

PROJECT TITLE: Land off Mendip Way, Great Ashby
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Prepared by: JD / IK
Checked by: GBR

ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT, LAND OFF MENDIP WAY, GREAT ASHBY

Introduction

1. This Accessibility Audit (AA) has been prepared by Woods Hardwick Ltd on behalf of Picture Estates Ltd in support of the Hybrid application for a residential-led development comprising residential (Use Class C3), educational use (Use Class F1), a community hub (Use Class F2) with associated new internal roads, access, parking, cycling infrastructure, landscaping and other associated infrastructure on land known as 'Land off Mendip Way, Great Ashby' in Stevenage. A Site Location Plan is included in **Appendix A**.
2. The Full application comprises the construction of vehicle access and an active travel link via Mendip Way, with associated landscaping and drainage works.
3. The Outline Application, for which all matters are reserved except for means of access, comprises the erection of up to 640 dwellings (Use Class C3), a site for a primary school, further land reserved for educational use (Use Class F1), a site for a community hub (Use Class F2), with associated infrastructure.
4. As identified within the adopted North Hertfordshire Local Plan (2011 - 2031), the site, GA2, is allocated under Policy SP18 as a Strategic Housing Site for a new neighborhood of approximately 600 homes. The Proposed Site Layout is enclosed in **Appendix B**.
5. The development proposals consist of the following;
 - Up to 640 residential units;
 - Up to 500sqm retail, food and beverage, and medical and social floorspace;
 - 4ha of land to make provision for 2FE primary/ 4FE secondary school; and
 - Suitable parking infrastructure designed in line with local car parking standards.
 - Principle access to the Site is to be provided via Mendip Way, with provision for sustainable modes of transport in alignment with the Stevenage Mobility Strategy. The access road to the Site will be designed to effectively integrate into the nearby existing road networks.

6. In terms of Highways and Transport, the development site lies under the responsibility of Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) who represent the Local Highway Authority (LHA) for the area.
7. This AA identify and assesses the routes from the site to key local services and facilities on foot, by bicycle and by public transport and provides the recommendations for where improvements to the existing infrastructure can be made to enhance the sustainable forms transport including walking cycling and public transport routes in terms of safety and convenience for future and current residents of the site.

8. As noted in North Hertfordshire District Council's (NHDC's) Local Plan Policy SP6 'Sustainable Transport', development proposals will comply with the NHDC Transport Strategy, and the provisions of the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) and the developer will work with the HCC to ensure a range of suitable transport options are available. Existing footpaths and PRoW's will be retained and pedestrian infrastructure within the development will be arranged to tie into existing provisions.
9. This Accessibility Audit covers the requirements outlined in Section 6: Transport and Accessibility Baseline Report in the Guidance on transport in masterplans (DRAFT, 2023). These requirements are noted below:
 - Identification of cycling and walking routes;
 - Audit of cycling and walking route accessibility;

Transportation Policy Context

10. This Accessibility Audit considers the guidance set out in the DfT document 'Guidance on Transport Assessment' published in March 2007, as well as the relevant sections of the Department for Communities and Local Government's more recent guidance contained within the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). In accordance with this guidance a review of relevant transportation policy at a national, regional and local level is included in this section.
11. The following policies are of particular relevance to the development proposals and this document:
 - Hertfordshire County Council Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (2019);
 - North Herts Council General guidance transport in masterplans (DRAFT - 2023);
 - North Hertfordshire District Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (DRAFT 2022);
 - Department for Transport Cycle Infrastructure Design Local Transport Note 1/20 (2020);
 - Department for Transport Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans - Technical Guidance for Local Authorities (2017);
 - Active Travel England Framework Document (2022);
 - Department for Transport Gear Change, A bold vision for cycling and walking (2020);
 - Stevenage Mobility Strategy (2016);
 - Stevenage Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) (2019);
 - Stevenage Future Town, Future Transport Strategy (2019).

Site Location

12. Great Ashby, in which the site is located is a civil parish in the North Hertfordshire district of Stevenage. The site is located 5km north east of Stevenage City Centre, 13.5km south of Letchworth Garden City, 12km East of Hitchin, 14km west of Buntingford and 20.5km north of Welwyn Garden City.
13. By road, Stevenage is primarily accessible by the A1(M) which runs in a north-south direction along the western outskirts of the city. The A1(M) enables access to Welwyn Garden City, Edgeware and Letchworth Garden City. The A602 runs through Stevenage, to the north west it provides access to Hitchin and to the south east it provides access to the southern outskirts of Stevenage, Watton at Stone and Ware. The A505 is accessible to the north of the site and facilitates access to Royston, Sawston and Great Abingdon.

14. The site is currently undeveloped and consists of open agricultural land, grassland and woodland. The north and east of the site is bound by grassland and woodland, to the south the site is abutted by woodland and residential development off Mendip Way and to the west the site is abutted by Mendip way and existing residential development.
15. Within the immediate vicinity of the site, Mendip Way operates under a 30mph speed limit. Pedestrian footpaths and street lighting are provided on both sides of the carriageway, in addition regular pedestrian crossing points and dropped kerbs are provided to enable safe and convenient pedestrian travel.

Site Access

16. Vehicular access to the site will be provided in the form of a priority junction from Mendip Way, the site carriageway width will be set at 6.2m. This width would be appropriate to accommodate bus services. Carriageway widths on the site will be designed in accordance with guidance contained in Chapter 8 of the Herts Design Guide and HCC guidance obtained through scoping. It is proposed that the new access road would become major arm extension of Mendip Way, changing priority on the junction for the northern section of Mendip Way, which would become a minor arm of the proposed junction.
17. The major access road will form a loop within the site. Minor access roads, shared surface streets, footways and cycleways will join them to create a transport network within the site, with provision for sustainable modes of transport in alignment with the Stevenage Mobility Strategy. The access road to the site will be designed to effectively integrate into the nearby existing road networks.
18. In addition to the main access, an emergency point of access is proposed from Warrens Green Lane to the north of the site.

Baseline evidence and Circulation Plans

19. As outlined in paragraph 10.1 of the North Hertfordshire District Council General Guidance on Masterplans (DRAFT, March 2023), all existing and proposed public rights of way in the vicinity of the site will be shown on any circulated maps. This will include Footpaths, Bridleways, Restricted Byways and Roads. Facilities and Services Plans have been prepared for the site and are included in **Appendix C**. The plans show Public Rights of Ways (PROWs) in the vicinity of the site.
20. Paragraph 10.3.1 of the above-mentioned document outlines that walking and cycling routes should follow reasonably direct and unconflicted routes to on-site and off-site destinations within a manageable walking distance (approx. 2km) and have a natural surveillance. The walking and cycling routes from the site have been identified and illustrated on the Facilities and Services Plans, included in Appendix C.
21. In accordance with Chapter 12 of NHC General Guidance on Transport in Masterplans (DRAFT, 2023) the Facilities and Services Plans also include walking isodistance for an 800m and a 1600m. Due to the size of the site, two separate plans have been prepared based on two centroids located in the most remote areas of the site; the first for the northernmost part of the site, by the school entrance and the second for the southernmost built area of the site. The 800m and a 1600m walking isodistance for Northern and Southern Centroid are shown in Figure 1 and 2 below.

KEY

-  Application Site
-  Bus Stop
-  Public Right of Way - Footpath
-  Bridleway
-  Walking route to main facilities and services
-  Cycling route to main facilities and services
-  Primary School
-  Nursery / Pre-School
-  Employment Centres
-  Community Halls
-  Pharmacy
-  GP Surgery
-  Convenience Shop
-  Cafe / Pub / Restaurant
-  Park / Outdoor space
-  Places of Worship
-  Northern Centroid
-  800m walking radius
-  1600m walking radius

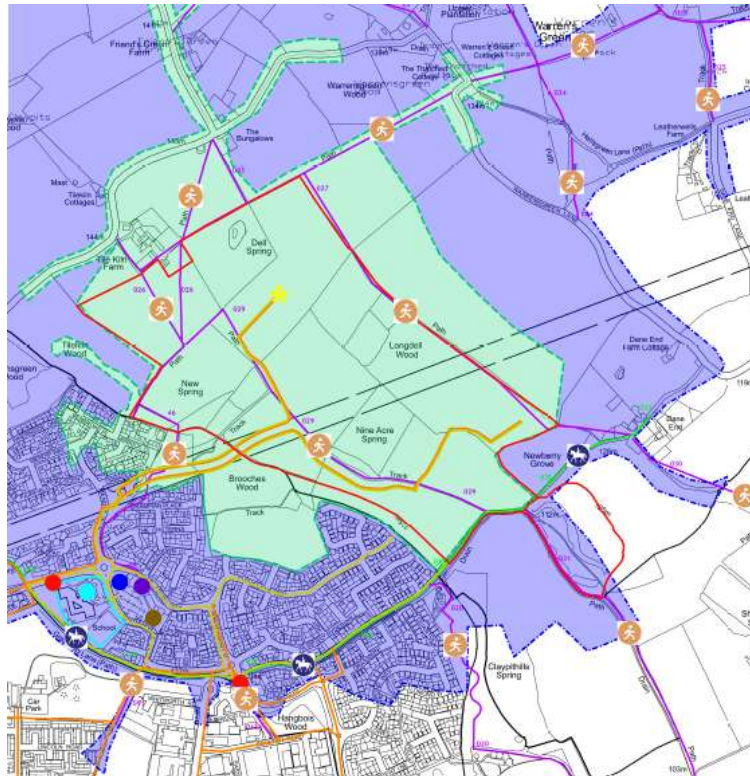


Figure 1. 800m and 1600m walking distance Northern Centroid

KEY

-  Application Site
-  Bus Stop
-  Public Right of Way - Footpath
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-  Employment Centres
-  Community Halls
-  Pharmacy
-  GP Surgery
-  Convenience Shop
-  Cafe / Pub / Restaurant
-  Park / Outdoor space
-  Places of Worship
-  Southern Centroid
-  800m walking radius
-  1600m walking radius

