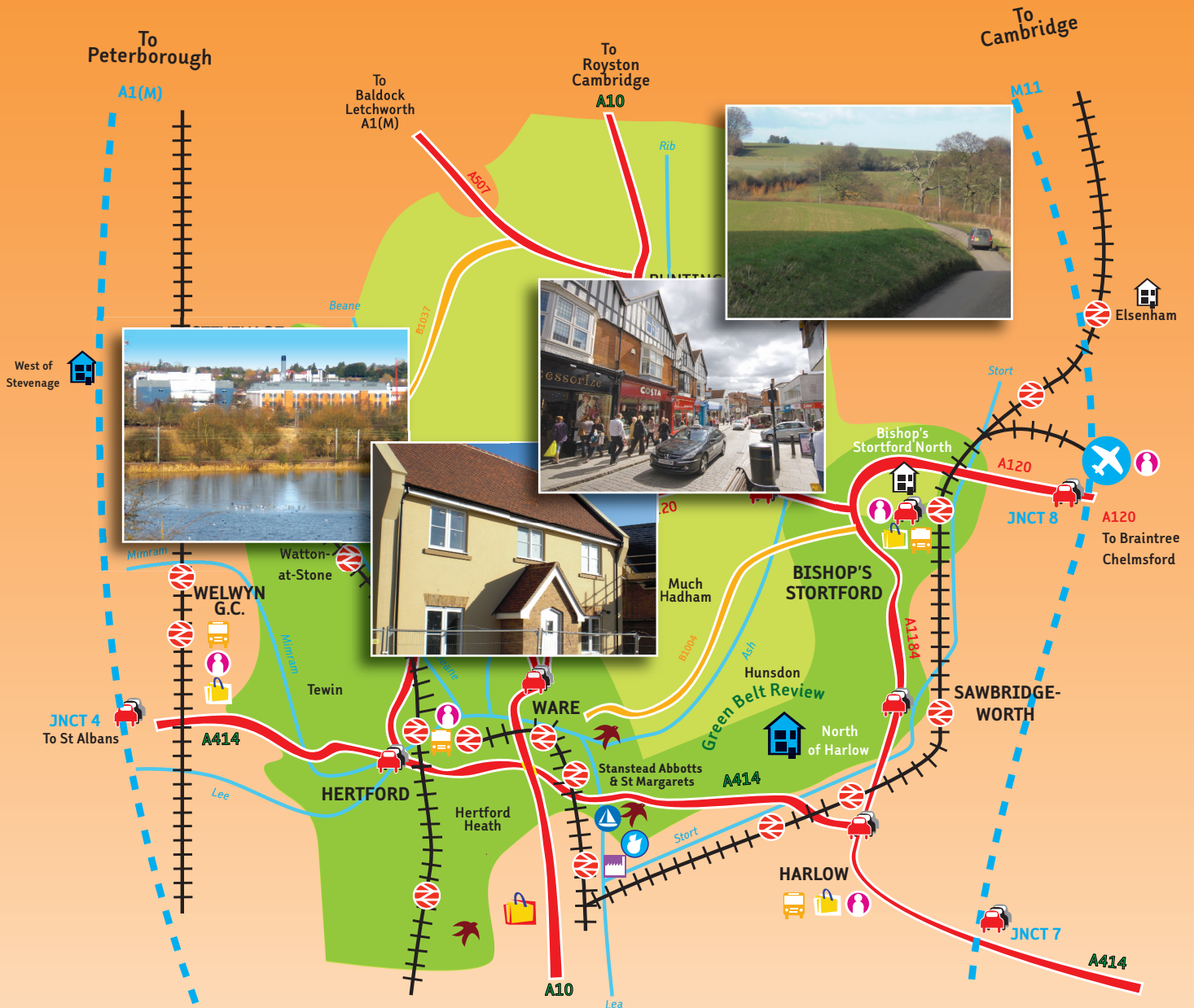


Issues and Options Consultation

Preferred Options Consultation

Submission Consultation

## CONSULTATION DOCUMENT



Consultation closes 5pm Thursday November 25, 2010

Visit our Consultation Portal at

<http://eastherts-consult.limehouse.co.uk>



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You may only be interested in a selection of the questions in this document. If so, you may wish to navigate directly to particular sections.

To do this, please use the navigation bar on the left-hand side of the screen. You will notice that the document is arranged across ten chapters. If you click on the '+' symbol next to each chapter, you can show (expand) the particular sections within each chapter. By clicking on the blue icon for any particular chapter or section you will be directed straight to the start of the relevant content. By clicking the '-' symbol you can hide (collapse) sections within each chapter.

The location of each question in the document is shown in the table below.

Chapter	Question Numbers	Question Section Numbers
1: Background and Context	1 and 2	1.6
2: Key Issues and Vision	3 to 21	2.4 to 2.13
3: Development Strategy	22 and 23	3.14 and 3.15
4: Bishop's Stortford	24 to 26	4.5 to 4.6
5: Buntingford	27 to 29	5.5 to 5.6
6: Hertford	30 to 32	6.5 to 6.6
7: Sawbridgeworth	33 to 35	7.5 to 7.6
8: Ware	36 to 38	8.5 to 8.6
9: Villages	39 to 42	9.5 to 9.7
10: North of Harlow	43	10.6

In order to understand any consultation question, you should read the relevant parts of the Issues and Options consultation document. Chapters 1 to 3 provide the context for subsequent chapters, and therefore ideally you should read them first, even if you only intend to answer one or two questions on a particular issue or settlement. If you answer questions on any particular settlement, you should read the entire chapter in order to fully understand the context of the question. For ease of reading, you can also select any chapter or section to download as a PDF by clicking the 'Download Document' button.

Consultation questions are contained in blue boxes. Above each box there is a line which says "Add Comment". Click the words "Add Comment" and a form will appear, into which you can type your response or upload a file (such as a Word document or PDF). You can then either save and review your submission, or click "Submit".

# How to navigate this document

East Herts Core Strategy | Issues and Options



# Chapter 1

## Background and Context

## 1.1 Purpose of this Issues and Options Consultation Document

- 1.1.1 This Issues and Options consultation document represents the initial draft of the East Herts Core Strategy; the new overarching planning document for the district which, as part of the East Herts Local Development Framework (LDF), will replace the East Herts Local Plan 2007 from 2013.
- 1.1.2 The focus of the planning system has shifted away from being solely concerned with how land is used, to a wider understanding of how places such as towns and villages function. This is especially important in a rural district like East Herts where we need to carefully balance competing social, environmental and economic demands to ensure that we maintain our high quality of life for both our generation and future generations.
- 1.1.3 East Herts Council, as the local planning authority must prepare a series of planning policies for its local area that set out how the Council will manage development proposals on behalf of its residents. These policies are set out in a plan which is used to judge applications for development such as changes to the use of land and the design of the built environment. However, unlike the Local Plan, the LDF is not a single document; rather it is a series or folder of documents each of which has a separate purpose and function.
- 1.1.4 More information on the East Herts LDF can be found in the Issues and Options Supporting Document that accompanies this consultation which is available to view and download at [www.tinyurls.co.uk/H9282](http://www.tinyurls.co.uk/H9282).

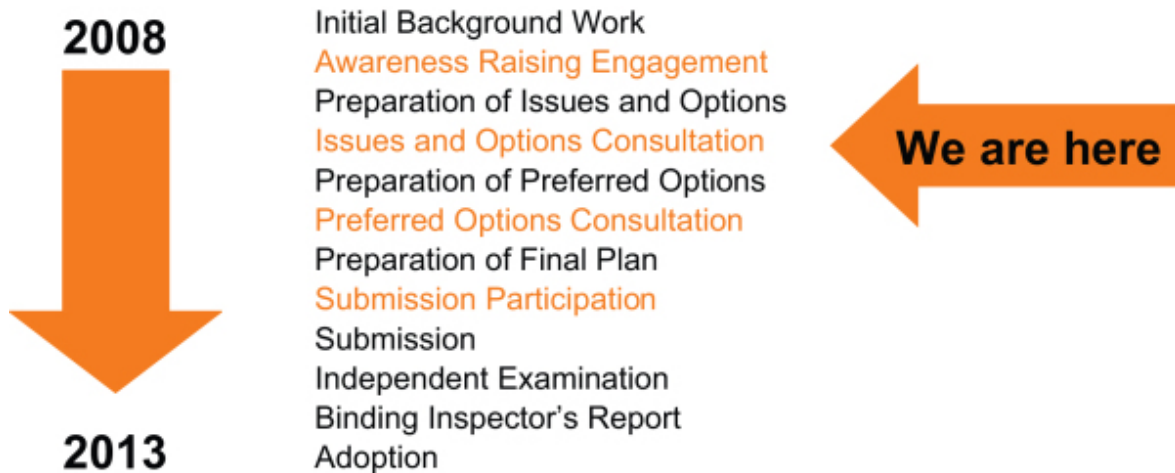
This chapter includes questions 1 and 2.

## 1.2 What is the Core Strategy?

- 1.2.1 The Core Strategy is the key planning document for the district that will set out the overarching development strategy for East Herts to 2031. Importantly, the Core Strategy sets the policy context for subsequent LDF documents by establishing the principles of development and identifying the broad locations for growth e.g. towns and villages. It will only include 'high-level' district-wide planning policies. The Core Strategy is not concerned with detailed policy issues e.g. design and amenity or the allocation of specific sites for development.
- 1.2.2 This Issues and Options consultation is not the final document and it does not constitute Council policy. It simply asks a series of questions, the answers to which will help prepare the next stage of the Core Strategy, known as Preferred Options. It is based on feedback from consultation that the Council has already undertaken. As the Council fine-tunes its plans over subsequent stages, the document will evolve and there will be further opportunity for

community and stakeholder engagement. This ensures that everyone has several opportunities to comment as the document develops. The stages of Core Strategy preparation are set out in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 Core Strategy Stages of Production (Orange highlighted text represents stages of production)



## 1.3 How to respond to this Consultation Document

**1.3.1** This document is arranged over 10 Chapters. This chapter deals with the background and methodology to this Issues and Options consultation document.

- Chapter 2 identifies the key issues facing East Herts, options for policy approach of the Core Strategy and an emerging LDF vision for East Herts;
- Chapter 3 sets out the options for identifying the broad locations of growth and approaches to distributing development across East Herts;
- Chapters 4 to 9 then set out the issues and options for the five towns and the villages; and,
- Chapter 10 deals with growth to the north of Harlow as required by the East of England Plan. This has been identified separately because this growth is in addition to that set out in Chapter 3.

**1.3.2** Much of the text in this document is explanatory and has been included to guide you through the Council's thought processes and to explain why and how the Council has reached these policy options. Throughout the text there are coloured boxes linked to highlighted text that provide further information including explanations about particular aspects of the planning system and/or the consultation process. Although we have tried to reduce the 'jargon' used in this document, there are a number of technical terms. These are explained in the Glossary.

## Example Information Box

- 1.3.3** Given the purpose of this Issues and Options document, the Council is not seeking comments on its general content. To this end, the consultation is based upon a series of specific questions that seek your views on the policy options. For ease of reference, the consultation questions are numbered consecutively and presented as a blue box at the appropriate place in the document.

## Example Consultation Question Box

- 1.3.4** Your comments will help us shape the final Core Strategy document. The policies and proposals in the final document will affect everyone that lives, works or visits East Herts - this is your opportunity to get involved and have your say on shaping the future of your district. If you have a query about any aspect of this consultation please contact the Planning Policy Team on 01279 655261 or via email at [planningpolicy@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@eastherts.gov.uk).
- 1.3.5** Also available and accompanying this Issues and Options consultation are the Sustainability Appraisal report (see Testing the Options in Section 1.6) and **Supporting Document**. These documents provide further background information to this consultation document but do not form part of the consultation itself.

The Supporting Document lists background information to the Issues and Options Consultation including the policy context and evidence base. It is available to view and download at [www.tinyurls.co.uk/H9282](http://www.tinyurls.co.uk/H9282).

## 1.4 Why Planning Matters

- 1.4.1** Planning is important because it shapes the places where we live and work. Good planning is a positive and proactive process, operating in the public interest that seeks to manage development and the use of land. It ensures that we get the right development, in the right place and at the right time, supported by the necessary infrastructure. It makes a positive difference to people's lives and helps to deliver homes, jobs, and better opportunities for all, whilst protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, and conserving the countryside and open spaces that are vital resources for us all.



- 1.4.2** By identifying in advance how a town or village will change, the necessary infrastructure, including community facilities, can be established alongside the development. It will also ensure that we have sufficient land in suitable and sustainable locations to meet our housing and employment needs. This meets the Council’s **corporate vision** “to improve the quality of people’s lives and preserve all that’s best in East Herts.”

The Corporate Strategic Plan 2009-2012 is available at [www.tinyurls.co.uk/N9281](http://www.tinyurls.co.uk/N9281)

It sets out how East Herts Council will achieve its vision on behalf of our residents and identifies six priorities. The priority for the LDF is entitled “Shaping Now, Shaping the Future” and this consultation document sets out in more detail how this priority is to be achieved by the application of the principles of planning, community engagement and infrastructure delivery.

- 1.4.3** The Core Strategy will have major effects, not only on how people lead their lives, through access to homes and jobs, but it will have environmental and cultural impacts as well. It is essential therefore, that the policy options in the East Herts Core Strategy are based on a thorough analysis of robust evidence and that they are clearly derived from the plan-making process.
- 1.4.4** Because the Core Strategy will set planning policy it needs to be examined by an independent Planning Inspector. The job of the Inspector is to check that the Core Strategy is **sound**; that is, to ensure that not only have all the necessary legal requirements been complied with, but that the policies are justified and effective.

To be sound, the Core Strategy should be justified, effective and consistent with national planning policy. ‘Justified’ means that the Core Strategy must be based on a robust and credible evidence base and be the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives. ‘Effective’ means that the document must be deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored.

