

Site & Context

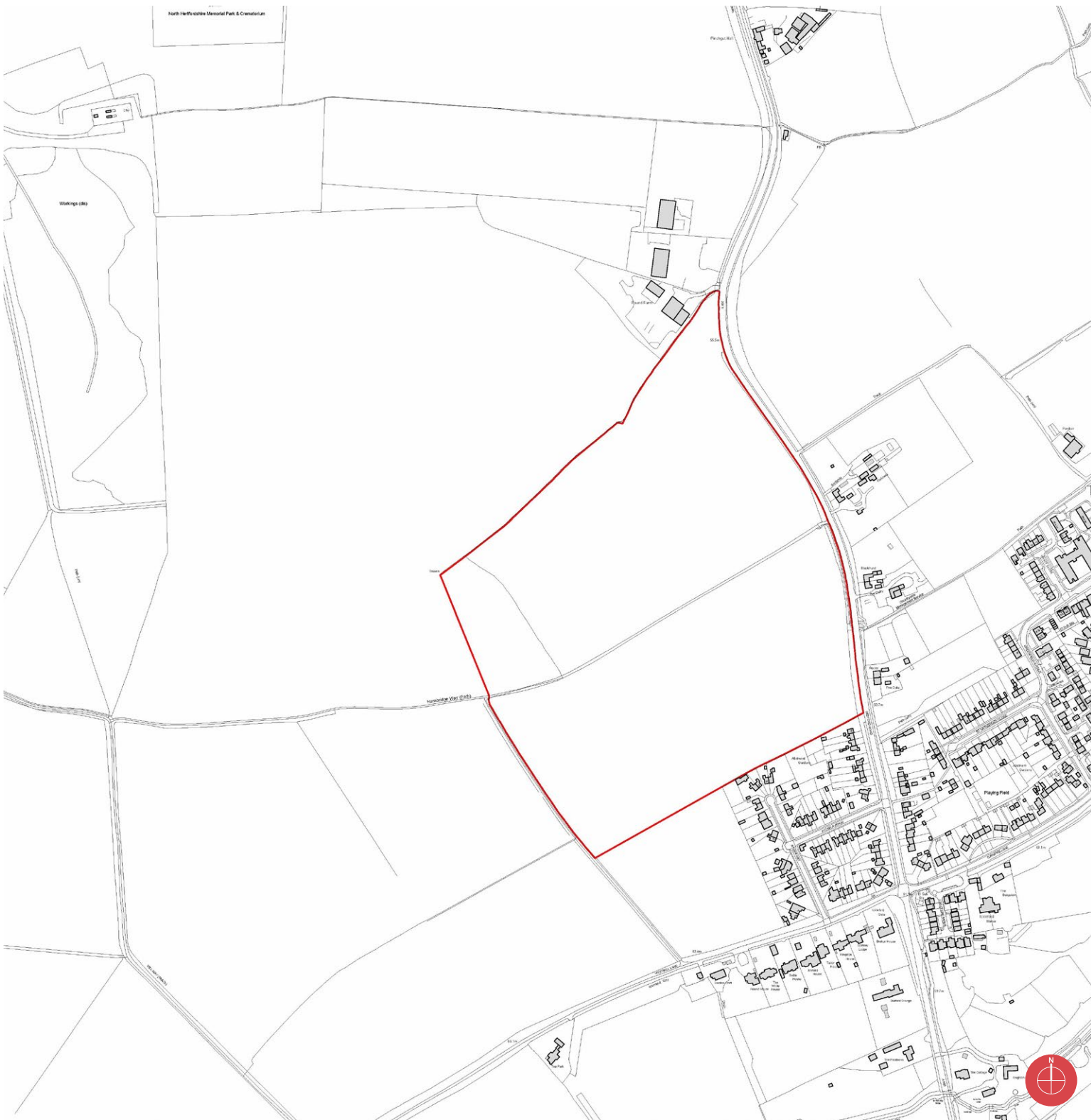
The application site comprises an irregular parcel of predominantly open agricultural land located at Pound Farm, on the western edge of Ickleford, fronting Bedford Road.