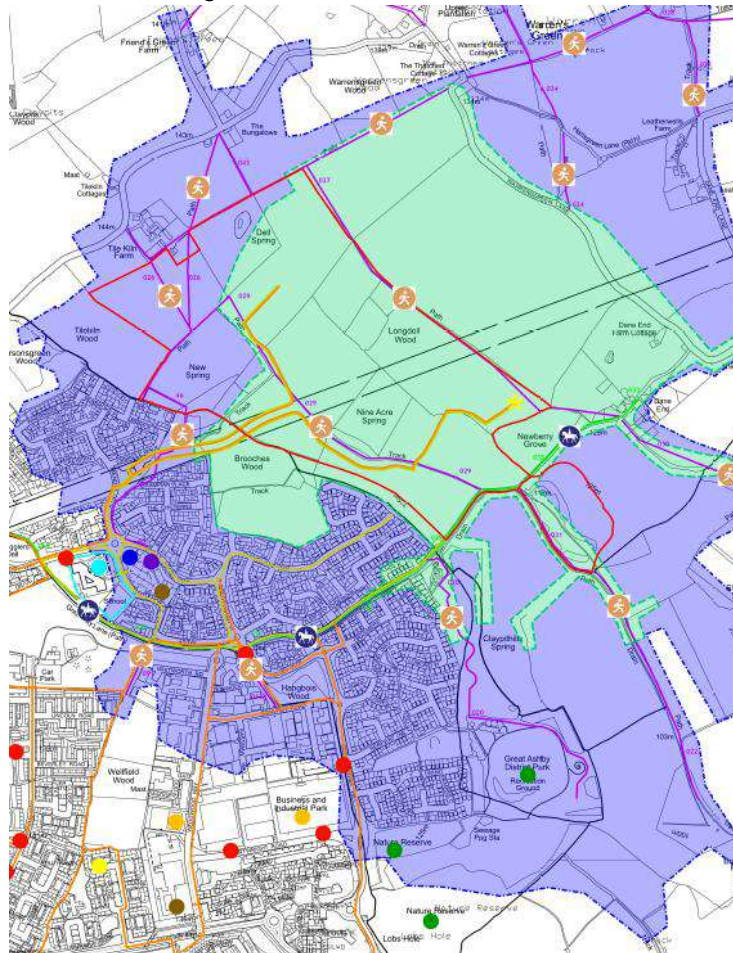


Figure 2. 800m and 1600m walking distance Southern Centroid

22. Following Paragraphs 12.5 of NHC General Guidance on Transport in Masterplans (DRAFT, 2023) the Facilities and Services Plans also include cycling isodistance for an 2km radius and a 4km cycling distance, which is estimated to take 10 and 20 minutes respectively, based on the cycling speed of 12kph. For clarity, a separate Facilities and Services Plans Cycling Isodistance drawing showing 2km and 4km cycling isodistance from the site was prepared and it is included in Figure 3 below and also in **Appendix C**. The drawing is based on the centroid located approximately 800m into the journey from either end of the site using the main site access.

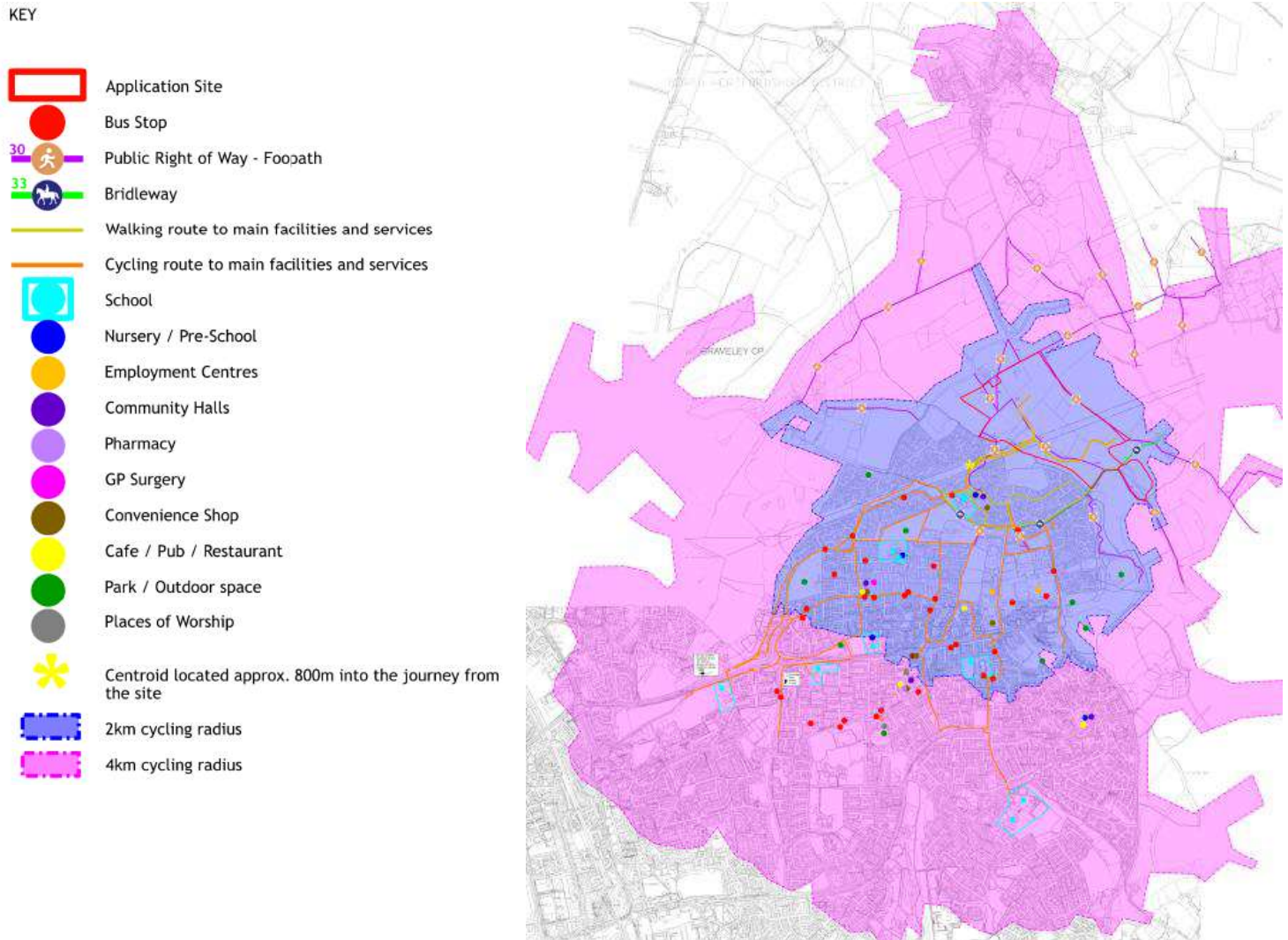


Figure 3. 2km and 4km cycling distance

23. Tables 1 and 2 below, which are also shown within the Facilities and Services Plans, include the information on the distances to the services and facilities, approximate journey times for walking and cycling using the guidance contained in Table 1 and Table 2 of NHC General Guidance on Transport in Masterplans and approximate journey times using Google Maps.

Table 1 : Distances to the services and facilities, approximate journey times for walking and cycling
Northern Centroid

Services and Facilities accessible by foot or by bicycle within the vicinity of the site.