## 1.5 Identifying Issues and Generating Options

- 1.5.1** As its name suggests, there are two elements to this Issues and Options consultation document; the identification of issues and the generation of alternative options that respond to the issues. The Issues and Options process is shown in Figure 1.2.

## Step 1: Issues Identification

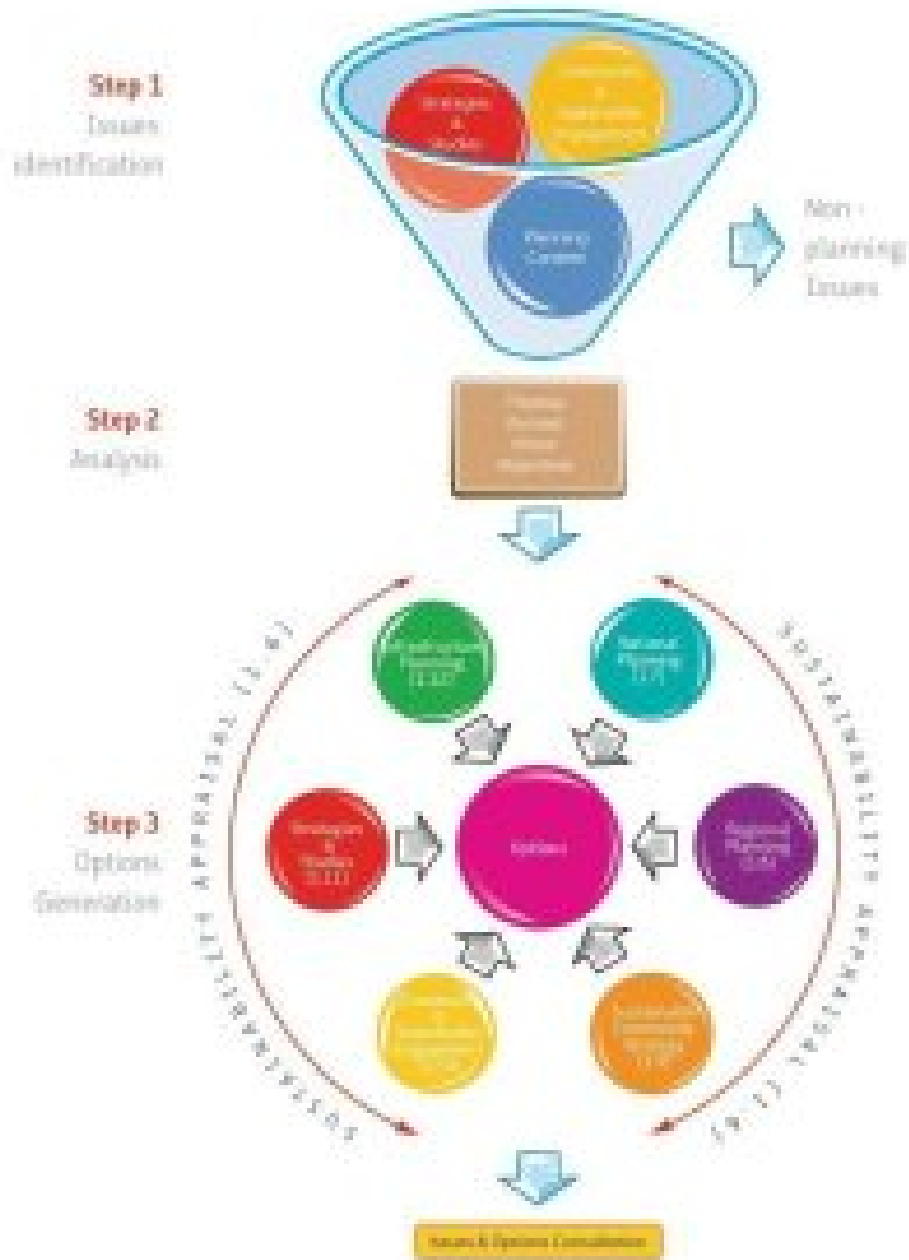
- 1.5.2** The key issues facing East Herts district have been identified from 3 main sources: published strategies and studies, an appreciation of the planning context for East Herts e.g. national and regional planning policy, and feedback from community and stakeholder engagement including with East Herts residents.
- 1.5.3** The key issues have been distilled through the identification of their various strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. By analysing the large amount of information through this filtering process we have been able to draw out the main characteristics of the district and identify the key challenges facing East Herts. The issues facing East Herts are set out in Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision.
- 1.5.4** Some of the community and stakeholder feedback received related to non-planning issues, such as the condition of roads and pavements and the provision of health services. Because these issues cannot be directly dealt with through the LDF, we have passed them on to the relevant Council department or other service provider. This will ensure that the appropriate organisation is fully aware of your concerns.

## Step 2: Analysis

The information from the evidence base is set out in Chapter 2 and has been used in the following ways:

- To generate a series of themes to give a structure to the LDF;
- To paint the portrait of the district i.e. what East Herts is like today;
- To identify an emerging LDF vision, i.e. what we want East Herts to be like in 2031;
- To derive the series of LDF strategic objectives that will deliver the LDF vision for East Herts.

Figure 1.2 The Issues and Options Process (section references in brackets)



### Step 3: Options Generation

**1.5.5** Once the issues have been identified and the LDF strategic objectives drafted, a series of policy options that respond to the challenges facing East Herts can be generated. The options can be seen as different ways of fulfilling the objectives of the Core Strategy. In making its choices, the Council has

understood the need to produce a sound Core Strategy, both in terms of the content of the document itself but also the procedures that the Council must follow in producing the Core Strategy.

- 1.5.6** The generation of Core Strategy options is an evolving process. The various policy options will be set out in both this Issues and Options consultation document (see Chapters 2 to 9) and in the Preferred Options consultation document.

## 1.6 Testing the Options

- 1.6.1** To ensure that the options are realistic they have been informed by the **Sustainability Appraisal**. This is an assessment of the social, environmental and economic impacts of a plan and is an integral part of the plan-making process. It is the means by which the reasonable alternatives are evaluated to ensure that the final plan is the most appropriate. The Sustainability Appraisal also includes a rural proofing checklist, an equalities impact assessment and health impact assessment. The purpose of these additional assessments is to ensure that full consideration is given to these topics.

The East Herts Sustainability Appraisal has been undertaken by consultants Scott Wilson Ltd. The full East Herts Sustainability Appraisal is available at [www.tinyurls.co.uk/H9282](http://www.tinyurls.co.uk/H9282).

Sustainability Appraisal is required by S19 (5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 1.6.2** Although not a policy document the Issues and Options consultation provides a useful opportunity to obtain feedback on the Sustainability Appraisal; a key technical process that informs the Core Strategy.

### Question 1

Sustainability Appraisal

Do you have any comments on the Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal?

- 1.6.3** We are also required by Article 6 of the Habitats Directive 1992 to test the potential impacts of the Core Strategy on wildlife sites of European importance such as Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and RAMSAR Sites, both within and outside East Herts. In addition, therefore, to the Sustainability Appraisal a separate Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been undertaken.

The East Herts Habitats Regulations Assessment has been undertaken by consultants Scott Wilson Ltd and is available at [www.tinyurls.co.uk/H9282](http://www.tinyurls.co.uk/H9282).

- 1.6.4** Like the Sustainability Appraisal itself, the Habitats Regulations Assessment is not a policy document. However, the Issues and Options consultation provides a useful opportunity to obtain feedback on the Habitats Regulations Assessment.

## Question 2

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Do you have any comments on the Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Assessment?

## 1.7 National Planning Context

- 1.7.1** The fundamental aim of the UK planning system is to achieve sustainable development, that is, to ensure a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations, by balancing competing social, environmental and economic demands and resources.
- 1.7.2** At the **national level**, the Government's planning objectives are set out in a series of topic based Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPG), Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Circulars. These documents set out the broad principles and key objectives that the planning system should seek to achieve and are **material considerations** when making planning decisions and preparing planning documents. In addition there are various Acts of Parliament that establish the legal requirements of the planning system. A full list of relevant national planning documents can be found in the Glossary.

Planning Policy Guidance notes, Planning Policy Statements and Planning Circulars can be found on the Communities and Local Government (CLG) website at [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

Material considerations are matters that although not included within the statutory Development Plan, should be taken into account when making planning decisions.

## 1.8 Regional Planning Context

- 1.8.1** East Herts is located within the East of England region and in preparing the Core Strategy the Council must be in **general conformity** with the East of England Plan, prepared by the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA).

The East of England Plan is the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the East of England Region. Section 24(1) (a) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out the requirement for the Core Strategy to be in general conformity with the RSS. This means that the detailed policies in the Core Strategy must reflect the broad content of the RSS.

- 1.8.2** The **East of England Plan** is the strategic planning document that sets the planning framework for the region as a whole. It is an important document because it is used alongside the Council's local planning documents to guide development and determine planning applications in East Herts. The East of England Plan was published in its final form in May 2008 and runs from 2001 to 2021. It includes district level housing numbers and county level employment figures.
- 1.8.3** However, in March 2010, EERA published a **Draft Review** of the East of England Plan in order to extend its provisions to 2031, including revised housing and employment figures for the period 2011 to 2031. Although the East of England Plan Review is still emerging and subject to further stages of public consultation, it is anticipated that it will be approved by the Government and finally published in 2011. It will then replace the current East of England Plan, published in 2008.
- 1.8.4** We need to ensure that the East Herts Core Strategy is in general conformity with the East of England Plan. Since the East Herts Core Strategy will be adopted in 2013, in preparing the Core Strategy we need to take into account not only the 2008 East of England Plan itself, but also the Review and any further revisions and/or changes to regional planning policy.
- 1.8.5** Since its publication in 2008, the East of England Plan has also been reviewed in respect of Gypsies and Travellers. Known as a **Single Issue Review** and finalised in July 2009, Policy H3 on Gypsies and Travellers has been revised and a new Policy H4 on Travelling Showpeople has been included.

The 2008 East of England Plan, the 2010 Review and the 2009 Single Issue Review are available to view on the Government Office for the East of England's website at [www.tinyurls.co.uk/J8618](http://www.tinyurls.co.uk/J8618)

- 1.8.6** Following the General Election on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2010, the new Government has announced its intention to “rapidly abolish Regional Strategies” and implement further changes to the planning system. At the time of writing, the detail of how and when these changes will be implemented has not been set out. However, it appears that Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) are set to remain as the mechanism for local planning decisions.
- 1.8.7** The content of this Issues and Options document takes account of the policies as currently set out in the East of England Plan. This is because until the legislation changes, the East of England Plan still forms part of the statutory Development Plan for East Herts, and we are required by Act of Parliament to be in conformity with it.
- 1.8.8** We still need to prepare a local planning framework which not only guides development, but also protects the special character of East Herts and the quality of life of our residents. Also, because we are still relatively early-on in the plan-making process, as we progress, the Core Strategy will evolve to take into account any subsequent changes to the planning system, including for example, abolition of the East of England Plan.
- 1.8.9** Furthermore, because the Issues and Options can be seen as a discussion document, it provides a useful opportunity to obtain valuable community and stakeholder feedback on the full range of issues and options, including those identified for East Herts in the East of England Plan.

## 1.9 Partnership Working

- 1.9.1** The shift to the new planning system also enables closer links to be established between LDFs and **Sustainable Community Strategies (SCSs)**. SCSs seek to improve the quality of life for residents by addressing difficult cross-cutting issues affecting local areas, such as their economic future, social exclusion and climate change.

Sustainable Community Strategies are required by the Local Government Act 2000 and the statutory guidance “Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities” 2008 is available to view and download at [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

- 1.9.2** Both Hertfordshire County Council and East Herts Council have prepared SCSs through the vehicle of their respective Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP); partnership bodies that bring together local public and private sector organisations and service providers. The Hertfordshire SCS, ‘**Hertfordshire 2021: A Brighter Future**’, prepared by Hertfordshire Forward, sets out a series of long-term objectives and short-term actions to tackle the key issues facing Hertfordshire, both on a county-wide and more local basis. It also includes a vision for Hertfordshire to 2021 as set out below.

Hertfordshire 2021: A Brighter Future Vision

*To ensure that by 2021 the good quality of life offered by Hertfordshire is sustained and improved, so that everyone, including the most vulnerable, has the opportunity to share in our success and live in vibrant, safe and cohesive communities*

- 1.9.3** At the district level, ‘Everyone Matters’, the East Herts SCS was prepared by the East Herts LSP in 2009 and sets the LSP’s vision and ambitions for the district to 2024.

Hertfordshire 2021: A Brighter Future is available to view and download at <http://www.hertslink.org/hertfordshireforward/15communitystrategy/>

Everyone Matters is available to view and download at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/sustainablecommunitystrategy/](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/sustainablecommunitystrategy/)

- 1.9.4** The Core Strategy must have regard to both the Hertfordshire and East Herts SCS. Given the relationship between the SCS and the Core Strategy, it was agreed that a shared vision (see Chapter 2, Section 2.13) and structure to both the East Herts LDF and East Herts SCS would be appropriate.

Section 19(2) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out the requirement that the Core Strategy must have regard to the community strategy for the area. This means that the Core Strategy must take into account the aims and objectives of the SCS.

## 1.10 Evidence: Community and Stakeholder Engagement

- 1.10.1** **Community and stakeholder engagement** is an important and central feature of the new planning system. Not only should local communities and stakeholders (including service providers) be consulted at each stage of the plan-making process but this participation should be ongoing. Certainly, East Herts Council has been keen to engage stakeholders and local communities, including residents and businesses, in the preparation of the Core Strategy. Community and stakeholder engagement also adds an important local reality check to the planning process and can help to shape the nature of the Core Strategy. Where community views are supported by technical evidence, they have been used to inform the choices that the Council has made in this Issues and Options document and will make in the Preferred Options consultation.



Consultation undertaken to-date includes Awareness Raising where we asked residents what they liked and disliked and what they thought the issues and opportunities facing East Herts were; and interactive LDF sessions where we asked attendees to come up with realistic strategies to distribute new homes across East Herts.

