



Radcliffe House, The Priory, Tilehouse Street, Hitchin
Transport Statement

Client: Metric & Maker

i-Transport Ref: WF/TH/ITL210646-004C

Date: 21 April 2026

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Contents

SECTION 1	Introduction	2
SECTION 2	Proposed Development	4
SECTION 3	Review against parking standards	6
SECTION 4	Justification for Reduced Provision	10
SECTION 5	Summary and Conclusion	20

Tables

Table 3-1 - NHDC's Office Parking Standards Summary	7
Table 3-2 - NHDC's Accessibility Zones	7
Table 3-3 - NHDC's Residential Parking Standards Summary	8
Table 3-4 - Parking Provision Net Summary	9
Table 4-1 - Local Facilities Summary Table	12
Table 4-2 - Bus Service Summary	14
Table 4-3 - Rail Service Frequency	14
Table 4-4 - Biggin Lane Car Park Tariffs Summary	17
Table 4-5 - Nearby Precedent Parking Provision	18

Figures

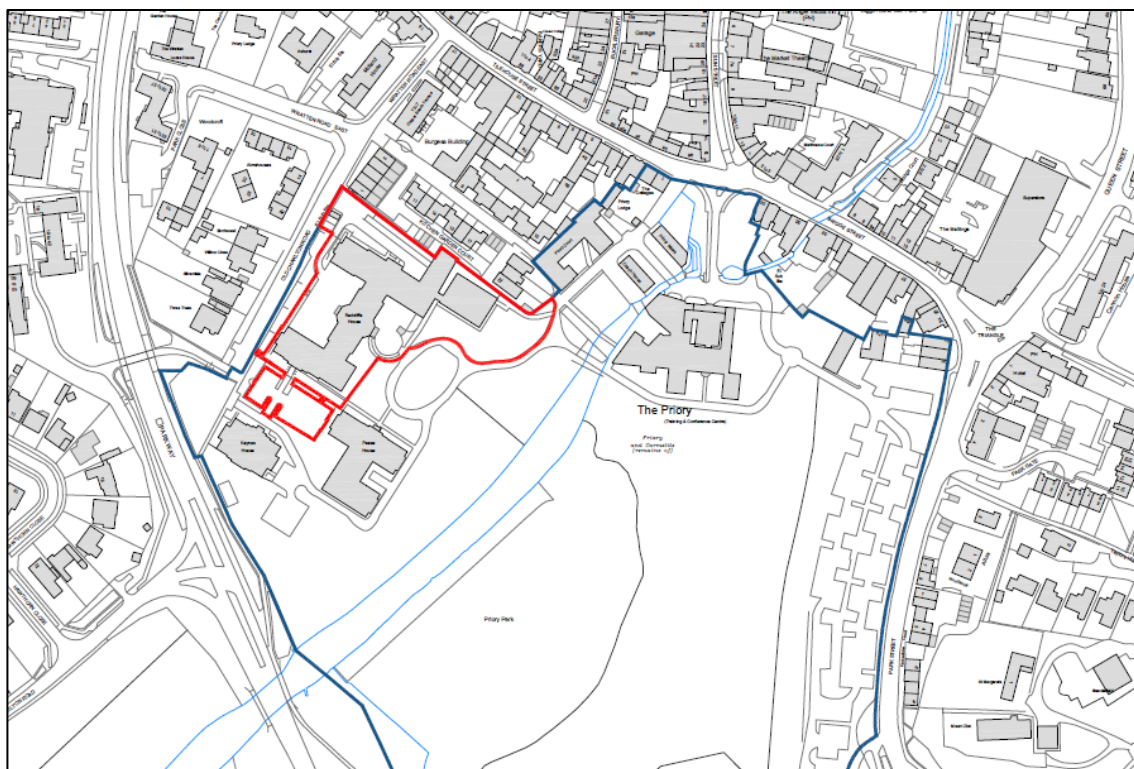
Figure 1-1 – Site location plan	2
Figure 2-1 - Proposed Site Layout Plan.....	4
Figure 2-2 - Radcliffe House - Proposed Car Parking Allocation.....	5
Figure 3-1 - NHDC's Hitchin Accessibility Zones Plan.....	8
Figure 4-1 - National Travel Survey - Trips by Journey Purpose.....	10
Figure 4-2 - Mode of Travel by Distance	11
Figure 4-3 - Local Facilities and Services Plan	12
Figure 4-4 - MSOA North Hertfordshire 008 Location.....	16
Figure 4-5 – DfT Connectivity Tool Score Extract.....	19

SECTION 1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 i-Transport have been commissioned by Metric & Maker to support a planning application for external works to Radcliffe House, The Priory, Hitchin. The site is accessed from Old Charlton Road and Tilehouse Street, located to the south of Hitchin town centre, within the jurisdiction of North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) who are the local planning authority (LPA) and Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) who are the local highway authority (LHA).

Figure 1-1 – Site location plan



- 1.1.2 Radcliffe House is currently occupied by office accommodation (Use Class E) but has recently gained prior approval consent for residential use (Use Class C3):
- On 15th October 2024 prior approval (ref: 24/01669/PNMA) was granted to change the use of the office accommodation at Radcliffe House to 49 residential dwellings
- 1.1.3 The proposed external works include changes to the façade, including installation of additional doors and windows, and hard and soft landscaping changes, as well as changes to the number of parking spaces.

1.1.4 No change of use, alteration to the permitted number of dwellings or access provision is proposed. As part of the application, an increase in cycle parking provision is proposed, including 62 long stay resident spaces and 62 short stay visitor spaces, in excess of the level of cycle parking required for the 49 dwellings included as part of the extant prior approval.