Service		Approximate journey times using HCC Guidance						Approximate journey times using Google Maps	
Educational Facilities	Distance ¹	Walking speeds and times			Cycling speeds and times			Distance ⁴	Approximate Journey Time (using Google Maps) ⁹
		4kph / 2.5mph (mm:ss) ²	5kph / 3.1mph (mm:ss) ³	6kph / 3.7mph (mm:ss) ⁴	12kph / 7.5mph (mm:ss) ⁵	16kph / 10mph (mm:ss) ⁶	20kph / 12.4 mph (mm:ss) ⁷		
Round Diamond Primary School	1.09 km	16:35	13:34	11:30	05:45	04:09	03:27	210 m	3 minute walk / 1 minute cycle
Busy Bees at Stevenage (Nursery)	1.14 km	17:10	13:54	11:40	06:10	04:28	03:42	260 m	3 minute walk / 1 minute cycle
Martins Wood Primary School	2.78 km	42:10	33:01	28:20	14:30	10:43	08:34	1.9 km	23 minute walk / 8 minutes cycle
Trotts Hill Primary School	3.48 km	52:21	41:33	35:20	17:40	13:05	10:44	2.6 km	32 minute walk / 9 minute cycle
Almond Hill Junior School	3.58 km	54:01	41:51	35:80	18:30	13:43	11:04	2.7 km	32 minute walk / 9 minute cycle
Convenience Stores / Shops									
Budgens	1.18 km	18:10	14:01	12:20	06:30	04:43	03:54	300 m	4 minute walk / 2 minute cycle
Shell Garage	2.58 km	39:10	31:04	26:20	13:30	10:08	08:04	1.7 km	22 minute walk / 6 minute cycle
Co-Op Food	3.18 km	48:10	38:06	32:20	16:30	12:33	09:54	2.3 km	28 minute walk / 10 minute cycle
Outdoor / Leisure Spaces									
Mendip Way Playground	1.33 km	20:35	15:09	13:30	07:05	05:39	04:39	450 m	5 minute walk / 2 minute walk
North Shore Open Space Park	1.98 km	30:10	23:51	20:20	10:30	07:43	06:34	1.1 km	12 minute walk / 4 minute cycle
The Great Ashby District Park	2.68 km	40:20	32:23	27:20	13:40	10:05	08:04	1.8 km	22 minute walk / 7 minute cycle
St Martins Wood Play Area	2.88 km	43:20	34:20	29:20	14:40	11:20	09:04	2.0 km	26 minute walk / 10 minute cycle
Pryors Wood	3.08 km	46:20	36:58	31:20	15:40	11:55	09:24	2.2 km	28 minute walk / 13 minute cycle
Sishes Wood	3.48 km	52:21	41:33	35:20	17:40	13:05	10:44	2.6 km	33 minute walk / 8 minute cycle
Other Amenities									
Great Ashby Community Centre	1.16 km	17:40	14:18	12:00	06:20	04:35	03:48	300 m	4 minute walk / 2 minute cycle
Fortunes Palace Chinese Takeaway	1.16 km	17:40	14:18	12:00	06:20	04:35	03:48	300 m	4 minute walk / 2 minute cycle
Jhoo's Pharmacy	1.18 km	18:10	14:01	12:20	06:30	04:43	03:54	300 m	4 minute walk / 2 minute cycle
No Bull Fitness	2.38 km	36:10	28:26	24:20	12:30	09:33	07:14	1.5 km	18 minute walk / 5 minute cycle
Employment / Industrial Center	2.38 km	36:10	28:26	24:20	12:30	09:33	07:14	1.5 km	18 minute walk / 5 minute cycle
The Oval Cluster of amenities (including: All Saints Church, The Times Club (Sports Club), Stevenage Family Butchers, St Nicholas & Martins Wood Center, The Oval Wines Off License, The Oval Alpha Pharmacy, Recycling Bank)	3.18 km	48:10	38:06	32:20	16:30	12:33	09:54	2.3 km	28 minute walk / 10 minute cycle
Stevenage Lytton Players Theatre	3.18 km	48:10	38:06	32:20	16:30	12:33	09:54	2.3 km	28 minute walk / 10 minute cycle
SMCC Mosque	3.18 km	48:10	38:06	32:20	16:30	12:33	09:54	2.3 km	28 minute walk / 10 minute cycle

- ¹ Walking and cycling distances noted have been measured from the approximate position of the furthest dwelling from the proposed site access on Mendip Way
- ² Average walking times noted are based on an average walking speed of 4kph / 2.5mph as stated in the North Herts Council General Guidance on transport in masterplans (2023)
- ³ Average walking times noted are based on an average walking speed of 5kph / 3.1mph as stated in the North Herts Council General Guidance on transport in masterplans (2023)
- ⁴ Average walking times noted are based on an average walking speed of 6kph / 3.7mph as stated in the North Herts Council General Guidance on transport in masterplans (2023)
- ⁵ Average cycling times noted are based on an average walking speed of 12 kph / 7.5 mph as stated in the North Herts Council General Guidance on transport in masterplans (2023)
- ⁶ Average cycling times noted are based on an average walking speed of 16 kph / 10 mph as stated in the North Herts Council General Guidance on transport in masterplans (2023)
- ⁷ Average cycling times noted are based on an average walking speed of 20 kph / 12.4 mph as stated in the North Herts Council General Guidance on transport in masterplans (2023)
- ⁸ Walking and cycling distances noted have been measured from the approximate position of proposed site access on Mendip Way
- ⁹ Walking and cycling times noted have been measured approximately using Google Maps data

Table 2 : Distances to the services and facilities, approximate journey times for walking and cycling
Southern Centroid

Services and Facilities accessible by foot or by bicycle within the vicinity of the site.

Service		Approximate journey times using HCC Guidance						Approximate journey times using Google Maps	
Educational Facilities	Distance ¹	Walking speeds and times			Cycling speeds and times			Distance ⁴	Approximate Journey Time (using Google Maps) ⁹
		4kph / 2.5mph (mm:ss) ²	5kph / 3.1mph (mm:ss) ³	6kph / 3.7mph (mm:ss) ⁴	12kph / 7.5mph (mm:ss) ⁵	16kph / 10mph (mm:ss) ⁶	20kph / 12.4 mph (mm:ss) ⁷		
Round Diamond Primary School	1.37 km	21:05	16:33	14:15	7:28	5:16	4:13	210 m	3 minute walk / 1 minute cycle
Busy Bees at Stevenage (Nursery)	1.43 km	21:40	17:32	14:25	7:13	5:34	4:28	260 m	3 minute walk / 1 minute cycle
Martins Wood Primary School	3.06 km	46:02	36:40	31:05	15:33	11:49	9:20	1.9 km	23 minute walk / 8 minutes cycle
Trotts Hill Primary School	3.77 km	56:53	45:17	38:05	19:23	14:12	11:30	2.6 km	32 minute walk / 9 minute cycle
Almond Hill Junior School	3.87 km	58:03	46:30	39:05	19:33	14:49	12:00	2.7 km	32 minute walk / 9 minute cycle
Convenience Stores / Shops									
Budgens	1.47 km	22:00	17:40	15:05	7:33	5:49	4:40	300 m	4 minute walk / 2 minute cycle
Shell Garage	2.87 km	43:02	34:02	29:05	14:33	11:14	9:00	1.7 km	22 minute walk / 6 minute cycle
Co-Op Food	3.45 km	52:03	41:15	35:05	17:33	13:39	10:40	2.3 km	28 minute walk / 10 minute cycle
Outdoor / Leisure Spaces									
Mendip Way Playground	1.62 km	34:25	19:18	16:15	8:08	6:06	5:25	450 m	5 minute walk / 2 minute walk
North Shore Open Space Park	2.27 km	34:01	27:30	30:05	11:33	8:49	7:20	1.1 km	12 minute walk / 4 minute cycle
The Great Ashby District Park	2.97 km	44:52	35:21	34:05	15:23	11:12	9:30	1.8 km	22 minute walk / 7 minute cycle
St Martins Wood Play Area	3.17 km	47:52	37:58	38:05	16:23	12:27	10:20	2.0 km	26 minute walk / 10 minute cycle
Pryors Wood	3.37 km	50:53	40:36	32:05	17:23	13:12	10:10	2.2 km	28 minute walk / 13 minute cycle
Sishes Wood	3.77 km	56:53	45:11	38:05	19:23	14:12	11:30	2.6 km	33 minute walk / 8 minute cycle
Other Amenities									
Great Ashby Community Centre	1.45 km	22:10	17:16	14:45	7:23	5:42	4:32	300 m	4 minute walk / 2 minute cycle
Fortunes Palace Chinese Takeaway	1.45 km	22:10	17:16	14:45	7:23	5:42	4:32	300 m	4 minute walk / 2 minute cycle
Jhoo's Pharmacy	1.47 km	22:00	17:40	15:05	7:33	5:49	4:40	300 m	4 minute walk / 2 minute cycle
No Bull Fitness	2.67 km	40:02	32:05	27:05	13:33	10:39	8:00	1.5 km	18 minute walk / 5 minute cycle
Employment / Industrial Center	2.67 km	40:02	32:05	27:05	13:33	10:39	8:00	1.5 km	18 minute walk / 5 minute cycle
The Oval Cluster of amenities (including: All Saints Church, The Times Club (Sports Club), Stevenage Family Butchers, St Nicholas & Martins Wood Center, The Oval Wines Off License, The Oval Alpha Pharmacy, Recycling Bank)	3.47 km	52:03	41:15	35:05	17:33	13:39	10:40	2.3 km	28 minute walk / 10 minute cycle
Stevenage Lytton Players Theatre	3.47 km	52:03	41:15	35:05	17:33	13:39	10:40	2.3 km	28 minute walk / 10 minute cycle
SMCC Mosque	3.47 km	52:03	41:15	35:05	17:33	13:39	10:40	2.3 km	28 minute walk / 10 minute cycle