A list of the community and stakeholder sessions can be found in Section B of the Supporting Document. The feedback from the community and stakeholder engagement can be viewed on the Core Strategy page of the Council's website at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/corestrategy)

**1.10.2** Alongside the LDF Awareness Raising sessions we have been continuing to engage key stakeholders with interests in East Herts including infrastructure and service providers (e.g. health and transport), faith groups and rural representatives. All these meetings are a crucial first step in understanding the concerns and views of residents and establishing partnerships with service providers. Understanding the specific land-use needs of service providers such as the Police and the education authority at the start of the plan making process will also ensure that both the Core Strategy and the necessary infrastructure are delivered.

## 1.11 Evidence: Strategies and Studies

**1.11.1** Our policy options must also consider the wide variety of published information relevant to East Herts district including the various strategies and studies published by the Council or other organisations; factual and statistical data; and technical studies commissioned by the Council and its partners. All this information is important because it provides factual background data to inform planning policies and decisions. In many cases it provides evidence to support many of the issues raised through the community and stakeholder engagement process.

**1.11.2** Using published data is a useful way of providing benchmarking and baseline information. It includes data from sources such as the 2001 UK Census, the Hertfordshire Environmental Forum's Quality of Life Report 2007, as well as the 2007 and 2009 East Herts Residents' Surveys. Information has also been obtained from various strategy documents produced by various Council departments and other organisations and include for example, town and parish plans. Although they may not provide statistical data themselves, such strategies do include aims, ambitions and objectives. These are a crucial source of evidence as they also shape the future of East Herts.

**1.11.3** We have also commissioned specialist consultants to undertake a number of **technical studies** to provide information on a variety of planning topics at a district or wider sub-regional level. Importantly, the studies or the recommendations contained therein do not constitute planning policy.

Technical studies follow accepted methodologies and provide us with local contextual information to support the options presented in this document and to inform planning decisions.

A list of the technical studies including a brief explanation of their scope can be found in Section C of the Supporting Document. The full technical studies can be viewed on the technical studies webpages of the Council’s website at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/technicalstudies](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/technicalstudies).

Sections F to O of the Supporting Document also set out the policy context and evidence base for each theme.

## 1.12 Evidence: Infrastructure

**1.12.1** The whole purpose of the planning system is to deliver better places and positive social, economic and environmental outcomes for people by ensuring that development is supported by the necessary infrastructure.

**1.12.2** However, whilst East Herts Council is the local planning authority, it is not responsible for the delivery and supply of much of the infrastructure required to enable the successful functioning of communities. Effective partnership working is therefore essential. Accompanying the final Core Strategy will be an **Infrastructure Delivery Plan**.

The Infrastructure Delivery Plan will establish a framework for private and public investment. It will identify as far as possible the infrastructure needs of new development, and the associated costs, phasing, funding sources and responsibilities for delivery.

**1.12.3** In order to prepare an Infrastructure Delivery Plan, it will be necessary to have a clear idea of the type and amount of infrastructure that should accompany development. Table 1.1 shows that there are three main types of infrastructure (physical, social, and green) including a wide range of different items.

Table 1.1 Physical, Social and Green Infrastructure

Physical Infrastructure	Social Infrastructure	Green Infrastructure
<b>Transport</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Passenger transport</li> </ul>	<b>Key services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Flood prevention</li> <li>● Biodiversity/habitat</li> <li>● Valued natural areas</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highways</li> <li>• Footways</li> <li>• Cycle routes</li> </ul> <p><b>Utilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gas</li> <li>• Water</li> <li>• Electricity</li> <li>• Renewable energy</li> <li>• Waste</li> <li>• Telecoms</li> <li>• National Infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Emergency Services</li> <li>• Community Centres</li> <li>• Social Services</li> <li>• Custodial Services</li> <li>• Post offices</li> <li>• Crematoria / Burial Ground</li> </ul> <p><b>Culture and Leisure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religious facilities</li> <li>• Libraries</li> <li>• Cultural facilities</li> <li>• Playing pitches</li> <li>• Play areas</li> <li>• Historic Buildings</li> <li>• Amenity areas</li> <li>• Pubs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open spaces</li> <li>• Footpaths</li> </ul>
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**1.12.4** Please note that this list is not exhaustive, nor is it necessarily the case that all these items will need to be considered by the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan will develop in relation to specific needs emerging from the development strategy.

**1.12.5** It is important that housing delivery and infrastructure delivery are integrated and planned in parallel. Table 1.2 (below) provides general guidance on how this might be achieved for social infrastructure. The figures are purely illustrative and need to be adapted to the East Herts context since thresholds will vary depending on both the location of the facility and the business plan of the service provider. However, it is useful to include illustrative thresholds in order to understand potential catchment size. More specific information on a wider range of infrastructure needs arising from the Preferred Options will be gathered in support of the next stage of preparation of the Core Strategy (the Preferred Options stage).

Table 1.2 Illustrative Social Infrastructure Thresholds

Local Facility	Illustrative Catchment Populations (to be adapted to local conditions and policies)	Approximate dwellings threshold (based on average 2.3 persons per household)*
Nursery/first school	2,000	870
Primary/middle school	4,000	1,740

Secondary School	8,000	3,480
Secondary School (large)	16,000	6,960
Health Centre (4 doctors)	10,000	4,350
Local Shop	1,500	650
Pub	6,000	2,610
Post Office	5,000	2,170
Community Centre	4,000	1,740
Local Centre	6,000	2,610
District Centre/superstore	24,000	10,440
Leisure Centre	24,000	10,440

Source: Adapted from *Shaping Neighbourhoods*, Hugh Barton, Marcus Grant and Richard Guise (Spon Press, 2003) page 98. \* Rounded to nearest ten

**1.12.6** In summary, infrastructure planning:

- **Requires partnership working** – including input from and ownership not just by East Herts Council as a whole, but also by the full range of infrastructure and service providers;
- **Is an on-going process** – not a one-off activity;
- **Is about funding-streams** – infrastructure delivery will be funded primarily through mainstream public funding, alongside developer contributions;
- **Is about delivery** – an Infrastructure Delivery Plan must identify what is being delivered, where, when and by whom.

## Chapter 2

# Key Issues and Vision

## 2.1 Purpose of Chapter 2

**2.1.1** Chapter 2 sets out a portrait of what East Herts is like now and a LDF vision for what we want East Herts to be like in 2031. A number of key issues have been identified based on your feedback, together with an analysis of the evidence base. It focuses on the following:

- A portrait of East Herts setting out how the district has evolved and its main characteristics (Section 2.2);
- An explanation of how we have identified the issues facing East Herts (Section 2.3);
- The key issues facing East Herts arranged across nine themes (Sections 2.4 - 2.12); and
- An emerging LDF vision for East Herts to 2031(Section 2.13).

**2.1.2** Each theme also includes strategic objectives that apply to the LDF as a whole. These LDF strategic objectives can be seen as the ‘goals’ that the Core Strategy should seek to achieve via its policies and are a means of delivering the LDF vision for East Herts and its residents. The nine themes are:

- Theme 1: East Herts Energy and Climate Change (Section 2.4);
- Theme 2: East Herts People and Community Safety (Section 2.5);
- Theme 3: Housing East Herts (Section 2.6);
- Theme 4: East Herts Character (Section 2.7);
- Theme 5: East Herts Economy, Skills and Prosperity (Section 2.8);
- Theme 6: East Herts on the Move (Section 2.9);
- Theme 7: East Herts Health, Wellbeing and Play (Section 2.10);
- Theme 8: Green East Herts (Section 2.11);
- Theme 9: East Herts Monitoring and Delivery (Section 2.12).

**2.1.3** The final Core Strategy will include policies that deal with strategic planning issues that apply across the district. The issues in this chapter are the starting point for those policies. The purpose of this chapter is to check that our approach to dealing with the issues through our objectives is correct as this will determine which policies will be included within the final Core Strategy.

**2.1.4** We are seeking your views in respect of the following two aspects: firstly, regarding which policy options should be included within the Core Strategy, and secondly regarding an emerging LDF vision for East Herts.

This chapter includes questions 3 to 21.

### 2.2 A Portrait of East Herts

- 2.2.1** The context map (Figure 2.1) represents the key features of the district and seeks to identify the main drivers for change in East Herts.
- 2.2.2** The district of East Herts covers an area of 477 square kilometres (184 square miles) and comprises around one third of the area of the County of Hertfordshire. It is predominantly a rural district, with attractive towns and villages set in a rolling landscape. Topographically, the district is shaped like a hand with the principal rivers of the Lea, Mimram, Beane, Rib, Ash, and Stort forming the fingers with the higher ground lying in-between.
- 2.2.3** East Herts has a dispersed settlement pattern that includes the five market towns of Bishop's Stortford, Buntingford, Hertford, Sawbridgeworth and Ware. Each of the towns provides a range of services to the surrounding rural area. There are also some hundred villages and hamlets of varying sizes.
- 2.2.4** The district is heavily influenced by the presence of major settlements beyond its borders. The three New Towns of Stevenage, Harlow and Welwyn Garden City are located immediately on the East Herts district boundary, and there is pressure for expansion of these settlements. There are also substantial cross-boundary influences from Cambridgeshire to the north and Essex to the east. Elsenham in Essex has been suggested as a site for a possible 'Eco-Town'.
- 2.2.5** East Herts is also part of the Government's London-Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough growth corridor as identified in the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan (ODPM, 2003) and reflected in the East of England Plan. Approximately the southern third of the district lies within the London Metropolitan Green Belt (17,530 hectares). The East of England Plan requires a Strategic Green Belt Review in respect of growth to the north of Harlow (see Chapter 3: Development Strategy, Section 3.6).
- 2.2.6** Historical development of the transport network has resulted in the district being largely bypassed by strategic road and rail corridors; with the M11 and the West Anglia Main Line between London and Cambridge to the east; and the A1(M) and East Coast Main Line to the west. The M25 London Orbital Motorway lies further to the south. Within the district, the main road routes are the A10, which bisects the district roughly in half on a north-south axis; and the A414 in the south of the district, running in an east-west direction. The A120 also runs east-west from the A10 at Puckeridge to Bishop's Stortford and beyond, and the A602 links the A10 from Ware with the A1(M) in Stevenage. Stansted Airport, whilst outside the district, is immediately to the north-east of Bishop's Stortford and has strategic implications for the area.



Figure 2.1 Context of East Herts



Source: East Herts Council

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### 2.3 Identifying the Issues: What You Have Told Us

- 2.3.1** The starting point for the Core Strategy has been to identify what East Herts is like now and what the key challenges facing the district are. During Spring 2008 we held a series of **LDF Awareness Raising sessions** across the district which asked residents what they liked and disliked about East Herts and what they thought the issues and opportunities facing the district were. This valuable information has been used together with various strategies and studies, such as town and parish plans, as the basis for understanding the issues facing East Herts, identifying the LDF strategic objectives and establishing the emerging LDF vision.

A list of the community and stakeholder sessions can be found in Section B of the Supporting Document and the feedback from the community and stakeholder engagement can be viewed on the Core Strategy page of the Council's website at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/corestrategy).

Sections F to O of the Supporting Document also set out the policy context and evidence base for each theme.

- 2.3.2** To ensure that the LDF strategic objectives are appropriate they have been assessed against both the Sustainability Appraisal and the Sustainable Community Strategy ambitions. Because of the separate function of both the SCS and the LDF, it was not considered necessary to have shared objectives providing that, where appropriate, the LDF strategic objectives seek to deliver the ambitions of the SCS.

Assessments of the LDF strategic objectives against the SCS and the Sustainability Appraisal are included within Sections D and E, respectively, of the Supporting Document and can be viewed and downloaded at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/issuesandoptions](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/issuesandoptions)

- 2.3.3** To ensure that all the LDF strategic objectives have been met, the policies in the final Core Strategy and subsequent LDF documents will cross reference to the relevant LDF strategic objectives. This joined-up approach will not only demonstrate the clear linkages between each LDF document, but also between the LDF and the SCS, reflecting how the approach of the LDF can deliver the sustainable development aspects of the SCS.
- 2.3.4** The following Sections identify the key issues facing East Herts set out by theme. Each Section then sets out the LDF strategic objectives for dealing with those issues. The specific policy context, the relevant sources from the evidence base and the linkages to the SCS for each theme are set out in Sections F to N of the Supporting Document.

**2.3.5** The objectives set out under each theme are intended to be used with other themed objectives to help achieve the LDF vision as a whole. As the Core Strategy is concerned with strategic rather than detailed issues it is therefore intended that only strategic policies be included within this Core Strategy and that more detailed policies be included within subsequent LDF documents.

### 2.4 Theme 1: East Herts Energy and Climate Change

**2.4.1** East Herts emits higher levels of greenhouse gases per person than neighbouring districts. Emissions can be reduced by providing opportunities for non-car transport through the location of new development, rather than locating development where the only practical access to jobs, services and facilities is by car. Emissions from the built environment can be reduced through sustainable construction practices.

**2.4.2** There are a variety of opportunities for generating clean energy. Micro-generation at the individual domestic and commercial building level could be encouraged. Within our towns, there is some scope for neighbourhood or district heat networks. In the rural area, many villages are located off the national gas grid, and are therefore potentially well placed to take advantage of local opportunities for sustainable heating supplies. Small-scale community wind projects, such as that at Leventhorpe School in Sawbridgeworth, could be encouraged. The [Low and Zero Carbon Study](#) suggests that the relatively high ground to the north and east of the district is potentially suitable for wind power. However, there are likely to be visual and other concerns regarding large wind turbines and this will need to be carefully considered.

The Hertfordshire Low and Zero Carbon Study (2010) and the Hertfordshire Climate Change Study (2009) can be viewed and downloaded at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/planningandclimate](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/planningandclimate)

**2.4.3** There is potential for a wide variety of energy from waste projects, ranging from landfill through to the use of agricultural by-products such as animal manure. Additionally, there is potential for agricultural diversification into markets such as wood pellet supply or sustainable biomass, through sustainable techniques such as woodland coppicing.

