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Introduction

This document is to support a reserved matters submission for the proposed residential development of Ickleford Mill, Ickleford. This follows on from the outline application (ref: 17/01955/1) 'for up to 71 dwellings and associated access, car parking, garages, landscaping and open space including demolition and removal of all existing structures, buildings and hardstanding (all matters reserved except means of access)'. The proposal includes 55 high quality homes of which 40% will be affordable.

Site Location

The key features of the site are:

- The site sits to the south of Ickleford and to the north of Hitchin.
- Site area circa 3.59ha (8.87 acres)
- The site was formerly an industrial flour mill and is currently vacant. The site contains various buildings and hardstanding associated with the mill as well as open areas of land.
- The River Oughton flows from west to east and cuts across the southern half of the site. Land to the south of the River is designated as green belt.
- The eastern part of the site is bound by Arlesey Road and beyond are residential properties. To the west is Green Belt and a landscaped boundary formed by trees.
- The site is currently accessed from Arlesey Road.



Proposed Illustrative Masterplan

Introduction

Who Are Hill?

Hill is an award-winning, family owned and operated housebuilder with a strong track record of delivering high quality developments. Since 1999, Hill has gained an industry reputation for creating inclusive and sustainable communities that respond to their local context. Hill prides itself in building exceptional homes by bringing together contemporary design, sustainable materials and a sympathetic approach. These high quality developments have resulted in delighted customers with consistently positive feedback year on year.

Awards

Hill are an award winning top 20 housebuilder who have delivered numerous successful schemes across southern and eastern England. Our reputation is built upon integrity, quality and individuality, three attributes which underpin our organisation and are key to what we do. Hill has won a number of accolades and accreditations, including winning overall House Builder Of The Year 2023, at the prestigious WhatHouse Awards.



Holymead Square, Newport



Capstone Fields, Hardwick



Chesterford Meadows, Great Chesterford



Eden Hill, Finchingfield



Recent Awards



Gills Hill, Bourn

Site Location

The application site is located to the south of Ickleford Village. The River Oughton runs through the site and a number of bridges cross the river to allow access from the southern half, where the access is located, to the northern half of the site. Ickleford is a large village which is to the north of Hitchin and it is approximately a 35 minute walk to Hitchin Town Centre. The site is 3 miles (5km) west of Letchworth Garden City and 8 miles (13km) north-west of Stevenage.

The red line application boundary is approximately 3.59ha. The site contains a former flour mill and includes a number of buildings that were used for processing, laboratories and offices as well a warehouses and the mill itself.

The River Oughton flows through the site from west to east and defines the village boundary. The land to the south of the river is used as open space.

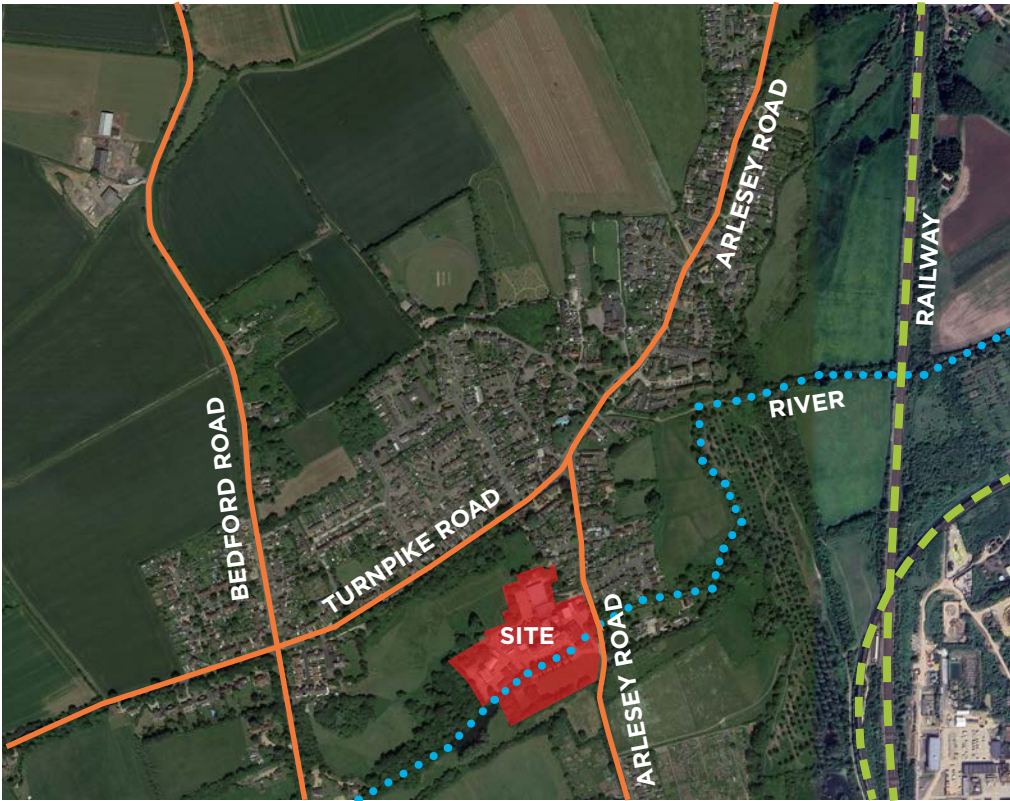
The site is currently accessed from Arlesey Road which links the site to Ickleford Village, Hitchin and further afield.