- ¹ Walking and cycling distances noted have been measured from the approximate position of the furthest dwelling from the proposed site access on Mendip Way to the south of the site
- ² Average walking times noted are based on an average walking speed of 4kph / 2.5mph as stated in the North Herts Council General Guidance on transport in masterplans (2023)
- ³ Average walking times noted are based on an average walking speed of 5kph / 3.1mph as stated in the North Herts Council General Guidance on transport in masterplans (2023)
- ⁴ Average walking times noted are based on an average walking speed of 6kph / 3.7mph as stated in the North Herts Council General Guidance on transport in masterplans (2023)
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- ⁷ Average cycling times noted are based on an average walking speed of 20 kph / 12.4 mph as stated in the North Herts Council General Guidance on transport in masterplans (2023)
- ⁸ Walking and cycling distances noted have been measured from the approximate position of proposed site access on Mendip Way
- ⁹ Walking and cycling times noted have been measured approximately using Google Maps data

24. Existing Bus Routes and services have also been identified in accordance with paragraph 10.4.1 and are presented on the Bus Routes and Services Plans, which are included in Figure 4 below and in Appendix D.

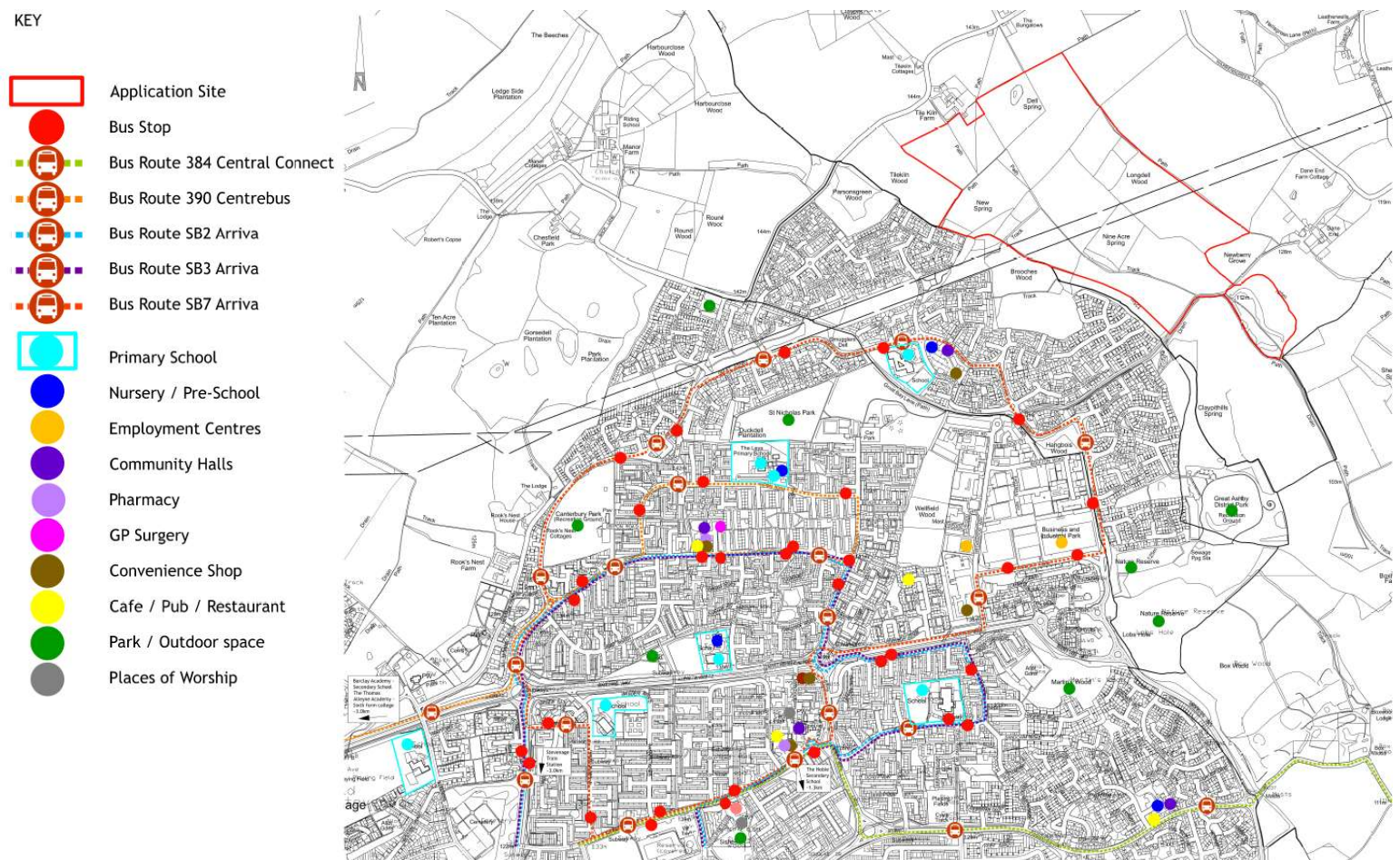


Figure 4. Bus Routes and Services Plan

Key Destinations

25. Careful consideration to the key destinations within the vicinity of the site was given, focusing on the opportunities that exist for sustainable travel by walking, cycling and public transport.
26. Key Destinations for the site have been identified in accordance with paragraph 23.1 of Appendix A to the North Herts Council General Guidance on Transport in Masterplans (DRAFT, 2023) and they are presented on the Facilities and Services Plans included in Appendix C.
27. The destinations included in the Facilities and Services Plans include the following;

Educational Facilities

- Round Diamond Primary School
- Busy Bees at Stevenage (Nursery)
- Martins Wood Primary
- Trotts Hill Primary School
- Almond Hill Junior School

Convenience Stores / Shops

- Budgens
- Shell Garage
- Co-Op Food

Outdoor / Leisure Spaces

- Mendip Way Playground
- North Shore Open Space Park
- The Great Ashby District Park
- St Martins Wood Play Area
- Pryors Wood
- Sishes Wood

Other Amenities

- Great Ashby Community Centre
- Fortunes Palace Chinese takeaway
- Jhoots Pharmacy
- No Bull Fitness
- Employment / Industrial Centre
- The oval cluster of amenities (including; All Saints Church, The Times Club (Sports Club), Stevenage Family Butchers, St Nicholas & Martins Wood Centre, The Oval Wines Off License, The Oval Alphega Pharmacy, Recycling Bank) oval cluster of amenities (including; All Saints Church, The Times Club (Sports Club), Stevenage Family Butchers, St Nicholas & Martins Wood Centre, The Oval Wines Off License, The Oval Alphega Pharmacy, Recycling Bank)
- The Neighbourhood Centre, Whitehorse Lane (Including; Blade Barbers, Great Ashby Vets)
- Canterbury Way cluster of amenities (including; St Nicholas Community Centre, St Nicholas Pharmacy, Saint Nicholas Pub, Canterbury Way Surgery, Martins Convenience shop)

Accessibility Audit Scope

28. The walking and cycling routes from the site have been identified and illustrated on the Facilities and Services Plans. Based on those routes and key destinations in the vicinity of the site the primary routes have been selected and those routes are shown in the Figure 5 below and also included within **Appendix E**. These routes will be analysed in greater detail in further sections of this document.