**2.4.4** Adaptation to the effects of climate change will be important. Increasing risk of flash-flooding will mean strict controls over development in or near the flood plain. Water consumption will need to be managed (see Theme 8). Green Infrastructure at a range of scales will help to mitigate summer heat-effects (Theme 8). Buildings will need to provide passive heating and cooling, to ensure that they do not overheat in summer or get too cold in winter (thereby requiring energy-hungry mechanical cooling and heating).

**2.4.5** The Energy and Climate Change (ECC) issues facing East Herts can be summarised as follows:

### Climate Change Mitigation

- Energy efficiency
- Transport emissions
- Renewable energy generation
- Decentralised energy infrastructure

### Climate Change Adaptation

- Avoiding development in the flood plain
- Reducing per-person water consumption
- Passive building design
- Local food production
- Green Infrastructure

**2.4.6** We have identified the following LDF strategic objectives to deal with these issues:

- **ECC1:** To mitigate climate change by reducing carbon dioxide emissions from new and existing development through an integrated approach to sustainable construction, energy efficiency and energy supply, and by encouraging use of low-emission travel alternatives including passenger transport, walking and cycling.
- **ECC2:** To enable communities to adapt to climate change through appropriate design measures, including landscaping, drainage, street layout and building design.

### Question 3

LDF Strategic Objectives - Theme 1: East Herts Energy and Climate Change

Have we got the LDF strategic objectives for Theme 1 correct?

**2.4.7** We think that the Core Strategy should include policy options that deal with the following aspects of objectives ECC1 and ECC2:

- Targets for carbon savings

**2.4.8** We think that the following aspects of ECC1 and ECC2 should be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents:

- Site-specific carbon savings targets
- Design guidance for climate change adaptation
- Detailed drainage and landscaping guidance

## Question 4

Policy Options - Theme 1: East Herts Energy and Climate Change

Is our approach to dealing with the policy options for Theme 1 correct?

## 2.5 Theme 2: East Herts People and Community Safety

**2.5.1** The district has witnessed significant growth in recent years as new residents continue to seek the high quality of life on offer in East Herts. Between 1981 and 2006 the population increased by 21% and is expected to increase from approximately 134,000 (54,324 households) in 2006 to 149,500 in 2021. Significantly 37% of this growth is anticipated to be aged over 65 years with population decreases in the 10-14 and 35-39 age groups. This changing demographic balance in the district has a number of planning implications. It will be very important to ensure that older people can live independently for longer, through good housing design and that they have good access to the services that they are dependent upon.

**2.5.2** A critically important aspect of the LDF and achieving a sustainable future for East Herts is the promotion of development that maintains a vibrant and prosperous environment for current and future generations and creates socially inclusive and safe communities.

**2.5.3** Whilst levels of recorded crime are generally lower in East Herts than the average for England and Wales, crime and the fear of crime are amongst the top concerns of the East Herts community. Both can have a serious impact on a person's quality of life and general wellbeing, particularly amongst those in the more vulnerable sectors of society. Planning can ensure that effective urban design principles are incorporated into all development proposals to reduce opportunities for criminal and anti-social behaviour, increase the likelihood of detecting crime and reduce the fear of crime. Designing high quality and safer living environments is an important aspect of creating places where people want to live, work and play.

**2.5.4** The People and Community Safety (PCS) issues facing East Herts can be summarised as follows:

## Community

- Concern that community spirit will be altered by new development and that newcomers will not integrate with the local community
- Increasing population within the district, particularly the elderly population, will increase pressure on existing services
- Need to maintain a mixed and balanced community

## Accessibility

- Lack of access to services and facilities for disadvantaged groups, including young people, elderly people, those with disabilities and rural residents

## Community Safety

- Public perception of crime and feeling unsafe is higher than the reality
- Concern about anti-social behaviour, particularly in relation to the night time economy

**2.5.5** We have identified the following LDF strategic objectives to deal with these issues:

- **PCS1:** To develop safe and secure communities by taking into account the need to reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour and to reduce the fear of crime across the district
- **PCS2 :** To encourage a rich and diverse community life to enhance cohesion and maintain the thriving and vibrant communities in East Herts
- **PCS3:** To encourage increased communication and partnership working between town, parish, district and county councils, and community and voluntary groups, to enable community involvement in the design, development and management of places
- **PCS4:** To ensure that services can withstand pressure from increased population numbers and take measures to maintain a mixed age population, enabling young people to stay in the district and catering for the growing elderly population, to ensure a balanced community
- **PCS5:** To protect existing facilities and provide high quality community based services to serve all levels of dependency, in an effort to reduce social inequalities and disadvantage and to address the needs of all groups in East Herts

### Question 5

LDF Strategic Objectives - Theme 2: East Herts People and Community Safety

Have we got the LDF strategic objectives for Theme 2 correct?

**2.5.6** We think that the Core Strategy should include policy options that deal with the following aspects of objectives PCS1, PCS2, PCS3, PCS4 and PCS5:

- All new development to integrate and contribute to the creation of vibrant, sustainable communities
- Maintaining a mixed-age population and encourage equal opportunities within new developments through providing a mix of housing (see Theme 3)
- Ensure the provision of local transport services to increase accessibility to services and promote social inclusion (see Theme 6)
- Provision of new community facilities that meet the needs of disadvantaged groups (see Theme 7)

**2.5.7** We think that the following aspects of objectives PCS1, PCS2, PCS3, PCS4 and PCS5 should be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents:

- Design of developments in an appropriate way to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime
- Criteria for meeting older people's housing need

### Question 6

Policy Options - Theme 2: East Herts People and Community Safety

Is our approach to dealing with the policy options for Theme 2 correct?

## 2.6 Theme 3: Housing East Herts

**2.6.1** Whilst the provision of new homes is a major part of the planning system, *Housing East Herts* is about more than simply building new houses. It is about ensuring that the accommodation needs of all members of our current and future communities can be housed in affordable and suitable ways and in sustainable locations.

**2.6.2** One of the key issues facing the district is the affordability of housing, with the house price to income ratio being 10:1, the third highest in the county. House prices are on average 110% above the regional average. In East Herts there is a gap in the housing market for those non-owning households earning £20,000 to £35,000 per annum. Below £20,000, households may be eligible for housing benefit to subsidise their housing costs. The high cost of housing in East Herts is a significant issue particularly in rural areas given the structural changes to the agricultural and rural economy in more recent years where house prices are higher and rural wages are lower.

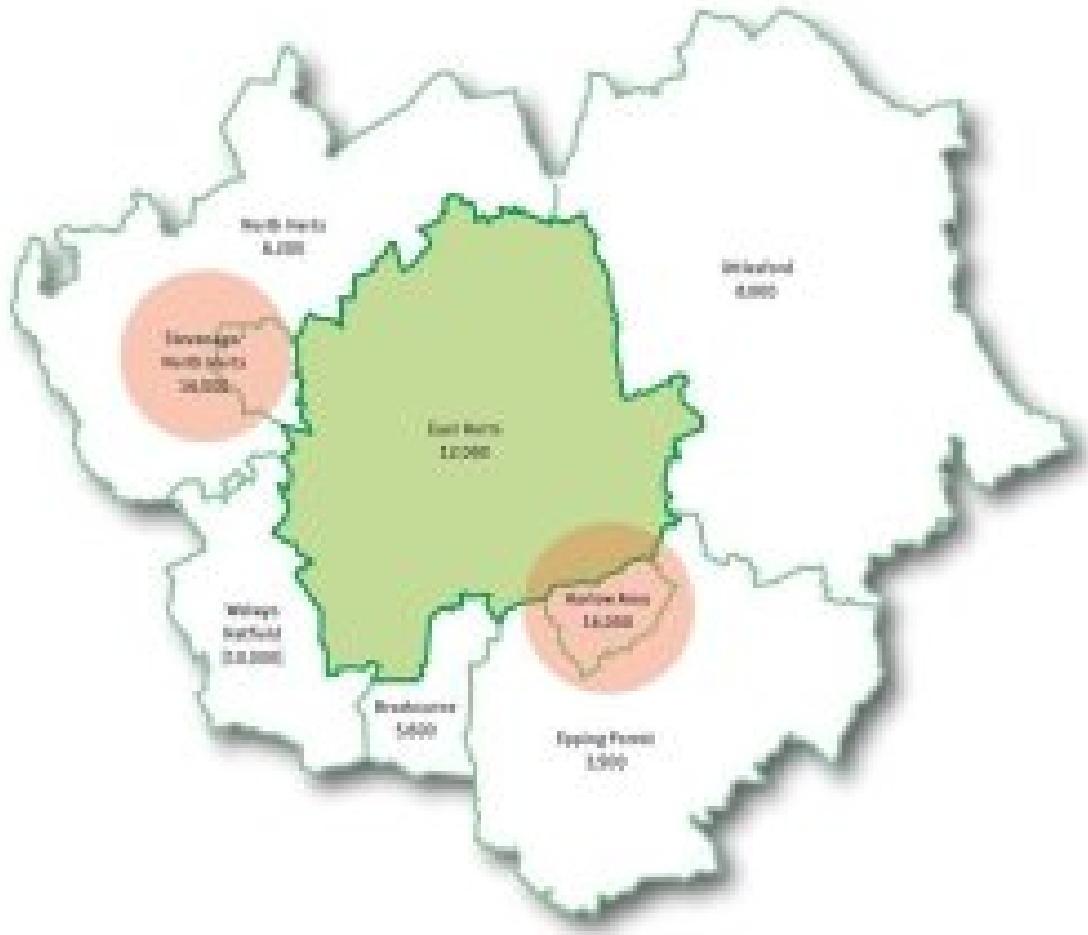
- 2.6.3** Two ways the Government believes that the planning system can make housing more affordable are firstly, to ensure that a percentage of the additional homes are subsidised and available to eligible households at a lower cost than would otherwise be available on the open market; i.e. **affordable housing**; and secondly, to increase the supply of all housing.

The Government's definition of affordable housing (from PPS3) includes both 'social rented' affordable housing and 'intermediate' affordable housing. Social rented is available to those households in housing need. Intermediate housing refers to housing set at prices above social rented prices but below market prices and is a way of helping householders start on the housing ladder. It can also include shared ownership products, lower cost homes for sale and for discounted rent and is often targeted at key workers such as nurses, teachers and police officers.

Low cost market housing, whilst more affordable, is not included within the definition. However, it is still a very useful means of providing cheaper housing for sale and should therefore be encouraged.

- 2.6.4** The East of England Plan sets a minimum district wide housing target of 12,000 new homes for the period 2001 to 2021 or 600 homes per annum. Significant growth is also planned in our neighbouring districts which will impact upon East Herts and affect how the district functions. Figure 2.2 sets East Herts in the sub-regional context.

Figure 2.2 East of England Plan Housing Allocations 2001 to 2021



Source: East Herts Council

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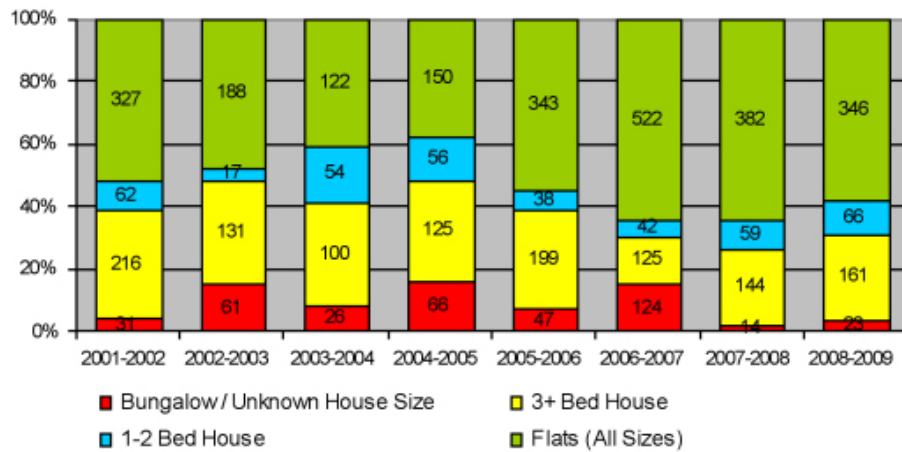
- 2.6.5** As can be seen, in addition to the East Herts housing figure, East Herts must also accommodate some of the 16,000 houses identified for the Harlow area. Whilst the purpose of the growth in the Harlow area is primarily to support the regeneration of Harlow itself, the growth can be used to assist in meeting the housing needs of East Herts residents. It follows that any increase in available housing within or in proximity to the district boundary will provide housing opportunities for East Herts residents. The growth to the north of Harlow is considered in more detail in Chapter 10. However, the issues set out below relating to East Herts will also be applicable in respect of the Harlow area.
- 2.6.6** To inform decisions about housing 'need' and 'demand', including what proportion of homes should be built as affordable; East Herts Council has undertaken a [Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#) technical study.



The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) estimates housing 'need' and 'demand' in terms of affordable and market housing. It also considers future demographic trends and estimates the mix of housing sizes.

- 2.6.7** In order to plan for the provision of new homes over the plan period we also need to understand what the population will be like in 2031, not just in terms of absolute numbers but how its age structure may differ from today. East Herts has an ageing population and it is projected that two thirds of the population growth anticipated in East Herts between 2006 and 2021 will be people aged over 65 years. This will have a significant impact on the provision of both housing and services, with accessibility and the suitability of houses being key factors. Because the LDF is the delivery mechanism for new homes, it is essential therefore that the specialist accommodation needs of all age groups can be met.
- 2.6.8** In addition to general needs housing, East Herts also needs to make specific provision for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The district requirements are set out in Chapter 3, Section 3.2. The benefit of planning for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople is that if a site can be identified through the planning process it reduces the likelihood of illegal encampments, which can cause conflict with the settled community and cost money if the Council has to take legal action.
- 2.6.9** By taking a positive approach we can have greater control over the identification of site locations. It also means that, should illegal encampments occur in East Herts, the Council will be far more likely to be successful if it has to take legal action because it will be able to demonstrate that it has provided sufficient pitches to meet locally identified need for the district as required by Circular 01/2006.
- 2.6.10** Planned development of Gypsy and Traveller sites also means that they are provided in locations where there is often better access to services and the likelihood of successful integration with the settled community is also increased. Policy H3 of the East of England Plan currently specifies pitch requirements for provision at a district level. However, as explained in Chapter 1, Section 1.8, the Government has indicated its intention to “rapidly abolish regional strategies” such as the East of England Plan. At the time of writing, the detail of how and when these changes will be implemented has not been set out.

