DUNKIRKS FARM

HERTFORD

VISION | JULY 2020

Brickendon Lane

Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

The published assessment notes that there are some influence and sense of encroachment of urban area along the norther parts of the parcel which includes the site. Release of land at Dunkirks Farm and creation of a new Green Belt boundary would ensure:

- The new Green Belt would be better related to landform
- The site sits at the settlement edge and relates clearly and closely to the settlement
- The safeguarding of the parkland character further south

Proposed Green Belt Change

The new and proposed Green Belt boundary would follow existing features and have the following advantages:

- Clear and well-defined existing components in the landscape that will be reinforced
- Green Belt boundary would follow existing physical features including existing highway - Brickendon Lane to the west; existing field hedgerows and ditch to the south; and existing avenue along Morgan's Walk to the east.
- Existing boundary components in the landscape that are durable and are likely to be permanent

Site Boundary
Exisiting Green Belt Boundary
Encroachment Limits
Brickendon Lane- Clear Boundary
Hedgerows - Physical Feature
Trees along Morgan's Walk- Physical Feature
Current and Proposed Settlement
Proposed Green Belt

Site Boundary
Exisiting Green Belt Boundary
Proposed Green Belt

3. ASSESSING THE SITE: LOCAL CONTEXT

Public Transport

The site is accessible via sustainable modes of transport. The closest bus stops to the site are located approximately 260m from an indicative site access point on Brickendon Lane. Approximately 30m north of the site, the bus stops can be accessed via a lit footway.

There are two local railway stations, each approximately 2.5km away from the site, Hertford North and Hertford West, providing services to London Liverpool Street twice hourly and Moorgate four times an hour.

Local footways close to the site, including the Hertfordshire Way

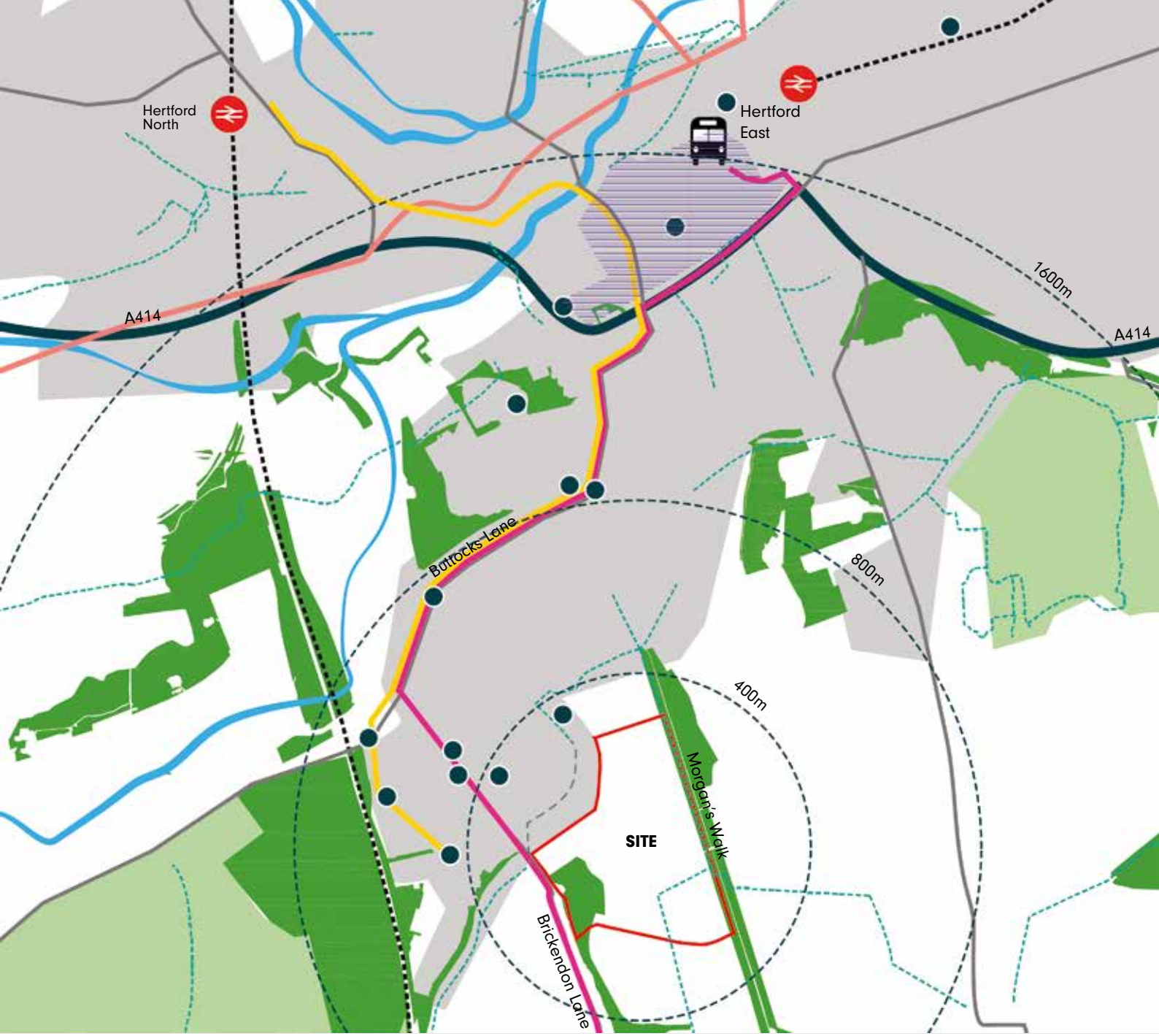
Pedestrians and Cycles

The site benefits from excellent pedestrian and cyclist linkages, including proximity to the PRoW network. There are lit pedestrian footways on Queens Road and Morgans Road. Brickendon Lane has a lit footway on the eastern side of the carriageway approximately 30m north of the site.

Alongside the eastern side of the site there is a bridleway (Hertford 047) which stretches alongside the site for approximately 360m and intersects the site for approximately 150m from east to west, and then approximately 125m from north to south.

To the west of the site, there is a public footpath (Hertford 052 & Brickendon Liberty 027) which follows a northeast to southwest alignment away from the site. The footpath crosses the 'Hertford Loop Line' railway line via a pedestrian footbridge.

National Cycle Network Route 61 (NCN 61) runs approximately 1km to the north of the site on Cole Green Road. NCN 61 provides a mixture of traffic free and on-road sections between Hertford and Welwyn Garden City (to the west) and Hoddesdon (to the east).



Movement Plan

- Site Boundary
- Park
- Woodland
- Isochrone
- Railway Station
- Town Centre
- Public Right of Way
- Bus Station
- Bus Stop
- Bus Route H4
- Bus Route 308
- National Cycle Route
- Recreational Route (Hertfordshire Way)

Local Facilities

Hertford offers a good range of local facilities, services and excellent transport links. The site is within proximity of a number of facilities and services, many of which are accessible in less than 20 minutes' walking distance, including those within Hertford town centre.