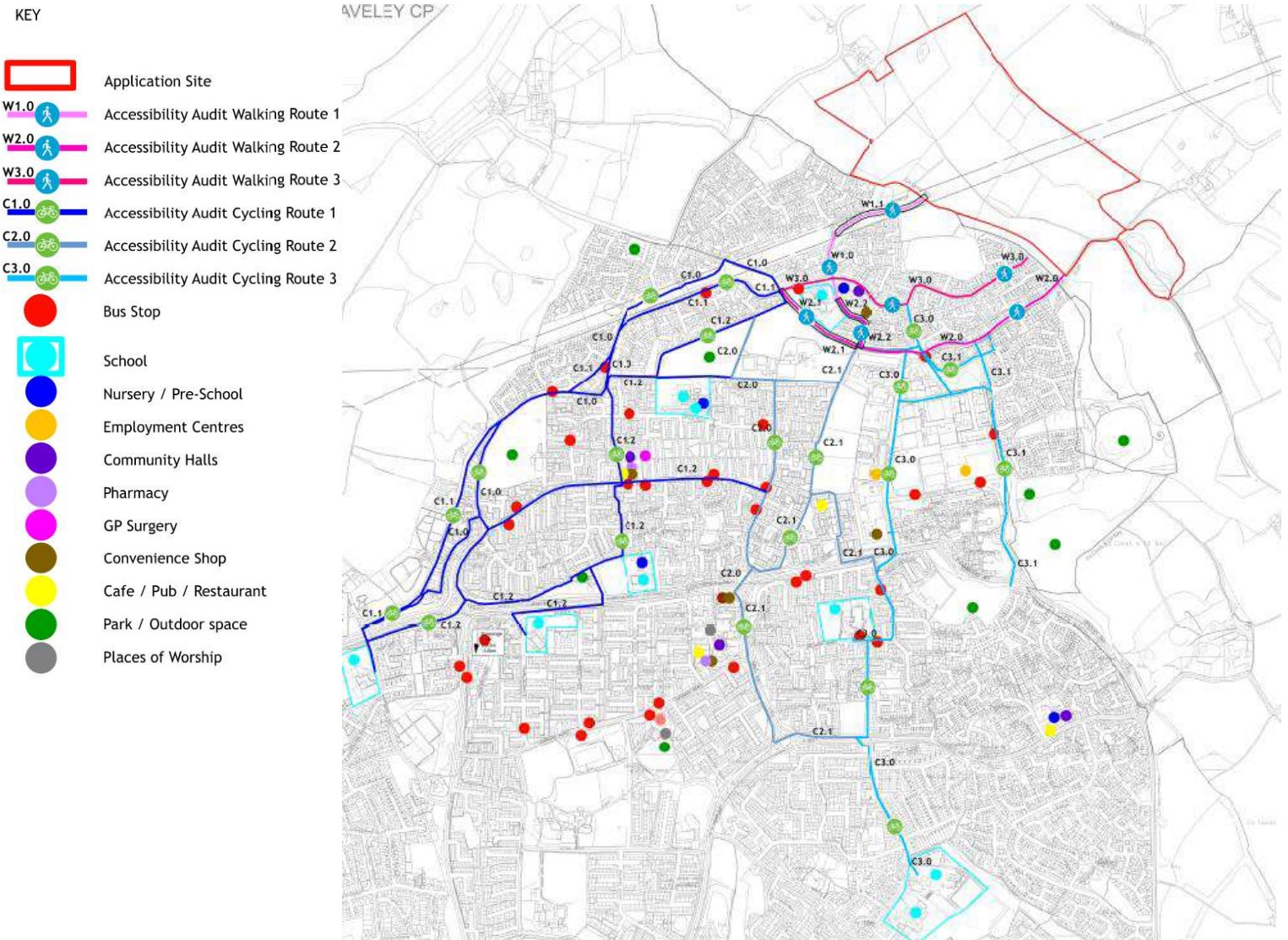


Figure 5. Accessibility Audit Scope

Walking

29. Walking is widely considered to be the most important mode of travel at the local level. Walking is a wholly sustainable mode of travel and an excellent way of keeping fit, which should therefore be heavily encouraged. To maximise trips by sustainable modes, walking will be fully promoted.
30. Within the vicinity of the site, cars, cyclists and pedestrians are generally able to follow the same routes, which are easily navigable towards the centre of the town. This feature is of great benefit to pedestrians who benefit from the legible design of roads within an area. Additionally, routes through existing residential areas are overlooked by residential dwellings, which allows pedestrians to feel safer along their route. This is in line with the recommendations detailed within Manual for Streets, and it is proposed that these principles will be continued within the site.
31. The existing pedestrian infrastructure on Mendip Way to the west of the site extends northwards to Woodfield and South to Pin Green and St Nicholas. The pedestrian infrastructure from the site access provides access to several key amenities including a convenience store, park, primary school, community centre and a Chinese takeaway.

32. Based on the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) publication 'Providing Journeys on Foot' and Paragraph 4.4.1 of MfS; the preferred maximum walking distance for the purposes of commuting / school journeys / sight-seeing is considered to be 2km. It can be appreciated that the entirety of Great Ashby in addition to Martins Wood, Woodfield, St Nicholas and Pin Green are accessible within 2km of the site. A list of destinations considered to be accessible within 2km of the site access off Mendip Way, together with the corresponding journey distances and times are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Destinations Accessible within 2km Walk from the site access off Mendip Way.

Destinations	Journey Distance and Time
Round Diamond Primary School, Busy Bees at Stevenage (Nursery), Budgens, Mendip Way Playground, Great Ashby Community Centre, Fortunes Palace Chinese Takeaway, Jhoots Pharmacy	800m
North Shore Open Space Park, No Bull Fitness, Employment / Industrial Centre	1600m
Martins Wood Primary School, Shell Garage, The Great Ashby District Park, St Martins Wood Play Area	Up to 2km Accessible within 25 mins

33. Several Public Rights of Way bound and / or run through the site. These are shown on Figure 6 below and are outlined below:

- Bridleway Weston 033 which runs south-west to north-east along the south-eastern boundary of the site. This provides an east to west connection from Dane End Farm, through the site and Great Ashby passing close to the District Centre, St Nicholas Park and the Pin Green employment area. This is a key connecting corridor and, in conjunction with the development of site GA1, provides the opportunity to continuously link from the Hertfordshire Way and Back Lane to Warrens Green Lane.
- Footpath Weston 029 which runs north-west to south-east through the south-western half of the site connecting Tile Kiln Farm to Bridleway Weston 033 (above) and linking to Footpath Weston 031 / Walkern 022 which provides an onward connection to the Beane Valley east of Stevenage.
- Footpath Weston 044 which delineates the north-eastern boundary of GA2.
- Footpath Weston 027 which delineates the north-western boundary of GA2 linking Back Lane and Tile Kiln Farm to Warrens Green Lane
- Footpath Great Ashby 011 which connects from Great Ashby District Centre across the pylon / proposed access corridor to the south-western edge of the site.
- Footpath Weston 026 connecting from Merrick Close along the eastern edge of Tile Kiln Wood, traversing the northern end of GA2 to the junction of Back Lane and Warrens Green Lane

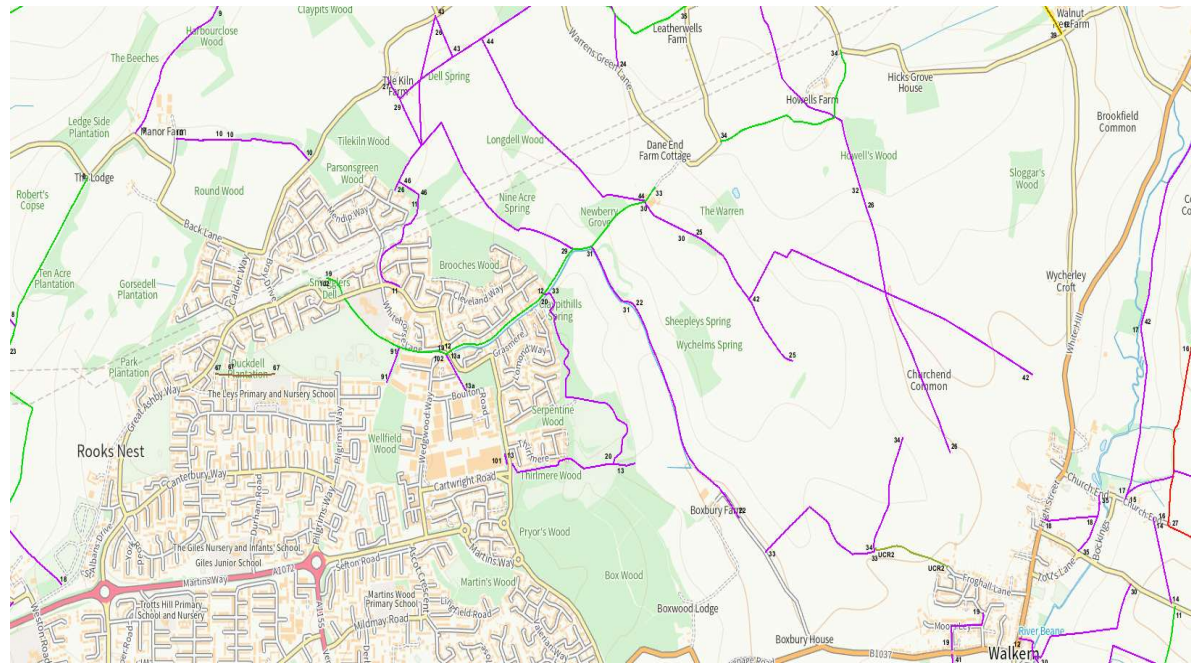


Figure 6: Extract of Hertfordshire's PRoW Map

34. It should be noted that Public Bridleway Weston 029 / 033 is to be retained within the site as part of the development proposals.
35. As noted in North Hertfordshire District Council's (NHDC's) Local Plan Policy SP6 'Sustainable Transport', development proposals will comply with the NHDC Transport Strategy, and the provisions of the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) and the developer will work with the HCC to ensure a range of suitable transport options are available. Existing footpaths and PRoW's will be retained and pedestrian infrastructure within the development will be arranged to tie into existing provisions.
36. As shown on the Proposed Site Layout included within Appendix B, cycle and pedestrian links are also provided into Merrick Close, Back Lande and Warrensgreen Lane.

