviewed and updated. It may also be necessary for a number of other studies to be commissioned. These include:

- Topographical survey (may need update)
- Tree survey (may need update)
- Ecological assessment – will need to be updated bearing in mind the timescale since it was originally completed. A number of species surveys may also need to be commissioned (as recommended in the current ecological assessment).
- Transport assessment / report
- Preliminary planning report

6.10 In due course the following studies and technical investigations are also likely to be required:

- Archaeological desk based assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy
- Alternative site assessment (based on this study)
- Geophysical / Geotechnical investigations (may need update)
- Utilities report

6.11 The following may also be required:

- Archaeological evaluation (excavations) – depending on results of geophysical survey

- 6.12 The overall conclusion is that the site is of more than sufficient size to accommodate a new primary school and is owned by the County Council and has been previously identified for this purpose. However, it is relatively remote from the Core Area, which is the area of greatest need, and so a new school in this location may not meet needs arising from the area of greatest need.
- 6.13 The main issue is likely to be the green belt location and the need for very special circumstances to justify a school, including the need to demonstrate that there are no alternative non-green belt sites available which could accommodate the school. A secondary issue is likely to be the perceived loss of what is seen by the public as an open space and its designation as an Asset of Community Value.

APPENDIX

St Albans Primary School Site Search

High Level Accessibility Appraisal for Site at Birklands Park

This high level access appraisal is to consider the suitability of access for a new 2 Form of Entry (2FE) primary school on the Birklands Park location in St Albans. It is to be read in conjunction with Drawing ST-2479-04, attached to the end of this document and refers to site reference O14.

This site was subject to an assessment of access suitability for both residential and/or educational use by Stomor Ltd in 2009. This study considered serving the site in isolation and also as part of a wider development to the west, or to both the west and east of the site. A number of different access options were considered proportionate to the scale of the development. As this current appraisal is solely to consider the possibility of a 2FE primary school on the site, only the more scaled back access options have been considered.

1. Site Background

1.1 Location

The site is situated on the southern edge of St Albans, bounded by residential development to the north, trees and grassland to the west, a mixture of commercial and residential development to the south and London Road to the east. It is thought that the majority of pupils will travel from the north.

1.2 Local Road Network

London Road (herein referred to as Old London Road) is an approximately 7m wide 30mph local access cul-de-sac to the east of the site. Access to Old London Road is via a short link road, with T-junctions at either end onto the A1081 London Road. The A1081 is a Main Distributor Road connecting the centre of St Albans with the A414 North Orbital Road at the London Colney roundabout, southeast of the site. In the vicinity of the site the A1081 is approximately 10m wide and is subject to a 40mph speed limit.

There is a short ghost island on the A1081 London Road to allow southbound cars to turn right into the site via the Old London Road link.

To the north of the site, New House Park is an approximately 7.3m wide Local Access Road which serves the surrounding housing estate, connecting to the A1081 London Road approximately 500m to the north of the site. The cul-de-sac section of New House Park which abuts the site is 4.8m wide. The Poplars is an approximately 5.5m wide cul-de-sac which serves housing abutting the northern site boundary and is accessed from New House Park.

1.3 Existing Access

There is currently no operational vehicular access to the existing site. However there is a gated access bellmouth serving the site from Old London Road to the east. This access is currently

overgrown. Pedestrians are able to access the site from Old London Road via on a footpath adjacent to the bellmouth described above, as well as via a footpath from The Poplars to the north.

1.4 Existing Conditions

Observations of transport conditions in the vicinity of the site were made in the AM peak period of 14th January 2016 between 8am and 9am. The weather was cold and generally dry. Traffic appeared to be mostly light in the vicinity of the site, except on the A1081 London Road heading southbound onto the London Colney Roundabout, where peak queues stretched back to the roundabout with Highfield Park Drive 750m to the north.

There appeared to be little on street parking currently on Old London Road, with capacity for more cars to park along it. There was a moderate amount of parking observed on the residential roads to the north of the site with quite limited scope for extra parking.

1.5 Existing Pedestrian/Cycle Provision

The A1081 London Road has a pedestrian refuge island to the south east of the junction with the link to Old London Road.

Birklands Lane forms Public Footpath (PROW) FP53, linking Old London Road to the A414 North Orbital, running along the southern boundary of the site.

An existing footbridge crosses the A414 North Orbital Road about 400m to the south east of the site and connects London Road with the residential areas in the north of London Colney. There is also a signal controlled crossing over the A1081 arm of the London Colney roundabout, approximately 350m to the south east of the site.

A combined foot/cycleway runs alongside the A1081 London Road from the London Colney roundabout to the junction with Grosvenor Road approximately 2km to the north west. This path also provides a link to National Cycle Route 61, The Alban Way, approximately 1.8km north west of the site.

There is also a foot/cycleway running along the southern side of Highfield Park Drive, linking to residential areas to the north east of the site. The cycleway running along Highfield Park Drive continues south onto the eastern side of the A1081 London Road, but terminates to the east of the site with no formal crossing onto the cycleway present on the western side of the A1081. There is a signal controlled crossing to the north of the roundabout joining London Road and Highfield Park Drive.

1.6 Public Transport

There are bus stops on both sides of the A1081 London Road, approximately 200m from the possible access onto Old London Road, both to the north west and south east. Route 84/84A, operated by Metroline, connects St Albans and New Barnet, passing the site four times per hour. The half-hourly Route 602, operated by Uno, connects Hatfield with Watford via St Albans and London Colney while

the hourly Route 658, also operated by Uno, connects Borehamwood with St Albans via London Colney also call at these stops.

The nearest major Railway Station is St Albans City, approximately 2.2 kilometres to the north west of the site, which has regular connections with Harpenden, Luton, London and further afield. St Albans Abbey, an unmanned stop approximately 2.5 kilometres to the west of the site, has connections with Watford Junction, approximately every 45 minutes.

2. Access Considerations

2.1 Network Capacity

Heavy traffic and associated queuing on the A1081 London Road at the London Colney roundabout during the AM peak period presents a noticeable inconvenience for vehicles travelling to the site from St Albans. The timings on the traffic lights at the London Colney roundabout could potentially be changed to reduce queue lengths on the A1081. However, this is unlikely to be considered further as the A414 North Orbital Road currently has very heavy flows and the Highway Authority would not want to negatively affect the dominant flow more than necessary.

The only likely potential slight improvement for vehicles accessing the site would be to lengthen the existing ghost island for right turns into the site. The extent of this is constrained by the close proximity of a right turn lane in the opposite direction which allows northbound cars to access the London Road Cemetery.

It is unlikely that the Highway Authority will accept the principle of parents dropping off pupils on any of the surrounding roads within the public highway. Therefore, on site parking for parents as well as staff would be required. Parents who are unwilling to join the southbound queue on the A1081 are likely to look for an area to drop off/pick up elsewhere; with the residential area around New House Park likely to be used if a northern access to the site was provided.

2.2 General Improvements

Depending upon results of desire line analysis, a new signal controlled crossing may be required on the A1081 to link the foot/cycleway to the east side of London Road to the cycleway on the west side.

Old London Road is about 7m wide, so there may be some limited scope for on street parking to occur without disrupting the two way flow into and out of the school. It is considered unlikely that there will be sufficient on street parking for all parents expected to use this, especially given its location on the edge of the town, south of the main area of need. Therefore, on site facilities for parents as well as staff should be provided.

2.3 Proposed Access

There are several potential options for providing vehicular and pedestrian access into the proposed site, as outlined below:

Option 1: Single vehicular entrance from Old London Road with pedestrian access from the north

The proposed access to the site is likely to be a simple T-junction in the position of the existing unused and gated bellmouth on Old London Road. Widening of the bellmouth would be required to accommodate two way flows into and out of the site. Additional highway works would be required in the vicinity of the site including repainting of road markings and the introduction of some parking restrictions in the vicinity of the access.

An outline design was previously carried out, which consisted of changing the priorities along Old London Road to make the access to the site the main movement along with the introduction of vertical speed control measures. This design was subject to a Road Safety Audit in 2009, which suggested that the existing give way arrangements should be retained and that vertical speed control measures were not considered necessary.

The Highway Authority previously advised that an access from Old London Road for a 2FE JMI school would be acceptable in principle.

It is thought that there is also likely to be demand for a parent parking facility on the London Road side of the site to the east, as this will allow onward access to the A414 North Orbital Road and M25.

A significant desire line is likely to be via New House Park and/or The Poplars, subject to improvement of the existing footpath into the site from this direction. It is possible that waiting restrictions would be required to discourage parents using this area as a vehicular drop off /pick up zone, especially considering the fact that queuing on the A1081 may make using this northern area more attractive.

Option 2: Vehicular entrances from Old London Road and New House Park

There is potentially scope for vehicular access from the residential area to the north west of the site, either via The Poplars or New House Park. While it is likely to be on the desire line of many pupils, a northern vehicular entrance is likely to be resisted by local residents due to its location in what appears to be an otherwise quiet residential area, particularly considering the potential for parents to prefer a drop off in this area to queueing on the A1081 London Road. Furthermore, it would be undesirable to have the principal vehicular access through these narrow (approximately 4.8m to 5.5m wide) residential roads if there is a better alternative.

This option is likely to be required if modelling showed that queuing on the A1081 makes an eastern entrance unsuitable for the sole vehicular access into the site. A northern entrance would require a drop off and parking facility to be included within the site itself, as there is a lack of capacity for two way flow and parking on the New House Park network. The drop off facility is likely to consist of a one way system that involves two access points, one on The Poplars and the other on New House Park. This would be built in an area of woodland and may require the removal of some trees.

2.4 Park and Stride

Birklands Lane forms Public Right of Way FP53 to the immediate south of the site; linking the A414 North Orbital Road to the south. Aylett Nurseries are located to the north of the A414 with a large

car park within 250m walking distance of the site. Depending upon the origin of pupils, and vehicle desire lines avoiding queues on the A1081, this could provide a suitable location for a park and stride facility, subject to agreement with the landowners. A review of Birklands Lane in terms of safety would be required.

3. Conclusion

The site is located on the southern edge of St Albans and it is likely that the majority of pupils will travel from the north. It is suggested that the most suitable option for vehicles to access the site is from Old London Road to the east of the site, while pedestrians could be provided with an additional access via New House Park and/or The Poplars to the north of the site. A northern pedestrian access may lie on the main pupil desire line to and from the school.

Whilst availability of on-street parking in the area is better than some sites, it will not be sufficient to serve a new school development, especially given its edge of town location south of the town. Therefore, on site parking for parents is required in addition to that provided for staff.

Minimal highway works should be required at the site consisting of the construction of the access road itself, road markings and the possible introduction of some parking restrictions. It may be that further studies show a longer ghost island would be beneficial on the A1081 London Road, although it may be difficult to achieve much change, given the proximity of the London Road Cemetery access road.

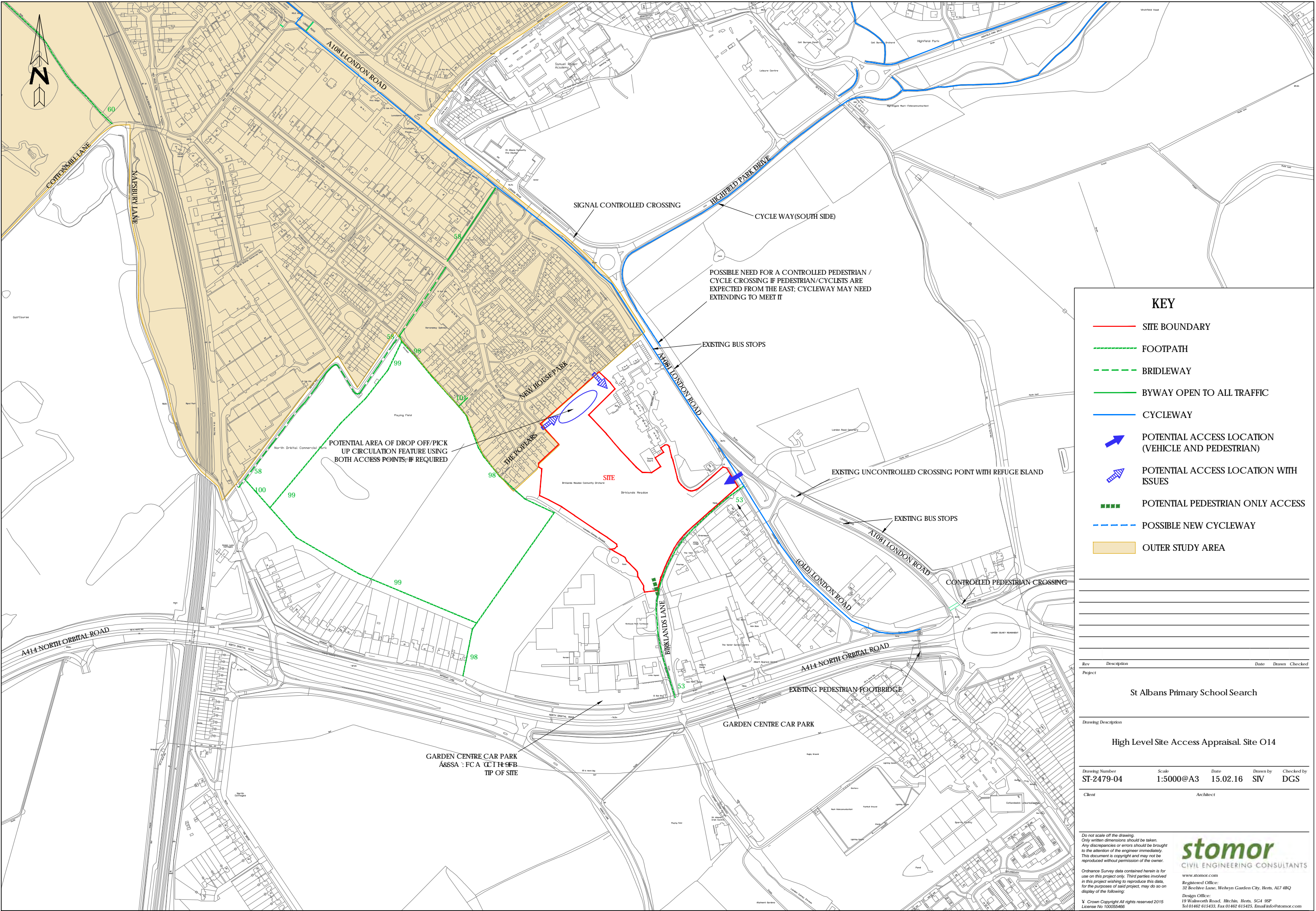
The existing footpath from The Poplars should be improved unless a new footway link is provided from New House Park. Depending upon results of desire line analysis, a new signal controlled crossing may be required on the A1081 to link the foot/cycleway to the east side of London Road to the cycleway on the west side.

The main challenge for the site is the impact of existing heavy traffic flows on the A1081 London Road which are likely to be increased by school traffic. This encourage parents to use a northern entrance, if provided.

If a single vehicular access from Old London Road is deemed insufficient, an additional drop off and circulation facility could be provided within the north of the site, formed by a one-way loop joining New House Park and The Poplars. A combination of accesses from New House Park/The Poplars, Old London Road and a possible park and stride via Birklands Lane could result in well distributed traffic, minimising the impact in any one location.

The local public transport network is reasonable and offers options for staff and accompanied pupils to use these sustainable travel modes.

Overall the site appears to offer good opportunities for suitable access for a 2FE primary school, if the measures set out above are implemented. It is recommended that it is sufficiently suitable in transport terms to warrant further more detailed investigation for such a use.



KEY

- SITE BOUNDARY
- FOOTPATH
- BRIDLEWAY
- BYWAY OPEN TO ALL TRAFFIC
- CYCLEWAY
- POTENTIAL ACCESS LOCATION (VEHICLE AND PEDESTRIAN)
- POTENTIAL ACCESS LOCATION WITH ISSUES
- POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN ONLY ACCESS
- POSSIBLE NEW CYCLEWAY
- OUTER STUDY AREA

Rev	Description	Date	Drawn	Checked
Project				

St Albans Primary School Search

High Level Site Access Appraisal. Site O14

Drawing Number	Scale	Date	Drawn by	Checked by
ST-2479-04	1:5000@A3	15.02.16	SIV	DGS

Client	Architect

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Only written dimensions should be taken.
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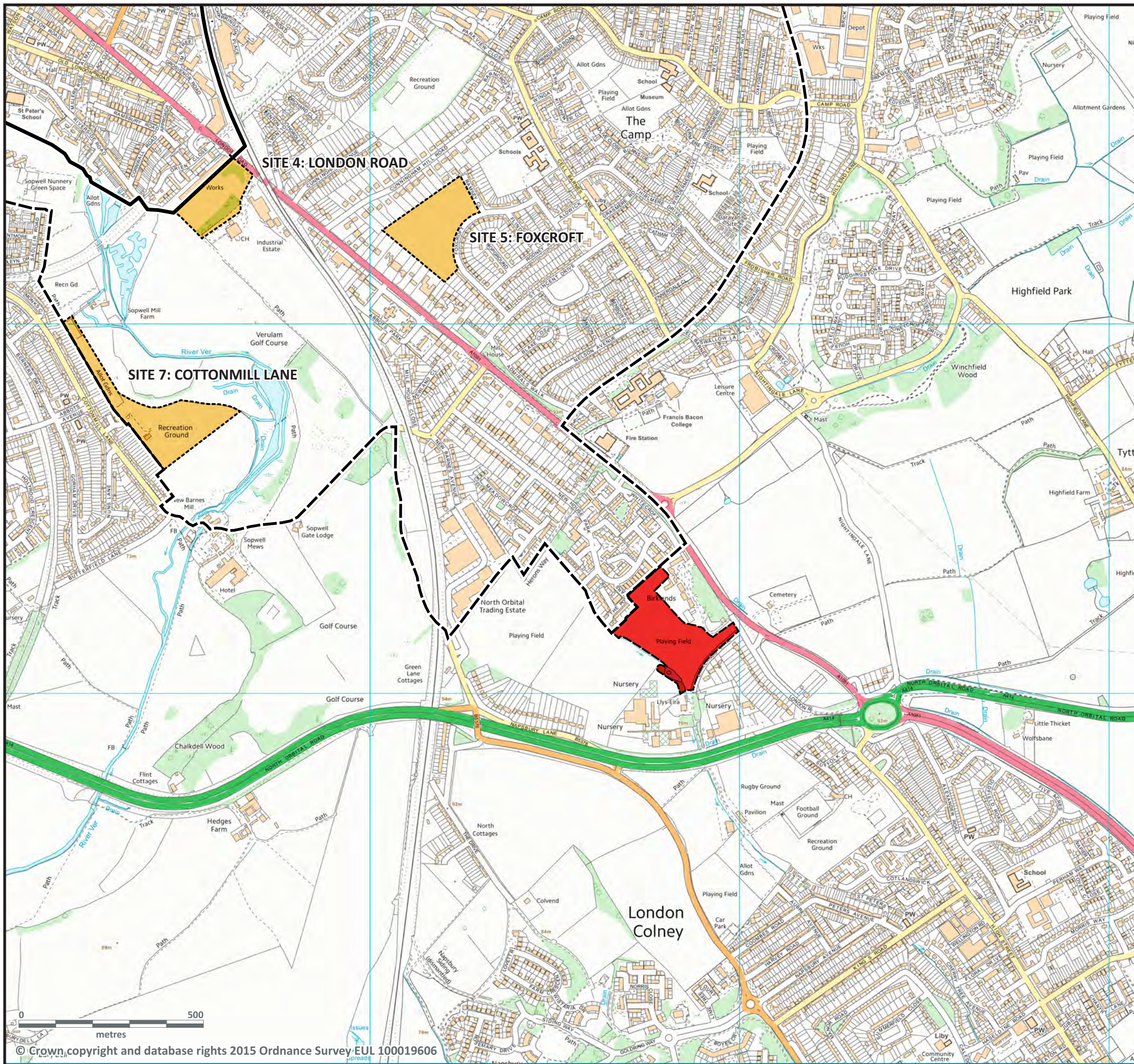
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DRAWINGS