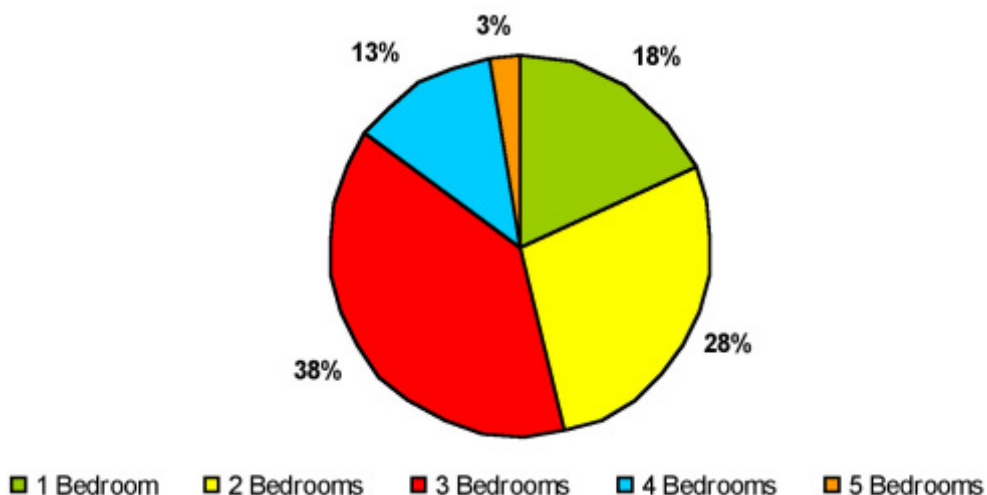
Figure 2.3 Gross Housing Completions in East Herts by Size



Source: Hertfordshire County Council

**2.6.11** In recent years, there have been an increasing number of flatted-developments built in East Herts. There are a number of reasons for this including high land values; the costs associated with developing town centre sites; the policy aim of prioritising brownfield sites as opposed to greenfield land; and the desire within the housing industry to match supply with the demand for smaller properties. As shown in Figure 2.3 above, flatted developments reached a peak in the years 2006 to 2008 representing 64% of gross completions.

Figure 2.4 Estimated Dwelling Size 2007-2021



Source: Figure 150, Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2010, ORS

**2.6.12** Based on demographic forecasts, the housing size mix to meet the needs of future households can be estimated, as shown in Figure 2.4 above. However, whilst the Council seeks to influence the size and type of market housing that gets built in East Herts, it is unable to *dictate* what should be built. Ultimately,

this is determined by the economics of each particular site and by the housing market. Notwithstanding this, it is clear that having balanced the housing mix through flatted development in recent years we should now seek to maintain a balanced mix of housing sizes.

**2.6.13** The Housing (HOU) issues facing East Herts can be summarised as follows:

### General

- Access to private ownership
- Ageing population
- Imbalance in type of new housing and local housing need, particularly in rural areas
- Integration of sites for Gypsies & Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, affordable housing and new general needs housing into new and existing communities

### Affordability

- 10:1 average house price to income ratio
- Acute problems in rural areas
- Affordability of affordable housing - pressures to extend social rented housing to higher income groups
- Economic viability of providing affordable housing in new developments

### Tenure

- Restricted range of tenures
- Increasing need for intermediate affordable housing
- Urgent need for more key worker homes, specialist housing and accommodation, flexible housing, and social rented housing

### Condition

- Families trapped in small and unsuitable housing
- 27% of vulnerable households are living in homes unfit for purpose
- Need for new housing to be to 'Lifetime Homes' standards

### Size and Type

- Rising need for higher density schemes across a range of types and sizes: terrace, flats, small-large family housing, etc.
- Amenity space, inside and out, is often unsatisfactory for people's needs

**2.6.14** We have identified the following LDF strategic objectives to deal with these issues:

- **HOU1:** To ensure flexibility of housing through minimum quality, accessibility, space, and private outdoor amenity standards

- **HOU2:** To ensure that the East of England Plan target of at least 600 additional homes per annum are delivered on suitable sites in sustainable locations that provide for a choice of housing types, sizes and tenures
- **HOU3:** To provide sufficient accommodation in sustainable locations for Gypsies & Travellers and Travelling Showpeople on sites which enable successful co-existence with settled communities and offer opportunities for social integration
- **HOU4:** To ensure that the specialist accommodation needs of vulnerable individuals and groups including older people are met
- **HOU5:** To achieve sustainable mixed communities by ensuring the delivery of sufficient affordable housing, either social rented or intermediate housing

### Question 7

LDF Strategic Objectives - Theme 3: Housing East Herts

Have we got the LDF strategic objectives for Theme 3 correct?

- 2.6.15** We think that the Core Strategy should include policy options that deal with the following aspects of objectives HOU2, HOU3, HOU4 and HOU5:
- Broad locations for housing development that could include affordable housing and accommodation for Gypsies & Travellers and Travelling Showpeople as part of the development strategy (see Chapter 3)
  - Provision of and approach to affordable housing including tenure split
  - Approach to specialist residential accommodation for older people
- 2.6.16** We think that the following aspects of objectives HOU1, HOU2, HOU3 and HOU4 should be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents:
- Lifetime Homes
  - Space Standards
  - Housing Condition
  - Dwelling size and type
  - Allocation of sites for housing
  - Allocation of sites for Gypsies & Travellers and Travelling Showpeople's accommodation
  - Allocation of sites for specialist residential accommodation

## Question 8

Policy Options - Theme 3: Housing East Herts

Is our approach to dealing with the policy options for Theme 3 correct?

### 2.7 Theme 4: East Herts Character

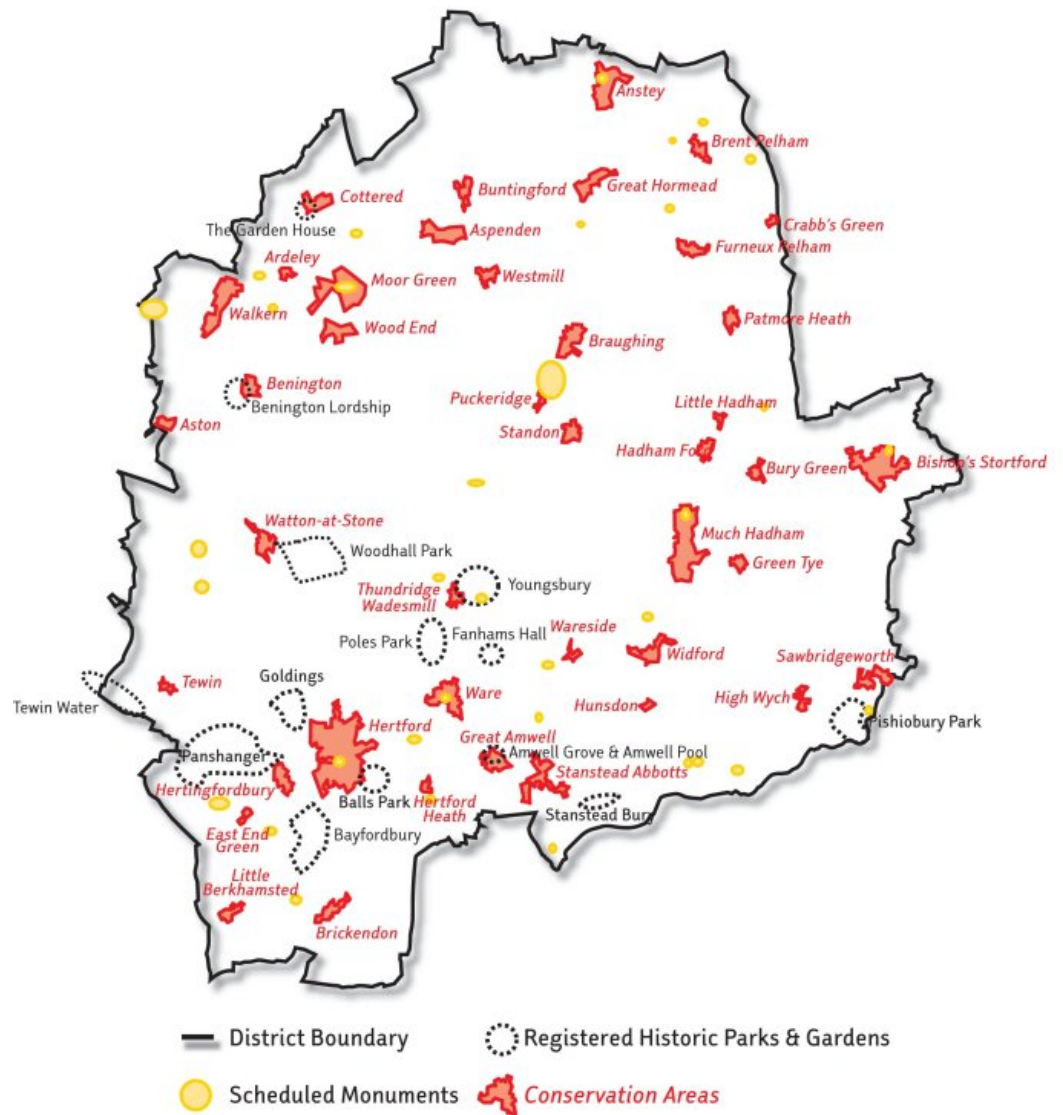
- 2.7.1** One of the strongest sets of issues to emerge from the Awareness Raising sessions was the value that residents place on the character and heritage of the district. Whilst previous local plans have covered topics such as the design of new development, landscape/the countryside, and heritage, they have been treated as distinct and separate from one another. In actual fact, all three combine to give East Herts its unique character and are therefore combined in this one theme.
- 2.7.2** East Herts functions as an important ‘Green Bubble’ in the wider sub-regional context. Residents value the rural nature and distinct identities of the settlements in East Herts that the Green Belt and Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt policies of the Local Plan 2007 have helped to maintain. We are required by the East of England Plan to undertake a Strategic Green Belt Review as part of the LDF, which will be determined by the preferred development strategy. Chapter 3, Section 3.6 sets out our approach to Green Belt issues and the required Green Belt Review.
- 2.7.3** The rural landscape is of great significance to the character of East Herts. The district has a rich undulating landscape of open fields and parklands shaped by river valleys and arable plateaus. Woodland accounts for 9% of total land cover, half of which is classified as being ancient. Of the six landscape regions identified across Hertfordshire, three are in East Herts; the East Hertfordshire Plateau; the Central River Valleys; and a small part of the South Hertfordshire Plateau. Within these landscape regions the Landscape Character Assessment has identified 63 landscape character areas that seek to capture the distinctiveness and variety of the local landscape.

The Landscape Character Assessment is a piece of technical work that seeks to enrich the countryside as a whole, not just its protected areas. It does this by maintaining its distinctive features and cross referencing the condition of the landscape against its strength of character.

The East Herts Landscape Character Assessment has been adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document to the Local Plan 2007. It can be viewed and downloaded at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/spd](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/spd)

**2.7.4** The landscape of the district also contains many features of the historic environment such as 450 Sites of Archaeological Significance, 15 registered Historic Parks and Gardens and over 30 Scheduled Monuments, all reflecting the local history of East Herts. Figure 2.5 illustrates the location of the district’s Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens and Scheduled Monuments.

Figure 2.5 Conservation Areas, English Heritage Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, and Scheduled Monuments.



Source: East Herts Council

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- 2.7.5** The settlements in East Herts have evolved over centuries with the centres of all five main towns, as well as 37 villages designated as Conservation Areas reflecting the valued local vernacular (see Figure 2.5). There are also over 4,000 listed buildings of which just over 1% is comprised of Grade 1 listed of exceptional interest.
- 2.7.6** The recently published 'PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment' (2010) acknowledges the important role that planning plays in conserving the historic environment. It broadens the approach to heritage by referring to "those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest", by the use of the term 'heritage assets'. Whilst some heritage assets possess a level of interest that justifies specific designation e.g. Listed Buildings (and particular procedures apply to decisions that involve them), PPS5 rightly deals with all heritage assets that are of heritage interest.
- 2.7.7** Whilst there is no 'East Herts' architectural style, good design is fundamentally important. Indeed, a feature of good design is that it respects its local context. That is not to say that new buildings should simply mimic their neighbours, but rather, that new buildings acknowledge and enhance the key characteristics and design principles of the locality. Good design tells a story; the built environment should be a narrative for the evolution of a place.
- 2.7.8** The design of the growth to the north of Harlow will be dealt with through subsequent LDF documents. However, such a large scale urban extension will provide a unique opportunity to combine the heritage of East Herts with the design ethos of modern best practice in urban design.
- 2.7.9** The design, density, type and size of home are all interrelated issues that determine the character and quality of the built environment. As discussed in Section 2.6, the majority of new homes built between 2001 and 2009 have been flats or 1-2 bedroom homes. This has complemented the drive nationally to increase the density at which new homes are built, so as to make the most efficient use of available land and protect the countryside as much as possible from development.
- 2.7.10** Increasing the density at which homes are built has important benefits, as it minimises land-take, which can result in a more compact built form that can reduce the distance to services, thereby improving accessibility and reducing the reliance on the private car. It can also improve the design of the built environment by reducing urban sprawl and creating and/or enhancing a sense of place. Density needs to be carefully judged in the context of overall design quality. Indeed, much recent higher density residential development has been apartment blocks or homes with small gardens. However, there is no reason why this should necessarily be the case. There are many fine examples of high-density development around the district, such as Victorian terraces and three and four storey Edwardian town-houses, which are now valued for their historic interest and contribution to quality of place.