The proximity of local amenities and the ability to reach facilities by foot and cycle is a key consideration when determining the sustainability of development. Guidance provided by the Institution of Highways and Transportation (IHT) in 'Guidelines for providing journeys on foot' (2000) suggests that in terms of 'commuting, walking to school and recreational journeys, walking distances of up to 2 km can be considered as a preferred maximum with 'desirable' and 'acceptable' distances being 500m and 1000m respectively'.

For non-commuter journeys, the Guidance suggests that walking distances of up to 1,200m can be considered as a preferred maximum, with the 'desirable' and 'acceptable' distances being 400m and 800m respectively. Again, it should be noted that journeys of a longer length are often undertaken.

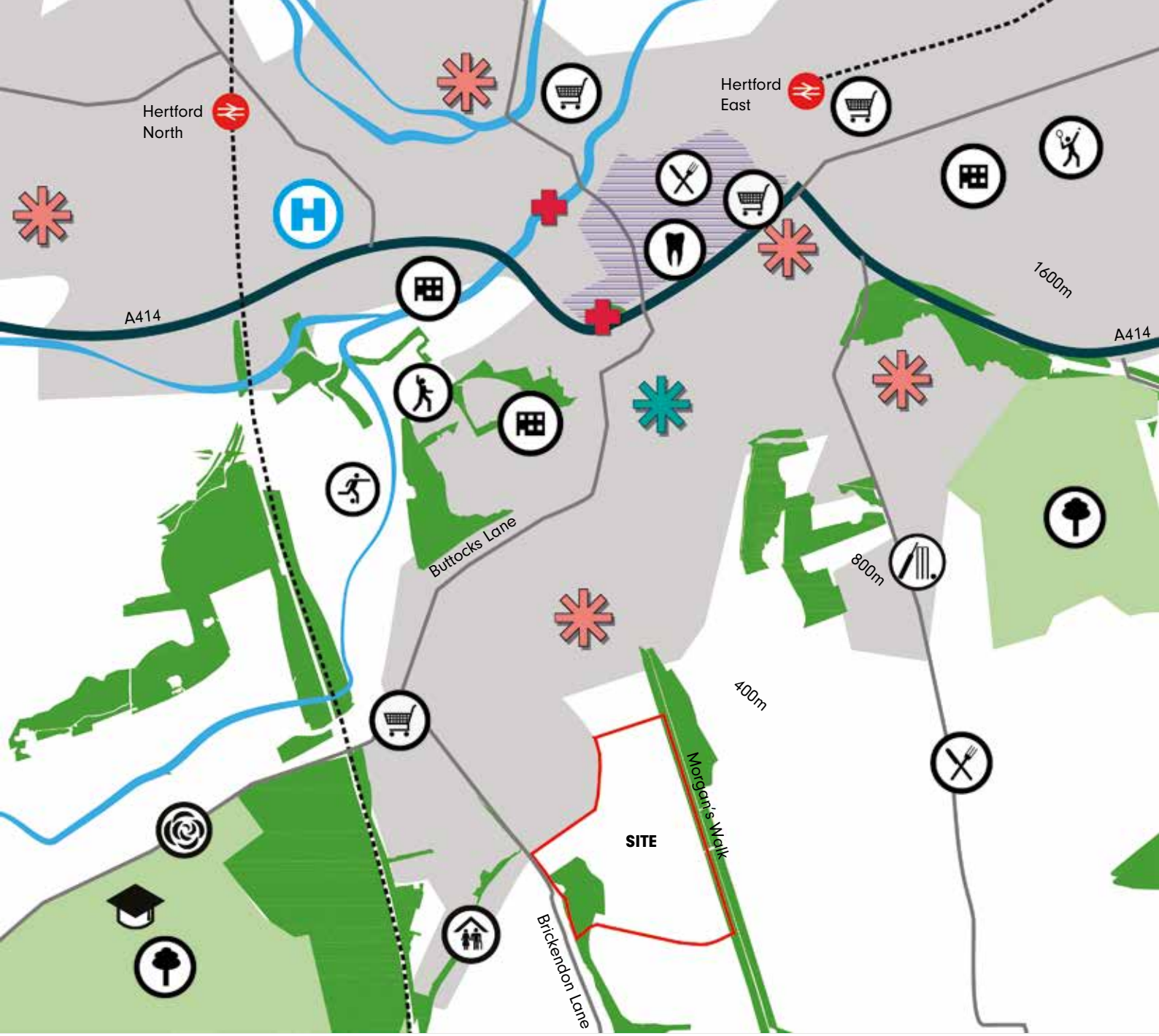
There are a number of local facilities within walking/cycling distance of the site providing a wide range of services for everyday needs. The Government's index of multiple deprivation statistics includes an indicator of "Transport Inclusion", which is defined in terms of access to four essential types of facilities, which are:

- Primary Schools;
- Health Centres;
- Convenience Stores; and
- Post Offices.

Key facilities are set out in the below table.

Facility / Amenity	Approx. Walking Distance / Time*
Morgans Primary School	0.2km (2 minute walk; 1 minute cycle)
Richard Hale School	0.7km (8 minute walk; 3 minute cycle)
Simon Balle School	1.3km (15 minute walk; 5 minute cycle)
Abel Smith School	1.1km (12 minute walk; 4 minute cycle)
Castlegate Surgery	0.9km (11 minute walk; 4 minute cycle)
Wallace House Surgery	1.3km (15 minute walk; 5 minute cycle)
Brickenden Lane Post Office	0.5km (6 minute walk; 2 minute cycle)
Hertford Post Office	1.2km (14 minute walk; 5 minute cycle)
Mac's Convenience Store	0.5km (6 minute walk; 2 minute cycle)
Tesco Superstore	1.5km (18 minute walk; 6 minute cycle)
M&S Simply Food	1.3km (15 minute walk; 5 minute cycle)
Sainsburys	1.6km (19 minute walk; 6 minute cycle)
*Based on 5 minutes for every 400m walked	

View of bus stop and post office within Hertford town centre



Local Facilities Plan

- Site Boundary
- Registered Park & Garden
- Woodland
- Isochrone
- Railway Station
- Town Centre
- Hospital
- Primary School
- Secondary School
- Park
- Employment
- University Campus
- Supermarket
- Football Club
- Restaurant / cafe / pub
- Dance School
- Garden Centre
- Community Centre
- Doctors
- Dentist
- Sports Centre

Landscape Baseline

Landscape Character

National Landscape Character: NCA 111: Northern Thames Basin

Landscape Character Assessment at a national level of study is recorded by Natural England (NE) within 159 National Character Areas (NCA). The Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) contained within the Vision Document records a careful appraisal of the national level character study.