Walking Route Audit Tool (WRAT)

37. The key walking routes from the site that have been identified above have been audited using the Walking Route Audit Tool (WRAT). These routes are shown in pink shades on the Figure 5: Accessibility Audit Scope drawing, also included in **Appendix E**. Three main routes have been identified:
 - Route 1 - Main site access off Mendip Way to Round Diamond School and cluster of facilities including among others Busy Bees Nursery school, Great Ashby Community Centre and Budgens supermarket
 - Route 2 - Bridleway site access via Fairfield Way Bus Stop, Round Diamond School and cluster of facilities; to equestrian crossing on Great Ashby Way
 - Route 3 - Cleveland Way access via Fairfield Way Bus Stop, Round Diamond School and cluster of facilities; to equestrian crossing on Great Ashby Way

38. All the above-mentioned routes have been audited using the WRAT tool, Routes 1 and 2 described were further divided into smaller sections Route 1.0 and 1.1 and Route 2.0, 2.1 and 2.2, to better represent the existing conditions and to understand where the improvements are needed the most.
39. The results of the WRAT are presented in the Table 4 below and on the Accessibility Audit Walking Routes (WRAT) Score drawing, which is included in Figure 7 below and also in **Appendix F**.

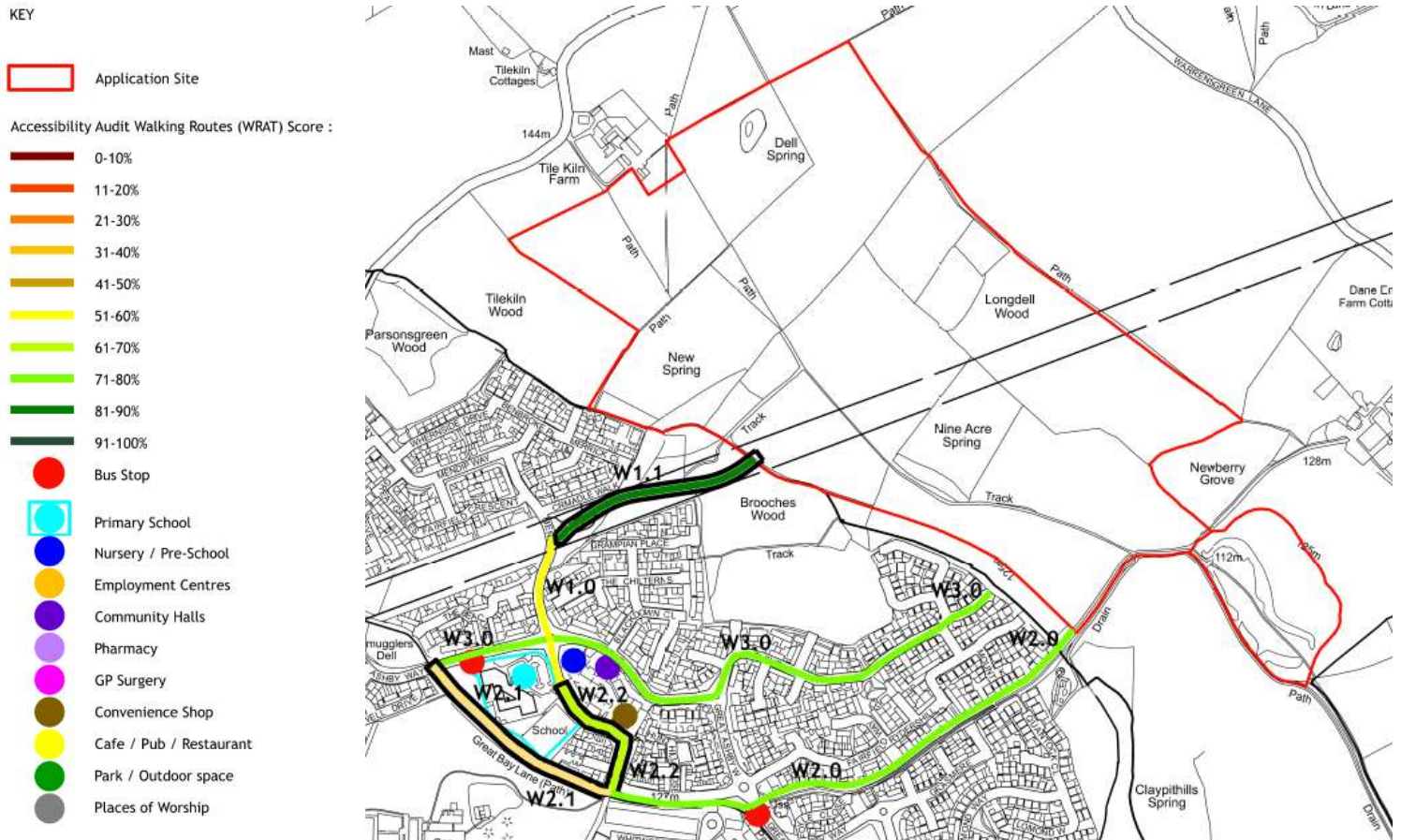


Figure 7: Accessibility Audit Walking Routes (WRAT) Score drawing

40. According to the WRAT guidance, a score of 70% should normally be regarded as a minimum level provision overall. Routes which score less than this and factors which are scored as zero should be used to identify where improvements are required. From the results it can be appreciated that possible improvements are likely to be required, to make the routes that have scored below 70%, more attractive for pedestrians.

Table 4: Accessibility Audit Walking Routes

Route Number	Distance	Key destinations	WRAT Score and %	Possible Improvement Options
Route 1.0	350m	Round Diamond School; cluster of facilities including among others Busy Bees Nursery school, Great Ashby Community Centre and Budgens supermarket	24/40 60.0%	• Upgrade existing crossings at Mendip Way/Great Ashby roundabout to zebra crossing • Widening of footway along Mendip Way • Provide the shelter for the existing cycle stands near the Budgens supermarket • Remove the overgrown vegetation along eastern footway on Mendip Way • Replace the existing coloured carriageway surfacing and road markings near the pedestrian crossing by Round Diamond School • Replace the surfacing where required
Route 1.1	600m	Mendip Way	36/40 90.0%	• This non existing route has been audited as it is proposed to be constructed, in accordance with the HCC standards
Route 2.0	800m	The Fairfield Way Bus Stop, St Nicolas Park	29/40 72.5%	• Lighting improvements near the Fairfield Way bus stop • Provide raised kerb for the bus stop • Consider providing benches along the route • Consider providing more signage for the existing Bridleway • Provide / Replace the surfacing where required
Route 2.1	350m	St Nicolas Park, Equestrian crossing on Great Ashby Way	19/40 47.5%	• Widening of footway could be provided along the back of St Nicolas Park • Remove the overgrown vegetation along St Nicolas Park route • Lighting improvements along St Nicolas Park • Provide / Replace the surfacing where required
Route 2.2	250m	Round Diamond School and cluster of facilities including among others Busy Bees Nursery school, Great Ashby Community Centre and Budgens supermarket	25/40 62.5%	• Consider providing more signage for the existing Bridgeway and other public rights of way
Route 3.0	1000m	The Beacons Bus Stop, Round Diamond School and cluster of facilities (as above); equestrian crossing on Great Ashby Way	31/40 77.5%	• Remove the overgrown vegetation where required • Provide / Replace the surfacing where required

41. The results of audit show that three out of six walking routes around the site have scored 70% or above. The highest score of 90% was calculated for Route 1.1, followed by Route 3.0, which scored 77.5%. The next two highest scoring routes were Route 2.0 and 2.2, which scored 72.5% and 62.5% respectively. The lowest score was calculated for Route 2.1, which only scored 47.5%, followed by Route 1.0, which scored 60%.
42. The findings of the WRAT audit tool analysis show, that the primary focus on the improvements should be given to Route 2, which is the PROW Bridleway. The possible route improvements are presented in Table 4 below. This could include, but it is not limited to resurfacing and widening of the route along all its length to 3.0m wide, improving the street lighting particularly in the areas of St Nicolas Park and near the Fairfield Way bus stop and removing the overgrown vegetation. The raised kerb for the Fairfield Way bus stop could also be provided.
43. The findings of the WRAT audit tool analysis also show, that improvements are required for Route 1.0, which is a route from the main site access on Mendip Way to Round Diamond School and nearest supermarket.
44. The possible route improvements to Route 1.0 are also presented in Table 4 below. This could include, but it is not limited to resurfacing and widening of the route along all its length on eastern side, removing the overgrown vegetation and replacing the surfacing where required. The existing coloured carriageway surfacing and road markings near the pedestrian crossing by Round Diamond School and the dropped kerb paving on Mendip Way arm could also be replaced.
45. The proposed improvements are illustrated on the Accessibility Audit Walking Routes Possible Improvements drawing, which is included in Figure 8 below and also in **Appendix F**.
46. Following the above findings, the proposed improvements were further categorised by their priority - prioritised improvements and optional non-essential improvements to be considered, this information is presented in Table 5. The ownership information is provided next to each of the proposed improvements.
47. The cost estimates were also obtained for the proposed works. The total cost of providing improvements to all walking routes is approx. £71,148.
48. Further details including the ownership land search, the budget cost estimate and photographs showing exact location of the proposed improvements are presented in Accessibility Audit Walking and Cycling Routes Summary document, included in **Appendix F**.