-  THE SITE
-  OTHER SITES UNDER CONSIDERATION
-  CORE SEARCH AREA
-  WIDER SEARCH AREA

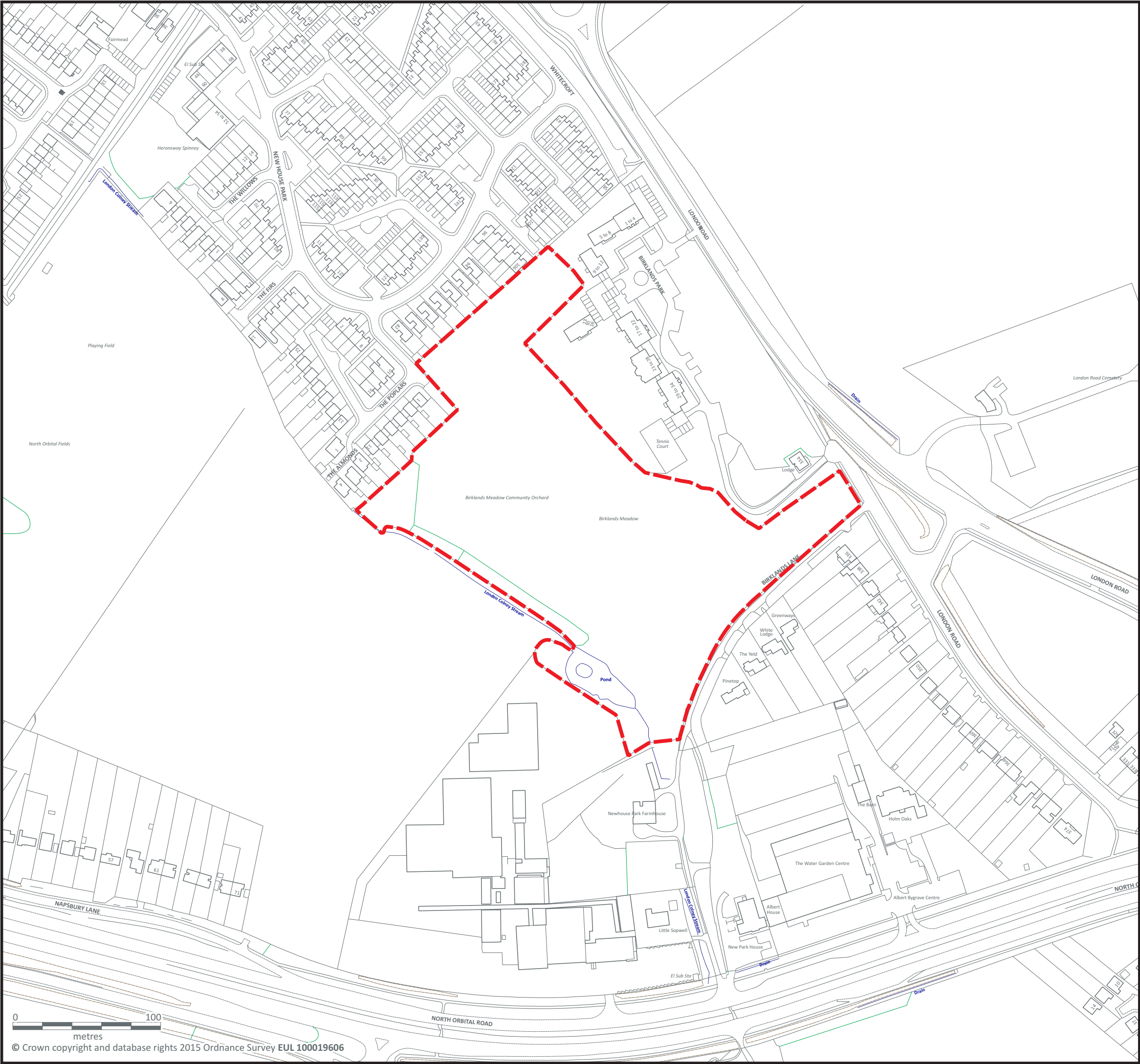
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PROJECT TITLE
St Albans Primary School
Site search

DRAWING TITLE
Site 6: O14 - Birklands Detached
Playing Field
Site location

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SITE BOUNDARY
4.20ha 10.38ac

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**St Albans Primary School
Site search**

DRAWING TITLE
**Site 6: O14 - Birklands Detached
Playing Field
Site identification**

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DRAWING TITLE
Site 6: O14 - Birklands Detached
Playing Field
Aerial photograph

SCALE	DATE JANUARY 2016	CHECKED
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**St Albans Primary School
Site search**

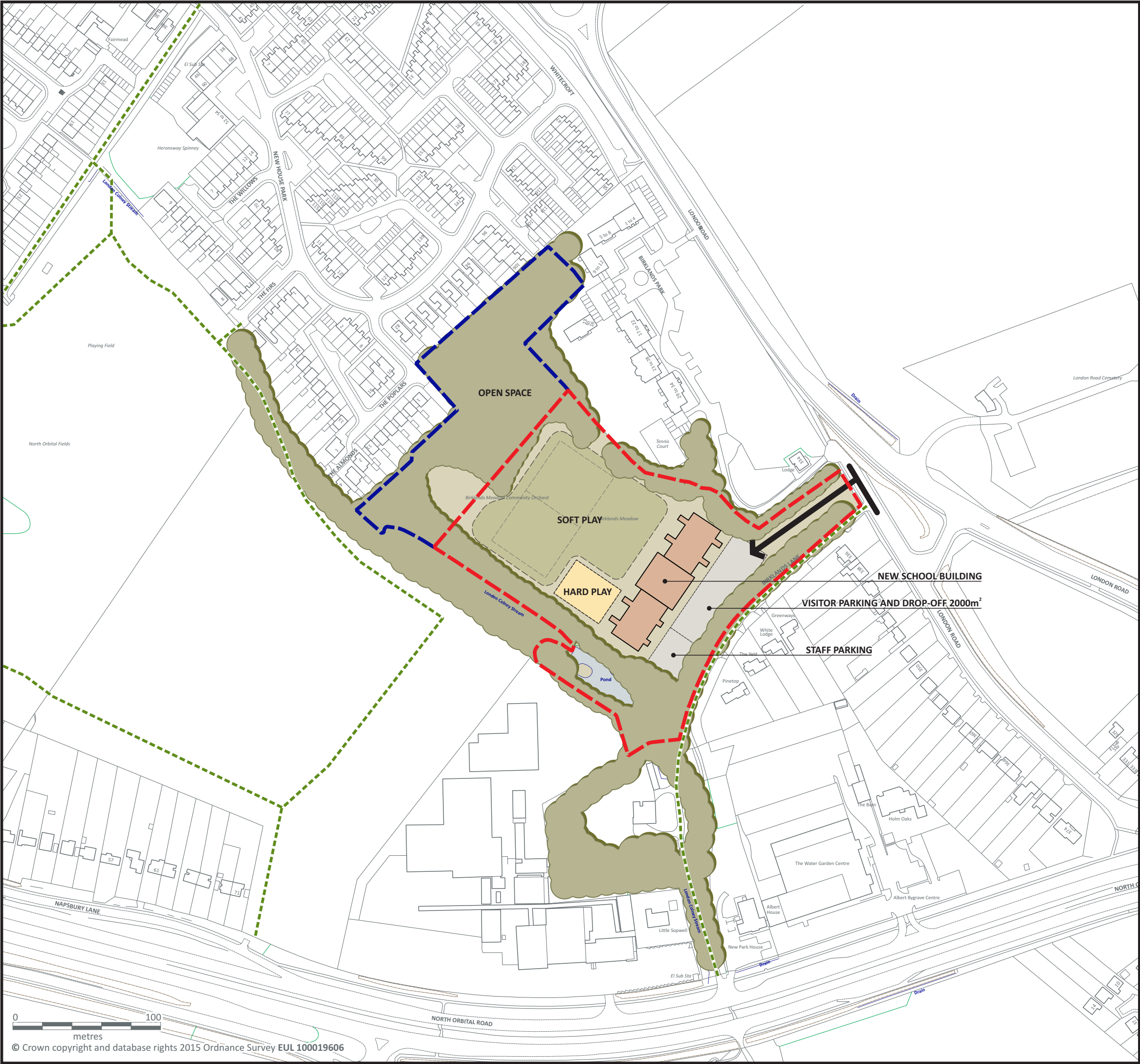
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**Site 6: O14 - Birklands Detached
Playing Field
Site identification**

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SITE BOUNDARY
2.99ha 7.38ac

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PROJECT TITLE
**St Albans Primary School
Site search**

DRAWING TITLE
**Site 6: O14 - Birklands Detached
Playing Field
Development principles**

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1:2500	DRAWN HNA	DATE

PROJECT No. 5115		354
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- SITE
- FOOTPATH
- BROADLEAF WOODLAND
- GRASSLAND WITH MOWN PATHS
- WATERCOURSES
- POND
- PEDESTRIAN POINTS OF ACCESS
- UNAUTHORISED PEDESTRIAN POINTS OF ACCESS
- PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY
- FILTERED VIEWS INTO/OUT OF SITE
- LONG DISTANCE VIEW OF ADJOINING RESIDENTIAL AREA
- OVERGROWN TENNIS COURT
- INFILLED SWIMMING POOL
- TREE WITH BAT POTENTIAL

PROJECT TITLE
**Birklands Detached Playing Field,
London Road,
ST ALBANS**

DRAWING TITLE
Site appraisal

SCALE	DATE	CHECKED
1:1250	MAY 2009	
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4768	N	003

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- SITE BOUNDARY
- SCHOOL BUILDING (2442m²)
- INFORMAL HARD PLAY (2255m²)
- TEAM GAME HARD PLAY (1736m²)
- GRASSED PLAYING FIELD (6690m²)
- TREE CATEGORY A 1, 2, OR 3 (TREES OF HIGH QUALITY AND VALUE)
- TREE CATEGORY A 1, 2, OR 3 ROOT PROTECTION AREA
- TREE CATEGORY B 1, 2, OR 3 (TREES OF MODERATE QUALITY AND VALUE)
- TREE CATEGORY B 1, 2, OR 3 ROOT PROTECTION AREA
- TREE CATEGORY C 1, 2, OR 3 (TREES OF LOW QUALITY AND VALUE)
- TREE CATEGORY B 1, 2, OR 3 ROOT PROTECTION AREA
- TREE CATEGORY R (TREES TO BE REMOVED)
- OTHER TREES (DERIVED FROM TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY)
- OTHER FOLIAGE/VEGETATION (DERIVED FROM TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY)

PROJECT TITLE
**Birklands Detached Playing Field,
 London Road,
 ST ALBANS**

DRAWING TITLE
**Illustrative layout:
 2 form entry primary school**

SCALE	DATE	CHECKED
1:1250	SEPTEMBER 2009	
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ST ALBANS PRIMARY SCHOOL SITE SEARCH

PLANNING APPRAISAL REPORT FOR SHORT LISTED POTENTIAL NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL SITES

SITE 7: WSE4 – OLD OAK / MARLBOROUGH RECREATION GROUND (OR LAND EAST OF COTTONMILL LANE), ST ALBANS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This planning appraisal is for the following site which was short listed following a review of potential sites for a new primary school at St Albans:
- Old Oak / Marlborough Recreation Ground (or land to the east of Cottonmill Lane), St Albans.
- 1.2 The site is located on the south eastern side of St Albans on the outer edge of the Wider Search Area.
- 1.3 A site visit was carried out on 2nd February 2016.
- 1.4 The site has an area of approximately 4.15ha. This appraisal assesses whether there is potential for the site to accommodate a 2fe primary school.
- 1.5 The following drawings accompany this report:
- Site Location Plan (5115/400)
 - Site Identification Plan (5115/401)
 - Aerial Photograph (5115/402)
 - Site Appraisal (5115/403)
 - Development Principles drawing (5115/404)
- 1.6 The following report also accompanies this report (see Appendix):
- High Level Accessibility Appraisal (including drawing ST-2479-03) prepared by Stomor Civil Engineering Consultants.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The site is located to the east of Cottonmill Lane between the residential properties fronting Cottonmill Lane and low lying land adjacent to the River Ver, to the south of the city centre.
- 2.2 It is located on the outer edge of the Wider Search Area, approximately 350m from the Core Area of Search, approximately 1.25km from the centre of the town (taken to be St Peter's Street).
- 2.3 The northern part of the site comprises an area of unused dilapidated lockup garages and a large hardstanding / car parking. To the south of this is a long narrow strip of land used for allotments (part used and part unused).
- 2.4 The southern part of the site, which is separated by an area of trees and change in level, widens out and is roughly triangular in shape and comprises a recreation ground with car park, community centre / pavilion (The Marlborough

Club), and floodlit multiuse games area, grass football pitch and a disused BMX track.

- 2.5 Immediately to the north of the allotment part of the site is a recreation ground with children's playground and the Alban Way cycleway / footway beyond, on a well treed embankment.
- 2.6 Immediately to west are the rear gardens of predominantly two storey semi-detached and terraced houses fronting Cottonmill Lane.
- 2.7 Immediately east of the site is an area of low lying open land, which appears to be unused, comprising willows, reeds and scrub, and the River Ver. Beyond the river is Verulam Golf Course.
- 2.8 **Immediately to the south of the site is an area of open farmland with the tree lined river and a group of large converted mill buildings (New Barnes Mill) beyond.**
- 2.9 **Access/Highways** – the site is has two indirect accesses to Cottonmill Lane. The northern part (garages and allotments) is via a narrow lane leading to Sopwell Mill Farm. The southern part (recreation ground) is via a residential access road - Old Oak
- 2.10 Stomor Civil Engineering Consultants have undertaken a high level transportation and accessibility appraisal for the site, which makes the following conclusions:

The site at Cottonmill Lane is located adjacent to a residential area in the southern part of St Albans. Existing levels of traffic in the vicinity of the site are currently relatively low; however it would appear that, in places, the surrounding road network does not have much additional capacity. Modelling may be required to assess the impact of school traffic on the local network.

The existing access points to the site appear to be unsuitable for use as a sole access for a new 2FE school. Old Oak is narrow and is unlikely to be suitable for widening due to the close proximity of existing buildings. Additionally, the road has a meandering alignment and poor visibility onto Cottonmill Lane. The cul-de-sac to the north west of the site is even narrower, though does have better visibility than Old Oak.

A one way system between Old Oak and the cul-de-sac to the north west, is deemed unlikely to have sufficient capacity for the combined vehicular and pedestrian movements associated with a 2FE school.

The preferred option would be to create a new vehicular access from Cottonmill Lane to the south of the site, combined with a pedestrian access from the cul-de-sac to the north of the site. This would require the acquisition of third party land to the south of the site for the access and a new junction from Cottonmill Lane. No access to the site for vehicles or pedestrians would be provided from Old Oak to minimise potential vehicular traffic on and around this road. This option would allow pedestrians to use a dedicated foot/cycleway from the cul-de-sac to the north, allowing for segregation from the general school vehicular traffic.

Both potential options would require a new pedestrian crossing on Cottonmill Lane and improvements to the footpath link from Saldeir Road to the north of the site. Given the extensive level of residential parking around the site already, on site provision for parents as well as staff vehicles will be required.

Local widening or provision of laybys could help to ease the flow of traffic along Cottonmill Lane.

There may be an opportunity for 'park and stride' from the St Albans Retail Park to the north west, which would provide a suitable facility for pupils and parents travelling from the west of the site.

The local public transport network is generally fairly poor, but potentially offers an option for travel by staff as well as accompanied pupils.

On balance, this site presents a number of potential challenges to providing suitable access for a 2FE school. These issues could be overcome through the construction of a vehicular access to the south of the site, a pedestrian crossing over Cottonmill Lane and a pedestrian access to the north west of the site. However, this would involve the acquisition of third party land which will need further investigation.

- 2.11 A copy of the report, and the accompanying drawing which illustrates the main conclusions, is attached at the Appendix.
- 2.12 **Pedestrian / cycle access** – the site has pedestrian accesses via the existing accesses to Cottonmill Lane. The Alban Way cycleway / footway runs approximately 110m to the north of the site. It forms part of the National cycle Network (route 61).
- 2.13 **Public transport** – a bus service S4 operates in a one way direction (south bound) along Cottonmill Lane near the northern part of the site.
- 2.14 **Green Belt** – the site is located in the Green Belt.
- 2.15 **Land ownership** – St Albans City and District Council's website indicates that, apart from an area at the centre of the site to the rear of Old Oak, the site is owned by the District Council.
- 2.16 **Flooding** – The Environment Agency website indicates that the adjoining land to the north and east is within an area at risk of flooding.
- 2.17 **Topography** – the northern part of the site slopes down gently towards the River Ver to the east. The southern part of the site is partly flat where the car park, community centre / pavilion, playing pitch and MUGA are located, with relatively steep slopes down to the river to the north east of these.
- 2.18 **Listed buildings/conservation area** – Sopwell Mill (Grade II) to the north east of the site is listed. There are two Grade II listed buildings and a number of locally listed buildings within the New Barnes Mill complex to the south east of the site. Beyond this is the large listed country house (now hotel) – Sopwell House Hotel (Grade II). A conservation area 'Sopwell Conservation Area' covers the mill and Sopwell House area.
- 2.19 **Archaeology** – the site is not located in an area of archaeological interest.
- 2.20 **Ecology** – there are no designated areas of nature conservation importance in the vicinity of the site. However, due to the boundary trees and scrub on much of the site it may well have ecological value. The adjoining low lying land immediately to the east of the site, next to the river, is likely to have high ecological value.
- 2.21 **Trees** – there are a number of trees on the site. There is a block of trees between the allotments and recreation ground parts of the site (which may preclude vehicular access between the two parts), trees on the northern frontage to the lane leading to Sopwell Mill Farm, a number of mature oak

trees with the centre of the recreation ground, and other trees alongside the Old Oak access road.

- 2.22 **Tree Preservation Order** – there are a number of TPO trees adjacent to Old Oak which is the access to the southern part of the site. A tree survey will be required.
- 2.23 **Agricultural land quality** – Agricultural land classification maps indicate that the general area is classified as land predominately in urban use.
- 2.24 **Public Right of Way** – there are no public rights of way within or adjacent to the site.
- 2.25 **Public access / Community Use** – the site is not identified as an area of Registered Common Land or Open Access Land or designated as an Asset of Community Value, although the recreation ground is a public open space.
- 2.26 **Noise sources** – the Midland Mainline / Thameslink railway line runs beyond the golf course to the east of the site but is unlikely to materially affect the site.
- 2.27 **Size / shape** – the northern part of the site is a long narrow shape some 25 to 30m wide and would be likely to be too narrow to accommodate a primary school, without extending onto the adjoining low lying land next to the River Ver (which is liable to flooding and likely to be of ecological value). The southern parcel is much wider and larger and would be more than adequate to accommodate a new primary school of 0.7ha (excluding playing field). See later for further discussion on this issue.
- 2.28 **Other Matters** – none.

3.0 SUMMARY OF RELEVANT LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

- 3.1 The St Albans District Local Plan was adopted in November 1994 and covers the period 1981 to 2001. A number of policies have been ‘saved’.
- 3.2 The Local Plan Proposals Map indicates the following ‘saved’ designations/policies affecting the site:

Policy 1 Green Belt – the usual presumption against inappropriate development applies.

Policy 114 (St. Albans City Centre, Building Height, Roofscape and Skyline) – site is located in a Zone of Visibility. The recreation ground is identified as a public viewpoint from which there are views of the City Centre skyline. The policy advises, amongst other matters, that proposals shall not obscure or detract from views of the historic roofscape of the Building Height Control Area.

