

2.0 Existing Site & Context

2.11 Accessibility

The application site is easily accessible on the outskirts of Hitchin. The site is connected to central Hitchin 1.8km to the north by the B656 London Road.

The nearest bus stop is situated 350m north of the site on London Road providing services to Hitchin, St Ippolyts, St Albans, Codicote and Welwyn Garden City.

Hitchin Railway Station is 3km from the site and has direct services to London Kings Cross, Cambridge and Peterborough.

The A1(M) is 5km by car to the east of the site with connections to Stevenage (7.5 km), Welwyn (17.5km) and the M25 junction 23 (34km) to the south and Baldock (12km) and Royston (25km) to the north and east.

The second and third phase of the development will be accessed through the approved first phase of the development for all modes of travel



Accessibility plan

2.0 Existing Site & Context

2.12 Local Facilities

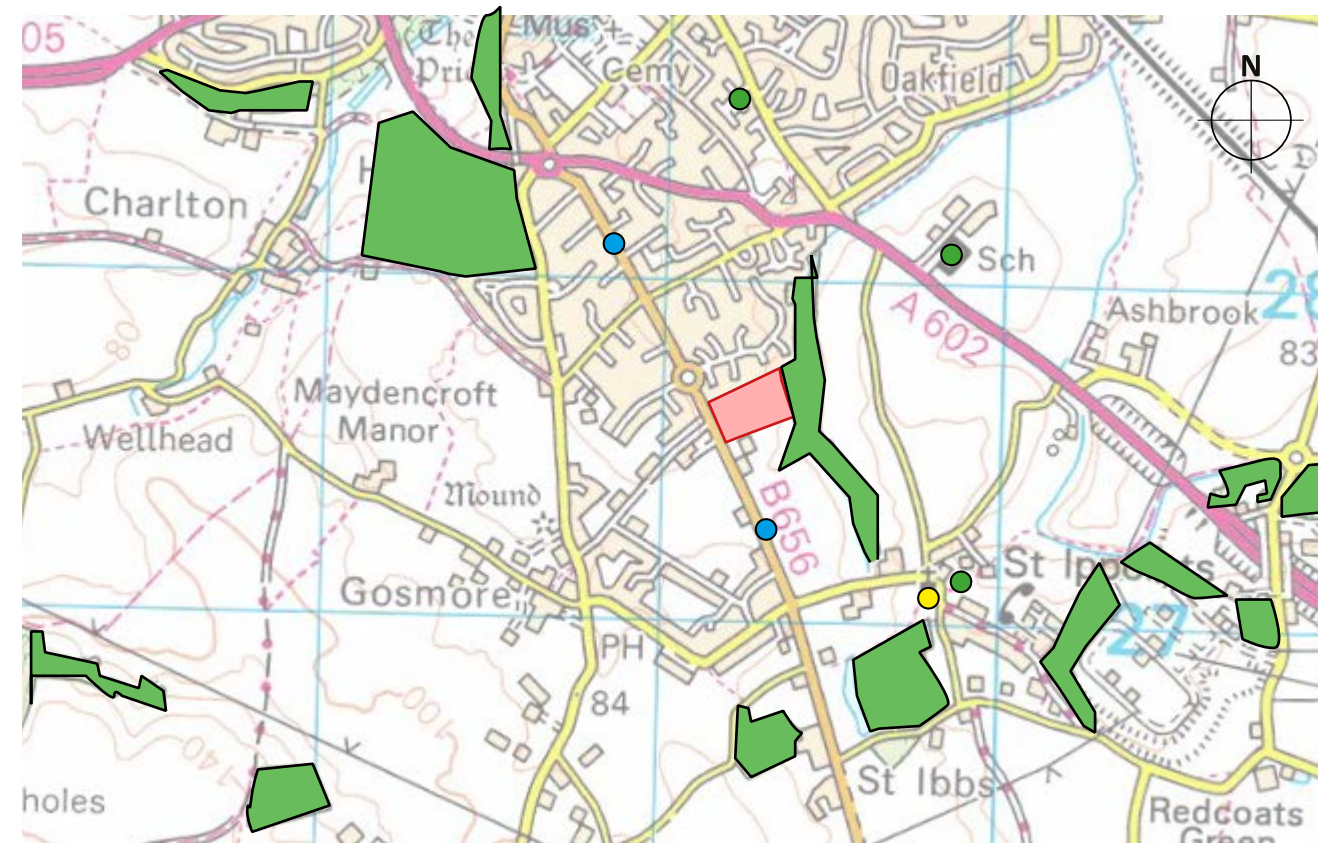
The site is located within close proximity to a range of facilities and services as shown on the plan (right). A number of schools, bus stops, doctors and places of worship are located within walking distance.

St Ippollitts, 600m to the south of the site has the following local facilities:

- Primary school
- Church
- Village hall
- Pub

The St Johns Lane area approximately 1km north of the site has the following additional facilities;

- Junior school
- Community Centre
- Pub
- Small supermarket



Local Facilities plan

- KEY
- Site
 - Green space
 - Bus stop
 - Education
 - Place of worship

3.0

Design Framework



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3.0 Design Framework

3.1 Introduction

This section highlights the most relevant planning policy considerations related to the application to develop the site for residential use and comprises a list of relevant development plan policies.

For detailed information relating to Planning Appraisal and principles of development, refer to Carter Jonas Planning Statement accompanying this reserved matters application.