The site is predominantly arable land and has no heritage or ecological constraints and lies in Flood Zone 1, the lowest category of flood risk. The land is mostly classified as 'rural area beyond the Green Belt' in the North Hertfordshire Local Plan, with the southern part of the site lying within the Green Belt. The application site does not lie in close proximity to the Ickleford Conservation Area, or any listed buildings and does not contain any TPOs.

The eastern boundary is formed by Bedford Road, with existing residential properties along the south-eastern boundary. Access to the site is currently taken from Bedford Road, opposite the property known as 'Scotlands'. The site is generally enclosed by low-lying vegetation, interspersed with small trees and a number of mature trees along the boundaries. The landscape is typical of the North Hertfordshire countryside, gently undulating and framed by long views across open fields. Existing footpaths cross parts of the land, connecting to the wider network of rural routes that link to the village and surrounding settlements.

The site is contained by existing field boundaries, trees and hedgerows, forming a logical, compact and sustainable extension to Ickleford. The North Hertfordshire local plan (2022) outlines the vision for the village to retain its own rural village identity and strong central hub. Future developments are to be carried out sensitively to maintain the character of the village and any new housing development should be built to high quality standards. Development here will help meet local needs for homes and specialist education while enhancing the surrounding landscape and creating new connections through the Icknield Way Path. In light of its location, current use, and compliance with both national and local planning policies, Icknield Fields represents an appropriate and deliverable site for development that provides clear public benefit.

Key
— Site boundary



Site Location Plan (not to scale)