1.1.5 In addition, an enlarged refuse store is also proposed. No changes to the delivery and servicing strategy are proposed to the arrangements consented as part of the extant prior approval, with all bins taken to the central collection point on Old Charlton Road on collection days. The proposed refuse store is located within the existing basement, a mechanically assisted tug will be used to transport the bins from the refuse store to the collection point.

1.1.6 In transport terms, the only material change is the number of car parking spaces which the application proposes to reduce. The parking ratio as a result of the proposed development will be below the NHDC's standards set out within the *Vehicle Parking at New Development Supplementary Planning Document* (SPD). Paragraph 4.2 of the SPD states:

"Flexibility is built into the standards. However, any exceptions to the minimums MUST be accompanied by a strong evidence case with specific reference to considering car ownership and visitor parking demand for the potential lifetime of the development."

1.1.7 Accordingly, this Transport Statement (TS) has been prepared to demonstrate that the level of parking provision proposed is suitable, and should be encouraged in sustainable transport terms, both for the existing and extant consent use, for the following reasons:

- 1 Highly accessible location of the site (adjacent to Hitchin town centre).
- 2 Parking standards are not reflective of actual local car ownership levels.
- 3 Public, town centre car parks accessible within short walking distances.
- 4 Parking in accordance with standards will result in overprovision and poor use of space.
- 5 Precedents already established from consents of less accessible developments.
- 6 On-street parking is restricted in proximity of the site, managing any overspill activity.

1.1.8 This TS is intentionally concise, focussing on the level of parking, following the structure below:

- **Section 2** – sets out an overview of the proposed development.
- **Section 3** – provides a contextual overview, detailing parking standards.
- **Section 4** – details justification for the reduced parking ratios (as summarised above).
- **Section 5** – provides a summary and conclusion of the TS.

SECTION 2 Proposed Development

2.1 Overview

- 2.1.1 As set out within the previous section, the proposed development does not seek to change the number of dwellings approved as part of the prior approval consent.
- 2.1.2 There will be 49 residential dwellings within Radcliffe House, comprising 21 one-bedroom, 19 two-bedroom and 9 three-bedroom dwellings. The proposals are designed to function equally well with the existing office use which accommodates a floorspace of 5,118sqm.
- 2.1.3 **Figure 2-1** below presents the proposed site layout plan including landscaping proposals.

Figure 2-1 - Proposed Site Layout Plan



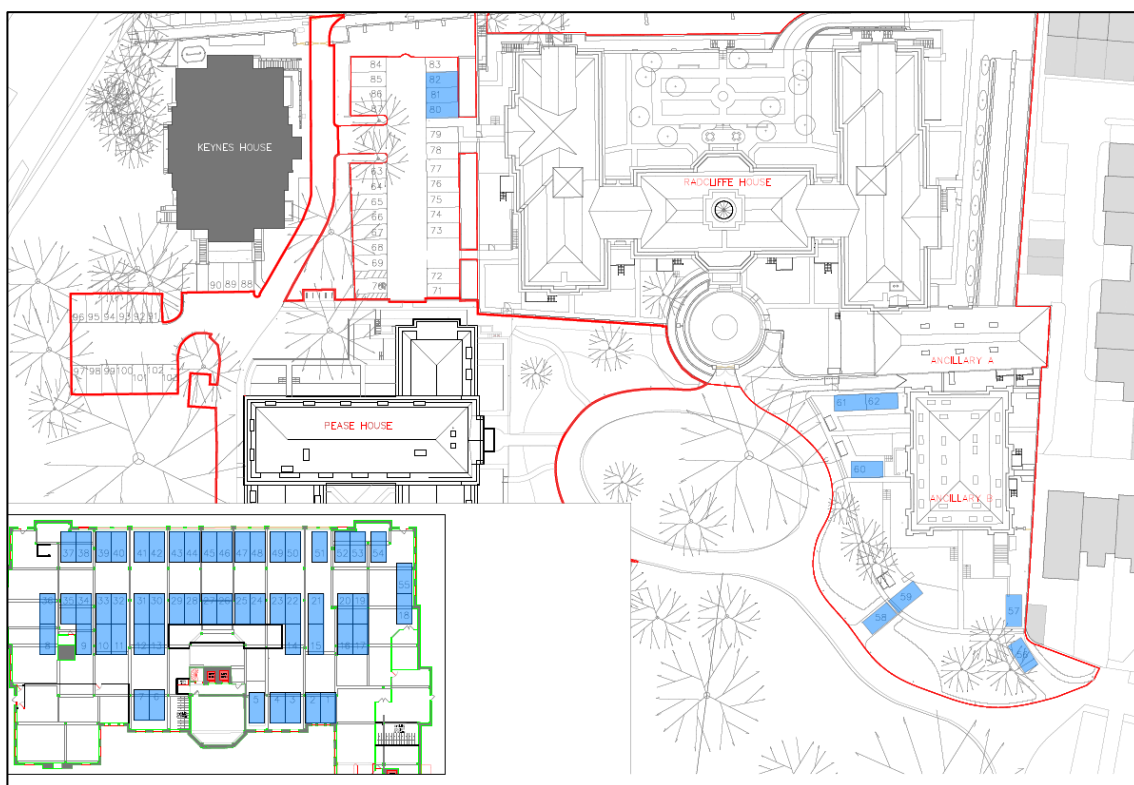
2.1.4 As illustrated, the proposed development seeks to deliver enhanced landscaping space. The existing access and servicing arrangements will remain the same as the prior approval consent. The only material change in transport terms is the level of car parking provision. This is outlined in further details within the following sections.

2.2 Proposed parking

2.2.1 A total of 65 car parking spaces located across the site are proposed to be allocated to Radcliffe House. Providing a parking ratio in excess of 1 space per dwelling (1.3 spaces per dwelling).

2.2.2 **Figure 2-2** below shows the location of the car parking spaces to be allocated to Radcliffe House, which are shaded blue. This includes spaces within the existing basement car park.