The development plan for North Hertfordshire District Council consists of the following:

- The adopted North Herts District Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (2022);
- Hertfordshire County Council Waste & Minerals Local Plan comprising:
 - *Minerals Local Plan Review 2002–2016 (2007);*
 - *Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2011–2026 (2012);*
 - *Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document 2011–2026 (2014).*

3.2 National Planning Policy Framework 2024

In addition to the development plan, the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 represents the Government’s statement of national planning policy and offers a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Relevant parts of the NPPF are: -

1. Introduction
2. Achieving sustainable development
3. Decision-making
4. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
5. Building a strong, competitive economy
6. Promoting healthy and safe communities
7. Promoting sustainable transport
8. Making effective use of land
9. Achieving well-designed places
10. Protecting Green Belt land
11. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
12. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
13. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

The Government has updated the NPPF since the approval of the Hybrid application. However, the changes are not considered to be materially significant to the assessment of this reserved matters proposal, given the nature of the extant consent and its relationship with this Reserved Matters application.

3.3 North Hertfordshire District Local Plan 2011–2031 (2022)

For detailed information relating to Planning Appraisal and principles of development, refer to Carter Jonas Planning Statement accompanying this reserved matters application.

The Local Plan was adopted in Autumn 2022. The policies considered most relevant to this application are as listed here, and detailed within the Planning Statement: :-

- Policy HT2: Land north of Pound Farm (St Ippolyts Parish)
- Policy SP1: Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire
- Policy SP2: Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution
- Policy SP5: Countryside and Green Belt
- Policy SP6: Sustainable Transport
- Policy SP7: Infrastructure Requirements and Developer Contributions
- Policy SP8: Housing
- Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability
- Policy SP10: Healthy Communities
- Policy SP11: Natural Resources and Sustainability
- Policy SP12: Green infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity
- Policy SP13: Historic Environment
- Policy T1: Assessment of Transport Matters

- Policy T2: Parking
- Policy HS1: Local Housing Allocations
- Policy HS2: Affordable Housing
- Policy HS3: Housing Mix
- Policy HS5: Accessible and adaptable housing
- Policy D1: Sustainable Design
- Policy D3: Protecting Living Conditions
- Policy D4: Air Quality
- Policy HC1: Community Facilities
- Policy NE1: Strategic Green Infrastructure
- Policy NE2: Landscape
- Policy NE4: Biodiversity and Geological Sites
- Policy NE6: New and Improved Open Space
- Policy NE7: Reducing Flood Risk
- Policy NE8: Sustainable Drainage Systems
- Policy NE9: Water Quality and Environment
- Policy NE10: Water Conservation and Wastewater Infrastructure
- Policy NE11: Contaminated Land
- Policy HE1: Designated Heritage Assets
- Policy HE3: Non-Designated Heritage Assets
- HE4: Archaeology
- Policy IMR1: Five Year Housing Land Supply

3.0 Design Framework

3.4 Supplementary Planning Documents

Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document January 2023

This SPD outlines the Council's approach to planning obligations in relation to planning applications and enables developers and landowners to be aware at an early stage what infrastructure, services and public facilities may be sought to cope with additional demands brought on by new development and offset any harmful effects to the natural, historic or built environment.

Design Supplementary Planning Document July 2011

The North Herts Design SPD was adopted in 2011. It states that achieving good design and sustainable development are the core principles underlying planning. The SPD highlights the importance of good design and provides guidance on how to achieve a well-designed and well balanced place for future generations.

Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document 2024

The North Herts Sustainability SPD was adopted in September 2024. It provides information regarding the Council's sustainability expectations for development in North Herts, and offers good practice guidance to residents and developers when developing proposals and submitting planning applications.

National Design Guide (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government)

The National Design Guide was published in October 2019. It sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. It forms part of the Government's collection of planning practice guidance and should be read alongside the separate planning practice guidance on design process and tools.

Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard, Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) 2015 [amended 2016]

The DCLG Technical Housing Standards document provides guidance on acceptable minimum sizes for residential accommodation. This includes overall gross internal areas and individual room sizes including room widths and depths as well as the provision of storage areas for future occupiers. All residential development should comply with the recommendations within the technical housing standards document unless otherwise specified.

St Ippolyts Neighbourhood Plan

The St Ippolyts Neighbourhood Planning Area was designated by The Council's Cabinet on 31st July 2018. However, a Neighbourhood Plan for the St Ippolyts Neighbourhood Planning Area has not been made.

3.5 Principle of Development

The Land north of Pound Farm has an allocation of up to 84 dwellings within the adopted Local Plan under Policy HT2. It has been removed from the Green Belt for development and incorporated within the settlement boundary for Hitchin.

The principle of residential development has been accepted by the allocation of the site within the Local Plan and the approved hybrid planning application for up to 84 new dwellings with associated works.

Phases 2 and 3 of the proposed development of the site relating to this application benefits from outline planning permission, granted under the hybrid application. In addition, access arrangements for the development have been established and agreed under the hybrid application.

The scheme remains in general conformity with the details submitted with the hybrid application which included an illustrative site-wide masterplan and parameters plan.

The following 7 bullet points are set out within Policy HT2 of the Local Plan in relation to the site:

- Site layout designed to take account of existing wastewater infrastructure;
- Address existing surface water flood risk issues through SUDs or other appropriate solution;
- No residential development within Flood Zone 2;
- Maintain appropriate buffer zone from Ippollitts Brook at southeast of site;
- Consider and mitigate against any adverse impacts upon adjoining priority habitat (deciduous woodland) and key features of interest of adjacent local wildlife site (Folly Alder Swamp);
- Retain and reinforce planting along southern and eastern boundaries to ensure integrity of revised Green Belt boundary;
- Sensitive design towards south-west of site and in areas viewed from Mill Lane to minimise harm to heritage assets.