The site and its immediate surroundings are located in the central section of the National Character Area profile: NCA 111 Northern Thames Basin. NCA 111 is a large region and covers an area of 251,000ha. The site at 14.42ha constitutes less than 0.1% of NCA 111. The key characteristics of the Northern Thames Basin NCA of relevance to the site and surrounding area comprise the following:

- The landform is varied with a wide plateau divided by river valleys. The prominent hills and ridges of the 'Bagshot Hills' are notable to the northwest and extensive tracts of flat land are found in the south.
- Characteristic of the area is a layer of thick clay producing heavy, acidic soils, resulting in retention of considerable areas of ancient woodland.
- A diverse landscape with a series of broad valleys containing the major rivers Ver, Colne and Lea, and slightly steeper valleys of the rivers Stour, Colne and Roman. Numerous springs rise at the base of the Bagshot Beds and several reservoirs are dotted throughout the area.
- The pattern of woodlands is varied across the area and includes considerable ancient semi-natural woodland. Hertfordshire is heavily wooded in some areas. Significant areas of wood pasture and pollarded veteran trees are also present.
- The field pattern is very varied across the basin reflecting historical activity.
- Mixed farming, with arable land predominating in the Hertfordshire plateaux, parts of the London Clay lowlands and Essex heathlands. Grasslands are characteristic of the river valleys throughout.
- The diverse range of semi-natural habitats include ancient woodland, lowland heath and floodplain grazing marsh and provide important habitats for a wide range of species including great crested newt, water vole, dormouse and otter.
- Rich archaeology including sites related to Roman occupation, with the Roman capital at Colchester and City of St Albans (Verulamium) and links to London. Landscape parklands surrounding 16th- and 17th-century rural estates and country houses built for London merchants are a particular feature in Hertfordshire.
- The medieval pattern of small villages and dispersed farming settlement remains central to the character of parts of Hertfordshire and Essex. Market towns have expanded over time as have the London suburbs and commuter settlements, with the creation of new settlements such as the pioneering garden city at Welwyn and the planned town at Basildon.
- Brick-built dwellings are characteristic from the late 17th century onwards. Prior to this dwellings and farm buildings tended to be timber built with weatherboarding, now mainly painted white but traditionally black or tarred, and whitewashed plaster walls.

On-site looking south towards Morgan's Walk tree belt marking the eastern boundary of the site

Local Character: East Hertfordshire District Landscape Character Assessment

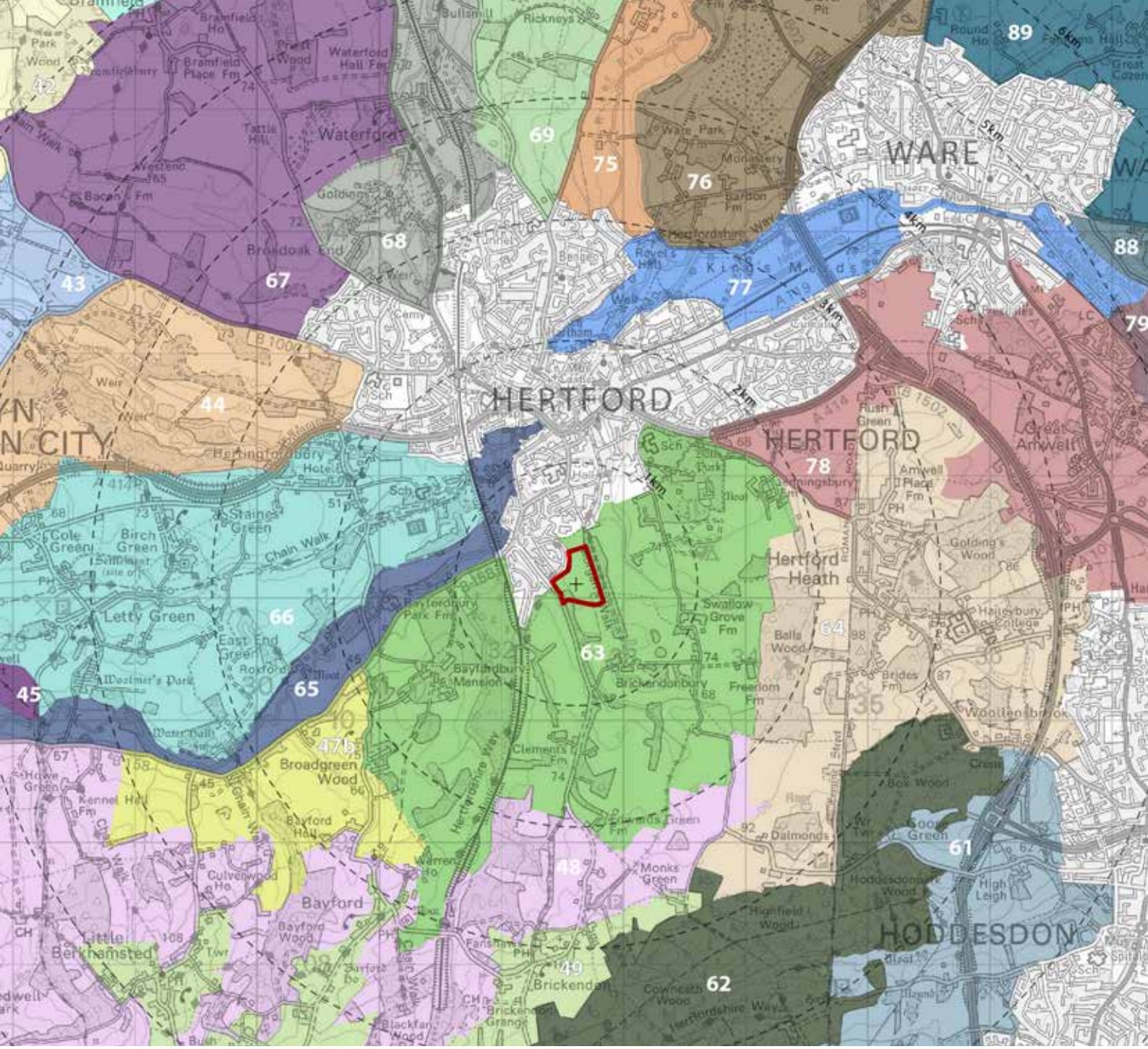
The Hertfordshire District and borough Landscape Character Assessments identify over 230 distinct local Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). Each of these areas have been mapped and includes an evaluation of its condition and robustness, and a strategy for influencing positive landscape change.

The site and its surroundings fall within LCA 63: Bayfordbury, Brickendonbury and Balls Parkland. The town of Hertford to the immediate north of the site, being an urban area, is not included within the study. LCA 63 is located to the south of Hertford between Bayford Lane and Hertford Heath, contained to the south by sloping land and to the north by the Lea valley and the B158.

LCA 63 is defined by "gently undulating parkland and estate farmland with large mansions now used for institutional purposes. Elsewhere this is a landscape of isolated farms and farm cottages, with some influence along the northern edge from Hertford's urban fringe. Bayfordbury occupies a sloping site and is characterised by its semi-natural oak/hornbeam woodland and many ornamental trees. Brickendonbury and Balls Park occupy a plateau divided by a brook, which is a strong landscape feature, and they are surrounded by arable farmland." Key features of LCA 63 include:

- *"sparse settlement pattern*
- *gently undulating landform*
- *large country mansions in extensive parkland*
- *strong north-south axis of transport routes*
- *regular field pattern with parkland accents, such as avenues"*

"Country mansions and parkland trees are highly visible due to their prominent position". This is described as a distinctive feature of the LCA.