Figure 2-2 - Radcliffe House - Proposed Car Parking Allocation



SECTION 3 Review against parking standards

3.1 Car Parking Standards

3.1.1 Paragraph 112 of the NPPF states the following:

“If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account:

- a) the accessibility of the development;***
- b) the type, mix and use of development***
- c) the availability of and opportunities for public transport;***
- d) local car ownership levels; and***
- e) the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.”***

3.1.2 Whilst NHDC’s local plan pre-dates the current NPPF, the above requirements are broadly reflected within Policy T2: Parking of *North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011 – 2031*, which states:

“Planning permission will be granted provided that:

- a) Parking for residential development is provided in accordance with the minimum parking standards set out in Appendix 4 of this Plan;***
- b) Parking for non-residential development is provided having regard to the standards for non-residential development set out in the relevant Supplementary Planning Document;***
- c) Proposals have regard to relevant Supplementary Planning Documents, strategies or advice and;***
- d) Applicants clearly identify how they provide for all likely types of parking demand and demonstrate that parking will be safe and of a design and layout that will function satisfactorily.***

Variations from these standards will only be considered where applicants can demonstrate that the accessibility, type scale, mix and use of the development; the availability of and opportunities for public transport; local car ownership levels; and on-street conditions justify such variations.”

3.1.3 Appendix 4 (referred to in Policy T2) contains a summary page from NHDC’s *Vehicle Parking at New Development Supplementary Planning Document* (SPD) (September 2011). This SPD sets out the full parking guidance for new development proposals. These are detailed overleaf.

Office

- 3.1.4 The vehicle parking standards for non-residential development is set out as maximum provision. Table 3-1 below provides a summary of the parking standards relevant to existing office use.

Table 3-1 - NHDC's Office Parking Standards Summary

Dwelling Size	Maximum Car Parking Standard (includes visitor spaces)
B1 (a) Offices	1 space per 30 m ² gfa

Accessibility Zones

- 3.1.6 Non-residential accessibility zones have been identified in the district's main towns based on access to key services including GP's, schools, retail centres by public transport.
- 3.1.7 The zones represent the degree of restraint to be applied to non-residential development within each zone type. Within each range the higher percentage represents the smallest acceptable reduction in provision. **Table 3-2** details the parking provision allowed against each zone.

Table 3-2 - NHDC's Accessibility Zones

Zone type	Car parking provision allowed
1	0 – 25% of unfettered demand
2	25 – 50% of unfettered demand
3	50 – 75% of unfettered demand
4	75 – 100% of unfettered demand

- 3.1.9 The site is located in Zone 1, as demonstrated in the plan overleaf. As a result, parking provided at a rate of between 0%-25% of the standards for non-residential land use is acceptable.

Figure 3-1 - NHDC's Hitchin Accessibility Zones Plan



Source: NHDC Vehicle Parking at New Development SPD – Appendix 3

Residential

3.1.10 Table 3-3 below provides a summary of the residential parking standards.

Table 3-3 - NHDC's Residential Parking Standards Summary

Dwelling Size	Car Parking Standard
1 bedroom	1 space per dwelling minimum
2+ bedrooms	2 spaces per dwelling minimum
Visitor/ unallocated	Between 0.25 and 0.75 spaces per dwelling (rounded up to nearest whole number), with the lower standard being applied where there are no garages in the proposed scheme and the higher standard applied where every dwelling in the scheme is to be provided with a garage.

1. Alternative publicly available off-street parking is available within 2 minutes walk of site
2. Where visitor parking arising from small scale (i.e. infill) development can be accommodated on street without compromising highway safety, the amenity of existing residents or the ability for businesses to operate.
3. Relevant evidence is submitted by the applicant that supports a reduction in standard which considers existing and future car ownership and likely visitor demand.

3.1.12 Paragraph 5.2 of the SPD states that the accessibility zone criteria can be applied to residential developments in exceptional circumstances. The reduction factor for zone 1 indicates that a car free development (0% of unfettered demand) is acceptable and policy compliant.

3.1.13 Whilst the application does not propose a car free development, a reduction against the residential parking standards is proposed. Section 4 of this TS provides clear justification to demonstrate that a reduction is acceptable and compliant with policy.

3.2 Net parking provision summary

3.2.1 Accounting for the acceptable reduction in provision set out within NHDC's SPD, the level of office car parking provision is acceptable, with the proposed reduction presenting a betterment.

3.2.2 **Table 3-4** below provides a summary of the residential parking provision. This includes a comparison against parking requirements against standard the level of provision proposed.

Table 3-4 - Parking Provision Net Summary

	Standards		Proposed		Net
	Number	Ratio	Number	Ratio	Number
Extant Residential	77	1.6/unit	65	1.3/unit	-12

3.2.3 For the residential use, the application proposes a total of 65 spaces, representing a ratio of 1.3. This presents a modest reduction of 12 spaces against the full standards but is within the allowable range when applying the reduction ratio. The following section includes evidence, demonstrating that the level of parking proposed is acceptable.