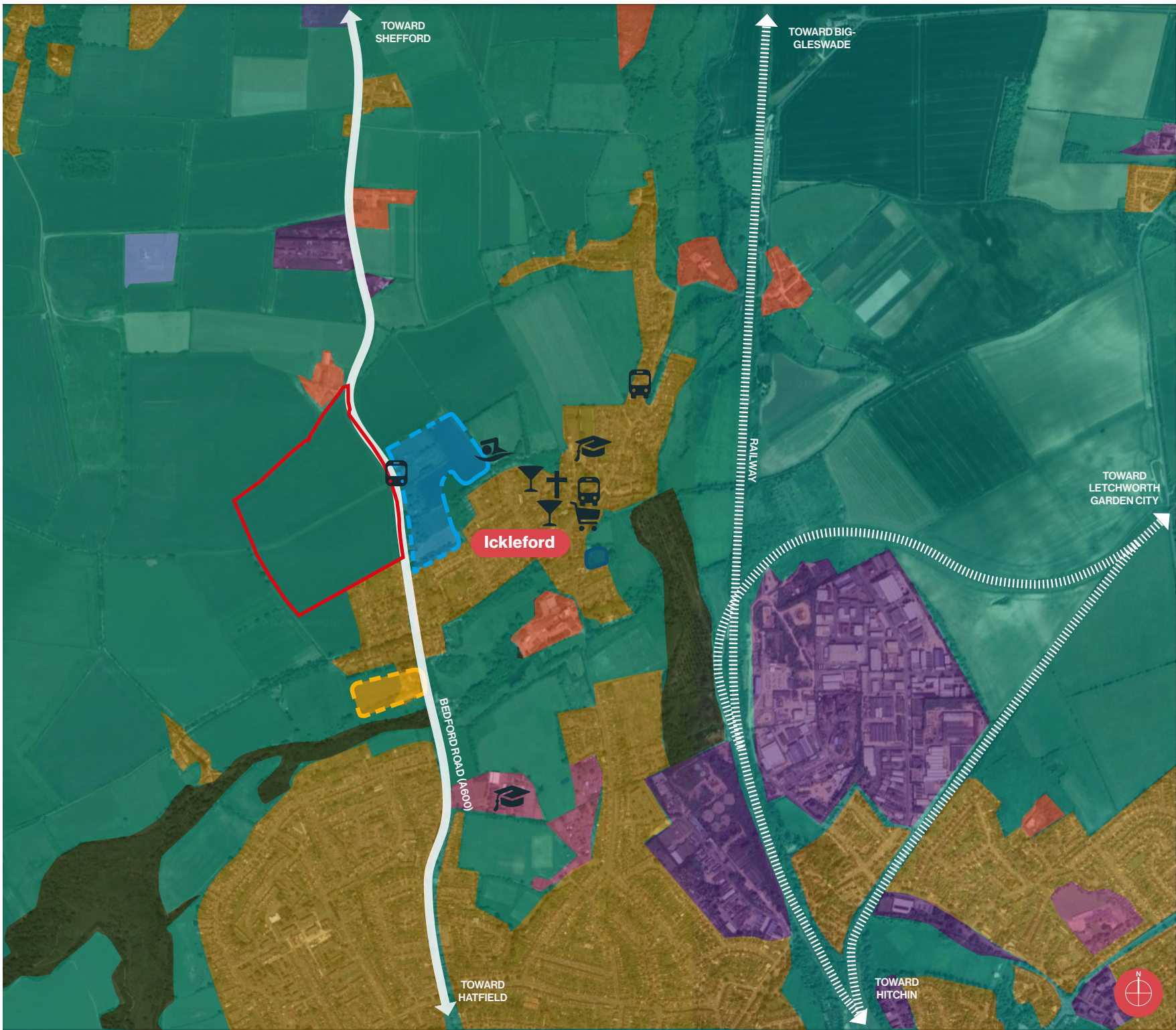
Google Maps

Wider Context

The adjacent diagram shows the wider context and land use surrounding the application site.

The application site is located adjacent to a residential area to the south and farm buildings to the north. There are a number of residential uses, as well as commercial and industrial uses in the wider context. Land is allocated to the east of the site for residential developments

- Key
- Application Site Boundary
 - Bus Stop
 - Primary School
 - Church
 - Pub
 - Leisure Centre
 - Supermarket
 - Farmland/ Open spaces
 - Residential
 - Woodland / Nature reserve
 - Commercial / Industrial
 - Crematorium
 - Farm buildings
 - School grounds
 - Allocated site IC3 (150 Homes)
 - Consented Development (Ref: 19/01106/FP)
 - Allocated site IC1 (9 dwellings)



Wider Context Diagram (not to scale)

Google Maps

Site Photographs

Photographs of the site are set out below:



Key
— Site boundary

Contextual Study

The area surrounding the site comprises an eclectic mix of houses, of mixed age, architectural style and scale.

The village of Ickleford itself retains a fine-grained structure, with a mix of historic cottages, post-war housing and recent infill development. Brick and clay tile are the predominant materials, with occasional use of flint, painted render and boarding. Streets are narrow and informal, with soft verges and trees contributing to the rural setting.



Material Palette

The area features a mix of materials that create visual variety while maintaining a cohesive character.

Bedford Road uses off-white render with tiled roofs and uPVC windows, while Ansell Grange emphasizes red multi-stock brickwork with white detailing. Ickleford Manor introduces lighter brick tones and blue-grey weatherboarding, complemented by white uPVC frames and traditional porch elements. Together, these materials blend durability with aesthetic diversity.



4 Walnut Way

- White Weatherboarding
- Reddish-brown concrete tiled, pitched roof
- Brickwork chimney
- UPVC window frames



Ansell Grange

- Red multi-stock brickwork
- White uPVC traditional style window frames
- White barge-boards and soffits
- White weather-boarded gable ends
- Low brick walls and metal railings define property boundaries



No. 15 & 16 Ickleford Manor

- Light red brickwork
- Blue-grey weatherboarding
- White uPVC traditional style window frames
- White barge-boards and soffits
- White traditional style porch details



No. 46 Arlesey Road

- Light red brickwork
- Black/Timber details with cream render finish
- White uPVC traditional style window frames
- Timber bargeboards and soffits
- Traditional style porch details

Local Character Areas

Street types: neighbourhood (major) access streets, local (minor) access streets, shared-surface edge streets and lanes.

The most notable are detailed below, all of which are 2 storeys in height.