Landscape Character Areas

Site Boundary

Landscape Character Area

LCA within 1km

- 63 Bayfordbury, Brickendonbury & Balls Parklands
- 65 Middle Lea Valley West
- 66 Cole Green & Hertingfordbury Settled Farmland

LCA within 2km

- 47b Essendon - Brickendon Farmed Slopes
- 48 West End - Brickendon Wooded Slopes
- 64 Hertford Heath
- 77 Kings Mead and Hartham Common Floodplain
- 78 Great Amwell Ridge and Slopes

LCA within 3km

- 44 Panshanger Parkland
- 49 Little Berkhamsted Ridge Settlements
- 62 Broxbourne Woods Complex
- 68 Lower Beane Valley
- 75 Lower Rib Valley
- 76 Ware Parklands

LCA within 4km

- 61 Broxbournebury
- 67 Bramfield Plain
- 69 Stoneyhills

LCA within 5km

- 43 Mimram Valley Parklands
- 45 Welwyn Fringes
- 79 Amwell Floodplain

LCA within 6km

- 42 Tewin, Dawley & Lockley Estate Farmland
- 88 Lower Ash Valley
- 89 Wareside / Braughing Uplands

Landform of the site and Setting

The site's landform consists of a combination of sloping land within the western and south-western region that rises up towards the east and centre of the site and then forms a plateau like landform. The site is typical of its setting, which is characterised by its undulating landform.

The landform within the immediate surroundings of the site, tends to fall to the north towards River Lea in the town of Hertford. The landform to the west and south-west, falls and rises again forming a narrow valley. Similarly, to the east, the land fall to rise again forming another narrow valley. To the south the land continues to rise in the immediate setting.

In the wider context, the landform is varied and complex with undulating land dominating the landscape. The many rivers including River Lea, River Rib, River Beane, River Mimram and other connected waterbodies form the low-lying land of the landscape. These watercourses constitute the many valleys within the wider context and attribute to the rolling and undulating landscape.

Land Use and Settlement Pattern

The LCA notes that within LCA 63 the primary land use comprises "arable estate farmland and parkland with associated indigenous and exotic woodland planting. Recreational use, particularly the sports fields associated with the educational institutions, is a notable secondary land use, with a caravan and camp site located in the southern part of Balls Park. There are a few disused mineral extraction sites adjacent to the railway line."

The landscape is criss-crossed by major transport corridors including the A414 to the north, approximately 1km from the site, the A10 to the east, just over 3.5km from the site; and the Hertford Railway Line lies to the west (approximately 320m from the site). The Hertford Railway Line and A10 run in a north-south alignment whereas the A414 runs in an east-west direction. This area is also drained by several rivers including River Lea lying just over 1 km to the north.

Settlements are common in the wider landscape along these major transport routes and alongside the various rivers. The landscape in between these settlements comprises farmland and some parkland that tend to be heavily wooded.

The site, being situated close to the Hertford Railway Line and adjoining the established urban area is well related to the settlement to the north and west. The urban influences of the railway noise and views of the urban settlement reduces its sense of rurality.

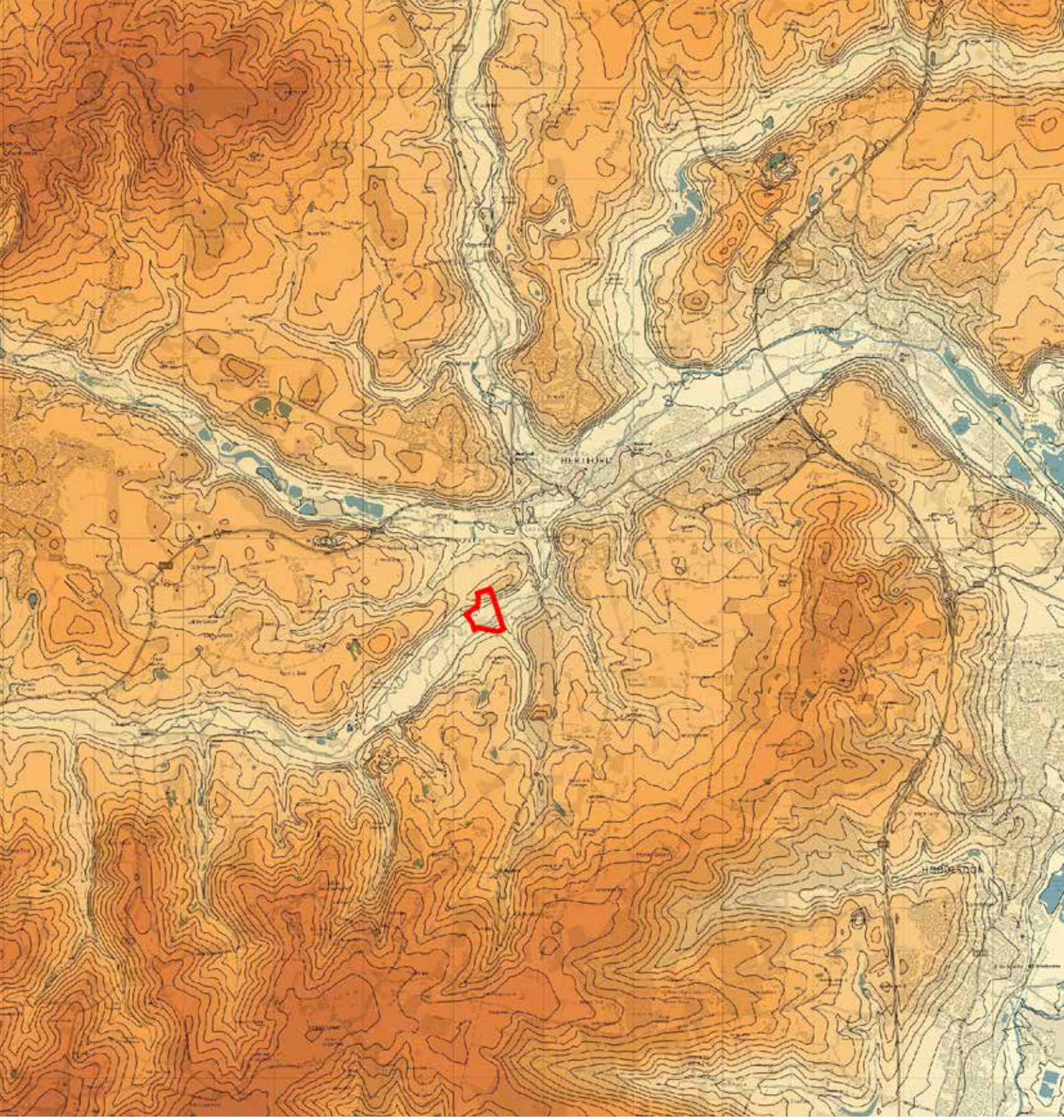
Tree Cover of the Site and Setting

Tree cover on site is largely found along its edges as part of its field boundaries. The field boundaries are generally formed of hedgerows and hedgerow trees or narrow lines of trees. The site's eastern boundary is particularly distinctive and comprises a part of the historic lime avenue leading to the Grade II listed country house at Brickendonbury, now used as laboratory and offices. The south-west corner of the site has an area of deciduous thick woodlands which constitutes a large part of the tree cover on site.