SECTION 4 Justification for Reduced Provision

4.1 Overview

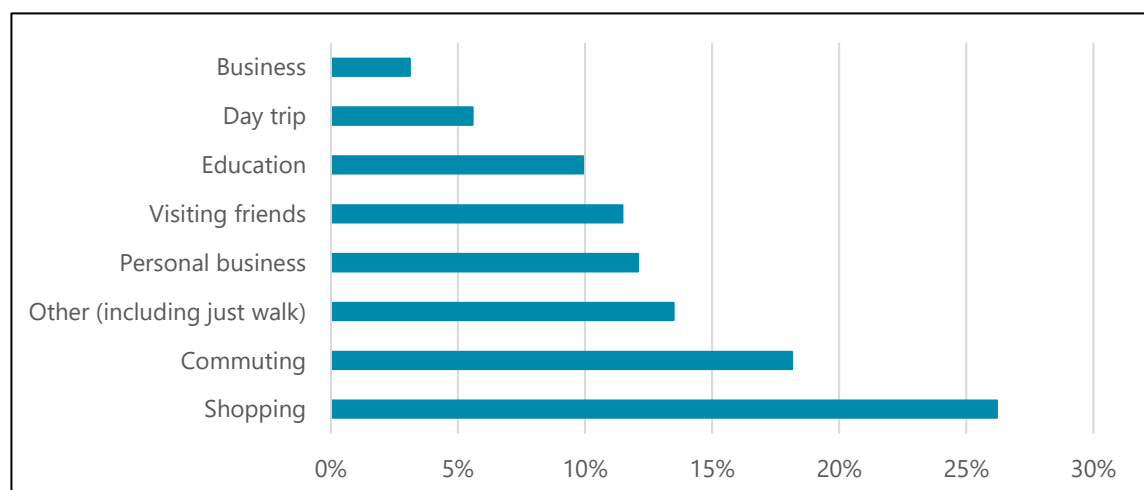
- 4.1.1 The parking standards are now 15 years old. In the intervening period the trajectory for transport planning at new developments has broadly moved from predicting and accommodating car travel toward reducing car dependence and encouraging sustainable travel. A major component of this shift has been towards reducing the provision car parking spaces at developments.
- 4.1.2 In addition to this, the existing standards offer flexibility for a reduced car parking provision on the basis that a suitable justification is provided. To support this, this section sets out six key reasons demonstrating that the level of car parking provision proposed is appropriate.

4.2 Reason 1 – Highly accessible, town centre location

Why do people travel?

- 4.2.1 The National Travel Survey (NTS) is a large scale annual national household survey of personal travel. The survey from 2023 includes a sample size of c22,000 addresses, which offer a representation of average national travel behaviours. The Trips by Journey Purpose results provide a helpful breakdown of average journey purpose proportions, as shown in **Figure 4-1**.

Figure 4-1 - National Travel Survey - Trips by Journey Purpose



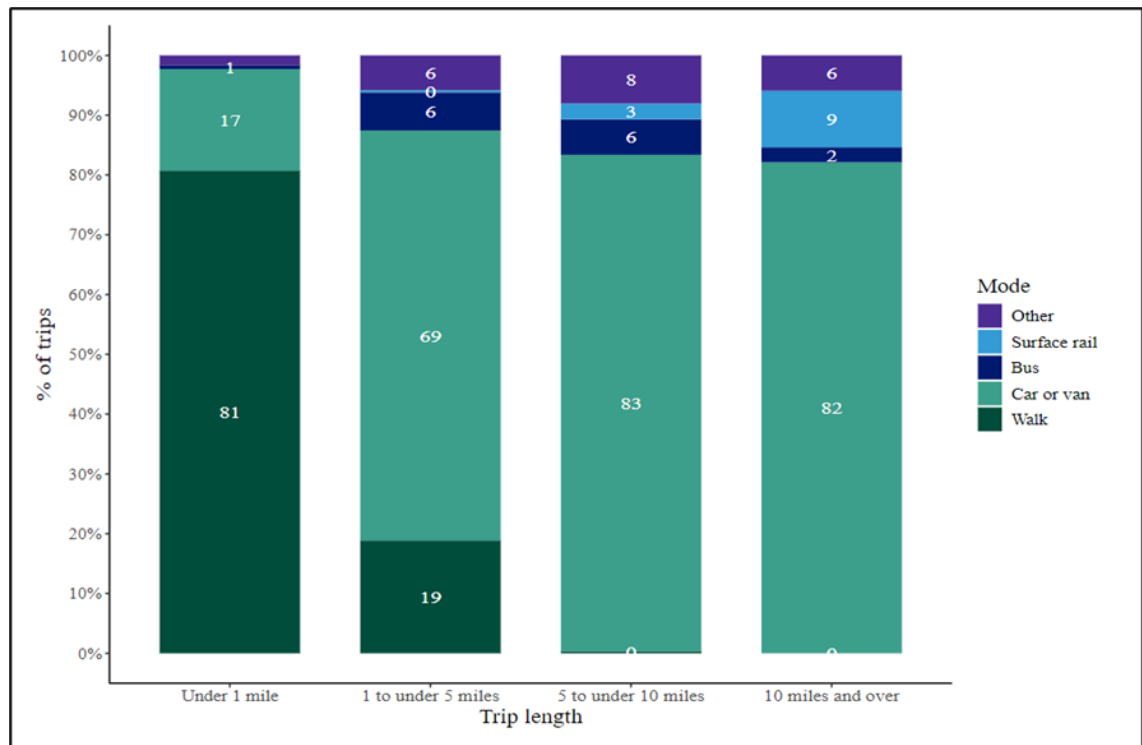
Source: National Travel Survey (2023)

- 4.2.2 The most common trip purpose was shopping (26%), followed by commuting (18%). Personal business (e.g. visiting hairdressers, banks, libraries and churches) is also a popular journey purpose making up 12% of journeys, followed by visiting friends (11%) and education (10%).

How far will people walk and cycle?

4.2.3 The NTS also identifies the mode share of journeys of different lengths and is presented in **Figure 4-2**. This confirms most (81%) trips up to one mile (1.6km) are undertaken on foot.

Figure 4-2 - Mode of Travel by Distance



Source: National Travel Survey (2023)

4.2.4 Journeys to facilities and services within one mile (1.6km) will provide the greatest opportunity for trips to be comfortably made by walking. However, 1.6km is not the maximum walking distance with many people prepared to regularly walk longer distances, and 30% of trips between 1-2 miles being made on foot.