Ryder Way: Cul-de-sac

- Ryder Way is a small cul-de-sac, the layout consists of detached and semi-detached dwellings arranged around a central turning head
- Properties generally face inward toward the shared access road, creating a cohesive frontage
- Front gardens and driveways dominate the immediate frontage, with soft landscaping adding greenery
- Generous rear gardens extend toward open green spaces, reinforcing the village-edge character
- The arrangement provides a clear transition between built form and surrounding countryside



Burford Grange: Linear street frontage

- Linear development along gently curving access road, properties are mainly detached and semi-detached homes with consistent building lines
- Frontages directly onto street, creating an active and well-defined edge
- Front gardens and driveways combine hard and soft landscaping, adding greenery to the streetscape
- The curved alignment of dwellings introduces visual interest while maintaining cohesion
- The layout reflects a suburban character that integrates with the surrounding village context



Bedford Road - Linear development

- Linear development along main road
- Properties face the road, creating an active frontage
- Front gardens and driveways dominate, with limited soft landscaping
- Generous rear gardens extend into open plots, adding rural character
- Pattern is dispersed, giving an open, less uniform streetscape

Cultural Heritage

Farmhouses, cottages and barns dated from the 16th to 18th century are commonly listed as heritage assets in Ickleford - contributing towards its rural character.

Ickleford became a vicarage in 1215 - serving two separate manors owned by the Lord of Ickleford and Lord of Ramerick. Some buildings from the two manors remain evident in Ickleford to date, including the Old Manor Cottage and the Clock House in the heart of the village on Turnpike Lane.

The Parish has over 30 Grade I and Grade II listed structures and a conservation area located in the centre, covering an area across Arleseey Road, Turnpike Lane and Chambers lane.



Aerial Map Showing Heritage Allocations

Google Maps

- Key
- Application Site Boundary
 - Conservation Area
 - Housing sites in Local Plan
 - Grade I (Church of St. Katherine)
 - Grade II Listed



Local Amenities

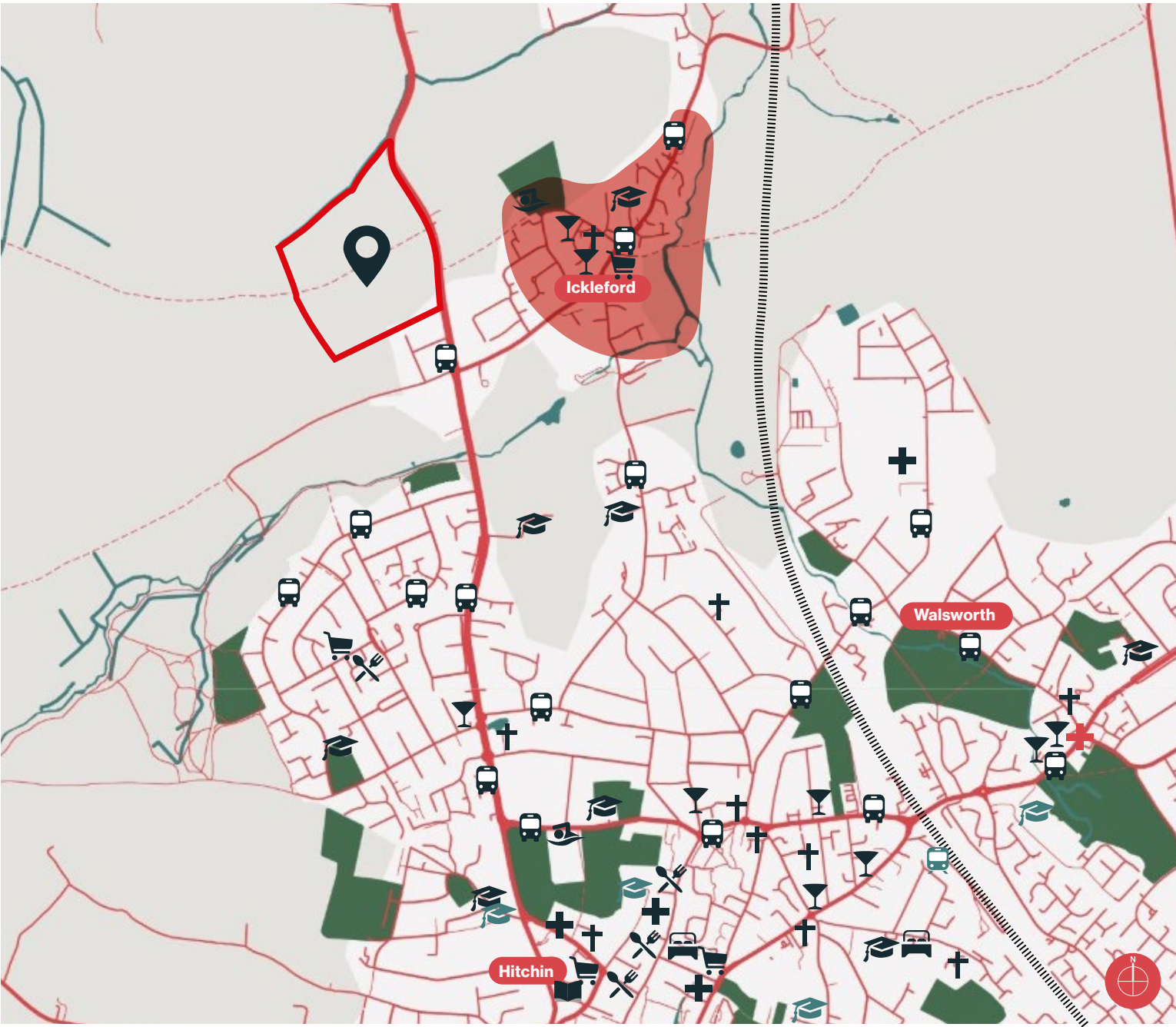
The adjacent diagram shows the local facilities and transport infrastructure.