The LCA notes that within LCA 63 – the near surroundings of the site, the woodlands are generally "oak/hornbeam and oak/ash, with a relic lime avenue at Brickendonbury, now in very poor condition. Great Stocks and Little Stocks are woodlands of parkland origin, as evidenced by the pollards within them. Field boundaries are widespread and consist either of hedges with hedgerow trees or narrow woodland belts."

Extensive tree cover is present within the wider landscape including several Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodlands (ASNWs). Some of these ASNWs include Great Stock Wood and Balls Wood to the east, Monk's Wood, Jepp's Wood, Box Wood and Harmond's Wood to the south and Terrace Wood and Southfield Wood to the west. The tree coverage within the northern setting of the site are generally related to trees within back gardens and street.

Apart from the ASNWs the presence of various blocks of woodland and tree lines are notable in the landscape. Scattered trees as part of the parklands are distinctive features in the landscape. Some of these parklands such as Bayfordbury, approximately 480m to the south-west of the site and Balls Park, approximately 600m to the east of the site, are Grade II listed Registered Parks and Gardens.



Landform Plan

Site boundary

Landform features

Contours

Elevation (metres)

+20m AOD	Site Low Point +49m AOD	Site High Point +69m AOD	+145m AOD

Other features

Watercourse

Landscape of the Site

The site has well defined boundaries. Field boundary marked by hedgerows and set against a sports field forms the northern boundary. Residential properties along Mandeville Road define the north-western boundary and Brickendon Lane marks the western boundary. Field boundary vegetation and ditches form the southern boundary. Tree belt along PRoW also known as Morgan's Walk defines the eastern boundary.

The landform of the site is undulating with the high point on the eastern boundary near Morgan's Walk. The site is irregular in shape following the existing built area and roads. It comprises one large agricultural field and a block of woodland within the south-western corner.

There is a PRoW on site, namely 'Hertford 049' which connects the site to Morgan's Walk to the east and through the southern fields to Brickendon Lane to the south-west. Although, this is the only PRoW on site, whilst undertaking field work it was noted that several other footpaths criss-crossed the site and were very well used by the public.

Extensive tree cover is mostly limited to the boundary vegetation along the field boundaries and the woodland in the south-west. The field being an arable field is devoid of any free-standing trees. The boundaries of the site are marked by thick vegetation, comprising hedgerows and trees, with limited breaks. This dense vegetation, in particular along the eastern, south-western and western edge, provides the site with a degree of intimacy.

Off site - view from PRoW – Brickendon Liberty 006, looking north-west towards the site. The site is visible, although this it is partially filtered by the southern boundary vegetation. The town, Hertford, forms the skyline.

Views and Visual Amenity

LCA 63 acknowledges that "the parkland is well contained and the wooded boundaries are dominant in the landscape. This is therefore an internally open but contained landscape, with few views in from the outside. From within views are often screened by vegetation, but there are some longer distance views across the large fields to the east of Swallow Grove Farm, blocked by the relic avenue in Brickendonbury Park."

The landform and extensive tree cover in the wider setting does not allow long views into or out of the Site. Due to this the Site is visually contained.

The site, due to its boundary vegetation, is also visually well contained in its immediate setting. From the north views are limited from the long-distance trail – Hertfordhire Way due to the vegetation along the edges of the public footpath. The limited breaks in the vegetation allows views out towards the Site across the sports fields, although these are filtered by the vegetation along the site's northern boundary.

From the north-west along views are limited to gaps in the houses along Mandeville Road. The upper storeys of the houses to the east of Mandeville houses would have views across the site as these houses adjoins the site's north-western boundary.

Views from the east are restricted due to the intervening tree cover. The strong boundary feature of the historic lime avenue to Brickendonbury, restricts all views from the east into the site, unless viewed at the entrance of the PRoWs.

Views from the west are restricted due to the intervening vegetation and topography.

Filtered views of the site are afforded from the immediate south of the Site. The break in the boundary vegetation where the PRoW continues onto the site provides views across the Site to the roofscape of Hertford. Views from further south are obscured by the rising topography and the many dense field boundaries. Brickendonbury is not visible from the site and vice versa the site is concealed from Brickendonbury.

On site, view from PRoW Hertford 049, looking north-west across the site. This view from an elevated position on site, looks across to the urban edge of Hertford. Housing, schools and County Hall building are clear components in this view.

4. ASSESSING THE SETTING: THE SITE

The findings from the initial site and context assessment have been evaluated to identify the emerging constraints and opportunities relevant to the development of the site.

The adjacent plan presents an analysis of these elements, the qualities of the site and technical surveys that provides the context for future development proposals. It should be read alongside the technical summaries set out within this section.

Land Use

The site lies immediately south of the existing settlement of Hertford, the county town of Hertfordshire, and is well connected to a number of large towns including Welwyn Garden City to the west, Stevenage to the north and London to the south. The site is immediately adjacent to the Horn's Mill suburban area of south Hertford. The 2011 Census recorded the population of Hertford at 26,783.

The proposals should be inspired by positive elements of the existing built form and should respect the privacy and amenity of existing dwellings adjoining the site.

Constraints and Opportunities Plan

Morgans Road
Maunderville Road
Brickendon Lane

Access & Movement

The development site would take vehicular access from Brickendon Lane. A safe and suitable access can be achieved by means of a priority junction.

As part of the development, pedestrian/cycle access will be provided in two places as follows:

- On Brickendon Lane – either in conjunction with the vehicle access junction or via a separate pedestrian/cycle link on the north easternmost corner of the site. A footway would then connect onto the existing provision on Brickendon Lane to the north.
- Onto Morgans Road via a pedestrian/cycle only link onto the Hertford 047 bridleway, located adjacent to the eastern site boundary.

Traffic and congestion on the A414 through Hertford is seen as a constraint to growth, and as such Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC) Transport Vision and the Local Transport Plan consider potential schemes to alleviate congestion and support growth. Two key infrastructure schemes identified, as part of a wider package of works, are:

- The delivery of a Hertford bypass – either north of south of the town
- A Mass Rapid Transit system encouraging sustainable transport into the town

In early 2019 HCC consulted on the A414 study which included the Hertford bypass. It is understood that the preferred option prior to consultation was a bypass to the south of the town, connecting the A414 west to the A10 to the east. Whilst a route has yet to be identified, this scheme could be designed such as to not preclude the delivery of the bypass. This development could also provide commensurate funding towards the infrastructure improvements, both the bypass and sustainable measures.

Notwithstanding the above, a 3D access strategy has been identified which considers the site levels and identifies an access solution in the form of a priority junction, capable of accommodating a scheme of this size. Further capacity modelling will be undertaken at planning application stage.

Ecology

Understanding the baseline

The preliminary ecological baseline of the site was derived through desk study and site survey.

Desk study

Biodiversity information was requested for a study area of 2km radius around the site (extended to 4km for previous records of bats) from Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre (HERC) in February 2020. Information requested included the location and details of the following:

- Designated sites of nature conservation value;
- Previous records of protected and/or notable species.