4.2.5 On this basis, it is reasonable to consider a journey of 2 miles (3.2km) as an 'upper' walking distance for most journeys. The below distances have been used for assessing walking journeys:

- Up to 1.6km – comfortable walking distance; and
- Up to 3.2km – upper walking distance.

4.2.6 The DfT's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (2017) states at paragraph 1.16 that:

“... there is significant potential for change in travel behaviour. Two out of every three personal trips are within five miles - an achievable distance to cycle for most people, with many shorter journeys also suitable for walking. For school children, the opportunities are even greater. Three quarters of children live within a 15-minute cycle ride of a secondary school, while more than 90% live within a 15-minute walk or bus journey from a primary school.”

4.2.7 On this basis, 8km (5 miles) is a reasonable cycle distance.

What journeys can be made by walking or cycling?

4.2.8 **Figure 4-3** and **Table 4-1** demonstrate the facilities and services that are within an acceptable walking and cycling distance from the site within Hitchin. These distances have been measured from the centre of the site and utilise the existing walking and cycling network.

Figure 4-3 - Local Facilities and Services Plan

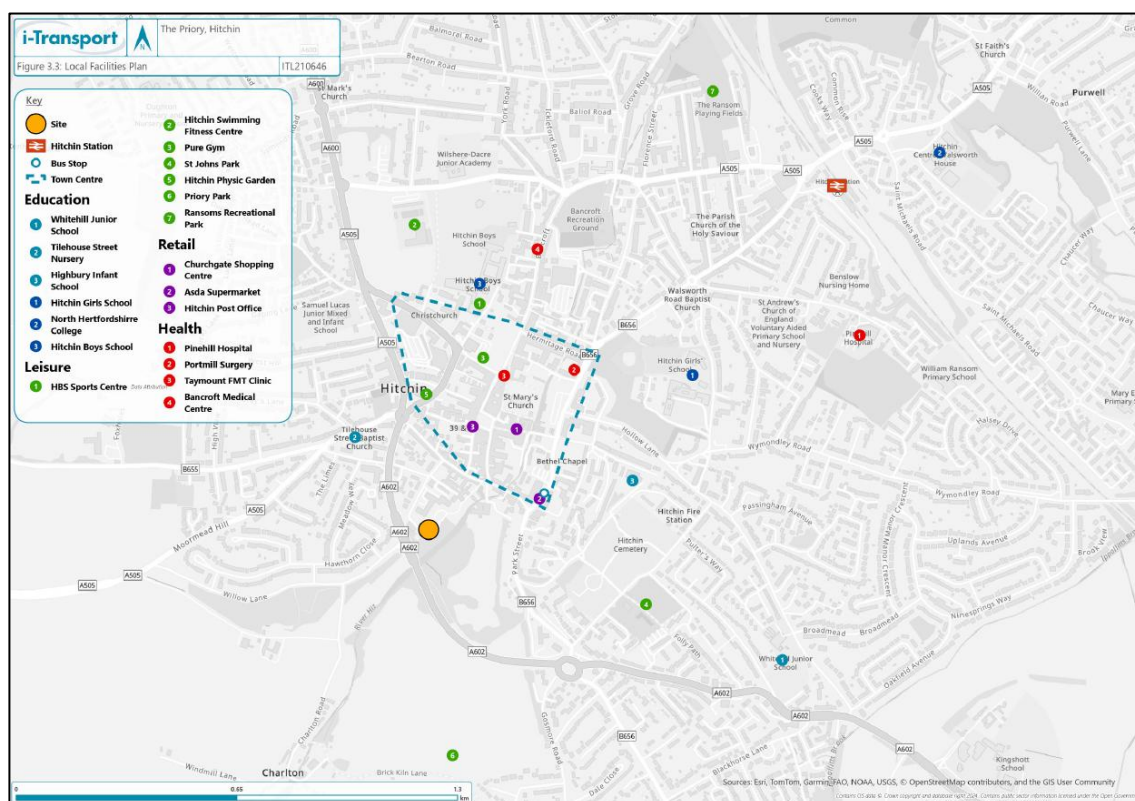


Table 4-1 - Local Facilities Summary Table

Purpose	Destination	Distance (m)	Walking Journey Time (mins)	Cycle Journey Time (mins)
Leisure	HBS Sports Centre	750	10	4
	Hitchin Swimming Fitness Centre	950	13	6

Purpose	Destination	Distance (m)	Walking Journey Time (mins)	Cycle Journey Time (mins)
	Pure Gym	650	9	2
	St Johns Park	1000	14	5
	Hitchin Physic Garden	400	5	1
	Priory Park	900	13	4
	Ransoms Recreational Park	1800	25	6
Education	Whitehall Junior School	1600	23	8
	Tilehouse Street Nursery	400	6	3
	Highbury Infant School	950	13	6
	Hitchin Girls School	1400	21	7
	North Hertfordshire College	2200	30	10
	Hitchin Boys School	800	11	4
Retail	Churchgate Shopping Centre	550	7	2
	Asda Supermarket	550	7	2
	Hitchin Post Office	450	6	1
Healthcare	Pinehill Hospital	1800	25	6
	Portmill Surgery	850	12	3
	Taymount FMT Clinic	550	7	2
	Bancroft Medical Centre	1000	14	5
Transport	Queen Street Bus Stops	550	7	2
	Hitchin Railway Station	1800	25	6

Key:

- Within 1.6km – “reasonable” walking distance
- Within 3.2m – “maximum acceptable” walking distance
- Within 8km – “reasonable” cycling distance

- 4.2.9 As demonstrated, the site has excellent access to a wide range of facilities and services within walking and cycling distance, this is as a result of being situated only 300m from the town centre.
- 4.2.10 Given the close proximity to the town centre, walking is expected to be a popular mode of travel. There is good quality, direct footway connections between the site and the town centre.
- 4.2.11 The proposed development includes provision for secure and covered cycle stores, further encouraging active travel by offering workers and residents the option to cycle.