The northern part of the site is bounded by gardens and driveways of residential dwellings which are accessed of Arlesey Road. The eastern boundary is defined by Arlesey Road and is separated from the road with close boarded and wire fencing. The southern and western boundaries are adjacent to the green belt and are lined with trees and vegetation which provides natural screening into the site.

The land falls across the site, with the highest points being along the north-western boundary and falls towards Arlesey Road and the river. The site is relatively flat where the buildings and hardscaping associated with the mill are.

The site sits within predominantly Flood Zone 1, however the banks of the river fall within Flood Zone 2 and 3.

The site is not within a conservation area, however the Ickleford Conservation area site is approximately 200m north of the site. None of the buildings on the site are listed.



Site Location Map



Site Location Map



Aerial View (Image by Savills)



Site from the south as viewed from Arlesey Road



Eastern boundary

Connections

The site sits to the south of Ickleford and is connected to the village centre by Arlesey Road. The site is north of Hitchin and it is approximately 1.5 miles to Hitchin town centre. The A505 links Hitchin to the neighboring town of Letchworth and connects to the A1(M) which connects the site to the north and London.

The site is currently accessed from Arlesey Road which links to Ickleford village centre and towards Hitchin. A footpath runs alongside this road creating pedestrian links to both the village and Hitchin town center.

Hitchin Train Station is approximately a 35 minute walk from the site links to the north east, London and Cambridge. There are two bus stops within close proximity to the site on Old Hale Way and Arlesey Road.