- 3.3 The Local Plan Proposals Map indicates the following ‘saved’ designations/policies adjoining the site:

Conservation Area No. 14 Sopwell. Policy 85 advises that the Council will pay attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character of conservation areas, and also provides detailed guidance on proposals within conservation areas.

- 3.4 The Local Plan also contains the following ‘saved’ policy which are also relevant:

Policy 65 Education Facilities is particularly relevant to the current proposals, particularly part B (iii) which relates to proposals for new schools in the Green Belt, stating that *‘New schools will be permitted only if very special circumstances can be demonstrated. It must be shown that no suitable location is available in areas excluded from the Green Belt and that there is an overriding need for the proposal to cater primarily living within the District’*.

Policy 67 Public Meeting Rooms and facilities, advises that before granting permission for a change of use or redevelopment of buildings used for community purposes, the Council will need to be satisfied that a need for them no longer exists.

Policy 69 General Design and Layout – seeks to ensure developments are to a high standard.

Policy 75 Green Space Within Settlements seeks to protect green space or re-provide it elsewhere if its loss would result in a deficiency of open space in the area. The policy would not permit development if it would destroy the character of any remaining green space. The policy identifies a number of considerations which will be taken into account in determining planning applications for the development of green space within towns. The accompanying explanatory text advises that urban green spaces consist of all open land, irrespective of ownership, which supports trees and other plants in built-up areas, including parks, playing fields, allotments, verges, waste land about public utilities and gardens.

Policy 74 Landscaping and Tree Preservation – seeks to retain existing landscaping and provide new landscaping in developments

Policy 102 Loss of Agricultural Land – advises that development that would result in the loss of agricultural land will be assessed against a number of criteria – land quality, and farm economics and management.

Policy 39 Parking Standards, General Requirements sets out the Council’s car parking standards.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 St Albans DC’s on-line planning records indicate that there have been a number of applications for the recreation ground. In 1997 consent was given for a replacement club/community centre. In 2000 consent was given for amendments to the changing room/meeting hall, and in 2008 permission was given for a floodlit multi-use games area.

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL FOR NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

Site

- 5.1 The site has an area of 4.15ha, which is significantly more than the minimum 0.7ha size sought for a new 2fE primary school by this study to identify potential new primary school sites (excluding playing field). It would also be

larger than the 1.99ha minimum site required by BB103 for a new 2FE primary school (including nursery) on an unrestrained site in a non-urban area.

- 5.2 If the northern part of the site, which would be likely to be too narrow to accommodate a school, were to be omitted the remaining area south of the block of woodland, although it would be triangular in shape, would have an area of approximately 2.0ha (excluding the sloping areas near the river) which would still be more than the area required for a new primary school based on 0.7ha or 1.99ha.
- 5.3 The site slopes down gently towards the River Ver and, depending on the extent of the site it may be necessary for some re-contouring near the northern and eastern edges of the site where it starts to slope down towards the river. The most significant site constraints are the existing mature oak trees within the recreation ground, and also the TPO trees adjacent to the main site access road (Old Oak). The trees adjacent to the access may limit the scope for highway improvements.
- 5.4 The site is located in the green belt and a new school would be contrary to green belt policy. In order to justify a new school in this location, very special circumstances would need to be justified to override green belt designation, in particular it would need to be demonstrated that there are no alternative non-green belt sites available which could accommodate the school. It would also be necessary to demonstrate that the impact on the green belt has been minimised. At this stage it may be necessary to assume that a building should be single storey (Note: the 0.7ha site assumes a two storey building).
- 5.5 The site is identified as a public viewpoint from which there are views of the St Albans City Centre skyline. The policy advises, amongst other matters, that proposals shall not obscure or detract from views of the historic roofscape of the Building Height Control Area. This mainly relates to developments in the Building Height Control Area but we would expect it to be an important consideration in any proposals for a new school on the site.

Acquisition of additional land

- 5.6 There is open land to the south and east of the site which could enable the site to be enlarged, if necessary. The land to the east is low lying land adjacent to the River Ver, which is an area liable to flooding and is likely to have ecological value and so may not be suitable. The land to the south is farmland above the area liable to flooding and could enable the site to be enlarged, or possibly provide replacement open space for that lost to the school. However, the land forms part of the open setting of the adjoining conservation area / listed buildings based on New Barnes Mills.

Maximum height of development

- 5.7 Bearing in mind the green belt location and the location in a Zone of Visibility any buildings should be kept as low as possible and preferably limited to single storey in height, in order to minimise the impact on the green belt and views. [Note: the 0.7ha site requires a two storey building]

Location relative to area of need

- 5.8 The site is located on the outer edge of the Wider Search Area, with the southern part some 600m crowfly distance of the Core Area, which is the optimum location for a new primary school. However, it is physically separated from this area by the River Ver and its valley, which forms a barrier, with relatively few crossing points, although the Alban Way cycleway does provide a link. It is also located approximately 1.5km from the centre of St Albans (taken to be St Peter's Street). It is considered to be relatively remote from the Core Area, which is the area of greatest need, and that it may not help to meet needs in that area.

Other considerations

- 5.9 The majority of the site is a public open space with sports pitch, floodlit all-weather playing pitch, BMX course (under used) and community centre. The proposals would result in the loss of the open space, and other uses (unless there were shared use facilities at the school).
- 5.10 Local Plan Policy 75 seeks to protect Green Spaces, including parks, so there would be a policy objection to the loss of the open space. It may be necessary to undertake an assessment to establish whether there is adequate open space provision in the locality and what the implications of the loss of at least part of the open space would be. Depending on the outcome of such an assessment and the view of St Albans City and District Council towards the loss of part of the open space it may be necessary to enhance the remaining area of the open space / provide replacement open space elsewhere / enhance other open spaces to compensate for the loss.
- 5.11 Sport England may object to the loss of at least some of the open space, in particular the football pitch, and may require alternative replacement provision to be provided nearby, or existing facilities to be enhanced to make up for the loss, although it might be possible to have shared use of a school pitch.
- 5.12 If this site is to be progressed as a location for a new primary school it is suggested that Sport England be consulted.

Development principles

- 5.13 The Development Principles drawing illustrates how a 2FE primary school could be accommodated on the site. This is based on a new 2FE primary school (including nursery) on an unrestrained site (1.99ha) in a non-urban area, rather than a two storey school on a constrained urban site (0.7ha), with detached playing field, as this could be accommodated on the site, although it would result in the loss of more of the open space.
- 5.14 The drawing also incorporates a new access road and other highway mitigation measures suggested by the high level transportation and accessibility appraisal.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The main planning and environmental constraints and considerations which would affect the potential use of the site for a new primary school are:

- Green belt designation
 - Loss of open space and playing pitch
 - Loss of community centre.
 - Identification as a public viewpoint and location in a Zone of Visibility from which there are views of the St Albans City Centre skyline
- 6.2 The site is of sufficient size to accommodate a new primary school (based on a 0.7ha site, excluding playing field). It is also likely to be of sufficient size to accommodate a new primary school based on a site area of 1.99ha (for an unconstrained site in a non-urban area, including playing field) although this would be likely to result in the loss of all of the open space.
- 6.3 The site is likely to be in single ownership, which is an advantage, but is relatively remote from the Core Area, which is the optimum location for a new primary school, being the area of greatest need, and so it may not help to meet needs in that area.
- 6.4 The site is located in the green belt and so very special circumstances would need to be given to justify a new school on the site. It would also need to be demonstrated that there are no suitable non green belt locations available, although if the site were to be taken out of the green belt and allocated for a new school in the Local Plan, these justifications would not be required.
- 6.5 The loss of the whole recreation ground to a school use would result in the loss of one of the identified viewpoints from which there are important views of the City Centre Skyline, in particular the cathedral, which could be a significant issue. The loss of the community centre would also be a significant issue, unless the school were to include a replacement facility (possibly shared with the school).
- 6.6 The site is relatively free of physical and site constraints and considerations (apart from loss of open space) which would affect the potential use of the site for a new primary school. The main constraint is:
- Existing mature trees within the site and adjacent to the access to the site
- 6.7 The high level transportation and accessibility appraisal advises that overall the site presents a number of potential challenges to providing suitable access for a 2FE school. These issues could be overcome through the construction of a vehicular access to the south of the site, a pedestrian crossing over Cottonmill Lane and a pedestrian access to the north west of the site. However, this would involve the acquisition of third party land which will need further investigation.
- 6.8 If proposals for a school are to be progressed it is likely to be necessary to undertake an assessment to establish whether there is adequate open space provision in the locality and the implications of the loss of at least part of the open space. Discussion would need to take place with the Council and with Sport England at the earliest opportunity to establish whether they would object in principle to the proposals and whether replacement open space / playing pitch would need to be provided.

- 6.9 Assuming that proposals are to be progressed the following studies and technical investigations are likely to be required (in addition to the open space assessment):
- Topographical survey
 - Tree survey
 - Ecological assessment
 - Transport assessment
 - Preliminary planning report
- 6.10 A suitable design for providing a suitable access to the site and mitigating the impact of the school on the surrounding roads will also need to be provided and agreed with the highway authority – the access avoiding important trees (to be identified by tree survey) and minimising the impact on the adjoining conservation area / listed buildings.
- 6.11 In due course the following studies and technical investigations are also likely to be required:
- Archaeological desk based assessment
 - Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy
 - Alternative site assessment (based on this study)
 - Geophysical / Geotechnical investigations
 - Utilities report
- 6.12 The following may also be required:
- Archaeological evaluation (excavations) – depending on results of geophysical survey
- 6.13 The overall conclusion is that although the site could accommodate a new primary school and is owned by the District Council, and could help meet needs, it is relatively remote from the Core Area, which is the area of greatest need and so may not be well located to help meet this need.
- 6.14 The main issue is likely to be the green belt location, which means that there would need to be very special circumstances to justify a school on this site, including a need to demonstrate that there are no alternative non-green belt sites available which could accommodate the school. The loss the public open space and the implications of this for open space provision in the area and the attitude of the Council and Sport England to the loss, the loss of the existing community centre, is also likely to be an important issue, as are the highway mitigation measures which would be likely to be required in order to accommodate a school, in particular the need to construct a new access road, which would be significant.

RL/5115/8.3.16

APPENDIX

St Albans Primary School Site Search

High Level Accessibility Appraisal for Site East of Cottonmill Lane

This high level access appraisal is to consider the suitability of access for a new 2 Form of Entry (2FE) primary school to the east of Cottonmill Lane in St Albans. It is to be read in conjunction with Drawing ST-2479-03, attached to the end of this document and refers to site reference WSE4.

1. Site Background

1.1 Location

The site is situated on the southern side of St Albans and consists of a long row of allotments to the north and the Marlborough Club sports ground to the south. The site is bounded to the north and west by housing, associated with Cottonmill Lane, to the east by the River Ver and the south by a large field which is owned by a third party. It is likely that pupils will arrive via the Cottonmill and St Julians residential areas to the west and north, many arriving at Cottonmill Lane via smaller local residential access roads.

1.2 Local Road Network

Cottonmill Lane is a 30mph Local Distributor Road, which runs broadly northwest-southeast through the Cottonmill residential area of St Albans from a mini-roundabout at the junction of Watsons Walk and Old London Road near the City Centre, to another mini-roundabout at the junction of Napsbury Lane and Mile House Lane. The former mini-roundabout is about 800m north of the site and provides connections to the A1081 north west via Watsons Walk, while the latter mini-roundabout is approximately 450m east of the site and provides connections to the A414 via Napsbury Lane and the A1081 south east via Mile House Lane.

Cottonmill Lane varies in width along its length, and is subject to poor alignment to the south east, particularly adjacent to Sopwell House and the old buildings at the River Ver. To the west of the site, the road is approximately 6.7m wide.

Abbots Avenue consists of two approximately 10m wide carriageways, both of which are one-way, separated by an approximately 7m wide grassed central reserve. They connect to Cottonmill Lane approximately 80m north of the junction with Old Oak.

1.3 Existing Access

The southern section of the site is currently accessed from Cottonmill Lane via Old Oak, a small cul-de-sac to the west of the site. The northern section is also accessed from Cottonmill Lane via a small unnamed cul-de-sac to the north west of the site which provides connections to the Ver-Colne Valley Walk, a recreation ground, Sopwell Mill Farm and garages.

The Old Oak cul-de-sac offers a poor access to a school site as it is relatively narrow, has poor visibility at the junction onto Cottonmill Lane due to parked cars and has a meandering alignment. Due to the position of houses at its western end, there is a very limited corridor width of about

8.4m. This corridor consists of a verge of 0.8m on the northern side, carriageway of 4.8m, footway of 1.8m and a strip of trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in the remaining width on the south side.

The small cul-de-sac to the north west of the site is approximately 3m wide and has a fairly tight horizontal alignment. Visibility from the access onto Cottonmill Lane is considerably better than at Old Oak, and at the time of the site visit no parking impeded this.

1.4 Existing Conditions

Observations of transport conditions in the vicinity of the site were made in the AM peak period of 14th January 2016 between 8am and 9am. The weather was cold and generally dry. Traffic in the vicinity of the site was mostly light, although some localised short-term queuing was observed around parked cars on Cottonmill Lane. Congestion was observed at the roundabout between Cottonmill Lane, Old London Road and Watsons Walk, with traffic queuing along Watsons Walk from the junction with the A1081 London Road. Queuing was also observed in the AM peak near the other end of Cottonmill Lane, on Mile House Lane where it joins the A1081 at traffic signals further to the south east.

Relatively extensive on street parking was observed along Cottonmill Lane in the vicinity of the site and was the main constraint on the flow of traffic. Parking along verges was observed to create muddy areas where they had not been hardened with tarmac.

1.5 Existing Pedestrian/Cycle Provision

There are approximately 1.8m wide footways on both sides of Cottonmill Lane adjacent to the site, separated from the carriageway by hard and soft verges. There is no pedestrian crossing provision along Cottonmill Lane in the vicinity of the site. There is no footway on the northern side of Old Oak. The northern access has a narrow footway to its northern side, with no provision to the south.

National Cycle Route (NCR) 6, a major north-south route between Uxbridge and the north of England, passes along Berners Drive which travels parallel to Cottonmill Lane near the site, before joining it approximately 300m north west of the possible northern site access. NCR 6 intersects NCR 61 at the same point. NCR 61 provides connections between Maidenhead and Hoddesdon via Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City (partially using NCR 6). The section between St Albans and Hatfield is also known as The Alban Way and this forms part of the new St Albans Green Ring walking and cycling route.

There are also local cycle routes identified to the north west, which link to St Albans Retail Park with associated large parking areas.

1.6 Public Transport

A bus stop is present on Cottonmill Lane, adjacent to the northern site access. A further bus stop is located on Abbots Avenue outside St Julian's Church approximately 150m to the west of the site. These stops serve local route S4 which has two services per hour to and from St Albans City Centre.

The nearest railway station is St Albans Abbey, an unmanned stop approximately 800m to the north west of the site, which provides connections to Watford Junction approximately every 45 minutes. The nearest major railway station is St Albans City, approximately 1.1 kilometres to the north of the site, which has regular connections with Harpenden, Luton, London and further afield.

2. Access Considerations

2.1 Network Capacity

While existing levels of traffic in the vicinity of the site were observed to be low, it would appear that the surrounding road network may, in places, lack the capacity required for the additional vehicles associated with a new 2FE school. There is currently extensive on-street parking in the vicinity of the site, despite many grass verges being hardened to accommodate parked cars, and this is currently a constraint on the flow of traffic. As a result of this on site parking provision would be required within the school site for parents as well as staff, combined with parking restrictions along Cottonmill Lane. There is also enough room on Cottonmill Lane for some localised widening, potentially incorporating laybys, which would ease two way traffic flow.

Additionally, the area of Cottonmill Lane to the south of the site contains several blind bends and pinch points which are likely to become congested if there are heavy flows via this route associated with a new school. There are unlikely to be any suitable mitigation measures to ease these issues due to the close proximity of existing buildings to the highway and the existing narrow bridge over the River Ver.

Further modelling may be required at areas of potential congestion to assess the impact of school traffic on the local network.

2.2 General Improvements

As the majority of the local residential area is to the west of Cottonmill Lane, it would be reasonable to assume that a sizeable percentage of pupils would need to cross this road. Therefore, regardless of the access option that is chosen, a new pedestrian crossing would be required.

Additionally, improvements may be required to the footpath connection between Saldeir Road and Monks Close 500m north west of the site. This footpath would potentially be on the desire line of many pupils arriving from the north on foot. A direct foot/cycle link could potentially be provided across the western edge of the sportsground to connect to the northern tip of the site.

New uncontrolled pedestrian crossing points may be required on Abbots Avenue to the west of the site due to the wide carriageway width at the junction with Cottonmill Lane. Abbots Avenue itself has the potential to be used for some further on street parking.

2.3 Proposed Access

Considering the existing site conditions, there are several potential access options which may use a combination of access points and highway improvements, as outlined below:

Option 1: One-way system using Old Oak and Cul-de-Sac to North West of Site

As none of the current access roads for the site are likely to be appropriate for two way flows, a one way system may be beneficial.

Given the poor visibility from Old Oak onto Cottonmill Lane, an entry only arrangement could be considered for school traffic. However, provision would need to be made for local residents to continue with two way movements, to maintain access to their properties as before. School traffic would require a separate egress route, which would be provided via the cul-de-sac to the north west.

Alternatively, the visibility onto Cottonmill Lane could be improved by introducing parking restrictions in the vicinity of Old Oak, possibly supplemented with strategically placed buildouts on Cottonmill Lane.

It would be desirable to widen the existing footway on the south side of Old Oak to accommodate the volume of pedestrians expected. However, as there is limited width available between houses at the western end, there is very limited potential to increase the footway width. Trimming vegetation adjacent to the footway will assist in providing additional width and further east there is more potential to widen, subject to the limits of the highway boundary. If the limits of the highway boundary present a restriction to widening, acquisition of third party land may be required.

Swept path analysis would need to be undertaken to establish whether larger vehicles (including a fire appliance) would be able to manoeuvre along the route. If not, a large vehicle or school coach would need to make alternative arrangements such as stopping on Cottonmill Lane itself or using another access. Furthermore, two way vehicular access will need to be maintained to Sopwell Mill Farm, the recreation ground and any retained garages and allotments, even when the access is busy with school traffic.

Option 2: Vehicular Access via Third Party Land to the South East with Pedestrian Access via the Cul-de-Sac to the North West

With neither of the two existing vehicular accesses into the site being particularly suitable for school traffic, and possible difficulties with a one way system, third party land would need to be purchased in order to achieve access from Cottonmill Lane via open land to the south of the site. Connection to Cottonmill Lane would be in the vicinity of its junction with Butterfield Lane.

A new access arrangement in this location would present some challenges in terms of proximity to the junction with Butterfield Lane, the twisting alignment of Cottonmill Lane and established trees along the field's boundary. There may be scope for a four-armed roundabout to be provided serving Cottonmill Lane, Butterfield Lane and a school vehicular access and is something that could be investigated if third party land could be obtained.

It is considered that a site access from the south would be away from the desire line of most parents who would be coming from the north and west and may therefore wish to drop off/pick up pupils in the vicinity of Old Oak regardless of specific provision for them. As a result of this, use of a southern

vehicular entrance should be combined with a pedestrian access from the northern cul-de-sac, providing no access for either vehicles or pedestrians to the site from Old Oak.

This option would require the small cul-de-sac to the north west of the site to be improved to make it more suitable for pedestrian use. A new foot/cycle route into the school site would be required in the position of the existing allotments. Localised restrictions may be required to prevent drop offs/pick ups in unsuitable places in the vicinity of the pedestrian entrance, and to encourage parents to use the more suitable arrangement accessed from the south.

2.4 Park and Stride

There is potential for a 'park and stride' arrangement to be used from the St Albans Retail Park approximately 500m to the north west of the site if necessary permission can be gained.