**2.7.11** The Character (CHA) issues facing East Herts can be summarised as follows:

### Countryside

- Maintaining its openness
- Acknowledging the role it plays in creating the dispersed settlement pattern of East Herts

### Landscape

- Highly valued unique character of the various local landscapes
- Conserve and enhance the whole rural area

### Design

- Promote good design that respects the local vernacular
- Conserve and enhance the character of the conservation areas

### Heritage

- Protect the unique local heritage of East Herts

**2.7.12** We have identified the following LDF strategic objectives to deal with these issues:

- **CHA1:** The whole rural area of East Herts functions as an important 'green bubble' and its openness should be maintained through the prevention of urban sprawl and inappropriate development and land use through the appropriate management of the Green Belt
- **CHA2:** To accept that all landscapes are influenced by human action and that they have changed and will continue to change over time. Manage this change in a sustainable manner by understanding and applying the key landscape features of each landscape character area to new development in a proactive way that does not destroy the intrinsic value of that unique landscape
- **CHA3:** Ensure that all new development is well designed, reflects its local vernacular context and uses local materials and/or building styles as appropriate to maintain a unique sense of place. By utilising sustainable and innovative approaches to design, new development should also seek to make the most efficient use of land, including land that has been previously developed
- **CHA4:** To preserve and enhance the special historic character of all East Herts' heritage assets



### Question 9

LDF Strategic Objectives - Theme 4: East Herts Character

Have we got the LDF strategic objectives for Theme 4 correct?

**2.7.13** We think that the Core Strategy should include policy options on the following aspects of objective CHA1:

- Broad locations for development as part of the development strategy (see Chapter 3)
- Density
- Green Belt
- Maintaining the openness of the whole rural area including the Metropolitan Green Belt

**2.7.14** The Core Strategy should also deal with the broad principles of objectives CHA2, CHA3 and CHA4, covering the following issues:

- Design
- Landscape
- Heritage protection

**2.7.15** However, detailed issues relating to LDF strategic objectives CHA2, CHA3 and CHA4 should be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents.

### Question 10

Policy Options - Theme 4: East Herts Character

Is our approach to dealing with the policy options for Theme 4 correct?

## 2.8 Theme 5: East Herts Economy, Skills and Prosperity

**2.8.1** East Herts is a prosperous district with higher than average earnings and low unemployment with a claimant count rate of 2.3% (April 2009, NOMIS). Of the 354 districts in England, East Herts is ranked as the 18<sup>th</sup> most affluent/successful, although this disguises pockets of relative deprivation within the district. Educational attainment is generally very high with nearly three quarters of pupils achieving five or more GCSE grades at A\* to C. There is a recognised need to ensure that the skills of the workforce are appropriate for the businesses in the district. It is therefore important to maximise

opportunities for life-long learning through links with further education providers. This is of particular importance in the rural area where access to these facilities is limited.

- 2.8.2** The district has a sound economic base built on small and medium-sized firms including engineering, high-tech computer companies, brewing, printing, food processing and distribution, and Stansted Airport related service industries. There is also a small but significant presence of employment in the district's rural area. This takes the form of small clusters of businesses and rural diversification schemes where landowners have changed their focus from farming as a single enterprise to selling local produce or converting parts of their farmland into visitor attractions or other uses. Whilst the designated areas of employment land in the rural areas may be smaller and of poorer quality than their town counterparts, they nonetheless provide valuable locations for small and start up businesses.
- 2.8.3** Like elsewhere, East Herts has felt the impact of the recession, but there is evidence of economic resilience in the district with the vast majority of businesses successfully continuing their trade. However, whilst the five town centres offer a range of high street and independent shops and services, there is competition from neighbouring centres offering a greater retail choice.
- 2.8.4** The potential development of land to the north of Harlow will need to accommodate land for economic uses as well as homes. This is a valuable opportunity to maximise economic investment into the area, providing new jobs and creating modern employment land. However, the construction of modern buildings in purpose-built sites near to road networks and a new workforce to draw on will undoubtedly attract existing businesses that are currently located in sites that are no longer suitable for their needs. In order to prevent the loss of businesses that are vital to our towns, measures must be taken to ensure that existing employment land meets the needs of new and existing businesses and that new investment does not come at the expense of existing employment land throughout the rest of the district.
- 2.8.5** The approach of the LDF enables the various strands of economic prosperity to be brought together coherently to include not only employment land, but retail, the rural economy, education and skills. Addressing the planning aspects of these distinct but linked areas of the economy in a holistic fashion will ensure that communities throughout the district will share in the prosperity that the local economy brings.
- 2.8.6** The Economy, Skills and Prosperity (ESP) issues facing East Herts can be summarised as follows:

### **Economy**

- Changing economic base from heavy industry to office based services, research and development, and storage and distribution

- Competition from outside the district for investment, job growth and retail providers
- Retention and quality of existing employment land: pressure to convert to housing; condition and suitability of existing land for employment sites
- Land availability and suitability for new growth: limited land within the main settlements and competing land use requirements (e.g. housing)
- Pattern of economic investment due to infrastructure and accessibility issues

### Jobs and skills

- Weaknesses in adult learning and intense competition for school places, particularly in rural areas
- Lack of capacity of existing schools in the district, particularly in Hertford (primary education) and Bishop's Stortford (secondary education)
- Inadequate skills base within the rural area to support new enterprise and a general mismatch between skills and the labour market within East Herts
- Insufficient high value jobs resulting in out commuting
- Uneven distribution of high value jobs and employment within the district
- Challenge of supporting and providing for needs of small businesses
- Increased pressure for agricultural and rural diversification

### Retail

- Competing neighbouring centres offering greater choice of large retailers
- Large supermarkets compete with town centre stores
- Large number of independent stores offering local identity and character but these are most at risk during an economic downturn

### Tourism

- Increasingly important role of tourist industry as an economic driver in East Herts taking advantage of the quality built and natural environments in the district
- Proximity of Stansted Airport brings economic and tourism benefits as well as issues with noise and air pollution and traffic congestion

**2.8.7** We have identified the following LDF strategic objectives to deal with these issues:

- **ESP1:** To attract investment and balance new housing with the creation of high-value jobs by delivering appropriate business infrastructure and employment sites for a range of business types and needs
- **ESP2:** To support a viable rural economy in the villages and on the land by enabling diversification whilst preserving the special character of the rural area

- **ESP3:** To promote the vitality and viability of the district's town centres by defining a clear and distinctive role for each one, encouraging an appropriate mix of shops, and a high quality urban environment which will appeal to residents and visitors alike
- **ESP4:** To support educational needs by encouraging the provision of new facilities and infrastructure in appropriate locations
- **ESP5:** To encourage visitors to our towns and villages by promoting East Herts and its culture supported by the provision of appropriate tourist facilities

### Question 11

LDF Strategic Objectives - Theme 5: East Herts Economy, Skills and Prosperity

Have we got the LDF strategic objectives for Theme 5 correct?

- 2.8.8** We think that the Core Strategy should include policy options that deal with the following aspects of objectives ESP1, ESP2, ESP3, ESP4 and ESP5:
- Broad locations for new employment land development reflecting the preferred development strategy (see Chapter 3 )
  - Approach to managing existing stock of employment land
  - Hierarchy of town centres based on their defined roles and retail functions
  - Approach to rural diversification
  - Provision of and approach to education facilities reflecting the preferred development strategy
- 2.8.9** We think that the following aspects of objectives ESP1, ESP2, ESP3, ESP4 and ESP5 should be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents:
- Specific locations for new employment land
  - Design, Use Class mix and tenure of new and existing employment land
  - Town Centre boundaries
  - Primary and secondary retail frontages
  - Use Class mix and design of retail areas
  - Environmental impacts, use and design of rural diversification schemes
  - Specific locations for education facilities and infrastructure
  - Type and design of education facilities
  - Specific locations, type and design of tourist facilities

### Question 12

Policy Options - Theme 5: East Herts Economy, Skills and Prosperity

Is our approach to dealing with the policy options for Theme 5 correct?

## 2.9 Theme 6: East Herts On the Move

- 2.9.1** Travel plays a key part in all of our lives. Whether it's to achieve access to work, shopping, leisure, education, or health facilities, journeys regularly need to be made as part of every day living. In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, a huge expansion in personal mobility enabled people to travel further afield. This particularly affected commuting patterns and led to employment opportunities located further away from home than had previously been possible. Likewise, freight traffic in Britain has seen a massive increase. While the freedom that independent travel brings has brought many benefits to our daily lives, it has also resulted in increased noise; congestion; carbon emissions (which can also affect air quality); road safety issues; and parking problems.
- 2.9.2** East Herts consists of dispersed towns, villages and hamlets based within a rural context. This scattered settlement pattern, combined with high levels of affluence and close proximity to London, has resulted in the district having the highest levels of car ownership in the county – where levels are already higher than the national average. Moreover, 47% of households in East Herts have access to two or more vehicles.
- 2.9.3** Due to complex journey patterns, which have traditionally made the district difficult to serve by passenger transport outside urban areas, the car is often viewed as the only viable travel option and 66% of the working population travel to work by car. The prosperity of many of the district's residents has exacerbated the use of the private car both for commuting and generally, with the corollary that congestion and parking problems are major issues, especially in the town centres. Conversely, some 13% of households in the district have no access to a car or van and largely rely on passenger transport.
- 2.9.4** Poor transport limits opportunities to access employment as well as services and facilities. Reliable, efficient, and above all, sustainable, transport is therefore essential to help achieve a strong local economy while securing a better quality of life for residents in the district.
- 2.9.5** Direct train services to London are available from stations mainly located in the southern part of the district and 17% of the working population commutes to and from the capital. Bus and coach provision varies throughout the district. Regular bus services are available in some locations and there is a well-used

bus station in Hertford, with improved passenger interchange facilities planned in Bishop's Stortford. However, off peak passenger transport services are more limited.

- 2.9.6** Furthermore, in some parts of the district the desire to travel to particular destinations by means other than the private motor vehicle is currently unmet. A lack of transport leading to difficulties in accessing services is known as transport deprivation. This is more likely to be apparent in rural areas although it also occurs in some urban locations. While in some cases transport deprivation is linked to low income, other people experiencing access difficulties include young people, older people and those with disabilities.
- 2.9.7** The **delivery of transport provision** largely lies with Hertfordshire County Council, as the Highway Authority for the area, with East Herts Council having an influence via the planning system and through its responsibility for some elements of community transport provision and the management and enforcement of car parking.

The Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2006/07 – 2010/11, is the delivery vehicle for transport improvements in the county and is produced by Hertfordshire County Council in conjunction with the ten district authorities. Its focus is on delivering the shared priorities of tackling congestion, delivering accessibility, providing safer roads, improving air quality and improving the quality of life for residents. The plan is supported by a number of daughter documents which provide greater detail on key areas of work.

The current LTP is now under revision with LTP3 due to be published by April 2011. More information on the LTP can be found at: <http://www.hertsdirect.org/envroads/roadstrans/transplan/ltp/>

- 2.9.8** One of the biggest challenges facing the LDF will therefore be to reduce car dependency, while ensuring that current and future access needs are met through improving passenger transport, walking, cycling and other sustainable modes of travel, by working with those agencies with responsibility for transport delivery. This will be a considerable challenge given the rural and dispersed nature of existing settlements within the district, many of which are not well served by passenger transport, as shown in Figure 2.6.
- 2.9.9** A further consideration for future planning is how the transport network in the district relates to the accommodation of any large scale development north of Harlow. In addition to the need to provide new roads and transport services, the impact that the increase in population and related travel movements would have on existing infrastructure would be considerable. This would pose a significant challenge to transport providers to increase infrastructure capacity while ensuring the free-flow of traffic on the road network and meeting people's accessibility requirements.



Figure 2.6 Bus and Rail Routes in East Herts



Source: East Herts Council

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**2.9.10** The On the Move (OTM) issues facing East Herts can be summarised as follows:

### General

- East-West movement restricted – both for road & rail
- Rural transport ‘deprivation’
- Congestion in towns – especially at peak times
- Continuous growth in road traffic posing threat to quality of life
- Many transport challenges lying outside the direct control of local authorities
- Impact of surface access to Stansted Airport

### Infrastructure

- Capacity issues with existing road & rail infrastructure – especially at peak times

### Private Car Usage

- High ownership (lack of realistic alternatives – especially in rural areas)
- Parking issues – particularly in town centres & residential areas (including airport related in Bishop’s Stortford)

### Accessibility

- Need to achieve greater accessibility so that all people are able to reach desired destinations irrespective of personal circumstances

### Passenger Transport

- Rail links north-south are generally good
- Significantly higher rail usage compared to Hertfordshire & national averages, but low uptake of bus services
- Off-peak services inconsistent & improved confidence in reliability required
- Peak crowding on trains, but ability for rail capacity to be expanded is limited due to network operation constraints
- Upgraded real time passenger information/fleet/station facilities required to facilitate uptake
- Transport network currently perceived to favour car-borne traffic – passenger transport priority should be explored



## Pedestrians

- Permeability issues – missing links in walking network & blockages to direct routes.
- High quality links needed between residential areas and key locations e.g. town centres, stations, schools, employment etc

## Cycling

- Permeability issues – difficulty in accessing destinations
- High quality, purpose built links required
- Safety issues on busy/narrow roads & where shared with pedestrians
- Lack of safe, covered storage facilities

**2.9.11** We have identified the following LDF strategic objectives to deal with these issues:

- **OTM1:** To assist in enabling people's travel needs to be met in order that safe access to the services and amenities offered in local towns, villages, the countryside and wider destinations can be achieved by all
- **OTM2:** To locate development where it will minimise the need to travel to key services and facilities such as employment, education, healthcare, retail and recreation
- **OTM3:** To assist in engendering modal shift from private motorised transport to sustainable integrated travel options to help relieve congestion, address car parking issues, reduce the district's carbon footprint and improve the quality of life for all
- **OTM4:** To help facilitate the delivery of passenger transport services that meet the travel needs of residents and employees in the district in a manner which addresses current shortfalls in provision and allows capacity to accommodate future growth
- **OTM5:** To support the retention and enhancement of existing walking and cycling routes and facilities and seek additional safe and attractive provision to make these means of travel more appealing to users and thereby increase modal share
- **OTM6:** To seek to mitigate the negative effects of aviation development and operation

### Question 13

LDF Strategic Objectives - Theme 6: East Herts On the Move

Have we got the LDF strategic objectives for Theme 6 correct?