There are ample facilities in close proximity to the site, which makes the site a sustainable choice for development.

- Key
- Site Location
 - Town / Village centre
 - Bus Stop
 - GP Surgery
 - Supermarket
 - Library
 - Church
 - Leisure Centre
 - Primary School
 - Secondary School
 - Hotel
 - Pub
 - Restaurant
 - Train-line
 - Main Roads
 - Waterways
 - Open spaces

Distances from Site:

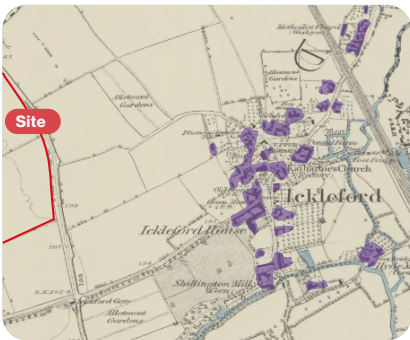
- Ickleford Local Amenities – 0.4 miles (8 min. walk)
- Pirton – 1.3 miles (25 min. walk)
- Hitchin Town Centre – 1.4 miles (8 min. cycle)



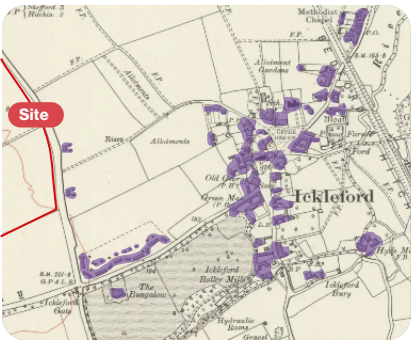
Local Amenities Diagram (not to scale)

Local History

The below diagram shows the site history.



Many of the buildings seen to the left are farmhouses and cottages built between the 16th and 18th century. In 1880, the structure of the village can be seen to have low density, following Arlesey Road and centralising around the Arlesey Road to Turnpike Lane intersection.