3. Conclusion

The site at Cottonmill Lane is located adjacent to a residential area in the southern part of St Albans. Existing levels of traffic in the vicinity of the site are currently relatively low; however it would appear that, in places, the surrounding road network does not have much additional capacity. Modelling may be required to assess the impact of school traffic on the local network.

The existing access points to the site appear to be unsuitable for use as a sole access for a new 2FE school. Old Oak is narrow and is unlikely to be suitable for widening due to the close proximity of existing buildings. Additionally, the road has a meandering alignment and poor visibility onto Cottonmill Lane. The cul-de-sac to the north west of the site is even narrower, though does have better visibility than Old Oak.

A one way system between Old Oak and the cul-de-sac to the north west, is deemed unlikely to have sufficient capacity for the combined vehicular and pedestrian movements associated with a 2FE school.

The preferred option would be to create a new vehicular access from Cottonmill Lane to the south of the site, combined with a pedestrian access from the cul-de-sac to the north of the site. This would require the acquisition of third party land to the south of the site for the access and a new junction from Cottonmill Lane. No access to the site for vehicles or pedestrians would be provided from Old Oak to minimise potential vehicular traffic on and around this road. This option would allow pedestrians to use a dedicated foot/cycleway from the cul-de-sac to the north, allowing for segregation from the general school vehicular traffic.

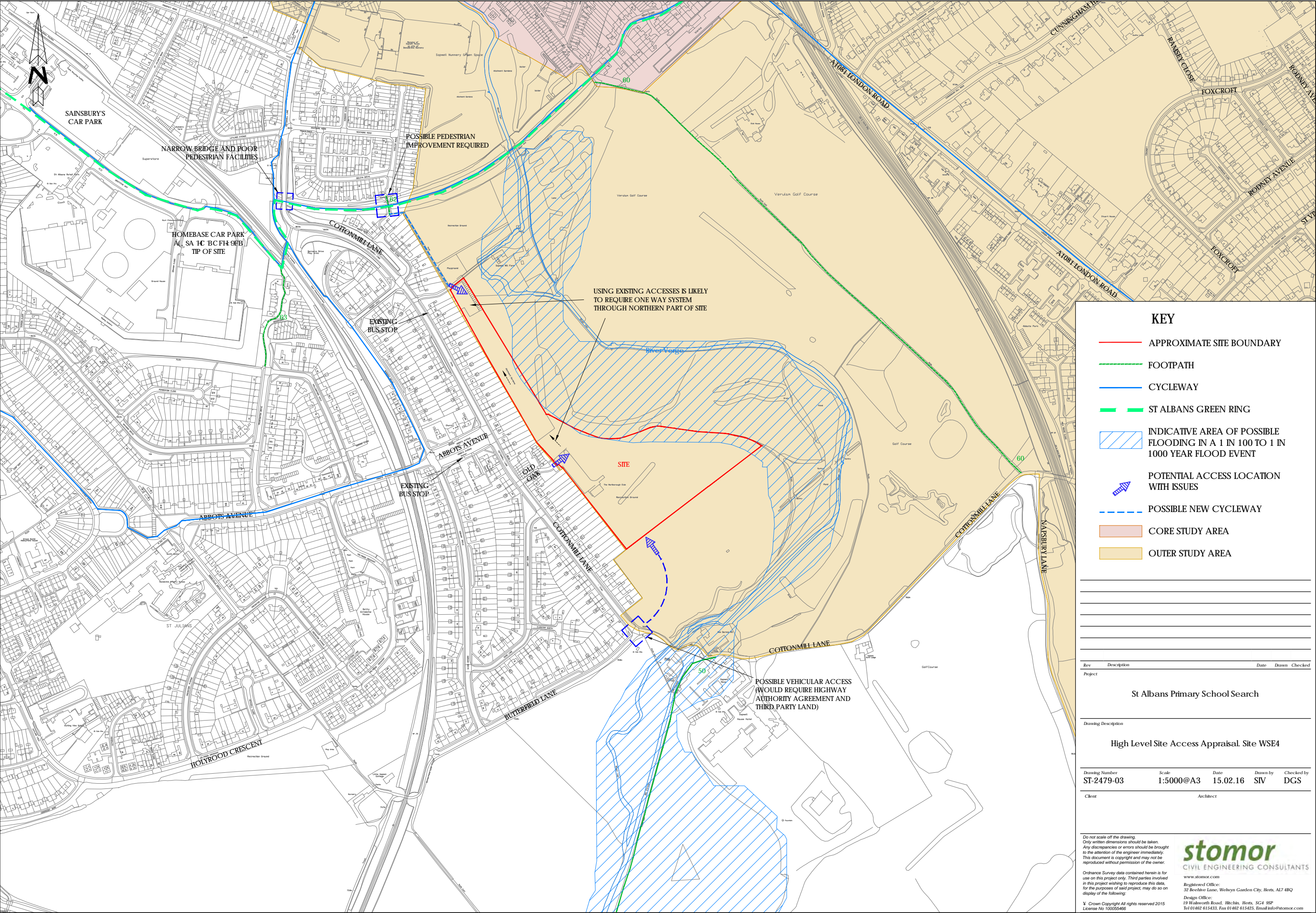
Both potential options would require a new pedestrian crossing on Cottonmill Lane and improvements to the footpath link from Saldeir Road to the north of the site. Given the extensive level of residential parking around the site already, on site provision for parents as well as staff vehicles will be required.

Local widening or provision of laybys could help to ease the flow of traffic along Cottonmill Lane.

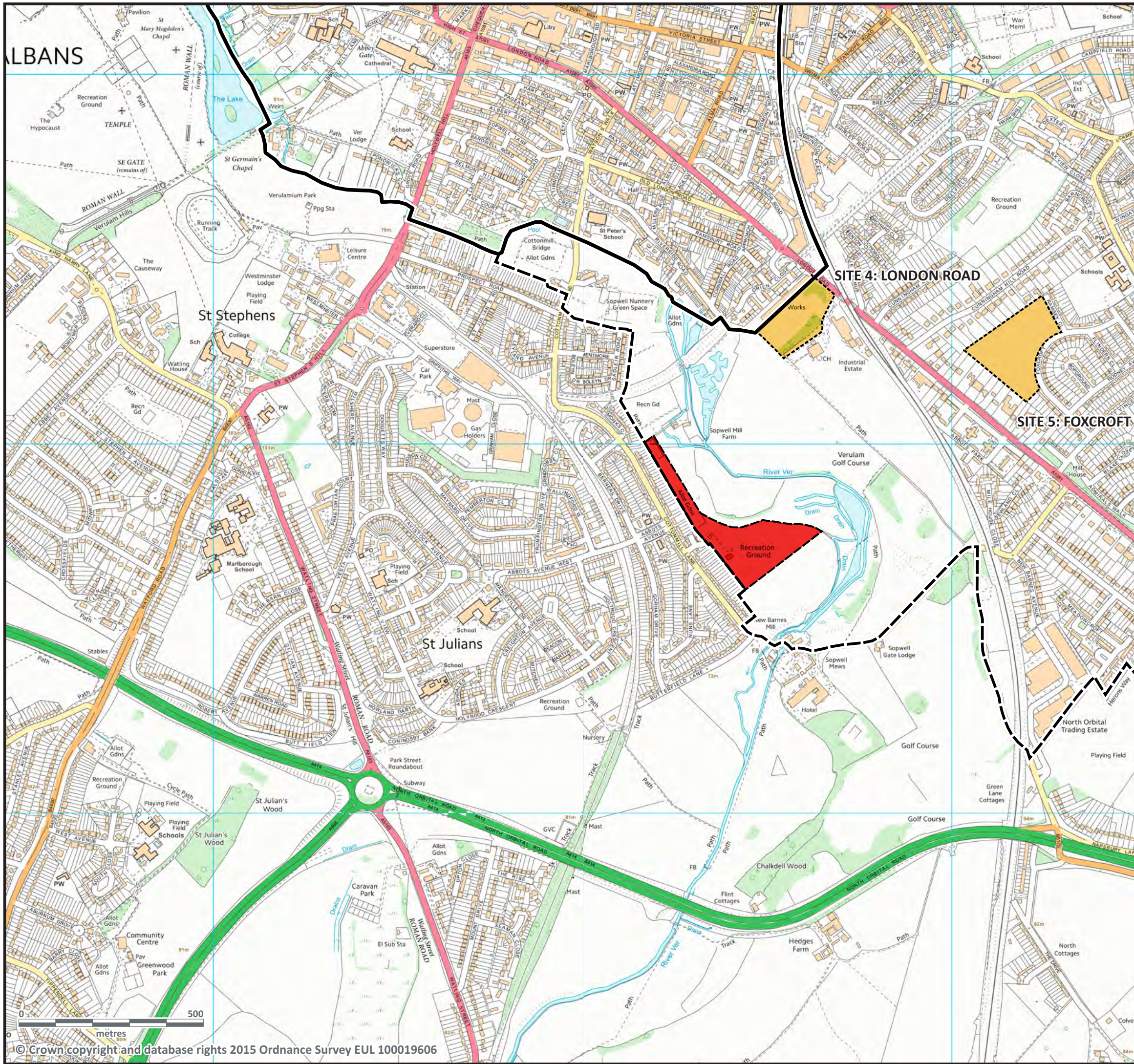
There may be an opportunity for 'park and stride' from the St Albans Retail Park to the north west, which would provide a suitable facility for pupils and parents travelling from the west of the site.

The local public transport network is generally fairly poor, but potentially offers an option for travel by staff as well as accompanied pupils.

On balance, this site presents a number of potential challenges to providing suitable access for a 2FE school. These issues could be overcome through the construction of a vehicular access to the south of the site, a pedestrian crossing over Cottonmill Lane and a pedestrian access to the north west of the site. However, this would involve the acquisition of third party land which will need further investigation.



DRAWINGS



THE SITE

OTHER SITES UNDER CONSIDERATION

CORE SEARCH AREA

WIDER SEARCH AREA

PROJECT TITLE

St Albans Primary School
Site search

DRAWING TITLE

Site 7: WSE4 - Old Oak/Malborough
Recreation Ground
Site location

SCALE

1:10000

DATE

JANUARY 2016

CHECKED

DRAWN

HNA

DATE

PROJECT No.

5115

N

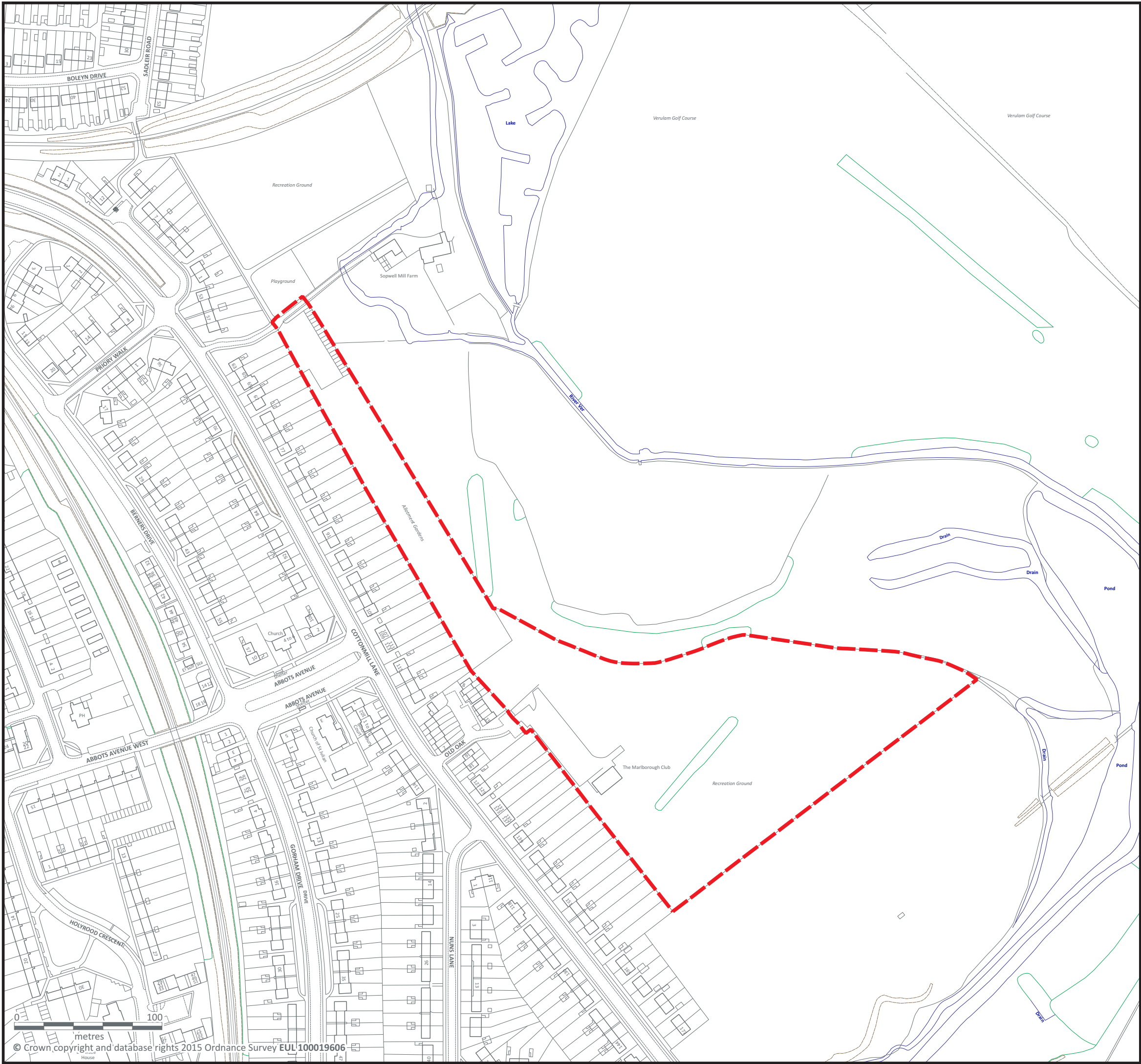
400

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CHARTERED ARCHITECTS AND TOWN PLANNERS

STERLING COURT NORTON ROAD STEVENAGE HERTS

TELEPHONE: 01438 316331 FAX:01438 722035



SITE BOUNDARY
4.15ha 10.25ac

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PROJECT TITLE
**St Albans Primary School
Site search**

DRAWING TITLE
**Site 7: WSE4 - Old Oak/Malborough
Recreation Ground
Site identification**

SCALE	DATE JANUARY 2016	CHECKED
1:2500	DRAWN HNA	DATE

PROJECT No. 5115		401
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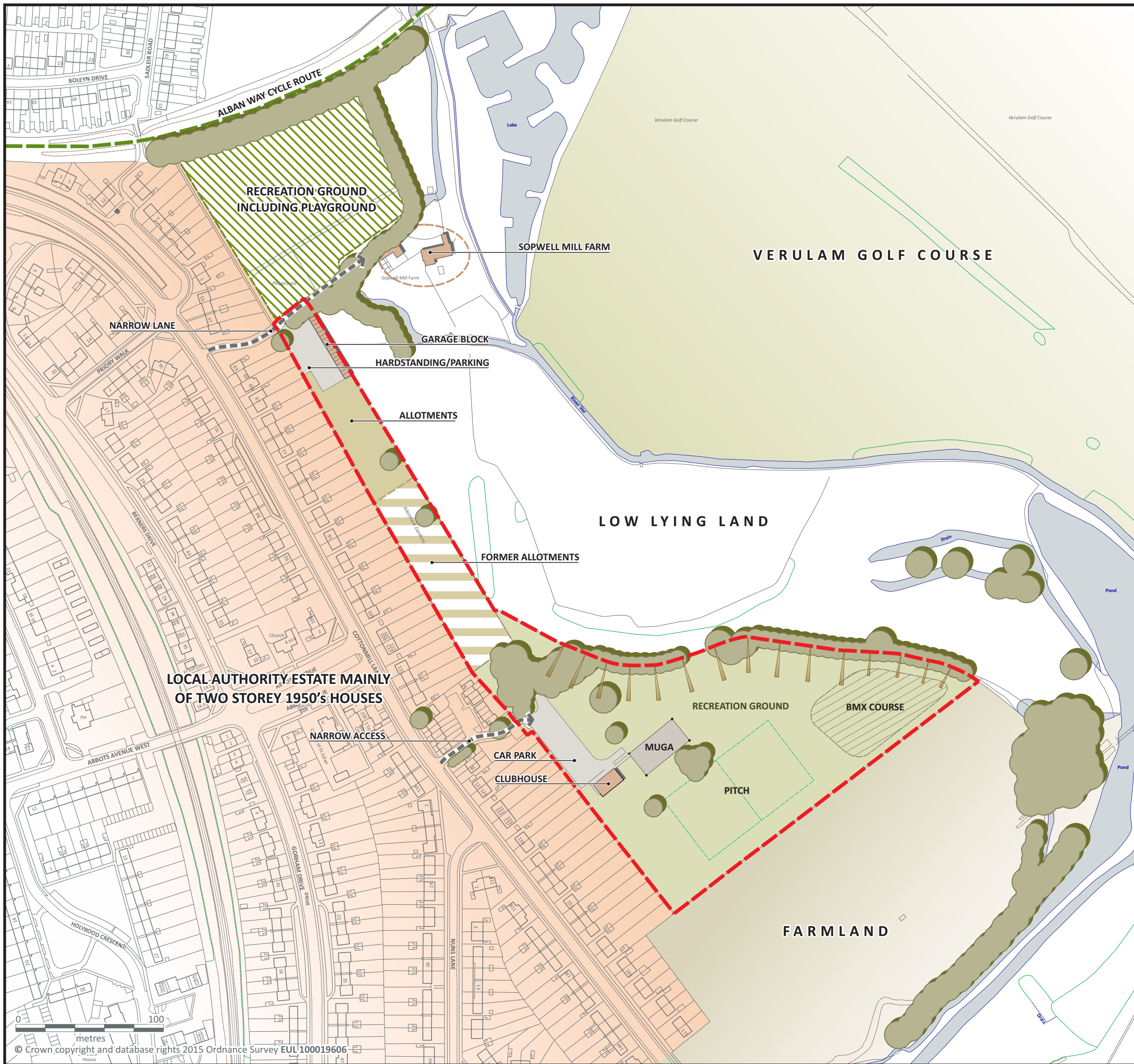
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St Albans Primary School
Site search

DRAWING TITLE
Site 7: WSE4 - Old Oak/Malborough
Recreation Ground
Aerial photograph