**2.9.12** We think that the Core Strategy should include policy options that deal with the following aspects of objectives OTM1, OTM2, OTM3, OTM4, OTM5 and OTM6:

- Modal hierarchy principles
- Strategic infrastructure provision
- Locating development in places that enable sustainable travel choices to be made and aid carbon emission reduction
- Creating development that is accessible by different modes of transport and reduces car dependency
- Improving accessibility to key services and facilities

**2.9.13** We think that the following aspects of objectives OTM1, OTM2, OTM3, OTM4, OTM5 and OTM6 should be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents:

- Cycling provision
- Pedestrian provision
- Passenger Transport improvements
- Vehicle Parking Standards
- Travel Plans
- Aviation mitigation
- Traffic calming principles
- Other Development Management issues associated with movement

### Question 14

Policy Options - Theme 6: East Herts On the Move

Is our approach to dealing with the policy options for Theme 6 correct?

## 2.10 Theme 7: East Herts Health, Wellbeing and Play

**2.10.1** The residents of East Herts enjoy a high quality of life and the local population is one of the healthiest in the country although this tends to mask relative deprivation in some town based ward areas and certain rural wards. The provision of accessible, safe and attractive public open space and facilities for sport and recreation underpins people's quality of life, health and wellbeing. New development places increased pressure on facilities and it is important that sufficient, high quality provision is made. 120 open spaces in the district are owned and managed by East Herts Council. Southern Country Park in Bishop's Stortford and the Ridgeway Park in Hertford have both been awarded Green Flag status.

- 2.10.2** It is the provision of health, community infrastructure and open space, sport and recreation facilities that enables communities to function successfully. Nationally and locally there is a drive to increase participation in physical and social activity and to encourage improvements in health and wellbeing for all ages. The role of planning therefore is to provide the opportunities for everyone to live healthy lifestyles and improve wellbeing. Health and wellbeing is a significant topic area which covers a variety of issues, not all of which are traditionally considered to be within the remit or influence of the land use planning system.
- 2.10.3** The approach of the LDF widens the scope for the planning system to influence health. The role of planning is not limited to the provision of health facilities. In providing for walking and cycling and for access to open space, sport and recreation facilities the Core Strategy is recognising its role in contributing to the health agenda.
- 2.10.4** The provision of open space, sport and recreation also makes an important contribution to sustainable development. It provides places where people can exercise and socialise, while at the same time providing the potential for habitat creation. PPG17 recognises that open space, sport and recreation underpin people's quality of life, contributing to the health and wellbeing of the individual whilst having valuable social, economic and educational roles.
- 2.10.5** The extensive network of rights of way in East Herts is highly-valued by residents and those from further a-field coming to enjoy the countryside. In particular, well-used rights of way pass along the river corridors and are shared by a wide range of users. The waterways of the district are also an important recreational resource, particularly where they connect settlements.
- 2.10.6** The **Lee Valley Regional Park** covers 10,000 acres and runs for 26 miles from Ware to the River Thames at the East India Dock basin. It is managed by the Lee Valley Park Authority which has a duty to develop and preserve leisure, recreation, sport and nature throughout the Regional Park.

The Lee Valley Regional Park was enshrined by the Lee Valley Regional Park Act 1966. Although not a local authority, it is required to produce a Park Development Framework.

The current draft framework sets out the following vision: *“The Lee Valley Regional Park will be a world class destination combining the best of open space, conservation and sporting excellence.”*

The Park Development Framework can be viewed and downloaded at [www.leevalleypark.org.uk/pdfconsultation/vision/consultation/](http://www.leevalleypark.org.uk/pdfconsultation/vision/consultation/)

- 2.10.7** There is often an overlap between leisure facilities and community facilities. Both provide important services and community facilities such as libraries, health care facilities, and places of worship are all important community assets. New development clearly puts additional pressure on these facilities, and further facilities will be required to meet the needs of communities. Community meeting places, such as village halls, church halls and community centre's also play an important role in the cohesion of communities (i.e. uniting the community and providing venues for people to take part in social and physical activities).
- 2.10.8** Culture consists of a number of sectors including the arts, tourism, museums, the diversity of faith communities and sport and recreation. Culture shapes the way in which we view places, use them, and value them. In turn, the places we create serve to shape relationships between people and between the different groups that make up our wider community. On this basis, how and where we provide opportunities to engage with culture and participate in leisure activities are important in terms of social inclusion and quality of life.
- 2.10.9** The Health, Wellbeing and Play (HWP) issues facing East Herts can be summarised as follows:

### General

- There is a need to increase and coordinate health care provision to reduce health inequalities
- Encouraging participation in physical activity has positive health implications
- Ageing population

### Wellbeing

- Increasing accessibility to services increases wellbeing

### Open Space, Sport & Recreation

- There is a need to protect and increase the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities to ensure that provision is accessible to all
- There are quantitative and qualitative deficiencies in open space provision

### Community Infrastructure

- There is a need to protect and support existing community facilities
  - Village shops, post offices and rural pubs should be protected as important community facilities
  - More facilities needed for young people
-

## Culture

- There is a need to maintain and improve existing arts, culture and entertainment facilities
- There is a need to acknowledge the diversity of faith communities and provide new facilities in the district

**2.10.10** We have identified the following LDF strategic objectives to deal with these issues:

- **HWP1:** To maintain and improve existing arts, culture and entertainment facilities and to encourage the provision of new facilities in appropriate locations
- **HWP2 :** To support the diversity of faith communities and places of worship by protecting existing facilities and encouraging the provision of new facilities in appropriate locations
- **HWP3:** To protect and support existing community facilities and encourage the provision of accessible new facilities which address the specific needs of the community
- **HWP4 :** To support the provision of good quality, accessible, health facilities to meet the needs of the community
- **HWP5 :** To support healthy communities by protecting and enhancing existing sport, recreation and open space facilities and providing accessible opportunities for new facilities including encouraging new water-based recreational opportunities in appropriate locations

### Question 15

LDF Strategic Objectives - Theme 7: East Herts Health, Wellbeing and Play

Have we got the LDF strategic objectives for Theme 7 correct?

**2.10.11** We think that the Core Strategy should include policy options that deal with the following aspects of objectives HWP1, HWP2, HWP3, HWP4 and HWP5:

- The planned provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities to support healthy communities
- The planned provision of community facilities, including places of worship, health care, arts, culture and entertainment facilities to enrich quality of life

**2.10.12** We think that the following aspects of objectives HWP1, HWP2, HWP3, HWP4 and HWP5 should be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents:

- Protecting existing community facilities

- Protecting post offices, village shops and rural pubs as community facilities
- Criteria for new facilities
- Protecting and enhancing existing sport, recreation and open space facilities
- Setting open space provision standards to help reduce deficiencies
- Securing the appropriate level of contribution towards the maintenance and creation of existing and new open space, sport, recreation, cultural and health facilities through development

## Question 16

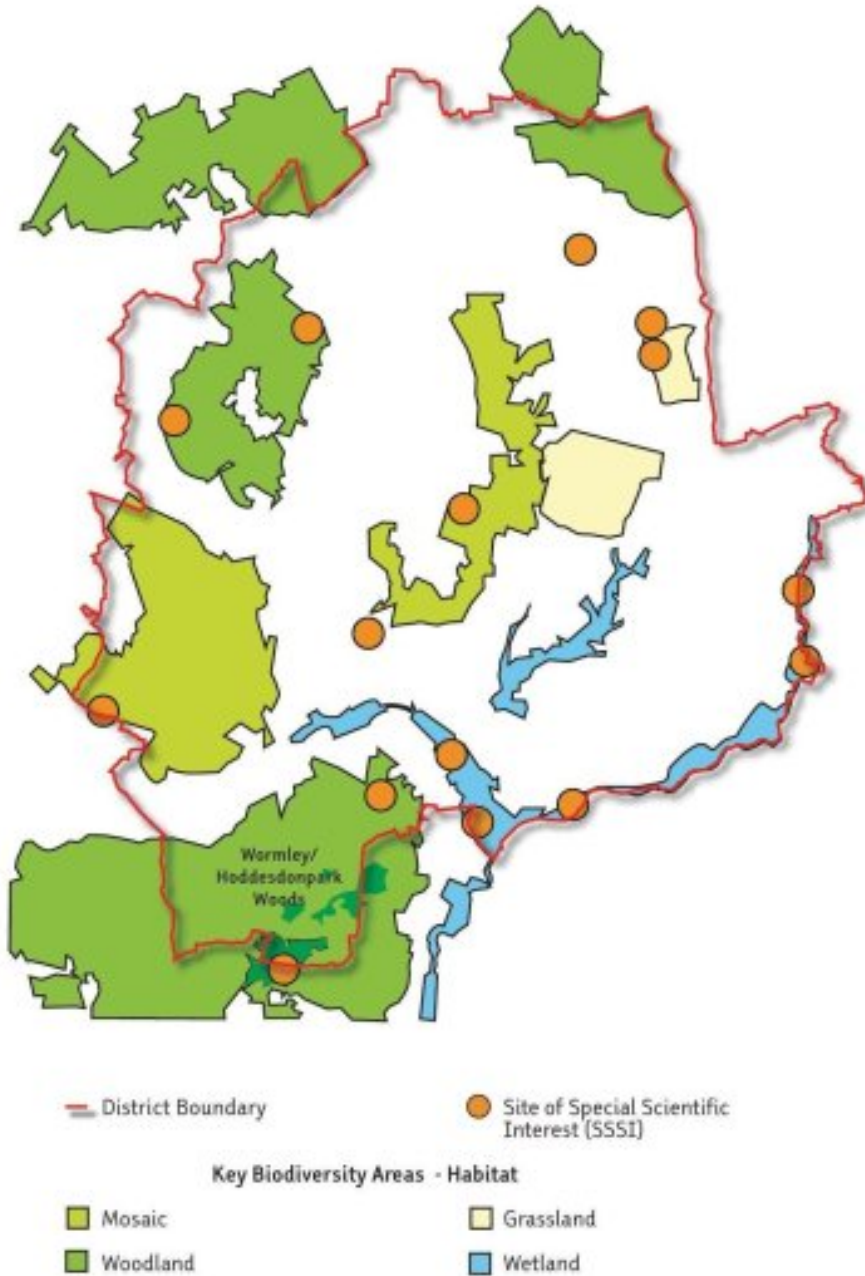
Policy Options - Theme 7: East Herts Health, Wellbeing and Play

Is our approach to dealing with the policy options for Theme 7 correct?

### 2.11 Theme 8: Green East Herts

- 2.11.1** Residents of East Herts are fortunate to have a high quality natural environment on their doorstep. There are a large number of wildlife sites and habitats, many of which are located in ancient woodlands or along our river corridors. Nature is not merely something to enjoy: it provides essential environmental services for all of us, in the form of clean air, clean water, and a comfortable world to inhabit. Figure 2.7 shows the key habitats in East Herts.
- 2.11.2** However, the natural environment of East Herts is under severe pressure. Landfill sites for disposal of our waste are filling up rapidly. Transport causes air and noise pollution, and disrupts people and wildlife.
- 2.11.3** Existing high levels of water consumption are unsustainable given proposals for further growth and development. During dry periods many of our rivers would dry up were it not for pumping of treated waste water back into the watercourses. However, during wet spells there can also be flash flooding due to the rapid runoff of water from impermeable man-made surfaces upstream. Some smaller river tributaries away from the main rivers are especially rich wildlife habitats and special efforts should be made to protect these. There are well established principles for natural flood storage techniques which are compatible with the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and wildlife habitats.
- 2.11.4** Whilst water quality often reflects farming practices, planning can play a role in safeguarding water quality through the careful management of surface water and drainage at new development.

Figure 2.7 Key Wildlife Sites



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**2.11.5** Development proposals put pressure on green spaces in and around our towns and villages. It is important that we identify, prioritise and protect the most valuable environmental assets before it is too late. This Green Infrastructure is at least as important to our long-term wellbeing as 'grey' infrastructure such as roads and railways. It can be difficult to reconcile the needs of increased access with protection of wildlife habitats. However, approached with sensitivity, Green Infrastructure in and around development can deliver a wide range of benefits.



**2.11.6** The Green (GRE) issues facing East Herts can be summarised as follows:

### General

- There is potential conflict between development and protection of the natural environment

### Wildlife and Habitat

- There is a need to reconcile enhanced access to nature with protection of undisturbed habitats for wildlife
- There is a need to safeguard valuable habitats from development

### Waste and Pollution

- There is an urgent need to reduce the amount of rubbish sent to landfill
- Traffic generates air pollution, with possible negative health effects for residents

### Water and Flooding

- Likelihood of future water shortages if growth occurs at current levels of consumption
- There is danger of flash flooding near rivers due to rapid rates of surface-water run-off
- Seasonal drops in river water levels endanger wildlife habitats
- Water quality is compromised by contaminants and surface run-off from development and agriculture

**2.11.7** We have identified the following LDF strategic objectives to deal with these issues:

- **GRE1:** To protect and enhance the quality of the environment by mitigating the impacts of air, water, land, light, and noise pollution through measures including the sustainable reduction and management of waste and the promotion of recycling
- **GRE2:** To identify and promote networks of green infrastructure as a haven for wildlife as well as a recreational amenity including the protection and management of habitats and areas of biodiversity
- **GRE3:** To protect water supplies and water quality from the impacts of new development
- **GRE4:** To mitigate flood risk by avoiding development in areas at risk of flooding and encouraging sustainable drainage



### Question 17

LDF Strategic Objectives - Theme 8: Green East Herts

Have we got the LDF strategic objectives for Theme 8 correct?