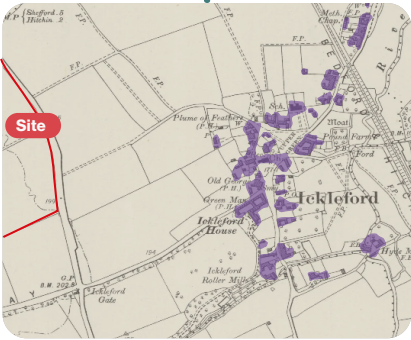
It was between 1899 and 1921 that Ickleford began to sprawl out from it's centre, with development evident to the west, along Turnpike Lane. It was at this time that signs of development began to appear on Bedford Road, near to the site. Density also continued to slowly increase in the centre of the village.



In 2007, Ickleford's village hub became dense with houses, shops, and pubs. Development also spread south along Arlesey Road and as far as Old Hale Way. Further up along Arlesey Road, development could be seen both sides of the road.



Between 1880 and 1899, not much development occurred - with few new buildings, which all remained within the confines of the village as it were in 1880.



At this time, the area immediately south of the site was developed into a residential estate. More buildings can also be seen along the east side of Bedford Road, adjacent to the site.



In recent times, development included Burford Grange, Ickleford Manor, and the expansion of the Pound Farm buildings. The proposed development fits the pattern of Ickleford's expansion. The structure of Ickleford began linear north-south. It then expanded from east to west along Turnpike Lane towards Bedford Road. It was at this point that development began to spread north-south again, along Bedford Road. After this, the density of development increased and the gaps were filled, linking the development around Bedford Road to Arlesey Road. Therefore, historically, development spreads along roads on both sides then density increases. The proposed development, along with the area allocated for development, aligns with the natural continuation of Ickleford's evolution.



Key

- Potential area for development
- Allocated for development
- Development areas in Ickleford

Approved Sites

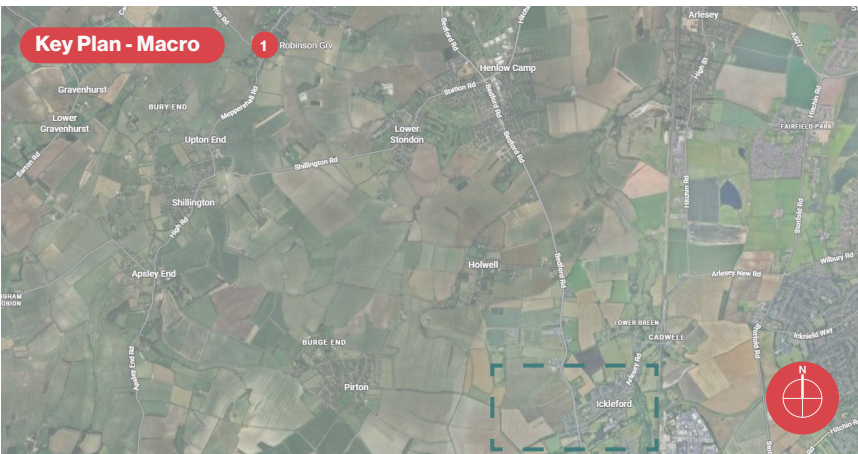
A number of local developments have recently been approved within close proximity to the application site.

The most notable are detailed below, all of which are 2 storeys in height.



Project: Ickleford Manor

- **Planning reference number:** 17/02628/1
- **Address:** Ickleford Manor, Turnpike Lane, Ickleford, Hitchin
- **Description:** Reserved Matters application for the approval of the external appearance of outline application 16/02012/1 granted 31/07/2017 for the development of 19 residential dwellings together with associated vehicular access and parking following demolition of existing commercial buildings.
- **Status:** Approved
- **Date of approval:** January 2018



Project: Robinson Grove

- **Planning reference number:** CB/18/01926
- **Address:** Land adjacent to 15 Shillington Road, Meppershall
- **Description:** 9 Dwellings and formation of Vehicular and Pedestrian access with Associated Landscaping.
- **Status:** Approved
- **Date of approval:** October 2018



Project: Burford Grange

- **Planning reference number:** 19/01106/FP
- **Address:** Burford Grange, Bedford Road, Ickleford, Hitchin
- **Description:** 48 dwellings with associated access, parking, private and public amenity space and associated works, following demolition of existing buildings.
- **Status:** Approved
- **Date of approval:** February 2023