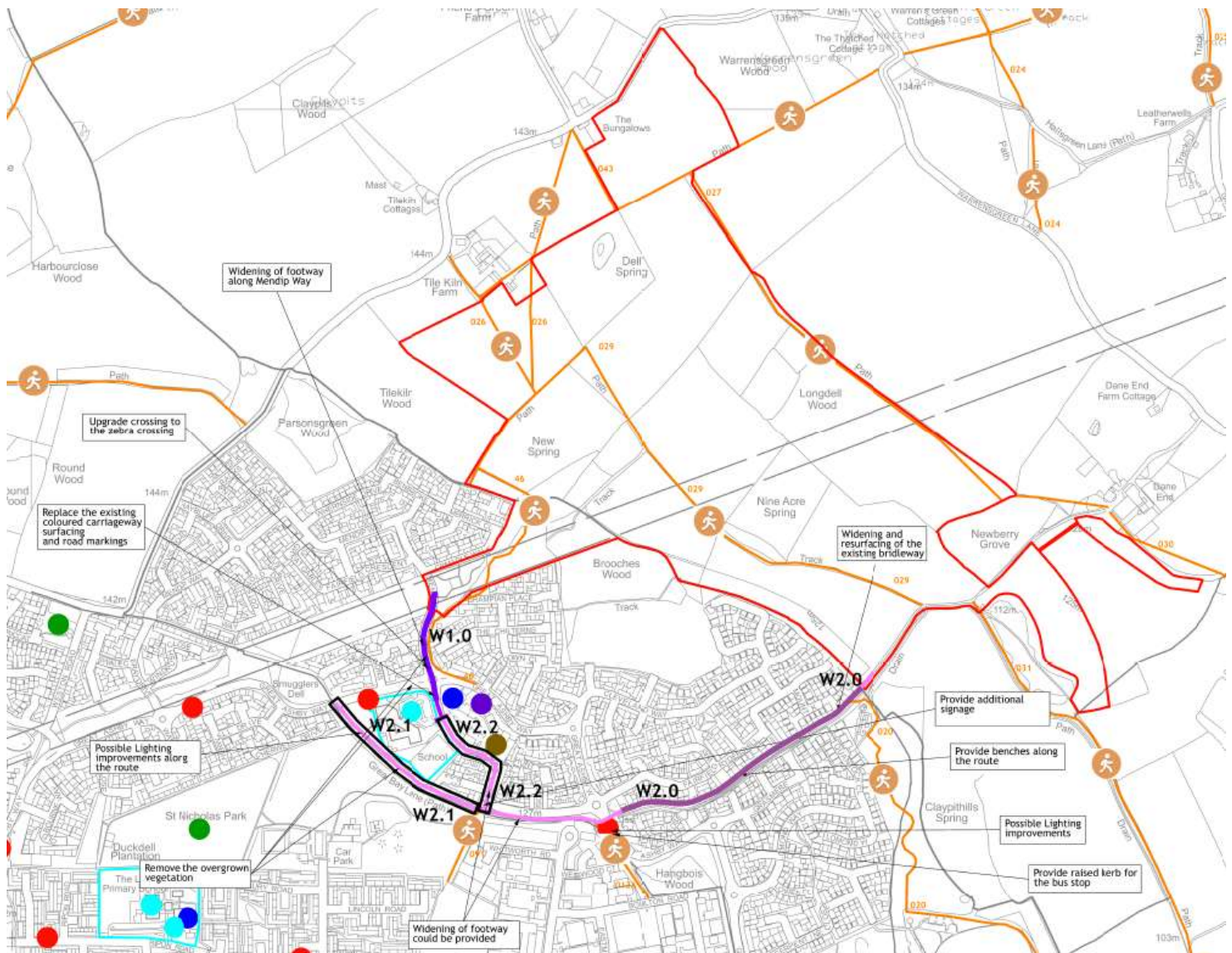


Figure 8. Accessibility Audit Walking Routes Possible Improvements

Table 5: Accessibility Audit Walking Routes Categorised Improvements

Location	Prioritised Improvements	Options for non-essential improvements to be considered	Ownership
Walking Route 1.0	Upgrade existing crossing at Mendip Way/Great Ashby roundabout to zebra crossing on Great Ashby East arm (existing two-stage crossing is 1.8m wide; 6.2m and 5.8m long with 3.5m wide island between); Whitehorse Lane arm (existing two-stage crossing is 1.8m wide; 5.1m and 5.4m long with 2.4m wide island between) and Mendip Way arm (existing two-stage crossing is 1.8m wide; 5.0m and 5.5m long with 2.3m wide island between) - <i>see Photo 1, 2 & 3</i>	- Provide shelter (approx. Length 5.0 x Width 2.0 x Height 2.0m) for the existing cycle stands near the Budgens supermarket located at The Neighbourhood Centre, Whitehorse Lane - <i>see Photo 4</i> - Remove the overgrown vegetation along eastern footway on Mendip Way; - Replace the existing coloured carriageway surfacing and road markings near the pedestrian crossing by Round Diamond School;	Hertfordshire County Council adopted highway land (Crossing at Mendip Way) Private Land (Shelter)
Walking Route 2.0	- Provide raised kerb for the Fairfield Way bus stop, which is approx. 4.0m long, raised kerb height to be 100mm-140mm - <i>see Photo 5</i> <i>See Bridleway Improvements</i>	- Additional 1x lamp post at the Fairfield Way bus stop - <i>see Photo 5</i>; - Consider providing 2-3 benches along the route, which is approx. 775m long;	Hertfordshire County Council adopted highway land (Bus Stop) Hertfordshire County Council adopted highway land / CCB (Stevenage) Limited (Bus Stop and Bridleway Section from the site up to Fairfield Way Bus Stop)
Walking Route 2.1	_____	<i>See Bridleway Improvements</i>	_____
Walking Route 2.2	Consider providing a signage post for the existing Bridgeway near 36 Whitehorse Lane - <i>see Photo 6</i>	_____	Hertfordshire County Council adopted highway land
Walking Route 3.0	_____	- Replace the surfacing where required along Great Ashby Way between Mendip Way/Great Ashby Way roundabout and St Nicolas Park (to be provided by GA1) - Remove the overgrown vegetation where required	_____

49. Based on the information collected to date all prioritised improvements to walking routes fall within adopted highway boundaries.
50. Based on the information contained above, it can be appreciated what possible improvements are likely to make the walking routes more sustainable and attractive for pedestrians and other users.

Cycling

51. Cycling is second only to walking in terms of sustainability and is similarly an excellent way of keeping fit. It is widely recognised that cycling has the potential to substitute for short car trips, particularly those of less than 5km. It can be appreciated that the entirety of Great Ashby, in addition to Stevenage, Shephall, Broadwater, Little Wymondley, Gravely and Walkern are accessible within a 25 minute cycle of the site access.
52. Cycling is well suited to form part of a multi-modal journey made by public transport. Therefore, it is important to note that Stevenage Train Station, which is situated approximately 5km (24 minute cycle) to the west of the site provides 266 secure cycle storage spaces.
53. National Cycle Route 12 is the closest formal national cycleway to the site. At its closest point National Cycle Route 12 can be accessed in the Western extents of Stevenage near Stevenage Train Station, approximately 5km (a 23 minute cycle) of the site. National Cycle Route 12 runs in sections from Enfield Lock in north London to Spalding via Stevenage, St Neots and Peterborough. More locally, National Cycle Route 12 enables access to Potters Bar, Biggleswade, Baldock and Stotfold.
54. As previously noted, the North Hertfordshire District Council General Guidance on Masterplans (DRAFT, March 2023), suggests a range of recommended cycling times depending on a range of average cycling speeds. For clarity, a separate Facilities and Services Plans Cycling Isodistance drawing showing 2km and 4km cycling isodistance from the site was prepared and it is included in Figure 3 below and also in **Appendix C**. The drawing is based on the centroid located approximately 800m into the journey from either end of the site using the main site access.
55. A list of destinations considered to be accessible within a 25-minute cycling journey from the development site, together with the corresponding journey distances and times are shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Destinations Accessible within 2, 4 & 8km distance from the proposed site access off Mendip Way