What longer journeys can be made by public transport?

- 4.2.12 As identified in **Table 4-1**, most journey purposes can be made locally by active travel modes. However, some longer journeys will need to be made, including for employment purposes, this section considers the opportunities for these journeys to be undertaken by public transport.

Bus travel

- 4.2.13 The nearest bus stops are located approximately 600m to the east on Queen Street (outside Asda). These stops are very well served by frequent bus services, as summarised in **Table 4-2**.

Table 4-2 - Bus Service Summary

Bus Service	Route	Frequency		
		Weekday	Saturday	Sunday
88	Luton – Hitchin	5 per day	4 per day	-
101	Luton – Hitchin - Stevenage	3 per hour	3 per hour	2 per hour
314/ 315	Hitchin – Welwyn Garden City	5 per day	5 per day	-
304	Hitchin – St Albans	6 per day	5 per day	3 per day
FL10	Maulden - Hitchin	1 service on a Tuesday	-	-

Source: Intalink timetables

- 4.2.16 As demonstrated, the site is within accessible distance to a wider range of bus routes offering frequent, convenient access to key destinations across the wider region.

Rail travel

- 4.2.17 Hitchin railway station is located circa 2km from the site, within maximum acceptable walking distance and acceptable cycling distance. The station is served by Thameslink, Great Northern and Grand Central trains offering frequent services to various destinations, summarised below:

Table 4-3 - Rail Service Frequency

Destination	Peak Frequency (per hour)
London King's Cross	2
Cambridge	2
Peterborough	2

Destination	Peak Frequency (per hour)
Brighton	1 (via London)
Letchworth Garden City	1
Horsham	2 (via London)

Summary

4.2.19 The site offers excellent opportunities for sustainable modes of travel, with a wide range of facilities and services available within the town centre. Frequently serviced bus stops are also within walking distance of the site providing access across the region, as well as Hitchin railway station which is within walking and cycling distance for longer distance journeys.

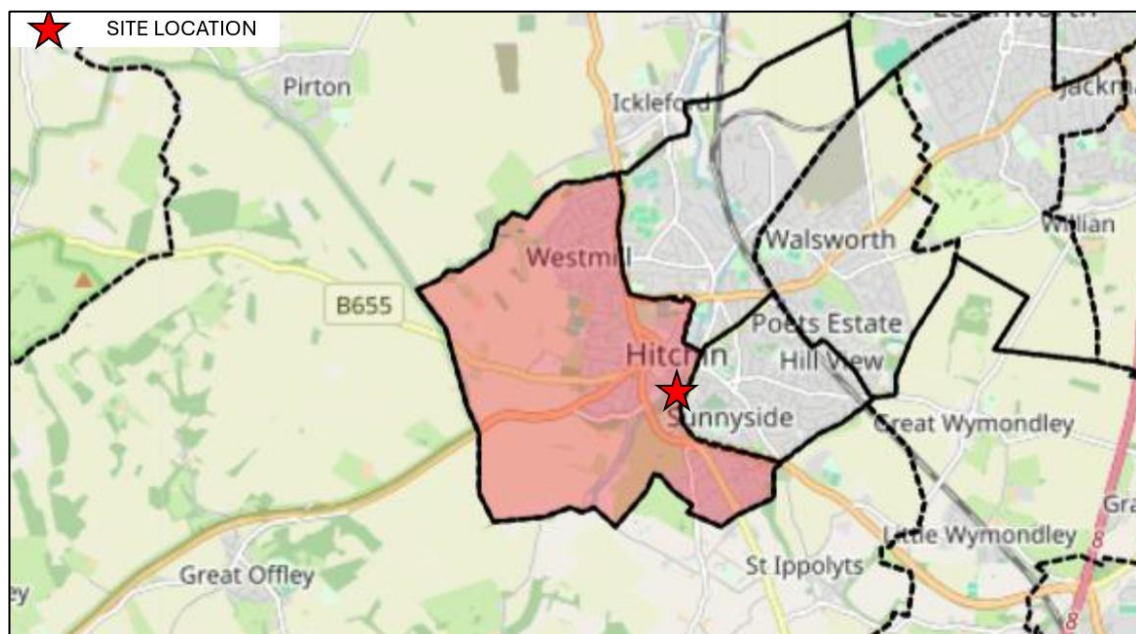
4.2.20 It can therefore be concluded that the site is situated within a highly accessible location. In line with Paragraph 115 of the NPPF, future residents and visitors to the site will be encouraged to travel by sustainable travel modes, making the most of the site location. Providing an appropriate level of car parking is crucial to this strategy, a suitable balance is proposed to not over-provide and subsequently encourage private car use in a highly accessible location.

4.3 Reason 2 – Car Ownership Levels

4.3.1 The proposed development is composed of a mix of one- and two-bedroom flats. The SPD standards for 3- or 4-bedroom dwellings are the same as 2+ bedrooms (minimum of 2 spaces per dwelling). The standards, therefore, do not account for the variation in parking demand and ownership for different size dwellings, and are disproportionately high for smaller dwellings.

4.3.2 Average car ownership data has been obtained from 2021 Census information for MSOA North Hertfordshire 008, in which the site is located. **Figure 4-4** shows the MSOA location:

Figure 4-4 - MSOA North Hertfordshire 008 Location



4.3.3 The data reveals to following for the area:

- An average car ownership per household of 1.20 cars.
- 43% of dwellings are 1 or 2-bedroom.

4.3.4 With 1 or 2-bedroom dwellings only accounting for 43% of dwellings making up the Census average car ownership, it is likely that the car ownership levels associated with the proposed development would be significantly less than the average local car ownership levels of 1.20.