SCALE	DATE JANUARY 2016	CHECKED
1:2500	DRAWN HNA	DATE

PROJECT No.				
5115	N		4	02

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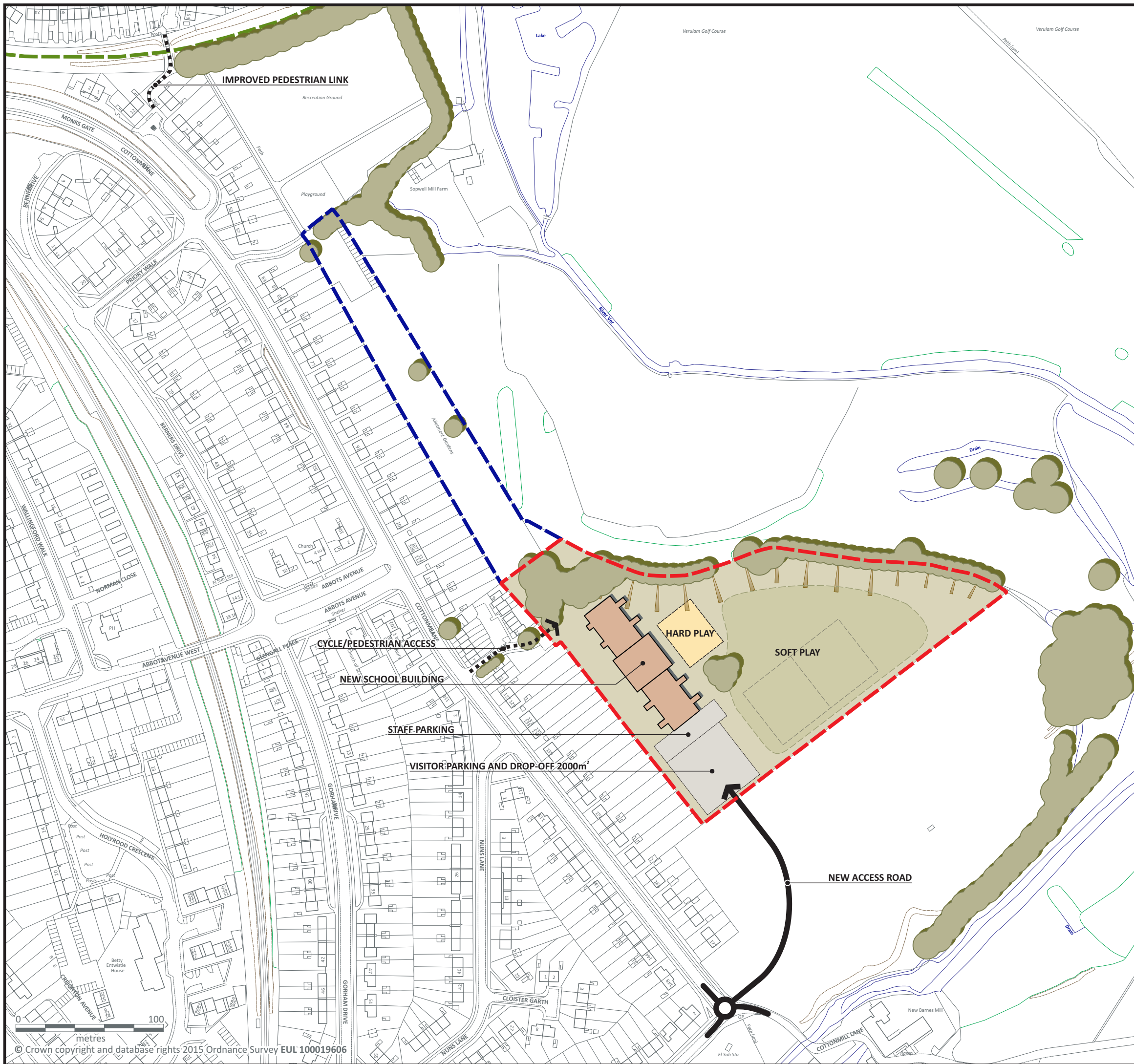
PROJECT TITLE
**St Albans Primary School
Site search**

DRAWING TITLE
**Site 7: WSE4 - Old Oak/Malborough
Recreation Ground
Site appraisal**

SCALE	DATE FEBRUARY 2016	CHECKED
1:2500	DRAWN HNA	DATE

PROJECT No.	5115	N	403
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SITE BOUNDARY
3.27ha 8.08ac

REMAINDER OF SITE

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PROJECT TITLE
St Albans Primary School
Site search

DRAWING TITLE
Site 7: WSE4 - Old Oak/Malborough
Recreation Ground
Development principles

SCALE	DATE	CHECKED
1:2500	MARCH 2016	
	DRAWN	DATE
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PROJECT No.				
5115	N	4	0	4

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6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 In total 145 potential primary school sites were identified and assessed as part of this study. A number of the sites were rejected early on for various reasons, including inadequate size, and fundamental constraints and designations (such as land being liable to flooding, or existing school sites). The remaining sites were assessed according to a number of considerations including existing use, planning and environmental constraints and designations. A number of sites were rejected and others were taken forward for further consideration to identify those potential sites which had the greatest potential and were most suitable for accommodating a new 2FE primary school.

6.2 This assessment resulted in a short list of 7 potential sites being identified which merited more detailed assessment, including a high level transport and access appraisal, to establish which site (or sites) might be the most appropriate to accommodate a new primary school (or schools). Schedule 5 summarises the main conclusions on the short listed potential school sites.

6.3 Of these one is a brownfield site located within built up area:

- WNW10 Ariston Works (main site)

6.4 Two are greenfield sites within the built up area:

- WE6 Land west of Foxcroft
- WNW11 Ariston Works (former playing field)

6.5 Four are greenfield sites located outside the built up area within the Green Belt:

- WSE13 Land North of Verulam GC
- WSE 4 Old Oak / Marlborough Recreation area
- O14 Birklands detached playing field, London Road
- O22 Land west of Batchwood Drive

Core Search Area

6.6 The Core Search Area is the area of greatest need and the optimum location for a new 2FE primary school.

6.7 There are no potential primary school sites located in the Core Search Area. However, there are two sites located just outside the Core Search Area, which might be well placed to help to meet needs within the Core Area. Both are greenfield sites located in the Green Belt, as follows:

- WSE13 Land North of Verulam GC
- O22 Land west of Batchwood Drive

6.8 The first site, Land North of Verulam GC, is located in the Wider Search Area and is possibly better located to serve the area towards the east of the centre of St Albans where there is more need than to the west. However, the site is smaller and would need to accommodate a new primary school based on the smaller area for a constrained site in an urban area, and would be likely to need a detached playing field. There are also possibly fundamental highways issues with the site, which would need to be subject to further investigations and discussions with the highway authority, to see whether the site could accommodate a new primary school.

6.9 A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been carried out which indicates that a satisfactory access may be able to be provided, but it assumed that full staff parking and dropping off / picking up facilities would be provided on site, which may not be possible due to the small size of the site. It may also be necessary to identify a suitable location for a detached playing field for the school, which may necessitate shared use of an existing public open space or playing field.

6.10 The second site, Land west of Batchwood Drive, is outside the Wider Search Area and is possibly less well located relative to the area of greatest need, but is a much larger site which could accommodate a larger school site based on the area for an unconstrained site in a non-urban location, with scope for expansion, and there are less highway issues. It is also located in the Green Belt but is outside a strong and clearly defined boundary former by Batchwood Drive.

Wider Search Area

6.11 There are five potential primary school sites located in the Wider Search Area, including the Land North of Verulam GC, where the location is less than optimal but may help meet needs in the Core Area. They are, according to type of location:

- Brownfield sites within built up area

- WNW10 Ariston Works (main site)
 - Greenfield sites within built up area
 - WE6 Land west of Foxcroft
 - WNW11 Ariston Works (former playing field)
 - Greenfield sites outside the urban area (located in Green Belt)
 - WSE13 Land North of Verulam GC – already mentioned.
 - WSE 4 Old Oak / Marlborough Recreation area
- 6.12 Other than the Land North of Verulam GC mentioned above, the Ariston Works (main site) is possibly the best located of these sites to meet needs within the Core Area, and would not involve land in the Green Belt or the loss of public open space, but it would not be available due to current development proposals relating to the re-provision of youth and community uses, there are also potentially ground stability issues on the site which would need to be addressed (but would be unlikely to stop it being used for a school).
- 6.13 The Ariston Works (former playing field) could also accommodate a new primary school and would not involve land in the Green Belt or the loss of public open space, but would result in loss of an area used by the public as open space adjoining Bernards Heath, and is a designated Asset of Community Value. It is also possible one of the last areas of open land forming part of the Second Battle of St Albans (although not officially designated). There are potentially ground stability issues on the site which would need to be addressed but would be unlikely to stop it being developed for a school.
- 6.14 The only other non-Green Belt site is Land west of Foxcroft, but this is not so well related to the Core Search Area and would involve the loss of most of a public open space. Also, the related highway mitigation which would be required (ie road widening, one way arrangement and parking restrictions), as well as the school itself (which would be located closer to, and more prominent from, existing houses than many other sites), would have a significant impact on adjoining residents.
- 6.15 The Verulam GC site has already been mentioned above.
- 6.16 The only other site in the Wider Search Area is the Old Oak / Marlborough Recreation area but this is considered to be relatively

remote from the Core Search Area and may not help meet needs in the Core Area. It would also be located in the Green Belt and would result in the loss of a public open space, a community centre and an identified viewpoint, and it would be difficult to provide access and may require a new access road crossing third party land close to a number of listed buildings and a conservation area.

Outside Search Area

6.17 There are two potential primary school sites located outside the Core and Wider Search Areas, including the Land West of Batchwood Drive where the location is less than optimal but may help meet needs in the Core Area. Both the potential sites are greenfield Green Belt locations:

- O14 Birklands detached playing field, London Road
- O22 Land west of Batchwood Drive

6.18 The Land West of Batchwood Drive has already been mentioned above.

6.19 The Birklands site is owned by the County Council and has been earmarked for use for a new primary school for some time and is effectively held in reserve for this use. Access should also be possible. However, it is relatively remote from the Core Search Area and so may not meet needs arising from this area. It is also located in the Green Belt and is used by the public as open space and is an Asset of Community Value.

Overall conclusion

6.20 There isn't a clear cut answer and no site is entirely free of significant planning and environmental constraints and designations, or entirely suitable, or in the right location to serve the educational needs of the central St Albans area.

6.21 A balance needs to be made between different factors, for example between a site which is located in the Green Belt and a site which is a public open space, or between a site which is in the Green Belt and one which would have a more significant effect on nearby residents.

6.22 However, three sites would appear to be best located to serve the needs of the central St Albans area and merit further consideration, although they are not located in the optimum location for a new primary school, and all have issues. They are:

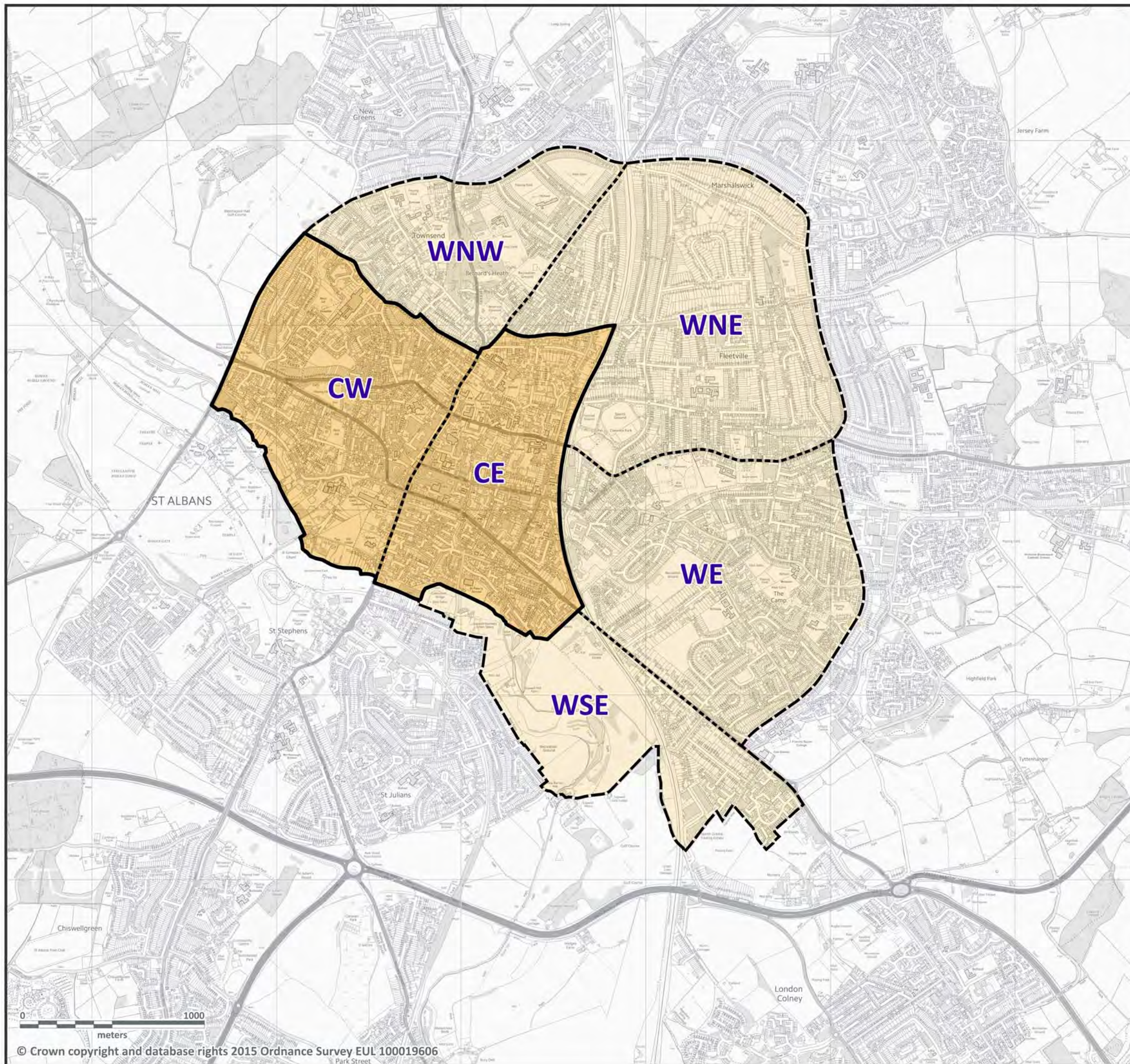
- WNW11 Ariston Works (former playing field)
- WSE13 Land North of Verulam GC
- O22 Land west of Batchwood Drive

6.23 Of these only one - Ariston Works (former playing field) – is within the built up area and not located in the Green Belt, and so is sequentially preferable from a Green Belt point of view. However, there are issues with the site.

6.24 The two other sites are both greenfield sites located in the Green Belt and so very special circumstances would be required to justify locating schools on these sites (unless the sites were to be taken out of the Green Belt through the Local Plan process).

6.25 The Verulam GC site is also subject to potentially fundamental highway issues, which would need to be resolved, and is a smaller site, and so would be likely to require a detached playing field, which would need to be identified, so is not ideal. On the other hand a school would potentially have less impact on the Green Belt than the Batchwood Drive site, which is located on more open land beyond a clear and well defined Green Belt boundary, although that site is larger and so could accommodate a less constrained school with a playing field, rather than having a detached playing field.

6.26 As mentioned in the introduction the report looks at potential sites for a new school from a planning point of view and needs to be considered alongside educational considerations in terms of suitability of the sites and the locations from an education perspective, including meeting educational needs.



CORE SEARCH AREA



WIDER SEARCH AREA

KEY TO REFERENCING FOR SUB-AREAS

CORE SEARCH AREA:

CW - CORE AREA WEST
CE - CORE AREA EAST

WIDER SEARCH AREA:

WNW - WIDER AREA NORTH WEST
WNE - WIDER AREA NORTH EAST
WE - WIDER AREA EAST
WSE - WIDER AREA SOUTH EAST

NOTE:

The study also identified potential locations just outside the wider study area. These were referenced 'O'

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PROJECT TITLE

St Albans Primary School
Site search

DRAWING TITLE

Site search areas

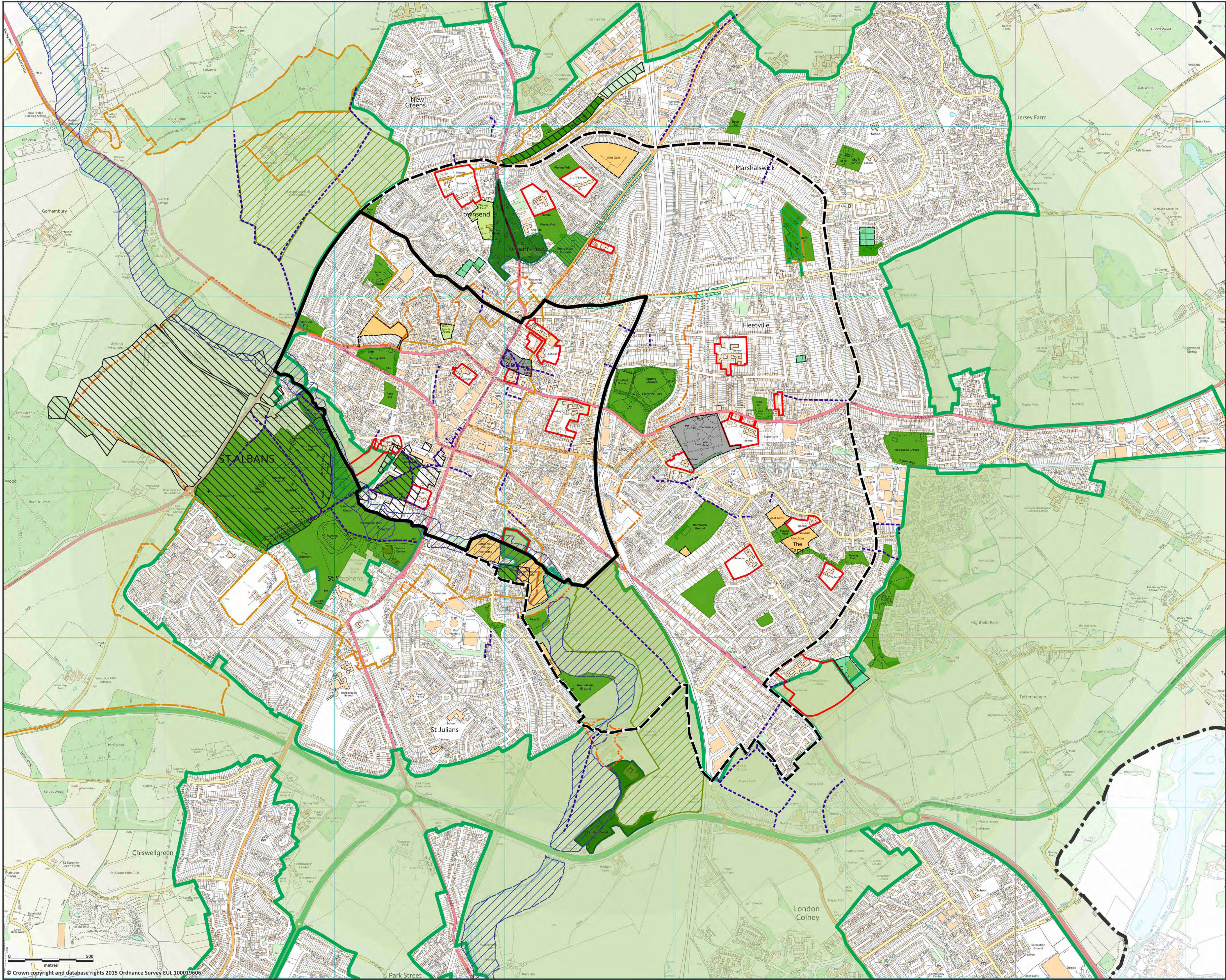
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PROJECT No.				
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CHARTERED ARCHITECTS AND TOWN PLANNERS

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- CORE SEARCH AREA
- WIDER SEARCH AREA
- EXISTING SCHOOL SITES
- SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS
- GREEN BELT
- GOLF COURSES
- PUBLIC OPEN SPACE/ PARK
- PRIVATE SPORTS GROUNDS
- AREAS OF WOODLAND
- CEMETERY
- ALLOTMENTS
- REGISTERED COMMON LAND
- LOCAL NATURE RESERVE
- CONSERVATION AREAS
- AREA OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST
- SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENT
- PUBLIC RIGHTS of WAY
- AREA OF FLOODING (SOURCE: ENVIRONMENT AGENCY)