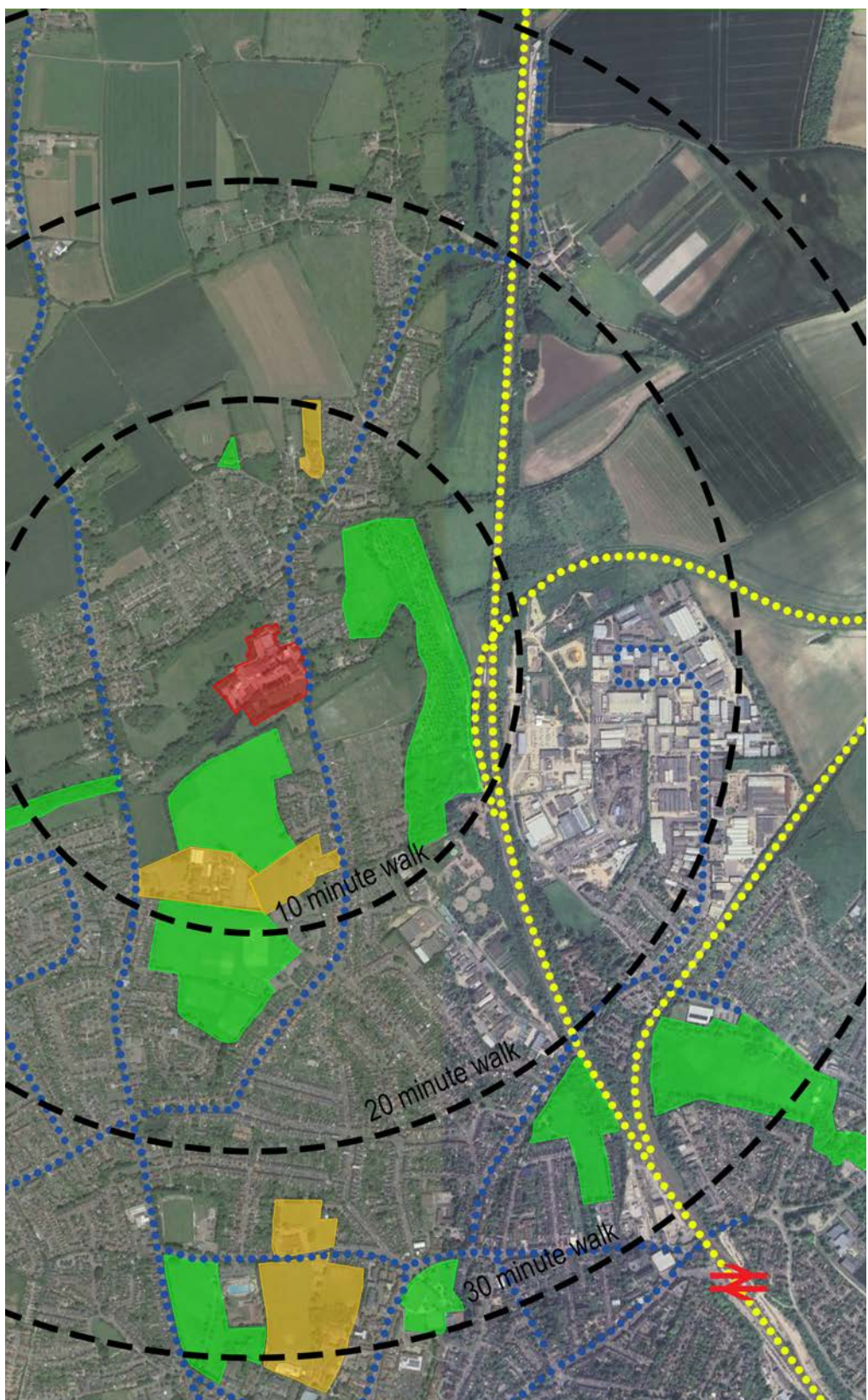
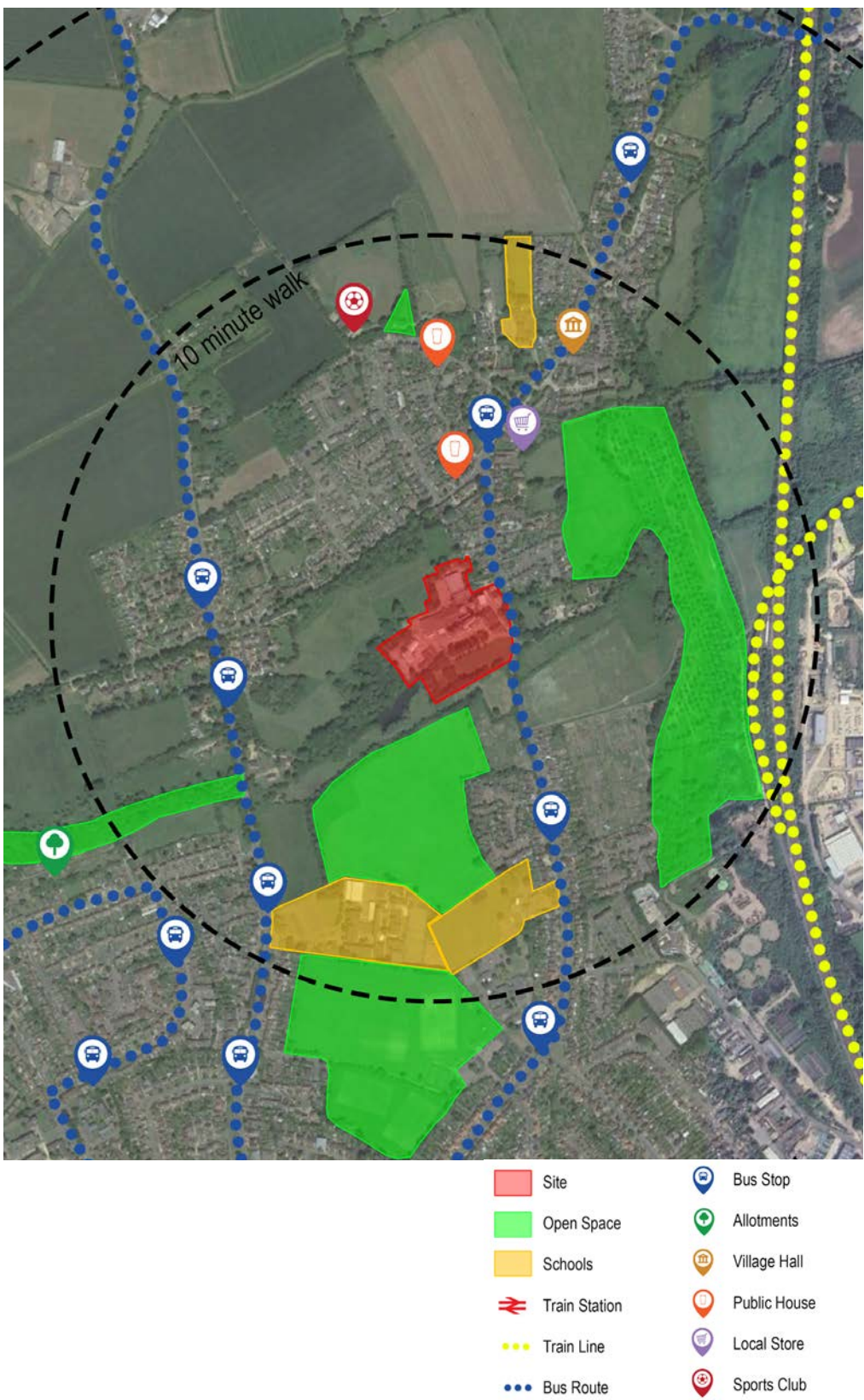
Facilities