4.4 Reason 3 – Publicly Available Car Parking

4.4.1 Paragraph 4.8 of NHDC's parking SPD states the following:

"Applications for new residential development must seek to promote walking, cycling and public transport and in doing so developers may make a case for negotiating the provision of parking below the minimum standard. Clear evidence must be provided that residents and visitor parking demand will not exceed the parking provided OR that alternative short and long stay daytime and evening parking will be readily available to future residents and visitors. The developer should identify examples of this evidence from other developments or locations in similar circumstances to those found in the district. The Council does not consider, however, that residents will choose not to own cars if they live within the most accessible areas or corridors."

4.4.2 As the SPD acknowledges, access to nearby public car parks offers the opportunity to accommodate parking, particularly for visitors. Being situated within a town centre location, the site has excellent access to publicly available car parks, with several within walking distance.

4.4.3 The nearest car park is Biggin Lane Car Park which is a 5-7-minute walk from the site. The car park offers 72 standard parking spaces, 2 blue badge bays and 1 motorcycle bay.

4.4.4 Biggin Lane Car Park has the following opening time:

- Monday to Thursday and Sunday, 24 hours
- Friday 8.30am to midnight (market day)
- Saturday 8.30am to midnight (market day)

4.4.5 The parking rates (at the time of writing) are summarised in **Table 4-4** below:

Table 4-4 - Biggin Lane Car Park Tariffs Summary

Tariff Period	Duration	Price
8am–3pm	Up to 1 hour	£1.60
	Up to 2 hours	£2.70
	Up to 3 hours	£4.30
	Up to 4 hours	£5.80
3pm–6pm	Flat rate	£1.70

Source: North Herts Council

Note: There is no charge for blue badge holders or the motorcycle bay

4.4.7 Additional car parks are also within walking distance. This includes St Mary's Square Car Park which is only a slightly further walk and offers 127 standard spaces and 6 blue badge spaces.

4.4.8 With access to ample publicly available car parking, it is unnecessary to accommodate visitor car parking on the site or provide an overprovision for residents, encouraging private car use.

4.5 Reason 4 – Poor Use of Space

4.5.1 Paragraph 4.4 of NHDC SPD states:

“A balance must be sought between parking provision and high quality landscaping and open space on schemes that are dominated by larger units and not having these layouts over provided by car parking. Minimum residential standards should not compromise quality and design of layout by over provision of parking.”

4.5.2 The retention of hardstanding space to accommodate unnecessary car parking does not offer best use of space against competing uses. In line with the intentions of Paragraph 4.4 of the SPD, the proposed development seeks to create high-quality spaces through provision of landscaping and open space. Overprovision of car parking will not only encourage unsustainable modes of travel but will also result in a lower quality space, with landscaping and open space areas needing to be reduced, or lost, to accommodate unnecessary car parking.

4.6 Reason 5 - Nearby Precedents of Low Parking Ratios

Local Precedents

4.6.1 A review of nearby, recently consented residential development has been undertaken to compare level of car parking provision agreed. **Table 4-5** below provides a summary of three example sites in similar locations where reduced car parking provision has been accepted.

Table 4-5 - Nearby Precedent Parking Provision

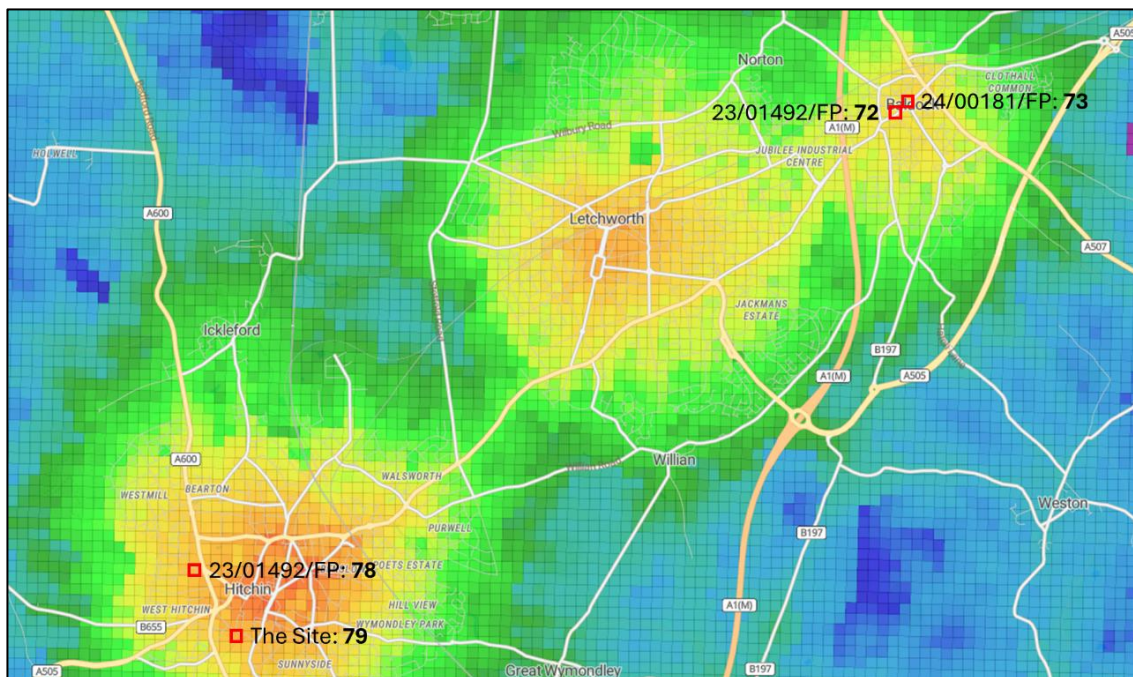
Ref	Address	Town Centre	Description	Car Ratio	Committee Report Extract
24/00756/FP	Coach House, Cloisters, Hitchin Street, Hertfordshire	Yes	Change of use of rearward buildings from offices to five 2-bed dwellings, retention of office use class to main front building, provision of 9 parking spaces and bin storage. Removal of existing archway gates and installation of new sliding gates	Parking ratio = 1.0	- Each dwelling gets 1 allocated car parking space; 4 spaces for office units. - Does not meet minimum parking standard (Policy T2, Vehicle Parking SPD). - Site is close to public transport, including Baldock Train Station. - Officer conclusion: Lack of parking not an objection due to sustainable location.
24/00181/FP	The George at Baldock, Hitchin, Hertfordshire	Yes	Part change of use and conversion of ground floor restaurant to four hotel rooms (C1 use) and one retail (E(a) use) and bar unit, including insertion of two windows to rear elevation and internal alterations	No car parking provided	- No access to a private car park; on-street parking available. - Public car parks present in town centre. - Hertfordshire Highways raised no objection. - Officer conclusion: Adequate parking; works not harmful to highway safety.
23/01492/FP	Westbourne Residential Care Home, 9 Bedford Road, Hitchin, Hertfordshire	Edge of Town Centre (similar distance from Town Centre as our site)	Change of use of care home to 16 residential apartments (C3 use), with roof extension to comprise increased ridge height, dormer windows and rooflights, with internal and external alterations	No off-street parking. On-street parking ratio = 0.75	- 12 off-street car spaces + 3 cycle stores (up to 19 cycles). - Minimum requirement: 18 car spaces + 12 visitor spaces (total 30). - Shortfall of 18 car spaces; exceeds cycle parking standard. - Site is highly sustainable: close to town centre amenities and public transport. - Flatted development reduces need for personal vehicles. - Officer conclusion: Reduced car parking acceptable due to sustainable location.