REVISION A:
Core area boundary amended, other general amendments
HNA/07-12-2015

PROJECT TITLE
St Albans Primary School
Site search

DRAWING TITLE
Development constraints

SCALE
1:10000 @A1

DATE
NOVEMBER 2015

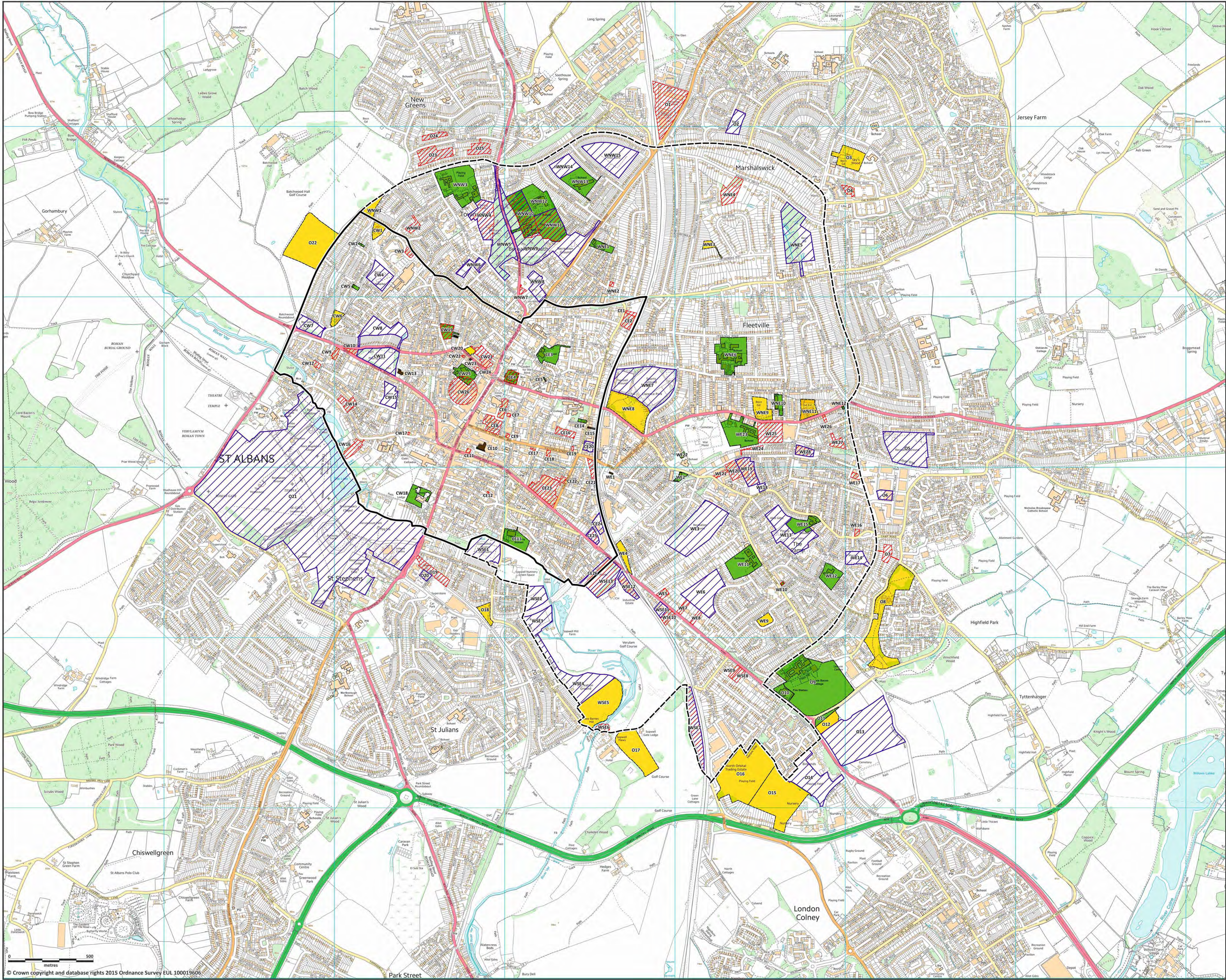
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PROJECT No.
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- CORE SEARCH AREA
- WIDER SEARCH AREA
- HCC FREEHOLD
- HCC LEASEHOLD
- LSH IDENTIFIED SITE
- SHLAA SITES
- VINCENT & GORRING IDENTIFIED SITES

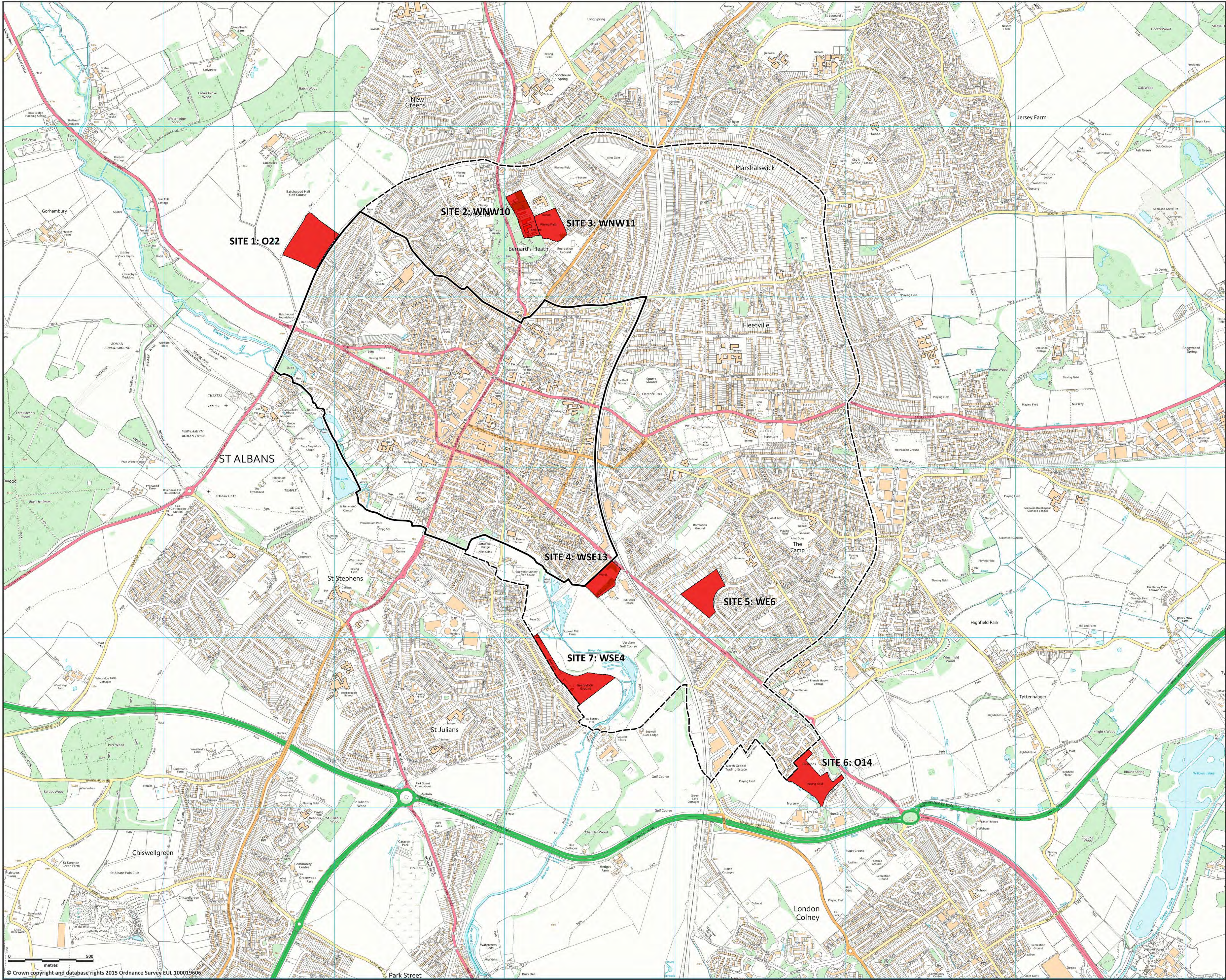
REVISION A:
Core area boundary amended, two site references amended
HNA/07-12-2015

PROJECT TITLE
St Albans Primary School
Site search

DRAWING TITLE
Option sites

SCALE 1:10000 @A1	DATE NOVEMBER 2015	CHECKED DATE
PROJECT NO. 5115	DRAWN HNA	DATE

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- CORE SEARCH AREA
- WIDER SEARCH AREA
- SHORT LISTED SITES

PROJECT TITLE
St Albans Primary School
Site search

DRAWING TITLE
Short listed sites

SCALE 1:10000 @A1	DATE FEBRUARY 2016	CHECKED DATE
PROJECT No. 5115	DRAWN HNA	DATE 004

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Schedule 1: St Albans Primary School Site Search - Full List: summary

Site ref.	Site source	Site Area (ha)	Constraint				Summary	Overall assessment
			Existing school sites (and related playing fields)	Scheduled Ancient Monument	Land liable to flooding	Registered Common Land		
	Core Area West							
CW1.	V&G	0.49					Rejected - too small	
CW2.	HCC freehold	0.04					Rejected - too small	
CW3.	SHLAA	0.18					Rejected - too small	
CW4.	LSH	1.45					Carry forward	
CW5.	HCC freehold	0.08					Rejected - too small	
CW6.	V&G	0.44					Rejected - too small	
CW7.	LSH	1.13					Carry forward	
CW8.	LSH	2.02					Carry forward	
CW9.	SHLAA	0.18					Rejected - too small	
CW10.	SHLAA	0.17					Rejected - too small	
CW11.	LSH	2.48					Carry forward	
CW12.	SHLAA	0.13					Rejected - too small	
CW13.	HCC leasehold	0.13					Rejected - too small	
CW14.	SHLAA	0.37					Rejected - too small	
CW15.	LSH	1.00					Carry forward	
CW16.	SHLAA	0.62					Rejected - too small	
CW17.	SHLAA	0.02					Rejected - too small	
CW18.	HCC freehold	0.84	✓				Rejected - existing primary school	
CW19.	HCC freehold /SHLAA	0.55	✓				Rejected - too small and existing school playing field	
CW20.	V&G	0.18					Rejected - too small [note: former primary school]	
CW21.	SHLAA	0.80					Carry forward	
CW22.	SHLAA	0.02					Rejected - too small	
CW23.	HCC leasehold	0.01					Rejected - too small	
CW24.	SHLAA	0.04					Rejected - too small	
CW25.	HCC freehold	0.95	✓				Rejected - existing primary school	
CW26.	SHLAA	2.16					Carry forward (note: site boundary is generalised)	
	Core Area East							
CE1.	SHLAA	0.11					Rejected - too small	
CE2.	SHLAA	0.50					Rejected - too small	
CE3.	HCC freehold	1.16	✓				Rejected - existing primary school	
CE4.	HCC freehold / SHLAA	0.50					Rejected - too small and existing primary school (new free school)	
CE5.	HCC freehold	0.02					Rejected - too small	
CE6.	SHLAA	0.40					Rejected - too small	
CE7.	SHLAA	0.04					Rejected - too small	
CE8.	SHLAA	0.83					Carry forward	
CE9.	SHLAA	0.04					Rejected - too small	
CE10.	HCC leasehold	0.15					Rejected - too small	
CE11.	SHLAA	0.05					Rejected - too small	
CE12.	SHLAA	0.01					Rejected - too small	
CE13.	HCC freehold	1.31	✓		✓		Rejected - existing primary school and part liable to flooding	
CE14.	HCC freehold	0.09					Rejected - too small	
CE15.	HCC leasehold	0.04					Rejected - too small	
CE16.	SHLAA	0.44	✓				Rejected - too small and secondary school (part)	
CE17.	SHLAA	0.02					Rejected - too small	
CE18.	SHLAA	0.07					Rejected - too small	
CE19.	SHLAA	0.02					Rejected - too small	
CE20.	LSH	0.32					Rejected - too small	
CE21.	SHLAA	0.27					Rejected - too small	
CE22.	SHLAA	0.15					Rejected - too small	
CE23.	SHLAA	1.82					Carry forward	
CE24.	LSH	0.42					Rejected - too small	
CE25.	SHLAA / LSH	0.39					Rejected - too small	
CE26.	SHLAA / LSH	0.70					Carry forward	
	WIDER AREA							
	South East							
WSE1.	LSH	2.43			✓		Rejected – liable to flooding	
WSE2.	LSH	1.39			✓		Rejected – liable to flooding [note: adjacent to SAM]	
WSE3.	LSH	1.65			✓		Carry forward. Part of site liable to flooding	

Site ref.	Site source	Site Area (ha)	Constraint				Summary	Overall assessment
			Existing school sites (and related playing fields)	Scheduled Ancient Monument	Land liable to flooding	Registered Common Land		
WSE4.	LSH	4.19			✓		Carry forward. Part of site liable to flooding	
WSE5.	V&G	4.26			✓		Carry forward. Part of site liable to flooding	
WSE6.	SHLAA	0.24					Rejected - too small	
WSE7.	SHLAA / LSH	1.99					Carry forward	
WSE8.	SHLAA	0.34					Rejected - too small	
WSE9.	SHLAA	0.20					Rejected - too small	
WSE10.	SHLAA	0.42					Rejected - too small	
WSE11.	LSH	0.40					Rejected - too small	
WSE12.	SHLAA / LSH	0.69					Only just under size. Carry forward	
WSE13.	SHLAA / LSH	2.25					Carry forward	
	East							
WE1.	HCC leasehold	0.02					Rejected - too small	
WE2.	HCC freehold	0.22					Rejected - too small and existing primary school	
WE3.	LSH	5.70					Carry forward	
WE4.	V&G	0.58					Rejected - too small	
WE5.	SHLAA	0.26					Rejected - too small	
WE6.	LSH	3.41					Carry forward	
WE7.	SHLAA	0.27					Rejected - too small	
WE8.	SHLAA	0.22					Rejected - too small	
WE9.	SHLAA	0.46					Rejected - too small	
WE10.	SHLAA	0.03					Rejected - too small	
WE11.	HCC freehold	2.43	✓				Rejected - existing primary school	
WE12.	HCC freehold	1.21	✓				Rejected - existing primary school	
WE13.	LSH	3.64					Carry forward	
WE14.	LSH	0.91					Carry forward	
WE15.	HCC freehold	1.19					Rejected - existing primary school	
WE16.	SHLAA	0.10					Rejected - too small	
WE17.	SHLAA	0.16					Rejected - too small	
WE18.	LSH	0.18					Rejected - too small	
WE19.	SHLAA / LSH	1.35					Carry forward	
WE20.	SHLAA	0.68					Carry forward	
WE21.	SHLAA	0.15					Rejected - too small	
WE22.	HCC freehold	0.09	✓				Rejected - too small and existing primary school (part)	
WE23.	HCC freehold	2.70	✓				Rejected - existing primary school	
WE24.	SHLAA	0.16					Rejected - too small	
WE25.	SHLAA	1.66					Carry forward	
WE26.	SHLAA	0.07					Rejected - too small	
WE27.	SHLAA	0.43					Rejected - too small	
WE28.	SHLAA / LSH	0.53					Rejected - too small	
	North East							
WNE1.	HCC freehold	0.59	✓				Rejected - too small and existing primary school (part)	
WNE2.	SHLAA	0.06					Rejected -too small	
WNE3.	V&G	0.31					Rejected - too small	
WNE4.	SHLAA	1.26					Carry forward	
WNE5.	LSH	4.82					Carry forward.	
WNE6.	HCC freehold	3.23	✓				Rejected – existing secondary school	
WNE7.	LSH	6.71					Carry forward	
WNE8.	V&G	3.39					Carry forward	
WNE9.	V&G	1.22					Carry forward	
WNE10.	HCC freehold	0.48	✓				Rejected - too small and existing infant school	
WNE11.	V&G	0.96					Carry forward	
WNE12.	HCC freehold	0.02					Rejected - too small	
	North West							
WNW1.	V&G	0.47					Rejected - too small	
WNW2.	SHLAA	0.35					Rejected - too small	
WNW3.	HCC freehold	4.28	✓				Rejected – existing schools	
WNW4.	SHLAA / LSH	2.23	✓				Rejected – existing detached playing fields (independent school)	
WNW5.	LSH	6.23				✓	Rejected – registered common land	
WNW6.	LSH	0.79					Carry forward	
WNW7.	SHLAA	0.10					Rejected - too small	
WNW8.	LSH	1.08					Carry forward	
WNW9.	LSH	11.75				✓	Rejected - registered common land	

Site ref.	Site source	Site Area (ha)	Constraint				Summary	Overall assessment
			Existing school sites (and related playing fields)	Scheduled Ancient Monument	Land liable to flooding	Registered Common Land		
WNW10.	SHLAA / LSH / HCC freehold	2.65					Carry forward	
WNW11.	SHLAA / LSH / HCC freehold	2.45					Carry forward.	
WNW12.	HCC freehold	7.20	✓				Rejected – existing school	
WNW13.	HCC freehold	1.96	✓				Rejected – existing school	
WNW14.	LSH	1.38					Carry forward	
WNW15.	LSH	3.73					Carry forward	
	OUTSIDE CORE / WIDER AREA							
O1.	SHLAA	3.85					Carry forward	
O2.	LSH	0.96					Carry forward	
O3.	V&G	1.79					Carry forward	
O4.	SHLAA	0.29					Rejected - too small	
O5.	LSH	4.56					Carry forward	
O6.	LSH	0.47					Rejected - too small	
O7.	SHLAA	0.49					Rejected - too small	
O8.	V&G	5.28					Carry forward	
O9.	HCC freehold	10.09	✓				Rejected – existing all through school	
O10.	HCC freehold	0.60					Rejected - too small	
O11.	HCC freehold	0.35					Rejected - too small	
O12.	V&G	0.82					Carry forward	
O13.	LSH	10.46					Carry forward	
O14.	LSH	3.96					Carry forward	
O15.	V&G	6.33					Carry forward	
O16.	V&G	7.54					Carry forward	
O17.	V&G	3.28					Carry forward	
O18.	V&G	0.58					Rejected - too small	
O19.	SHLAA	0.95					Carry forward	
O20.	LSH	0.24					Rejected - too small	
O21.	LSH	74.59		✓	✓		Rejected – Scheduled Ancient Monument (most), liable to flooding (part), outside search area (most)	
O22.	V&G	5.71					Carry forward	
O23.	SHLAA	1.44					Carry forward	
O24.	SHLAA	0.41					Rejected - too small	
O25.	SHLAA	0.76					Carry forward	

KEY TO COLOURS

Green Site carried forward for further consideration

Red Site not taken forward for further consideration (for reasons given)

Schedule 2: St Albans Primary School Site Search - Long List: Review

Site ref.	Site address	Site source	Site Area (ha)	Current use	Constraint										
					Public open space/playing fields	Allotments	Private sports grounds	Areas of woodland / significant tree cover	Green Belt	Local Nature Reserve	Conservation Area	Area of archaeological interest	Public rights of way	Site shape and features	Multiple ownership /occupation
	WITHIN BUILT UP AREA: PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND														
	Core Area														
CW21.	10-28 Catherine Street (including Coupers garage) and land to rear	SHLAA	0.80	Car sales garage, and light industrial to rear											
CW26.	West of St Peter's Street	SHLAA	2.16	Town centre multi-storey car park and market storage											
CE8.	Land to the north of Victoria Street	SHLAA	0.83	Magistrates Court and vacant / under-used. Former police station, offices and car parking.											
CE23.	Former Eversheds printing works and associated land, Alma Road and London Road	SHLAA	1.82	Partly unused / partly retail units / residential.											
CE26.	222 London Road Business Park	SHLAA / LSH	0.70	Industrial											
	Wider Area														
WE19.	Sphere Industrial Estate, Campfield Road	SHLAA / LSH	1.35	Light industrial and wholesale											
WE20.	Land to the south of Campfield Road	SHLAA	0.68	Light industrial											
WE25.	Morrison's Supermarket Car Park, Hatfield Road	SHLAA	1.66	Superstore car park											
WNE11.	Industrial estate to the north of Hatfield Road	V&G	0.96	Industrial estate and car rental uses											
WNW8.	Water Company Premises, Sandridge Road	LSH	1.08	Water works and covered reservoirs											
WNW10.	Former Ariston Works site	SHLAA / LSH / HCC freehold	2.65	Partly unused (including unused fire station) and partly community uses											
WSE12.	Verulam Industrial Estate	SHLAA / LSH	0.69	Light industrial and retail											
	Outside Area														
O1.	Land between Ronsons Way and railway line	SHLAA	3.85	Light industrial and household waste recycling centre											
O19.	St Albans Abbey Station	SHLAA	0.95	Station car park											
O23.	Land r/o 45 to 83 Francis Avenue and 56 to 96 Batchwood Drive	SHLAA	1.44	Residential / residential gardens											