Information was also obtained from www.magic.gov.uk (for additional information on statutory designated sites) and from Hertfordshire's Ecological Networks (Hertfordshire Local Nature Partnership, 2019).

Site Survey

An Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey of the site was undertaken on 12 February 2020. The survey followed guidelines published by JNCC (2010) and Institute of Environmental Assessment (1995) and identified the main habitat types on the site and the presence/potential presence of protected and notable species.

Designated sites

There are no designated sites of nature conservation importance within the proposed development site boundary. 'Wooded Bourne, Brickendon Lane' Local Wildlife Site lies immediately adjacent to the south-western site boundary and has been designated for its semi-natural broadleaved woodland.

The nearest Site of Special Scientific Interest to the proposed development site is Hertford Heath Site of Special Scientific Interest, which lies approximately 2.1km to the east and has been designated for its mosaic of dwarf-shrub communities, wooded common, ponds and glades. Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods Special Area of Conservation is located approximately 2.3km to the south-east of the site and has been designated for oak-hornbeam woodland.

Habitats

The proposed development site was dominated by an improved grassland field, bound by fences, hedgerows, ditches and semi-natural broadleaved woodland. Semi-natural broadleaved woodland also occurred in the south-west of the site and comprised sycamore, larch, ash, Scot's pine, lime, field maple, pedunculate oak, hazel, holly, hawthorn, privet, yew and beech. A stream was present on the western boundary of the woodland. Further semi-natural broadleaved woodland occurred off-site along the eastern site boundary.

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland is a Priority Habitat and woodland is a Hertfordshire BAP Habitat. Both woodland areas (on-site and off-site) are identified on the Hertfordshire Ecological Network Map as 'Priority Habitat'. Streams and hedgerows are Priority Habitats; hedgerows also form part of the 'Farmland' habitat group under the Hertfordshire BAP.

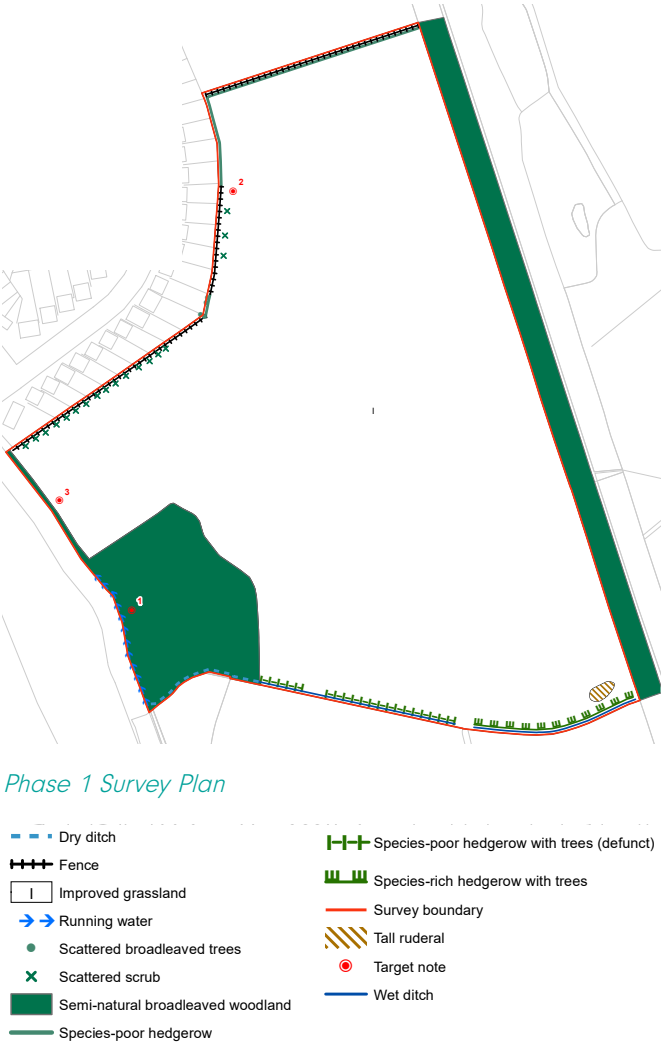
Semi-natural broadleaved woodland and streams are habitats of moderate to high ecological importance. Hedgerows and ditches are of low to moderate ecological importance. Improved grassland is of low ecological importance.

Protected and notable species

Habitats within the site could potentially support protected/notable species, including invertebrates, amphibians (such as great crested newt), reptiles, breeding birds, bats (including potential roosts within the semi-natural broadleaved woodland), hazel dormouse, badger, otter and water vole. No evidence of invasive-plant species was recorded.

Conclusions

There are no overriding ecological constraints to the development of the site. Whist potential constraints for habitats and protected/notable species occur, it is considered that avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures could be provided for adverse effects. In addition, ecological enhancements could also be integrated into the development layout. The Local Wildlife Site adjacent to the south-west boundary would not be affected. Compliance with legislation relating to statutory designated sites and protected species could be achieved and 'biodiversity net gain' could be delivered.



Phase 1 Survey Plan

Arboriculture

The site comprises a series of large open fields located between Brickendon Lane, to the west, residential land to the north (Mandeville Road) and linear plantation to the east.

A block of woodland is located in the south west corner of the site (W14), within a former quarry. The woodland comprises of primarily broad-leaved species with some conifers present. The woodland is mature with an even age structure and it lacks a shrub and field layer. There is significant scope to enhance the feature through simple woodland management to increase its age, species and vertical structure. This woodland is subject to a tree preservation order, (LPA Ref: TPO No. 8 – W14 , dated 1955), that imposes a woodland designation which will cover all trees present of whatever age or size.

The remainder of the western boundary contains an over mature hedge with mature trees located within it, on a steep slope over the road. The hedge has developed substantial gaps due to a lack of management in recent decades.

The southern boundary contains a sporadic hedge with occasional trees developing / emerging from it. The hedge contains a limited species mix and there is scope to enhance this feature.

A linear plantation is adjacent to the eastern boundary (W30 & W32). This contains occasional large mature trees amongst younger even aged plantation. These woodlands are a significant landscape feature with some growth potential. The plantation is subject to a tree preservation order (LPA Ref. TPO No. 1, G1 dated 1950. The Group designation relates to trees present when the TPO was made.

The woodland areas (W11, W30 & W32) are identified on the DEFRA National Woodland Inventory as broadleaved woodland. No areas of ancient woodland are identified. The existing tree cover is typical of the area and forms a key landscape feature. No veteran or ancient trees were present on site.

The northern boundary contains occasional trees of mixed species within the adjacent gardens. These are of varying quality and have a limited influence on the site.

Proposed access – concept plan:

The current concept plan proposes the primary access point in the western corner onto Brickendon Lane. This access is well clear of the protected woodland (W14) and this can be achieved with no negative or significant impacts on the woodland. It will entail the loss of part of the frontage hedge and trees that have emerged from the hedge. The loss of this is acceptable and will have a highly localised impact. This route offers the most sensible solution and will have the lowest impact on trees.

The concept plan also indicates footpath links in the southern and eastern boundaries. These will link into existing access points and will not negatively impact on trees.