4.6.2 As set out, all three sites have an equivalent or lower car parking ratio to the proposed development. For all three proposals, the main reasoning for acceptance of the lower car parking ratio is the sustainable location of the sites. DfT's Connectivity Tool has been reviewed to compare the accessibility of the site against the nearby developments as listed above.

4.6.3 The Connectivity Tool is a connectivity metric developed by DfT which measures a person's ability to reach employment, services and social engagements. Each location is provided with a score between 0 and 100 where 100 represents the most connected area.

4.6.4 **Figure 4-5** below shows an extract of the Connectivity Tool with the site locations annotated.

Figure 4-5 – DfT Connectivity Tool Score Extract



Source: DfT Connectivity Tool

4.6.5 As presented, the site achieves a connectivity score of 79, exceeding the score of all three other sites listed in **Table 4-5**. On this basis, the proposed parking ratio of 1.3 presents a generous level of car parking provision, particularly in comparison to the nearby precedent consents.

4.7 Reason 6 – On-street Parking Controls

4.7.1 For the reasons set out above, the proposed development will provide ample on-site car parking capacity to accommodate the likely demand. Therefore, the proposed development is unlikely to generate an increase in over-spill on-street parking on the roads within the site proximity.

4.7.2 In locations where insufficient on-site parking is provided, issues only tend to occur where parking is unrestricted on the surrounding roads resulting in unsocial parking activity.

4.7.3 The site is situated within CPZ Zone C, which operates Monday – Saturday 8am – 6pm. Therefore, preventing and providing suitable enforcement against unsocial on-street car parking activity.

SECTION 5 Summary and Conclusion

- 5.1.1 The Transport Statement has been prepared to support a planning application for external works at Radcliffe House, The Priory, Hitchin. The building is currently used as offices but has prior approval consent to be converted into a total of 49 new residential dwellings.
- 5.1.2 The proposed works involve external alterations and landscaping improvements, this includes a reduction in car parking provision, which is the only material transport matter. No changes are proposed to the building's use, number of dwellings, or access arrangements. The application includes increased cycle parking, including a total of 124 spaces (62 long stay and 62 short stay), exceeding the requirements for the 49 approved dwellings, along with an enlarged refuse store. Waste collection arrangements remain the same, with bins taken to the central collection point on Old Charlton Road, using a mechanically assisted tug from the basement store.
- 5.1.3 Accounting for the acceptable reduction in provision as set out within NHDC's Vehicle Parking SPD, the level of office car parking provision proposed is acceptable.
- 5.1.4 For the residential use, the application proposes a total of 65 spaces, representing a residential parking ratio of 1.3. This presents a reduction of 12 spaces against the level based on the standards.
- 5.1.5 Paragraph 4.2 of NHDC's Vehicle Parking SPD states:

"Flexibility is built into the standards. However, any exceptions to the minimums MUST be accompanied by a strong evidence case with specific reference to considering car ownership and visitor parking demand for the potential lifetime of the development."

- 5.1.6 Accordingly, this Transport Statement set out a series of reasons demonstrating that the level of car parking proposed is suitable for the extant use of the site, taking into account the site's excellent location with good connectivity to sustainable modes, these are summarised as:
- 1 Highly accessible location of the site (adjacent to Hitchin town centre).
 - 2 Parking standards are not reflective of actual local car ownership levels.
 - 3 Public, town centre car parks accessible within short walking distances.
 - 4 Parking in accordance with standards will result in overprovision and poor use of space.
 - 5 Precedents already established from consents of less accessible developments.
 - 6 On-street parking is restricted in proximity of the site, managing any overspill activity.

- 5.1.7 Through the evidence provided, it has been demonstrated that the proposed development satisfies local policy requirements including Local Plan Policy T2: Parking. With a robust justification presented for the variation to SPD parking standards accounting for the site context.
- 5.1.8 The proposed development will not generate an unacceptable impact on highway safety or generate severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network and therefore should not be prevented or refused on highway grounds in line with Paragraph 116 of the NPPF.