Site ref.	Site address	Site source	Site Area (ha)	Current use	Constraint										
					Public open space/playing fields	Allotments	Private sports grounds	Areas of woodland / significant tree cover	Green Belt	Local Nature Reserve	Conservation Area	Area of archaeological interest	Public rights of way	Site shape and features	Multiple ownership /occupation

	WITHIN BUILT UP AREA: GREENFIELD LAND														
	Core Area														
CW4.	Oysterfield Recreation Area, off Oysterfields and Temple View	LSH	1.45	Public open space with children's play area											
CW7.	Recreation ground adjacent to Down Edge / Redbourn Road	LSH	1.13	Public open space with children's play area											
CW8.	Folly Lane Allotment Site	LSH	2.02	Allotments											
CW11.	Victoria Playing Field, off Folly Lane	LSH	2.48	Public open space											
CW15.	'The Brickie' open space, New England Street	LSH	1.00	Public open space with children's playground											
	Wider Area														
WE3.	Cunningham Hill Open Space, Cunningham Avenue	LSH	5.70	Open space and playing fields											
WE6.	Land west of Foxcroft	LSH	3.41	Open space with children's play area and cricket pitch											
WE13.	Camp and Camp 1 Allotments and Camp Open Space	LSH	3.64	Allotments / public open space											
WE14.	Richard Stagg Open Space	LSH	0.91	Public open space											
WNE4.	Land to the south of Marshalls Drive	SHLAA	1.26	Residential											
WNE5.	The Wick open space	LSH	4.82	Public open space (woodland, field and children's play area)											
WNE7.	Clarence Park (north)	LSH	6.71	Park, football ground, cricket pitch and tennis courts / hockey pitch.											
WNE8.	Clarence Park (south)	V&G	3.39	Park and children's play ground											
WNE9.	Fleetville Recreation Ground, north of Hatfield Road and west of Royal Road	V&G	1.22	Public open space with children's playground, community centre and cafe											
WNW6.	Townsend Bowls and Tennis Club, Waverley Road	LSH	0.79	Bowls / tennis club											
WNW11.	Former playing field at Ariston Works	SHLAA / LSH / HCC	2.45	Former playing field / informal use as open space											
WNW14.	Marshall Avenue Open Space	LSH	1.38	Playing field											
WNW15.	Sandridge Road Allotment site	LSH	3.73	Allotments											

Site ref.	Site address	Site source	Site Area (ha)	Current use	Constraint										
					Public open space/playing fields	Allotments	Private sports grounds	Areas of woodland / significant tree cover	Green Belt	Local Nature Reserve	Conservation Area	Area of archaeological interest	Public rights of way	Site shape and features	Multiple ownership /occupation

	Outside Area														
O2.	William Bell Recreation Ground	LSH	0.96	Public open space											
O3.	Skyswood open space, off Sherwood Avenue	V&G	1.79	Public open space and woodland with Children's playground and tennis courts											
O5.	Long acres Park, off Oakdene Way	LSH	4.56	Public open space with children's playground and scout hut.											
O25.	Land r/o 1-43 Francis Avenue & 2 to 54 Batchwood Drive	SHLAA	0.76	Residential gardens											
	URBAN EDGE: GREENFIELD / GREEN BELT														
	Core Area														
	None														
	Wider Area														
WSE3.	Sopwell Mill Recreation Ground	LSH	1.65	Recreation ground / open space											
WSE4.	Old Oak / Marlborough Recreation area	LSH	4.19	Recreation ground / open space											
WSE5.	Land to the east of Cottonmill Lane	V&G	4.26	Agricultural											
WSE7.	Land between Napsbury Lane and railway	SHLAA / LSH	1.99	Unused											
WSE13.	Land to north of Verulam Golf Club	SHLAA / LSH	2.25	Unused											
	Outside Area														
O8.	Highfield Park	V&G	5.28	Public open space											
O12.	Land to the east of London Road	V&G	0.82	Unused											
O13.	Land east of junction of London Road and Highfield Park Lane	LSH	10.46	Arable											
O14.	Birklands detached playing field, London Road	LSH	3.96	Unused former playing field											
O15.	Land to the north of Napsbury Lane (western site)	V&G	6.33	Unused land											
O16.	Land to the north of Napsbury Lane (eastern site)	V&G	7.54	Unused land											
O17.	Land to the south of Cottonmill Lane	V&G	3.28	Arable											
O22.	Land to the west of Batchwood Drive	V&G	5.71	Arable											

Site ref.	Site address	Site source	Site Area (ha)	Current use	Constraint										
					Multiple ownership /occupation	Site shape and features	Public rights of way	Area of archaeological interest	Conservation Area	Local Nature Reserve	Green Belt	Areas of woodland / significant tree cover	Private sports grounds	Allotments	Public open space/playing fields

KEY TO COLOURS

- Green

Constraint does not apply affect site
- Yellow

Constraint affects part of site or immediately adjoins site
- Red

Constraints affects all or most of site

Schedule 3: St Albans Primary School Site Search - Long List: Summary and conclusions

Site ref.	Site address	Current use	Summary / conclusion	Overall assessment
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	WITHIN BUILT UP AREA: PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND			
	Core Area			
CW21.	10-28 Catherine Street (including Coupers garage) and land to rear	Car sales garage, and light industrial to rear	Rejected – due to multiple ownerships / occupation, potentially difficult access onto Catherine Street, site only just large enough, and in a sensitive location in a conservation area, which may be difficult to accommodate a new school.	
CW26.	West of St Peter’s Street	Town centre multi-storey car park and market storage	Rejected – site unlikely to be available in at least the near future due to multiple ownerships and land uses and would be likely to require replacement / relocation of town centre multi-storey car park. Located immediately adjacent to existing primary school.	
CE8.	Land to the north of Victoria Street	Magistrates Court and vacant / under-used. Former police station, offices and car parking.	Rejected – site unlikely to be available as has been subject to proposals for intensive development town centre redevelopment.	
CE23.	Former Eversheds printing works and associated land, Alma Road and London Road	Partly unused / partly retail units / residential.	Rejected - site unlikely to be available. Was originally acquired by Tesco for superstore but proposals were not progressed due to planning / highways difficulties. Buildings currently in process of being refurbished / developed for residential use and other uses.	
CE26.	222 London Road Business Park	Industrial	Rejected - very long narrow site not suitable for use for primary school (unless added to CE27)	
	Wider Area			
WE19.	Sphere Industrial Estate, Campfield Road	Light industrial and wholesale	Rejected – site unlikely to be available in at least the near future due to existing employment use and multiple ownership / occupation. It is located in an employment area, which would make it difficult to provide a satisfactory environment for a school. There may also be issues relating to possible conflict between school traffic and employment traffic (ie HGV’s)	
WE20.	Land to the south of Campfield Road	Light industrial	Rejected – site is slightly less than 0.7ha, so too small, and is located in an employment area, which would make it difficult to provide a satisfactory environment for a school. There may also be issues relating to possible conflict between school traffic and employment traffic (ie HGV’s)	
WE25.	Morrison’s Supermarket Car Park, Hatfield Road	Superstore car park	Rejected – site unlikely to be available in the foreseeable future. Currently used as car park for superstore, which is well used and generally full. Unlikely to be available unless superstore closes, which is unlikely (Note: understood to be Morrison’s flagship store). Located immediately adjacent to existing junior school.	
WNE11.	Industrial estate to the north of Hatfield Road	Industrial estate and car rental uses	Rejected – site unlikely to be available in at least the near future due to existing employment use and multiple ownership / occupation.	
WNW8.	Water Company Premises, Sandridge Road	Water works and covered reservoirs	Rejected – site unlikely to be available in at least the near future unless the water works (and reservoir) closes / relocates. Access may be difficult as next to busy road junction.	
WNW10.	Former Ariston Works site	Partly unused (including unused fire station) and community uses	Carry forward for further consideration. Only previously developed land potentially available within Core / Wider Area of Search. HCC currently progressing planning application for residential development and new youth and community uses. Located immediately adjacent to existing school (school for deaf children).	
WSE12.	Verulam Industrial Estate	Light industrial and retail	Rejected – site unlikely to be available in at least the near future due to existing employment use and multiple ownership / occupation. Small site only just large enough school but narrow width may make it difficult to accommodate a school. Part of site in Green Belt. Access may be difficult.	
	Outside Area			
O1.	Land between Ronsons Way and railway line	Light industrial and household waste recycling centre	Rejected – site unlikely to be available in at least the near future due to existing employment use / household waste recycling site, and multiple ownership / occupation. It is located in an employment area, next to a railway line, which would make it difficult to provide a satisfactory environment for a school. There may also be issues relating to possible conflict between school traffic and employment traffic (ie HGV’s). Access may be difficult onto Sandridge Road at busy road junction.	
O19.	St Albans Abbey Station	Station car park	Rejected – site only just large enough. Much of site is well treed. Well used station car park and access to station. Unlikely to be available in foreseeable future, unless station closes, which seems unlikely.	
O23.	Land r/o 45 to 83 Francis Avenue and 56 to 96 Batchwood Drive	Residential / residential gardens	Rejected – site unlikely to be available in at least the near future as mainly residential garden land in residential area in multiple ownerships	

Site ref.	Site address	Current use	Summary / conclusion	Overall assessment

	WITHIN BUILT UP AREA: GREENFIELD LAND			
	Core Area			
CW4.	Oysterfield Recreation Area, off Oysterfields and Temple View	Public open space with children's play area	Carry forward for further consideration. Would result in loss of public open space / children's play area.	
CW7.	Recreation ground adjacent to Down Edge / Redbourn Road	Public open space with children's play area	Rejected – would result in loss of public open space immediately adjacent to Conservation Area, in an Area of Archaeological Interest, at a very prominent location at one of the main entrances to town.	
CW8.	Folly Lane Allotment Site	Allotments	Carry forward for further consideration. Well used allotments immediately adjacent to Conservation Area and Area of Archaeological Interest. Back land area with poor access, which would be likely to need to be improved by acquiring adjoining residential properties. Alternative replacement provision for allotments would be likely to be required.	
CW11.	Victoria Playing Field, off Folly Lane	Public open space	Rejected – prominent, important open space in conservation area. Alternative replacement playing pitches would be likely to be required.	
CW15.	'The Brickie' open space, New England Street	Public open space with children's playground	Rejected – attractive open space in centre of conservation area. Difficult access / narrow roads adjoining site. Also, significant changes in level. Generally unsuitable for primary school.	
	Wider Area			
WE3.	Cunningham Hill Open Space, Cunningham Avenue	Open space and playing fields	Carry forward for further consideration. Would result in loss of part of a public open space (including playing pitches), but outside conservation area so less sensitive. Access may be difficult as no road frontage. Alternative replacement playing pitches would be likely to be required.	
WE6.	Land west of Foxcroft	Open space with playing pitch, children's play area and basketball area.	Carry forward for further consideration. Would result in loss of part of a public open space (including playing pitch), but outside conservation area so less sensitive. Access may be difficult. Alternative replacement playing pitches would be likely to be required. Located close to existing primary school.	
WE13.	Camp and Camp 1 Allotments and Camp Open Space	Allotments / public open space	Carry forward for further consideration. Would result in loss of public open space and/or allotments, but outside conservation area so less sensitive. Access may be difficult as no frontage. Cycleway / footpath which currently runs through site may need to be retained / diverted. Located immediately adjacent to existing primary school.	
WE14.	Richard Staggs Open Space	Public open space	Carry forward for further consideration. Would result in loss of public open space, but outside conservation area so less sensitive. An alternative replacement playing pitch would be likely to be required. Cycleway / footpath which currently runs through site may need to be retained / diverted. Located close to existing primary school.	
WNE4.	Land to the south of Marshalls Drive	Residential	Rejected – well treed mature gardens in sensitive low density residential area. Unlikely to be acceptable due to loss of trees.	
WNE5.	The Wick open space	Public open space (woodland, field and children's play area)	Rejected - majority of site woodland / Local Nature Reserve / Area of Archaeological Interest. Access would be difficult due to intervening woodland / trees.	
WNE7.	Clarence Park (north)	Park, football ground, cricket pitch and tennis courts / hockey pitch.	Rejected – attractive, well used Victorian Park, with mature trees, located in conservation area. School would be unlikely to be acceptable. Alternative replacement playing pitches would be likely to be required.	
WNE8.	Clarence Park (south)	Park and children's play ground	Rejected – attractive, well used Victorian Park, with mature trees, located in conservation area. School would be unlikely to be acceptable.	
WNE9.	Fleetville Recreation Ground, north of Hatfield Road and west of Royal Road	Public open space with children's playground, community centre and cafe	Carry forward for further consideration. Would result in loss of a well-used public open space, and children's playground, but outside conservation area so less sensitive. Alternative replacement playing pitches would be likely to be required. Located immediately adjacent to existing infant school and close to junior school.	
WNW6.	Townsend Bowls and Tennis Club, Waverley Road	Bowls / tennis club	Rejected - awkwardly shaped site only just large enough for school. May be difficult to accommodate a new school. Alternative replacement sports facilities would be likely to be required.	
WNW11.	Former playing field at Ariston Works	Former playing field / informal use as open space	Carry forward for further consideration. HCC currently progressing planning application for residential development and community uses. Former playing field used as open space by public. Designated Asset of Community Value. Ground conditions issues (close to recent St Albans sink hole). Located immediately adjacent to existing school (school for deaf) and close to existing infant and junior schools.	
WNW14.	Marshall Avenue Open Space	Playing field	Rejected – as used as playing field by adjoining primary school (under licence from SADC). Back land area with poor access.	
WNW15.	Sandridge Road Allotment site	Allotments	Carry forward for further consideration. Well used allotments. Back land area with poor access, which would be likely to need to be improved by acquiring adjoining residential properties. Alternative replacement provision for allotments would also be likely to be required.	

Site ref.	Site address	Current use	Summary / conclusion	Overall assessment
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	Outside Area			
O2.	William Bell Recreation Ground	Public open space	Carry forward for further consideration. Would result in loss of a public open space, but outside conservation area so less sensitive. Alternative replacement playing pitch would be likely to be required. Relatively remote location relative to area of greatest need for additional primary school places.	
O3.	Skyswood open space, off Sherwood Avenue	Public open space and woodland with Children's playground and tennis courts	Carry forward for further consideration. Would result in loss of part of a public open space, but outside conservation area so less sensitive. Alternative replacement sports facilities may be required. Relatively remote location relative to area of greatest need for additional primary school places. Located immediately adjacent to existing primary school.	
O5.	Longacres Park, off Oakdene Way	Public open space with children's playground and scout hut.	Carry forward for further consideration. Would result in loss of part of a public open space, but outside conservation area so less sensitive. Open space in process of being upgraded. Relatively remote location relative to area of greatest need for additional primary school places.	
O25.	Land r/o 1-43 Francis Avenue & 2 to 54 Batchwood Drive	Residential gardens	Rejected – site unlikely to be available in at least the near future as residential garden land in residential area in multiple ownerships	
	URBAN EDGE: GREENFIELD / GREEN BELT			
	Core Area			
	None			
	Wider Area			
WSE3.	Sopwell Mill Recreation Ground	Recreation ground / open space	Carry forward (assuming no non-Green Belt sites available). Would result in loss of public open space, but outside (adjacent to) conservation area so less sensitive. An alternative playing field may be required. Part of site liable to flooding	
WSE4.	Old Oak / Marlborough Recreation area	Recreation ground / open space / allotments	Carry forward (assuming no non-Green Belt sites available) Would result in loss of public open space, but outside conservation area so less sensitive. An alternative replacement playing pitch and/or allotments would be likely to be required. Part of site liable to flooding	
WSE5.	Land to the east of Cottonmill Lane	Agricultural	Reject. – Important for setting of group of mill buildings which form the basis of adjoining conservation area. Small part of site conservation area. Access poor - Cottonmill Lane in vicinity of site narrow with bends and no scope for improvement due to conservation area (possible listed buildings). Part of site liable to flooding	
WSE7.	Land between Napsbury Lane and railway	Unused	Reject - long narrow site immediately adjacent to railway line, so not ideal for new school. Difficult access - frontage to busy but narrow country lane with hedges and trees with no footways (or scope for improvement, without harming character of lane). Site feels remote from residential areas.	
WSE13.	Land to north of Verulam Golf Club	Unused	Carry forward (assuming no non-Green Belt sites available) – well contained area of unused land relatively close to area of greatest need. Adjoining conservation area. Access could be difficult.	
	Outside Area			
O8.	Highfield Park	Public open space	Reject - mature landscaped public open space with trees and cycleway /footway. Part of park originally identified as a reserve site for primary school when the adjoining estate was developed but now an integral part of open space. Relatively remote from area of greatest need.	
O12.	Land to the east of London Road	Unused field	Carry forward for further consideration (assuming no non-Green Belt sites available). Small field (unused) (used in the past for circuses / fairs), just large enough for school. Access may be difficult due to proximity to roundabout. Relatively remote from area of greatest need. Close to existing all-through school.	
O13.	Land east of junction of London Road and Highfield Park Drive	Arable	Reject – large area of open prominent farmland forming a significant part of the narrow gap between St Albans and London Colney. Has been promoted for employment use through Local Plan. Relatively remote from area of greatest need.	
O14.	Birklands detached playing field, London Road	Unused former playing field	Carry forward for further consideration (assuming no non-Green Belt sites available) as was originally acquired by HCC for possible use as a site for a primary school. Discrete area of land forming part of the narrow gap between St Albans and London Colney. Unused land but known locally as Birkland Meadow and used informally as open space by public (who have also planted trees on the land) so sensitive site. Relatively remote from area of greatest need.	
O15.	Land to the north of Napsbury Lane (western site)	Unused land	Carry forward for further consideration (assuming no non-Green Belt sites available). Area of unused land forming part of the narrow gap between St Albans and London Colney. Informally used as open space by public. Owned by national housebuilder with aspirations for residential development. Has been subject to planning application for residential development (refused at appeal) and promotion through Local Plan. Relatively remote from area of greatest need.	
O16.	Land to the north of Napsbury Lane (eastern site)	Unused land	Carry forward for further consideration (assuming no non-Green Belt sites available). Area of unused land forming part of the narrow gap between St Albans and London Colney. Shown as playing field on OS plans. Informally used as open space by public. Owned by national housebuilder with aspirations for residential	

Site ref.	Site address	Current use	Summary / conclusion	Overall assessment
			development. Has been subject to planning application for residential development (refused at appeal) and promotion through Local Plan. Relatively remote from area of greatest need.	
O17.	Land to the south of Cottonmill Lane	Arable	Reject – Important for setting of group of mill buildings which form the basis of adjoining conservation area. Site is also located in immediate foreground of Sopwell House listed building (country house/hotel). Access poor - Cottonmill Lane in vicinity of site narrow with bends and no footways. No scope for improvement due to trees / conservation area (also possible listed buildings).	
O22.	Land to the west of Batchwood Drive	Arable	Carry forward for further consideration (assuming no non-Green Belt sites available). Relatively well contained area of rising land between golf course and built up area, relatively close to area of greatest need (although outside Core / Wider Area). Good road access (but pedestrian crossing may be required).	