Destinations	Journey Distance and Time
Round Diamond Primary School, Busy Bees at Stevenage (Nursery), Budgens, Mendip Way Playground, Great Ashby Community Centre, Fortunes Palace Chinese Takeaway, Jhoots Pharmacy, North Shore Open Space Park, No Bull Fitness, Employment / Industrial Centre, Martins Wood Primary School, Shell Garage, The Great Ashby District Park, St Martins Wood Play Area.	Up to 2km
Trotts Hill Primary School, Co-Op Food, Pryors Wood, The Oval cluster of amenities (including; All Saints Church, The Times Club (Sports Club), Stevenage Family Butchers, St Nicholas & Martins Wood Centre, The Oval Wines Off License, The Oval Alphega Pharmacy, Recycling Bank), Stevenage Lytton Players Theatre, SMCC Mosque, The Thomas Alleye Academy (Sixth Form), Millie Spinny Park & Playground, Bury Mead, Barclay Academy (Secondary School), Almond Spring Woods, The Almond Tree Pub, Lonsdale Express Convenience Store, Hampson Park & Skatepark, Moss Bury Primary School and Nursery, Best One Convenience Store, Domino's Pizza, Lodge Farm Primary School.	Up to 4km
Tiny Toes Day Nursery, Shells Scout Hut, Swan Gymnastic Academy, Chells Café, Camps Hill Primary School, The Glebe Parade of shops (Including; Tesco Express, Walton Lodge Veterinary Group, Gangnam Korean Restaurant, St Hugh and St John's Church, Stevenage Halal Meats & Groceries Butchers, Golden Fry Fish & Chips, Nisa Local, Gate of India Indian Restaurant, Stevenage Cycles Bike Shop), Emperors Gate Parade of Shops (Including; Emperors Head Pub, Hasan Balti Indian Takeaway, Chells Manor Community Centre, Stevenage Pharmacy), Stevenage town centre (including; Stevenage train station, various shops, pubs, bars, restaurants, banks, hairdressers, opticians, a bus station and various supermarkets).	Up to 8km

Cycling Level of Service Tool and Junction Assessment Tool (LTN 1/20)

56. The key cycling routes from the site that have been identified and audited using the Cycling Level of Service Tool and Junction Assessment Tool are provided in LTN 1/20 Appendix A and B. These routes are shown in blue shades on the Figure 6: Accessibility Audit Scope drawing, also included in Appendix E. Three main routes have been identified:
- Route 1 - Site access to The Leys Primary and Nursery School, Giles Junior Sand Nursery and Infants' School, Trotts Hill School and Almond Hill Junior School
 - Route 2 - Site access to The Oval Community Centre, Co-op Food - Stevenage - The Oval, Shell Petrol Station, Martins Wood Primary School and The Noble School Secondary School
 - Route 3 - Site access to Employment Area, Martins Wood Primary School and The Noble School Secondary School
57. It should be noted that Route 1 follows the Great Ashby to Stevenage Central/Gunnels Wood (Route 2 indicated in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2019), except for the final non-existing connection between Great Ashby Way and Mendip Way. It was identified that at present a triangular shaped attenuation basin associated with the existing residential development is located underneath the electric pylons, at the location of the proposed link, therefore this non existing section was excluded from the audit.
58. All the above-mentioned routes have been audited using the Cycling Level of Service Tool and the Junction Assessment Tool provided in LTN 1/20 Appendix A and B and they are also included in Appendix G. These three main routes described above were further divided into the separate routes, to better represent the existing conditions and to understand where the improvements are needed.
59. The results of Cycling Level of Service Tool are presented in Table 7 below and on the Accessibility Audit Cycling Routes (LTN 1/20) Score drawing, which is included in Figure 9 below and also included in Appendix G.

KEY

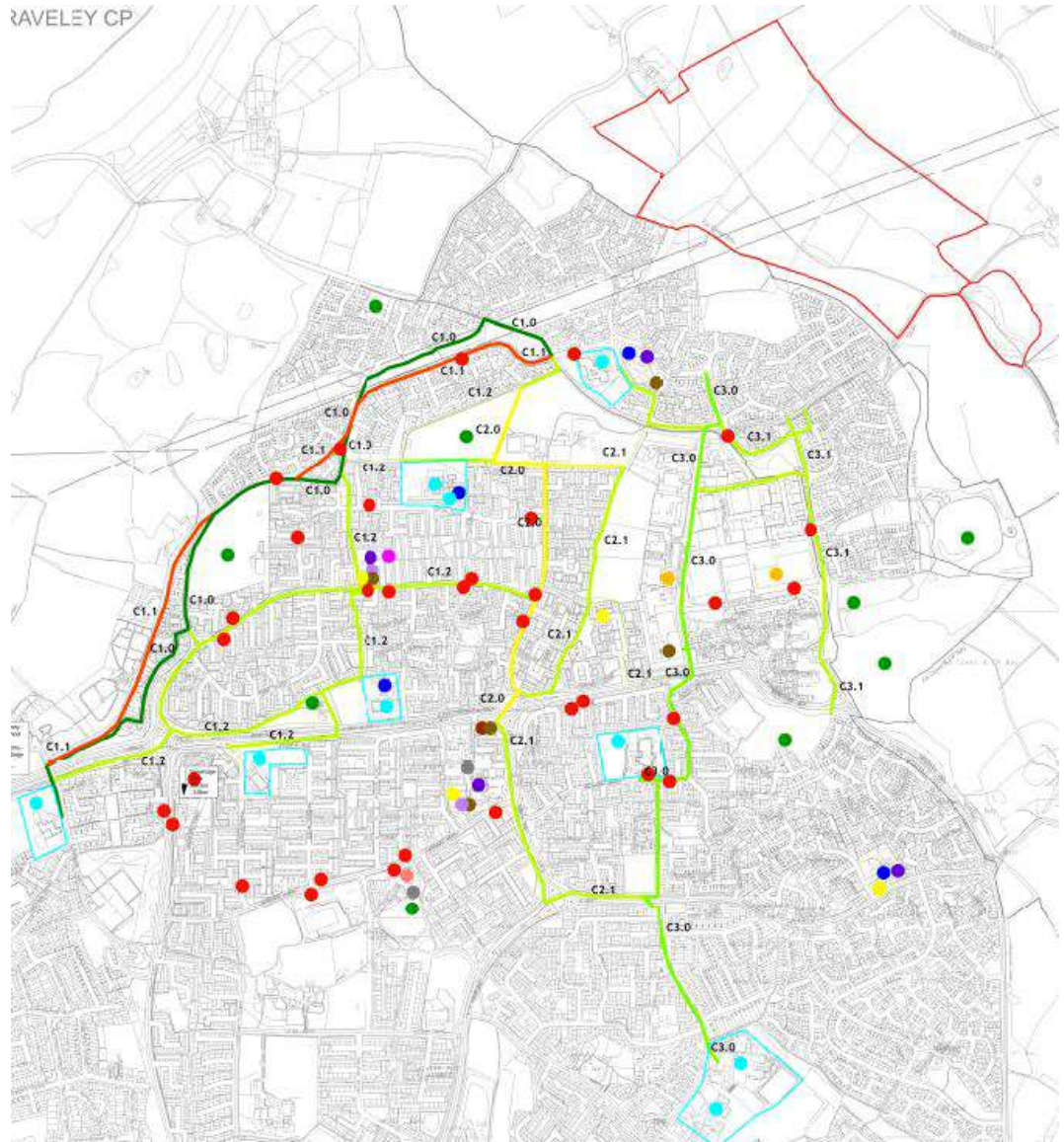
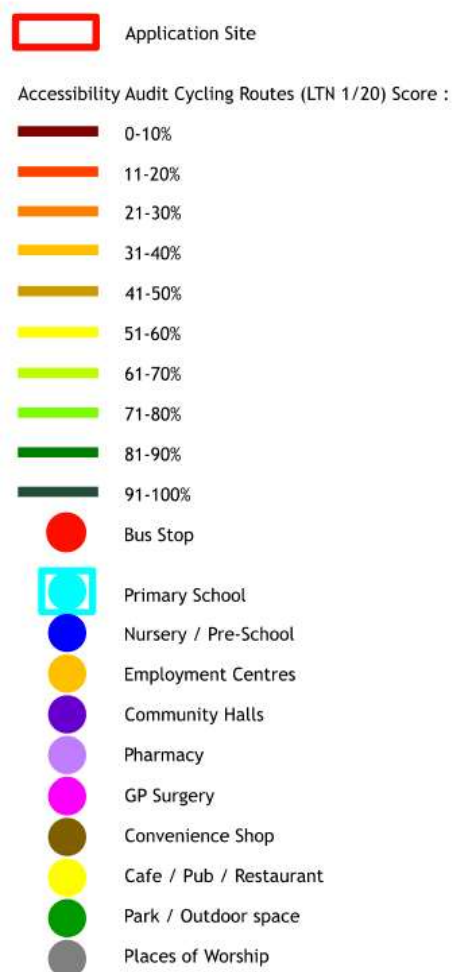


Figure 9: Accessibility Audit Cycling Routes (WRAT) Score drawing