The concept plan also shows a buffer zone between the proposed residential areas and the on-site and off-site woodlands. This will reduce pressure to fell or prune trees and reduce any negative impacts arising from development to negligible levels.

The open nature of the site, with trees around the edges mean that the impacts on retained trees will be very low. The scope for new planting within the scheme will result in a positive long-term impact and an increased tree cover on the site.

Existing mature vegetation within the site

Heritage

Within approximately 500m of the site are eight designated assets: Hertford Conservation Area, six listed buildings and one registered park and garden.

The closest asset is Dunkirk Farmhouse (listed Grade II) located approximately 180m to the northeast of the site. The Hertford Conservation Area which is focused on the historic core of the town extends southwards to include the farmstead. Today, the farmhouse sits to the north of a courtyard of buildings and is separated from the site by the avenue of trees that forms the historic approach to Brickendon Bury. This avenue together with the distance visually and spatially separates the site from these assets thereby avoiding any objectionable visual impact.

To the north of the site is the mid-20th century Grade II* listed primary school. This has a residential setting to the north, east and west, with a more open aspect to the south overlooking playing fields. The site is located over 200m to the south such that these playing fields will act as an appropriate buffer thereby preserving the setting of the listed school building.

Some distance to the south of the site is the historic country house complex at Brickendon Bury (Tun Abdul Razak Research Centre). The Grade II listed house is located over 500m from the site boundary, with the Grade II listed Clock Cottage and Stable Cottage to the north being just located within the 500m study area. At this distance any visual impacts in views outwards from the house and cottages can be successfully mitigated. Development can be offset from the tree avenue to ensure its retention as a historic landscape feature.

The remaining Grade II listed buildings and Bayfordbury registered park and garden located within 500m of the site are sufficiently distant and separated by existing townscape, vegetation and/or infrastructure features such that development on the site would not have any impact on their significance.

Flood Risk & Drainage

The EA 'Flood Map for Planning' shows that most of the site is located within Flood Zone 1. The western boundary of the site is bordered by Flood Zone 3, which is associated with Brickendon Brook – a tributary of the River Lea. There is another watercourse (ditch) which flows from east to west along the southern boundary of the site. At its lower reach, this watercourse flows through the wooded area at the south-west of the site before joining Brickendon Brook. Brickendon Brook flows adjacent to Brickendon Lane in an easterly to westerly direction along the western border of the site before crossing to the other side of the road via a culvert at approximate NGR TL 32384 11109, near Horns Mill Housing Estate.

The risk of groundwater flooding is assessed to be moderate and may require mitigation particularly during construction. However, the risk of flooding from this source is not determined to be a constraint to development at the site.

There are no surface water sewers located within the immediate vicinity of the site.

A small area within the copse at the south-west corner of the site is indicated to be at high risk from surface water flooding. Also, running parallel to the western site boundary is the Brickendon Brook, which is an area of high and medium surface water flood risk. However, with appropriate mitigation in place, surface water flooding is not determined to be a constraint to development, and the overall flood risk from this source of flood hazard is assessed to be low.

There are no public sewers or water mains located on the site. There is a trunk foul sewer located adjacent to the north-western boundary. There is also a network of foul sewers in the residential area located to the north-west. Foul flows from future development could potentially connect to this network (subject to consultation and agreement with Thames Water).

There are no surface water sewers located within the vicinity of the site. However, surface water from the potential development could drain to the watercourses located to the west and south of the site.

There is also potential for the incorporation of SuDS, such as attenuation ponds and swales, and soakaways, which can attenuate surface water flows before discharging into the watercourse to the west of the site at a controlled rate.

5. DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND CONCEPT

The concept masterplan for the site has been informed by the vision, site analysis and identified constraints and opportunities. The concept masterplan shows the key design principles which underpin the development of the site, as set out below:

- The proposals provide approximately 7.5ha of residential development land, achieving 260 dwellings using an average density of 35 dwellings per hectare (dph).
- Vehicular access to the site will be provided from Brickendon Lane. A potential second emergency vehicle access point could also be taken from Morgans Road / Queens Road.
- The existing PRoW has been retained and integrated with a new network of informal footpath routes, aiding the creation of easy and accessible linkages for pedestrians that provide sustainable routes to the town centre and to wider recreational walks including the Hertfordshire Way long distance footpath and those along the River Lea.
- The structure of development blocks has been arranged to ensure the creation of a permeable and legible place that promotes safe streets and spaces.
- Development blocks will overlook streets and spaces. This will also help to ensure the provision of an attractive and active network of green corridors and a central green space.
- A green buffer between the proposed residential development and Morgan's Walk ensures the protection of the avenue of trees that border the eastern edge of the site and form the historic approach to Brickendon Bury.
- Existing green capital has been retained wherever possible and will be enhanced to promote a distinctive character for the development. Areas of public open space including attenuation / swale areas create important and valuable green infrastructure, enhancing biodiversity and wildlife habitats. An area of green open space along the southern edge of the site will help safeguard views towards Hertford on the approach to the site, whilst aiding with the creation of an attractive and accessible pedestrian footpath network.
- A significant area of multi-functional, centrally located public open green space has been provided, accommodating areas for recreation, formal play, attenuation and ecological enhancement. This is complemented by the provision of green corridors that run north-south and east-west through the site.

Concept Masterplan

- Site Boundary
- Primary Access Point
- Pedestrian and Cyclist Access Point
- Residential Development
- Primary Route
- Existing Vegetation
- Proposed Street Trees
- Proposed Vegetation
- Proposed Area for Formal Play
- Proposed Informal Footpath
- Public Right of Way
- Recreational Route
- Existing Woodland
- Potential Area for Attenuation

6. LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The New Landscape

An important consideration of the suitability of the site for residential development is the clarity of its well-defined limits and the strength of its boundaries. It sits on the boundary of the town and the qualities both town and country bear influence on the site from its northern edge with housing and school grounds. The mature tree lines along Morgan's Walk mark the skyline and define and contain the eastern limit of the site. Established tree cover also marks and holds-in the western edge. Landform also contributes to the clarity and easy appreciation of the boundaries – to the south and west.