KEY TO OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Green	Carry forward site to medium list for further consideration
Yellow	Carry forward site for further consideration but less potential than green sites
Red	Site not carried forward to short list

Schedule 4: St Albans Primary School Site Search: Medium List – Conclusions

Site ref.	Site address	Current use	Summary	Conclusion	Overall assessment
	CORE AREA		OPTIMAL LOCATION		
	Within Built Up Area: Previously Developed Land				
NONE					
	Within Built Up Area: Greenfield Land				
	Public open space				
CW4.	Oysterfield Recreation Area, off Oysterfields and Temple View	Public open space with children's play area	1.45ha site. Site lies in an Area of Archaeological Interest. Site not carried forward as proposal would result in the loss of most if not all of the public open space / children's play area in an area with limited other open space available. Replacement open space may also need to be provided nearby. Also, not carried forward due to access difficulties - including lack of frontage access / adequate access to a highway so would be likely to require the acquisition of one or more residential properties to provide a suitable access, and also relatively narrow roads adjoining site.	Not carried forward due to loss of whole open space and access difficulties	
	Allotments				
CW8.	Folly Lane Allotment Site	Allotments	2.02ha site. Site lies in an Area of Archaeological Interest and immediately adjacent to Conservation Area. Site not carried forward as it would result in the loss of a significant part of area of well used allotments which are likely to need to be replaced nearby, which would be difficult. Also, backland site with poor access to Folly Lane which would be likely to need to be improved by acquiring adjoining residential properties.	Not carried forward due to loss of significant part of allotments and access difficulties	
	Urban Edge: Greenfield / Green Belt				
NONE					
	WIDER AREA		SUB-OPTIMAL LOCATION		
	Within Built Up Area: Previously Developed Land				
WNW10.	Former Ariston Works site	Partly unused (including unused fire station), and community uses	2.65ha site owned by HCC. Site adjacent to woodland / Registered Common Land / open space. Located immediately adjacent to existing school (school for deaf). Only previously developed land potentially available within Core / Wider Area of Search. HCC currently progressing planning application for mixed residential development, community uses and open space. Could use part of site but would remove opportunity to provide replacement community facilities.	Carry forward for further consideration	
	Within Built Up Area: Greenfield Land				
	Public open space				
WE3.	Cunningham Hill Open Space, Cunningham Avenue	Open space and playing fields	5.70ha site. Proposal would result in loss of part of a public open space, with several football pitches, but outside conservation area so less sensitive. Prominent site with views towards St Albans Cathedral and city centre skyline. Access may be difficult. Alternative replacement playing pitches would be likely to be required, which would be difficult to provide. Could possibly enhance appearance / facilities on remainder. Close to site WE6 Land West of Foxcroft (see below) which has better access and fewer pitches.	Not carried forward at this stage (could be carried forward for further consideration if other sites ultimately rejected).	

Site ref.	Site address	Current use	Summary	Conclusion	Overall assessment
WE6.	Land west of Foxcroft	Open space with children's play area and cricket pitch	3.41ha site. Carry forward. Would result in loss of part of a public open space, but outside conservation area so less sensitive. Close to site WE3 Cunningham Hill Open Space but has a frontage with better access. Alternative replacement playing pitches would be likely to be required. Could possibly enhance appearance / facilities on remainder.	Carry forward for further consideration	
WE13.	Camp and Camp 1 Allotments and Camp Open Space	Allotments / public open space	3.64ha site. Would result in loss of part of public open space and/or allotments, but outside conservation area so less sensitive. Most of site landlocked with no access / access difficulties. Cycleway / footpath which currently runs through site may need to be diverted. Alternative replacement playing pitches / allotments may be required. Located immediately adjacent to existing primary school (Camp Primary School) and so has potential to allow that school to be expanded at a later date which may be lost if site used for new school. Not carried forward due to these difficulties and more difficult site than others nearby (ie WE3 and WE6).	Not carried forward mainly due to access difficulties	
WE14.	Richard Stagg Open Space	Public open space	0.91ha site Not carried forward. Would be likely to result in loss of whole public open space, but outside conservation area so less sensitive. An alternative replacement playing pitch would be likely to be required. Has a road frontage. Cycleway / footpath which currently runs through site may need to be diverted.	Not carried forward mainly due to loss of whole open space.	
WNE9.	Fleetville Recreation Ground, north of Hatfield Road and west of Royal Road	Public open space with children's playground, community centre and cafe	1.22ha site. Not carried forward. Would result in loss of most of a well-used public open space, and children's playground, with community centre, but outside conservation area so less sensitive. An alternative replacement open space would be likely to be required. Located immediately adjacent to existing infant school (Fleetville Infants School) and so has potential to allow that school to be expanded at a later date, if required, which would be lost if site used for new school. Located in congested area immediately adjacent to infant and junior school / superstore / local shops, so traffic impact / access may be an issue.	Not carried forward mainly due to loss of most of open space and highways / access difficulties	
WNW11.	Former playing field at Ariston Works	Former playing field / informal use as open space	2.45ha site. Designated Asset of Community Value. Carry forward - HCC currently progressing planning application for residential development and community uses. Former playing field used as open space by public. Ground conditions issues (close to recent sink hole, with similar issues). Located immediately adjacent to existing school (school for deaf) and close to existing infant and junior schools.	Carry forward for further consideration	
	Allotments				
WNW15.	Sandridge Road Allotment site	Allotments	3.73ha site. Not carried forward. Well used allotments. Backland site with poor access, which would be likely to need to be improved by acquiring adjoining residential properties. Alternative replacement provision for allotments would also be likely to be required, which would be difficult.	Not carried forward mainly due to access difficulties	
	Urban Edge: Greenfield / Green Belt				
	Public open space				
WSE3.	Sopwell Mill Recreation Ground	Recreation ground / open space	1.65ha site. Green Belt site located adjacent to conservation area. Would result in loss of significant part of public open space, but outside (adjacent to) conservation area so less sensitive. An alternative playing field may be required. Part of site liable to flooding. Access may be difficult.	Not carried forward mainly due to access difficulties	
WSE4.	Old Oak / Marlborough Recreation area	Recreation ground / open space / allotments	4.19ha site. Green Belt site. Carry forward (assuming no non-Green Belt sites available) – would result in loss of part of the public open space, but outside conservation area so less sensitive. An alternative replacement playing pitch and/or allotments would be likely to be required, which could possibly be provided to the east (on agricultural land – site WSE5). Part of site liable to flooding. Access would need to be given careful consideration bearing in mind location close to poor road in vicinity of Sopwell Mills.	Carry forward for further consideration	
	Unused land				

Site ref.	Site address	Current use	Summary	Conclusion	Overall assessment
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WSE13.	Land to north of Verulam Golf Club	Unused	2.25ha site. Green Belt site. Carry forward (assuming no non-Green Belt sites available) – well contained area of unused land relatively close to area of greatest need. Adjoining conservation area. Access could be difficult but merits further consideration.	Carry forward for further consideration	
	OUTSIDE AREA		LEESS THAN SUB-OPTIMAL LOCATION (APART FROM O22, AS LOCATED ADJACENT TOI CORE AREA)		
	Within Built Up Area: Previously Developed Land				
NONE					
	Within Built Up Area: Greenfield Land				
	Public open space				
O2.	William Bell Recreation Ground	Public open space	0.96ha site. Not carried forward as would be likely to result in the loss of the whole public open space, but outside conservation area so less sensitive. Alternative replacement playing pitch would be likely to be required. Also, relatively remote location relative to area of greatest need for additional primary school places.	Not carried forward due to loss of whole open space and relatively remote location.	
O3.	Skyswood open space, off Sherwood Avenue	Public open space and woodland with Children's playground and tennis courts	1.79ha site. Not carried forward as would result in loss of a significant part of a public open space, much of which is woodland, although it is outside conservation area so less sensitive. Alternative replacement sports facilities may be required. Relatively remote location relative to area of greatest need for additional primary school places well outside wider study area. Located immediately adjacent to existing primary school and so has potential to allow that school to be expanded at a later date, if required, which would be lost if site used for new school.	Not carried forward mainly due to loss of most of open space and relatively remote location.	
O5.	Longacres Park, off Oakdene Way	Public open space with children's playground and scout hut.	4.56ha site. Would result in loss of part of a public open space, but outside conservation area so less sensitive. Open space in process of being upgraded. Relatively remote location relative to area of greatest need for additional primary school places well outside wider study area.	Not carried forward mainly due to relatively remote location.	

	Urban Edge: Greenfield / Green Belt				
	Unused land				
O12.	Land to the east of London Road	Unused	0.82ha site. Green Belt site. Small field (unused) (but used in the past for circuses / fairs), just large enough for school. Forming part of the narrow gap between St Albans and London Colney. Access may be difficult due to proximity to roundabout. Relatively remote from area of greatest need. Close to existing all-through school (Samuel Ryder Academy). Not carried forward mainly as relatively remote location and site O14 preferable.	Not carried forward mainly due to relatively remote location and access and nearby site O14 preferable if school located in the vicinity.	
O14.	Birklands detached playing field, London Road	Unused former playing field	3.96ha site. Green Belt site. Discrete area of land forming part of the narrow gap between St Albans and London Colney. We understand it was originally acquired by HCC for possible use as a site for a new primary school. Unused land but known locally as Birkland Meadow and has been used informally as open space by public (who have also planted trees on the land) so sensitive site. Relatively remote location from area of greatest need but as was acquired for educational use and is in HCC ownership justifies more detailed consideration (assuming no non-Green Belt sites available).	Carry forward for further consideration	

Site ref.	Site address	Current use	Summary	Conclusion	Overall assessment
O15.	Land to the north of Napsbury Lane (western site)	Unused land	6.33ha site. Green Belt site. Area of unused land (contiguous with O16) forming part of the narrow gap between St Albans and London Colney. Informally used as open space by public and crossed by a number of public footpaths. Owned by national housebuilder with aspirations for residential development. Has been subject to planning application for residential development (refused at appeal) and promotion through Local Plan. Access difficulties – either via A414 North Orbital (dual carriageway) or via Site O16 (see below) to Napsbury Lane, also difficult due to number of junctions. . Relatively remote from area of greatest need. Not carried forward as less merit than site O14, in particular difficult access.	Not carried forward mainly due to relatively remote location and access difficulties and nearby site O14 preferable if school located in the vicinity	
O16.	Land to the north of Napsbury Lane (eastern site)	Unused land	7.54ha site. Green Belt site. Area of unused land (contiguous with O15) forming part of the narrow gap between St Albans and London Colney. Shown as playing field on OS plans. Informally used as open space by public and crossed by a number of public footpaths. Owned by national housebuilder with aspirations for residential development. Has been subject to planning application for residential development (refused at appeal) and promotion through Local Plan. Access difficulties – either to Napsbury Lane (difficult due to number of road junctions) or via Site O15 to A414 North Orbital (dual carriageway). Relatively remote from area of greatest need. Not carried forward as less merit than site O14, in particular difficult access.	Not carried forward mainly due to relatively remote location and access difficulties and nearby site O14 preferable if school located in the vicinity.	
	Farmland				
O22.	Land to the west of Batchwood Drive	Arable	5.71ha site. Green Belt site. Site lies in an Area of Archaeological Interest Relatively well contained area of rising land between golf course and built up area, relatively close to area of greatest need just outside Core Area. Good road access (but pedestrian / cycle crossing likely to be required). Located in area of visual link between Batchwood Hall (country house- used as night club) and St Albans Cathedral on opposing hills. Building would need to be carefully designed and kept low but large site so could enable single storey building with ample landscaping. Carry forward (assuming no non-Green Belt sites available)	Carry forward for further consideration	

KEY TO OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Green	Carry forward site to short list for further, more detailed, consideration and high level transport and access assessment
Yellow	Site not carried forward to short list, but preferable to red
Red	Site not carried forward to short list

Schedule 5: St Albans Primary School Site Search – Short List: Review

Site	Site address	Consideration									
		Location relative to area of need	Size of site	Ownership	Green Belt location	Public open space	Highways and access	Ground conditions and topography	Community uses	Asset of Community Value	Impact on residential amenities
	WITHIN BUILT UP AREA: PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED LAND										
	Core Area										
	None										
	Wider Area										
WNW10.	Former Ariston Works site										
	Outside Area										
	None										
	WITHIN BUILT UP AREA: GREENFIELD LAND										
	Core Area										
	None										
	Wider Area										
WE6.	Land west of Foxcroft										
WNW11.	Former playing field at Ariston Works										
	Outside Area										
	None										
	URBAN EDGE: GREENFIELD / GREEN BELT										
	Core Area										
	None										
	Wider Area										
WSE4.	Old Oak / Marlborough Recreation area										
WSE13.	Land to north of Verulam Golf Club										
	Outside Area										
O14.	Birklands playing field, London Road										
O22.	Land to the west of Batchwood Drive										
	KEY TO COLOURS										
		Red – poorest location relative to need Yellow – moderate location relative to need Green – best located relative to need	Red – school would need to be constrained urban site with detached playing field Yellow – site could possibly accommodate unconstrained non-urban school site, but constrained site Green - site could possibly accommodate unconstrained non-urban school site	Red – ownership other than HCC / SACDC Yellow – SACDC ownership Green – HCC ownership	Red – Green Belt location Green – non-Green Belt location	Red – loss of public park / open space Yellow – loss of open land used by public as open space Green – no loss of open space involved	Red – significant highways issues Yellow – highways issues but less significant Green – access should be relatively straight forward	Red – ground condition issues Yellow – possible ground condition issues / terracing required Green – unlikely to be ground condition issues / terracing	Red – potential loss / significant implications for existing community use Green – no loss / implications for community use	Red – designated ACU Green – not designated ACU	Red – greatest impact Yellow – modest impact Green – least impact

BB103 Space Standards for a new 2 FE Primary School

The space standards presented in this paper relate to an unrestrained school site in a non-urban area.

This Brief considers a 2fe school with 480 NOR including a 60 place nursery.

1.0 Total site area

1.1 The total site area is taken to mean the “operational area” of the school which is not just the area occupied by the pupils but includes those areas which are essential to the operation of the school.

BB 103 standards provide a range for this area from 1.6 to 2 hectares. It is more likely that the site will be at the top end of the range to incorporate the school building and the playing fields as well as the following¹:

- car parking, cycle bays, drop off and turning circles
- abnormalities leading to site constraints such as; topography, trees, ancient woodland, contaminated land, archaeological remains and ancient monuments.
- sewers, drainage and sustainable drainage such as balancing ponds or swales (which can require considerable land take depending on design)
- fencing and hedging.
- external storage, refuse area and recycling point

2.0 Soft Outdoor PE (soft team game surface)

2.1 For a 2fe primary school BB103 space standards require an area of 8,400 m² for grass playing fields².

2.2 This is normally the largest area of a school site and comprises of a natural grass area that is level and suitable for playing team sport. This area needs to be able to provide space for summer and winter pitch layouts and should be demonstrated in any site plan to ensure the following can be accommodated:

- Winter – under 11s size football pitches
- Summer – rounder's pitch and a 100 metre running strip.

¹ A total site area in the lower range will require 2 storey buildings to reduce land take and possibly all weather surface for court areas.

² Previously HCC followed School Premises Regulations (1999) (SPRs 99) and therefore only calculated pitch area for pupils of age 8 years and above, from Year 4 pupils onwards. Therefore most of Hertfordshire Primary Schools at 2FE have 5,000sqm. It is still to be agreed at policy level if we should remain with the KS2 calculation or provide schools with the larger area of 8,400sqm.

The pitch area must provide space for run-off and located not too close to obstructions such as trees.

3.0 Hard Outdoor PE (courts)

- 3.1 Hard games court areas are either fenced (most often at secondary schools) or unfenced with court markings (most often at primary schools) the latter is often located within a larger tarmac area of the playground.
- 3.2 The games courts are most often marked netball courts on a tarmac surface for KS2 and more informal markings for KS1.
- 3.3 This area for a 2fe school should have a minimum area of 1,030 m² and does not include provision for nursery as team game provision is not required for this age group.

4.0 Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA's)/Polymeric surfaces

- 4.1 These areas have a special polymeric surface (a soft synthetic finish) with multiple games markings. They normally have substantial fencing and can have floodlighting to allow extended community use. MUGAs are suitable for intensive use for rebound ball sport such as netball and tennis
- 4.2 They are able to take extensive use so can be counted as double their actual area BUT only where they are substituting for sports pitches. They are most often found in highly developed school sites which have very little or no grass pitches on site and also not enough space to develop a full size synthetic turf pitch (STP).

5.0 Hard Informal and Social Areas

- 5.1 These are the areas of hard surface which are suitable for pupils during break times to use for informal play and socialising. They are not all the hard surfaces on the site, particularly on primary schools they are only those areas which are capable of being supervised by staff during break times.
- 5.2 Paths that give access from the buildings to play areas are excluded if they are narrow and cannot be supervised, if the paths although not in the main area of activity can be supervised and are wide enough for very small groups to use to socialise they are included.
- 5.3 For a 2fe primary school a minimum area of 680 m² is required and includes provision for nursery.

6.0 Soft Informal and Social Areas

6.1 This area is predominantly landscaped grass, plant beds or grass areas around the edge of site.

6.3 In practice this area is the soft space left over on the site and previously known as informal recreation.

6.4 For a 2fe school this should have a minimum area of 1560 m² and includes provision for nursery.

7.0 Habitat areas

7.1 These areas are normally only accessed under supervision and tend to be peripheral on the site they are specifically designed to reflect a type of habitat such as:

- Woodland, this maybe an old area of woodland predating the school or more recent planting or a mixture of both. It is common to have set paths of bark chippings through the area for all weather access.
- Pond/wetland, this type of area is normally fenced off so that pupils only enter under supervision and it often includes a wider area of wild habitat.
- Meadowland, this is often an area of sports pitch which has been allowed to grow without any cutting, a meadow grass mix may have been added to widen the range of plants
- gardens/allotments, these are areas that the children cultivate which feeds into the science curriculum so tend to be nearer to the classrooms.

7.2 The Habitat area on a school is the smallest in the BB103 guidance for a 2fe primary school it amounts to 210m²

8.0 Car parking

8.1 Car parking standards vary from one District Council to another. Depending on the location, the local highways network and layout of the site different requirements will need to be considered regarding spaces for visitors and parent drop-off facilities.

8.2 General parking space areas for individual vehicles are as follows:

- Car 2.4 metres x 4.8 metres
- Light Vans 2.4 metres x 5.5 metres
- Rigid Vehicles 3.5 metres x 14.0 metres

- Articulated Vehicles 3.5 metres x 18.5 metres
 - Coaches (60 seats) 3.5 metres x 14.0 metres
- Note this does not include clear zone and access gangways

8.3 With clear zone a car park space would require approx 19 m²

The table below gives a general formula for standard car parking areas on educational establishments which are used by the majority of District Planning Authorities.

Car Parking			
Description	Max Car Parking Standards	Numbers (Approx)	Parking areas Approx 19 m ² per clear zone
School	1 space per full-time member of staff	40	760
	+ 1 space per 100 pupils	4	76
		Total 44	836 m ²

Cycle parking			
Description	Max Cycle Parking Standards	Numbers (Approx)	Cycle Parking areas Approx 1m ² per stand
Secondary Schools School	1 l/t space per 10f/t staff	4	4 m ²
	+ 1 l/t space per 15 student	32	32 m ²
		Total 36	36 m ²

8.3 For a 2fe primary school staff parking would require an approximate area of 836 m². This does not take into account any possible area needed for parental drop-off, visitor car parking or turning circles.

9.0 School building areas

9.1 Using BB103 internal space area for 2fe school would requires a minimum Gross Area of 2318 m²

10.0 Summary of BB103 site minimum areas for a 2fe primary school.

Site Area	Total m ²
Soft outdoor PE (Pitch)	8,400
Hard outdoor PE (court)	1,030
Hard informal and social area (playground)	680
Soft informal and social area (inf rec)	1,560
Habitat	210
Car parking and cycle park	872
Turning circle, visitor parking and drop -off	2,000 (approx)
Building	2,318
Float (site)	2,820
Total Min Standards	19,890 m²

End

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