The site is considered to be a sustainable location, as a result of the good transport connections and the proximity to Ickleford Village and Hitchin, the site benefits from a range of local facilities.

Ickleford Village has a number of facilities including a grocery store and two public houses. Hitchin contains a large number of supermarkets, stores and healthcare facilities.

There is a nursery and two Primary Schools within approximately 0.5miles of the site. The Secondary School sits off Bedford Road and are approximately a 22 minute walk from the site. Other schools and education establishments are situated nearby and within Hitchin.

There are a wide range of recreational and community facilities near to the site including Ickleford Village Hall and Ickleford Sports and Recreation Club. There are parks near to the site as well as a play park and hiking trails. There are also allotments near to the site off Bedford Road.



Site Context Diagram

Local Context

Ickleford is a medieval settlement and was originally surrounded by several farmsteads. The layout of the village has evolved but remained rural in character along Turnpike Road with modern housing being built to the north and south of this road. Ickleford conservation area covers a large central area within the village and reflects the historical settlement pattern of the village.

A key feature within the conservation area is the village greens which are flanked by trees and fronted by buildings. The high level of planting within the front gardens contributes to the green character of this area and there is also a prevalence for low brick boundary walls to front gardens of dwellings. By contrast, there are examples of historic buildings elevations butting up against footpaths and road, creating a mixed historic character to Ickleford.

The modern developments that surround the conservation area are generally built in the late 20th Century. The roads are relatively uniform and generally lined by two footpaths with houses fronting the road. Parking is generally on plot, in front of the house with large areas of paving and minimal front gardens. Generally there are no front boundary treatments, however there are examples of low brick walls or hedging.