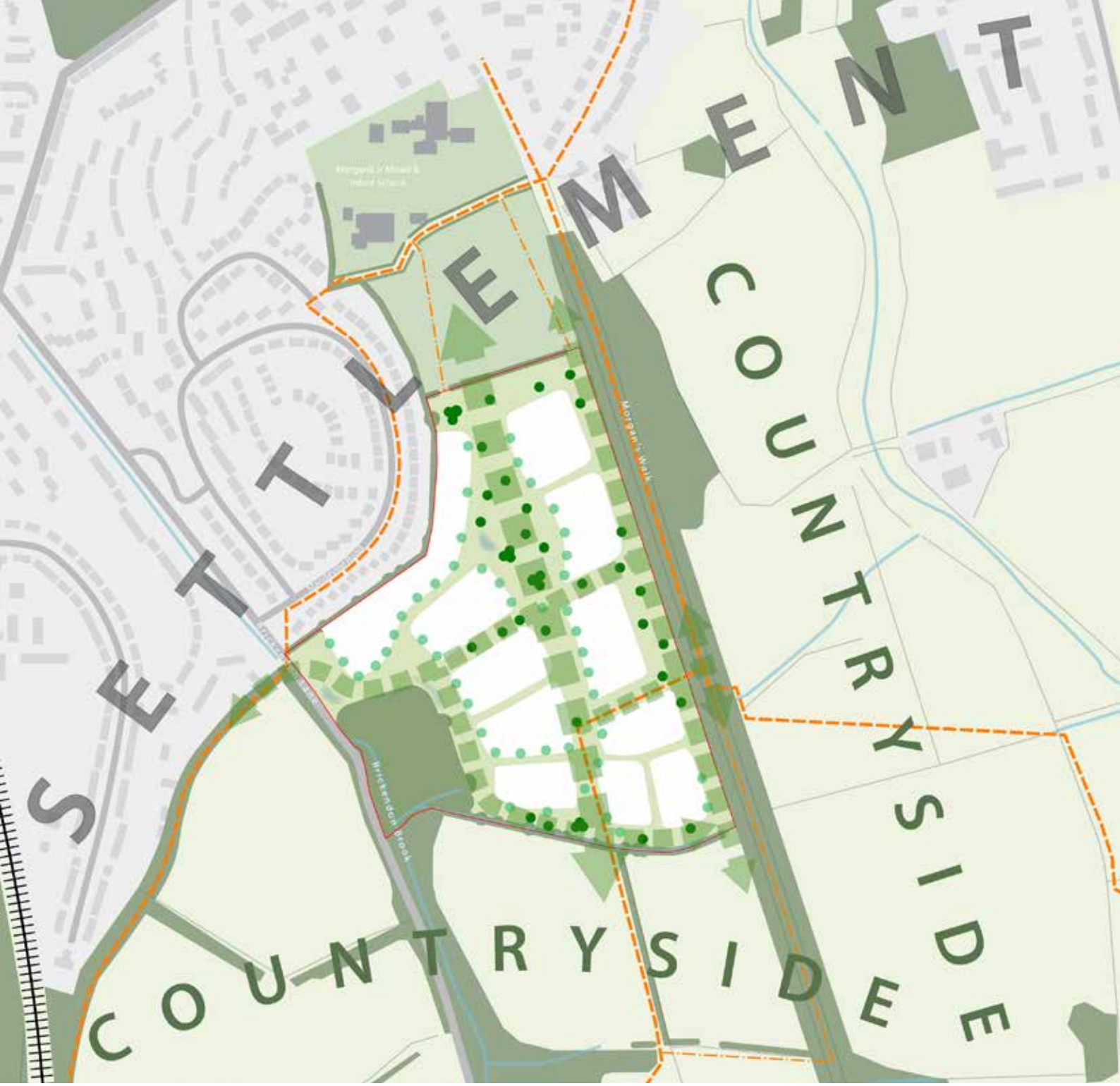
These are the readily recognisable attributes that exist. It is contained by logical and clearly identifiable elements around its boundaries This is important to the consideration of how likely future development may be accommodated with least effect on the wider setting.

The objective of the Landscape Strategy is to set the development into the host landscape in a manner that achieves a sympathetic and successful assimilation in the countryside at the settlement edge

There are three key objectives for the Landscape Strategy:

- to make an important contribution to integrating the development with the host landscape of the immediate setting;
- to create a public asset of attractive green space to serve the needs of the development; and
- to ensure the effects of the development are limited and contained in a manner that makes an attractive and in essence a new edge to the settlement.

Existing components: Field pattern, hedgerows and trees, in association with new green spaces will give form and structure to the new Green Infrastructure. The existing components will be connected by new green areas to form a network of biodiverse planted linked spaces and habitats. It will also provide linkage to other Green Infrastructure assets beyond the site. The existing components will be retained and further enhanced, and the development arranged around it, to provide strategic and meaningful space with a strong sense of place.



Green Infrastructure Plan

Site Boundary

Landscape Analysis

Settlement

Countryside

Playing field

Public Right of Way

Informal paths (current)

Watercourse

Railway line

Roads

Vegetation

Hedgerow

Proposed Features

Open space

Development area

Proposed trees

Street trees

Sustainable Urban Drainage

Countryside links

Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure is integral to the concepts for the development. It will assist in mitigating the impacts of climate change and will deliver a range of environment objectives: biodiversity, Sense of Place, contact with seasonal change. The early concepts demonstrate the commitment to forming links to the wider Green Infrastructure network in the countryside.

An important objective has been to set the future development into the host landscape in a manner that achieves a sympathetic and successful assimilation in the countryside at the settlement edge. New areas of publicly accessible open green space within the development will be created running through the entire development. The large central 'Green' will contain a Play Space. The Sustainable Urban Drainage system may comprise swales and planted shallow basins to attenuate rainwater and these have been set within green spaces. They will be designed, planted and managed in a manner to ensure that they also serve as a public amenity.

There are five key objectives for Landscape and Green Infrastructure Strategy:

- to integrate the development within the host landscape of the immediate setting replicating the pattern of settlement and division that already exists;
- to ensure that the creation of green spaces link and enhance the wider Green Infrastructure network;
- to create a public asset of attractive green spaces that serves the needs of residents and visitors.
- the creation of an exemplar Blue Infrastructure system that has integrated Sustainable Urban Drainage system that is created in a manner that belongs to the place – new watercourses, swales, ponds and ditches will become new attractive places for the public and wildlife to enjoy; and
- the creation of an aspirational high quality deeply sustainable Green Infrastructure Network of public green spaces

7. SUMMARY OF ASPIRATIONS

This document sets out how our proposals for Dunkirks Farm, Hertford could deliver the vision, alongside the following key benefits:

» **Quality Living Environment and New Homes**

- ◊ High quality development that can deliver up to 260 new dwellings (at 35dph), in a range of types and tenures including affordable dwellings to meet local and wider needs.

» **Accessibility and Sustainability**

- ◊ A site that benefits from a sustainable location, with easy connections to the wider range of facilities and services Hertford has to offer.
- ◊ Potential to contribute towards wider infrastructure improvements including the Hertford bypass and a Mass Rapid Transit system.

» **Responsive Design to Local Context**

- ◊ Development that considers and responds to existing site features and assets, opportunities and constraints within the development proposal.
- ◊ Development that responds positively to the existing settlement including dwellings along Mandeville Road.

» **Local Distinctiveness**

- ◊ Positive features retained and incorporated into the scheme to strengthen local distinctiveness.
- ◊ Accessible links to the wider footpath network including the Hertfordshire Way.

» **Public Open Space and Landscape**

- ◊ New areas of open space that will be publicly accessible and provide an attractive and usable open space for the wider community.
- ◊ Links with Hertford's green fingers.
- ◊ Provision of a network of accessible pedestrian footpaths that loop around the site and link with the existing public rights of way network, including Morgan's Walk along the eastern edge of the site.
- ◊ Retention and enhancement of existing trees and hedgerows wherever possible.

» **Best Practice**

- ◊ Attractive development that is based upon best practice design principles to create a safe, active place that has its own identity.

Pedestrians and dog walkers enjoying Morgan's Walk adjacent to the site

BARTON
WILLMORE