Chambers Lane



Turnpike Lane



Arlesey Road



Boswell Drive



Walnut Way



Winchester Road

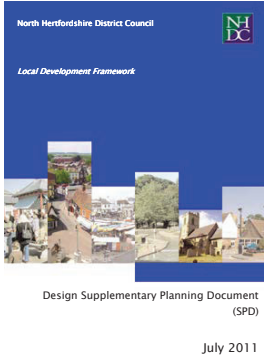
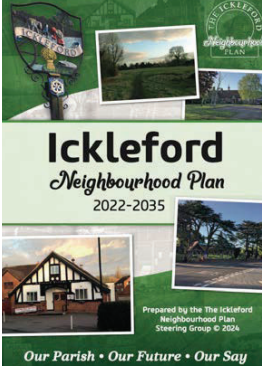
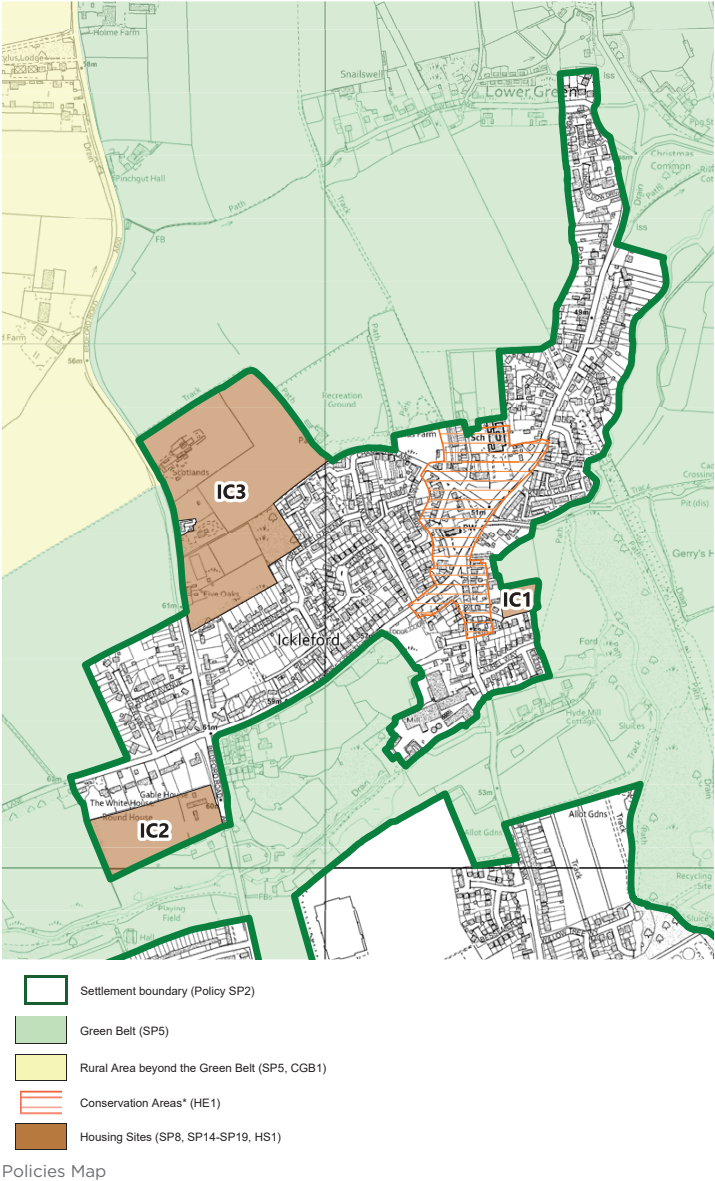
Planning Guidance

As per the policies map to the right, most of the site sits within the settlement boundary of Ickleford. The River Oughton that runs through the site sits on the village boundary, with the southern part of the site falling within the green belt. The Ickleford Conservation Area is approximately 200m north of the site.

Although the site is predominately within Flood Zone 1, due to the river banks being in Flood Zone 2 and 3, special consideration to the design of the site will be taken.

As part of the design process, we have referred to the below documents for guidance on the design to ensure the scheme meets policy.

- North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031
- Design Supplementary Planning Document (July 2011)
- Ickleford Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2035
- Waste Storage & Collection Guidance For Developers



Reference documents