**2.11.8** We think that the Core Strategy should include policy options that deal with the following aspects of objectives GRE1, GRE2, GRE3 and GRE4:

- Protecting and enhancing water quality at new development
- Water consumption targets for new development
- Defining key areas of Green Infrastructure in relation to the preferred development strategy
- Avoiding development in areas at risk of flooding

**2.11.9** We think that the following aspects of objectives GRE1, GRE2, GRE3 and GRE4 should be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents:

- Guidance on protected species and habitats
- Guidance on specific areas of Green Infrastructure
- Pollution control
- General guidance on flood risk
- Site-specific guidance on flood risk (where appropriate)
- Approach to surface water drainage at new development

### Question 18

Policy Options - Theme 8: Green East Herts

Is our approach to dealing with the policy options for Theme 8 correct?

## 2.12 Theme 9: East Herts Monitoring and Delivery

**2.12.1** Monitoring the effectiveness of plans is a prerequisite of delivery. If there are issues which might derail our plans, we need to take positive steps to address them. Monitoring is an on-going process which requires us to look not only at issues within East Herts, but also potential impacts from neighbouring authorities (Broxbourne, Epping Forest, Harlow, North Herts, Uttlesford, Stevenage, and Welwyn Hatfield.) We already monitor a wide range of issues in the [East Herts Annual Monitoring Report](#).

The East Herts Annual Monitoring Report is available to view and download online at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/amr](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/amr)

- 2.12.2** In order to coordinate delivery and ensure that the necessary funds are available, monitoring of the LDF will need to be more sophisticated than that required for the Local Plan 2007. It will need to ensure that the delivery of housing or other development will be integrated with the delivery of supporting infrastructure (see Section 1.12).
- 2.12.3** Delivery of our plans requires co-ordination with a wide range of delivery bodies, such as infrastructure and service providers in order to understand what the infrastructure requirements are and how they can be met. In some circumstances an actual site may be required to accommodate a new piece of essential infrastructure. Most of the cost of providing infrastructure comes from mainstream public funding. Another source of funding comes via the planning process, known as developer contributions. This is when the developer contributes to the funding of infrastructure to compensate for the direct impact of the development itself.

The **Hertfordshire Infrastructure and Investment Strategy (HIIS)** considers both strategic infrastructure (transport, education, municipal waste, health, utilities) and local infrastructure (parks and gardens, sports facilities, community and cultural facilities).

The **Rye Meads Water Cycle Strategy** looks at the issue of water supply and waste water infrastructure.

Both documents are available to view online at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/technicalstudies](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/technicalstudies)

- 2.12.4** Monitoring and Delivery (MAD) issues facing East Herts can be summarised as follows:

### Monitoring

- Integrated delivery of development and supporting infrastructure
- Ongoing process
- Positive steps to address key issues
- Impact of development in neighbouring authorities on East Herts

## Delivery

- Coordination of mainstream public funding to support development
- Developer contributions
- Contingency planning
- Provision of sites needed for infrastructure to support development

**2.12.5** We have identified the following LDF strategic objectives to deal with these issues:

- **MAD1:** To ensure the timely delivery of infrastructure necessary to support new growth and development
- **MAD2:** To provide a framework for continuous monitoring together with procedures and guidance to enable risk to be managed in the best way, and to provide sufficient flexibility to cope with changing circumstances and uncertainty
- **MAD3:** To deliver sustainable development and ensure that social and environmental benefits are achieved through proper use of developer contributions
- **MAD4:** To produce and keep up to date an effective Local Development Framework based on an analysis of robust evidence to deliver the LDF vision and objectives and achieve sustainable development

### Question 19

LDF Strategic Objectives - Theme 9: East Herts Monitoring and Delivery

Have we got the LDF strategic objectives for Theme 9 correct?

**2.12.6** We think that the Core Strategy should include policy options that deal with the following aspects of objectives MAD1, MAD2, MAD3 and MAD4:

- Monitoring of key targets, for example in relation to housing, energy and climate change, water consumption, and infrastructure provision
- Strategy for developer contributions towards infrastructure costs

**2.12.7** We think that the following aspects of objectives MAD1, MAD2, MAD3 and MAD4 should be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents:

- Detailed guidance on developer contributions
- Monitoring of site-specific issues
- Monitoring of development management policies

## Question 20

Policy Options - Theme 9: East Herts Monitoring and Delivery

Is our approach to dealing with the policy options for Theme 9 correct?

### 2.13 Everyone Matters: East Herts LDF Vision

- 2.13.1** Having identified the main characteristics of East Herts today, together with the key issues and challenges facing the district, we can now set out what we want East Herts to be like in the future and the means for delivering the LDF vision.
- 2.13.2** We are required to plan for at least 15 years from the date that we adopt the Core Strategy. It is anticipated that this will be in 2012/13. Setting the time horizon to 2031 will enable the Core Strategy to be brought into line with the time period of the East of England Plan Review.
- 2.13.3** The LDF vision should be a statement setting out what East Herts will be like in 2031 and must explain how the district will change both in terms of its geography and its socio-economic characteristics.
- 2.13.4** The first part of the LDF vision is shared with the East Herts SCS (see box below). This shared vision has been informed both by the evidence base filtering work and by work undertaken as part of the preparation of the SCS. The shared vision re-emphasises the pivotal role that planning and the LDF have in delivering better outcomes for East Herts.

#### East Herts Shared LDF/SCS Vision

*Create a thriving, fair, and inclusive East Herts that safeguards and enhances our unique mix of rural and urban communities, where people choose to live, work and visit because:*

- *it is safe, clean, green and well connected;*
- *everyone matters and can take part in decisions that affect their lives; and*
- *there are sustainable economic and social opportunities that improve quality of life that are available to all.*

- 2.13.5** The second part of the LDF vision will set out what we want to achieve in respect of the district wide issues identified under each theme. We believe that in respect of the district as a whole, in 2031:

- **Theme 1: East Herts Energy and Climate Change**

*Greenhouse-gas emissions from new development will be greatly reduced, the supply of clean energy increased, and effective climate change adaptation measures will be part of the fabric of new development;*

- **Theme 2: East Herts People and Community Safety**

*All communities in East Herts will be socially inclusive, safe and consist of a well balanced population, with a strong sense of identity and a rich and diverse community life;*

- **Theme 3: Housing East Herts**

*East Herts will meet the accommodation needs of the whole community through the provision of a mix of housing tenures, types and sizes;*

- **Theme 4: East Herts Character**

*New development will have made a positive influence on its surroundings acknowledging the local vernacular and the character of every local landscape will have been conserved and enhanced;*

- **Theme 5: East Herts on the Move**

*Access options will have been improved for all, which will have encouraged a modal shift away from the private car to more sustainable modes of transport including passenger transport, walking and cycling;*

- **Theme 6: East Herts Economy, Skills and Prosperity**

*East Herts will have a diverse and thriving economy, where educational excellence fosters a highly skilled population and innovation in industry;*

- **Theme 7: East Herts Health, Wellbeing and Play**

*Residents will continue to enjoy a high quality of life through improved access to community, cultural, leisure and health facilities;*

- **Theme 8: Green East Herts**

*All new development will make a positive environmental contribution, and natural hazards such as flooding and drought will be controlled;*

- **Theme 9: East Herts Monitoring and Delivery**

*New development will be supported by the necessary infrastructure and services, and coordinated delivery of sustainable development will be at the heart of the Council's approach to planning.*

### Question 21

#### LDF Vision

Is our emerging LDF vision for what East Herts will be like in 2031 correct?

- 2.13.6** Reflecting the dispersed geographic nature of East Herts we also anticipate that the final LDF vision will include separate visions relating to the five towns and the villages. These visions will emerge as the Core Strategy evolves through its stages of preparation and we finalise the development strategy (see Chapter 3). This is because the development strategy will determine how much growth each settlement will receive. An initial LDF vision for each town and the villages is set out in Chapters 4 to 9.

# Chapter 3

## Development Strategy

## 3.1 Purpose of Chapter 3

**3.1.1** Chapter 3 sets out the options for identifying the broad locations of growth across East Herts, known as the **Development Strategy**. We have generated six distinct development strategy options that we believe can deliver the LDF vision and objectives of the Core Strategy and accommodate the required growth in the most sustainable locations. We would like to know which development strategy you think is most appropriate to address the issues facing East Herts and achieve sustainable development.

The Development Strategy is the key element of the Core Strategy. It is the means by which the East of England Plan housing requirement will be distributed across East Herts over the plan period and it will determine the broad locations for growth. The development strategy will also determine which sites are allocated for development in subsequent LDF documents.

As is explained in Section 3.7, the options presented in this chapter are based on the feedback from the community engagement undertaken in Summer 2008 and the results of the Call for Sites in Summer 2009.

**3.1.2** Chapter 3 focuses on the following:

- How many homes and how much housing land we need (Sections 3.2 and 3.3);
- The issue of density (Section 3.3);
- How many jobs we need (Section 3.4);
- The availability of land and the issue of brownfield or greenfield land (Section 3.5);
- The need for a review of the Green Belt (Section 3.6);
- Generating the development strategy options (Sections 3.7 to 3.14)
- How to distribute the housing under each option (Section 3.15)

**3.1.3** The development strategy options outlined in this chapter do not deal with the growth to the north of Harlow which is dealt with in Chapter 10. The growth to the north of Harlow, will however, impact upon the final development strategy for East Herts as it will influence which settlements should be identified as part of the development strategy and the extent of the Green Belt.

This chapter includes questions 22 and 23.



## 3.2 How Many Homes Do We Need?

**3.2.1** One of the Government’s key objectives is to ensure that “everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community where they want to live” (Paragraph 9, PPS3). To help achieve this objective, the Government believes that the overall supply of housing must be increased.

### The East of England Plan

**3.2.2** The East of England Plan sets out the amount of houses that the region has to accommodate. The published 2008 East of England Plan covers the period to 2021 and must deliver at least 508,000 additional homes across the East of England region. Taking into account those homes already built between 2001 and 2006, the minimum regional housing target is 402,450 homes.

**3.2.3** To achieve the housing growth, the East of England Plan allocates a proportion of growth to each district (Policy H1). This is known as the district housing requirement and is the minimum number of additional homes that should be planned for.

**3.2.4** The East of England Plan also identifies certain towns as **Key Centres for Development and Change (KCDC)** where growth will be concentrated. Although none of the towns in East Herts have been identified as KCDCs, both Harlow and Stevenage have been identified as such.

Policy SS3 of the East of England Plan identifies Key Centres for Development and Change across the East of England. New development will be concentrated in these locations, thus making the most of existing infrastructure and the potential for improvements or extensions to it.

**3.2.5** In accordance with Policy HA1, Harlow is required to provide a minimum of 16,000 homes for the period 2001 to 2021. However, this figure is for the Harlow area and includes urban extensions in East Herts and Epping Forest districts. Such urban extensions are to be to the north, east, and on a smaller scale to the south and west, of Harlow. For clarity, therefore, this chapter deals with the East Herts district housing figure (see below) whilst the growth to the north of Harlow in East Herts is considered in Chapter 10.

**3.2.6** The 2010 Draft East of England Plan Review (see Chapter 1, Section 1.8) covers the period 2011 to 2031. This Review must facilitate 500,700 additional homes across the East of England Region. Its approach to delivering these homes is the same as the 2008 East of England Plan, in that it allocates a proportion of growth to each district (Revised Policy H1) as well as identifying certain towns as KCDCs where growth will be concentrated. Harlow remains identified as a KCDC and must provide 16,000 homes in the period 2011 to 2031.

**3.2.7** As explained in Chapter 1, Section 1.8 the Government has indicated its intention to “rapidly abolish regional strategies” such as the East of England Plan. At the time of writing, the detail of how and when these changes will be implemented has not been set out. A consequence of the abolition of the East of England Plan would appear to be the deletion of the district housing requirement. However, it should be stressed that whilst this would remove the figure as set out in the plan, it would not remove the actual requirement or need to build new homes in East Herts.

## A Continuous Supply of Housing

**3.2.8** Whilst a plan covers a fixed period of time, housing supply is continuous. Because of this, it is usual for the periods of operation of plans to overlap; e.g. the 2008 East of England Plan runs for the 20 year period 2001 to 2021 whilst the 2010 Draft East of England Plan Review runs for the 20 year period 2011 to 2031. It should be noted however, that Policy H1 of the 2008 East of England Plan requires the same rate of housing provision after 2021, as for the period 2001 to 2021, until formally replaced by the 2010 East of England Plan Review.

**3.2.9** Homes already built during the overlapping period can therefore be counted towards the district housing requirement. As set out in Table 3.1 below, the number of homes built in the eight years 2001/02 to 2008/09, known as completions, can be deducted from the district housing requirement.

**3.2.10** Sites that are earmarked for development but have not yet been developed, such as sites with planning permission and existing **allocated sites** identified in the Local Plan 2007 are known as commitments. These can also be deducted from the total requirement, where there is a degree of certainty that they will still come forward for development.

**3.2.11** Permission has been granted for 1,048 dwellings on **unallocated** sites and we expect these to come forward for development within the next five years. A further 649 dwellings have been granted permission on allocated sites and are assumed will be built. We also anticipate at least another 3,995 dwellings to come forward on outstanding allocated sites.

To meet its housing requirement the Council allocates land for a particular type of land use, such as housing, as part of its planned approach to managing development and shaping the future of our towns and villages. Infrastructure providers can then take the planned growth of a settlement into account when delivering their services to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place to support growth.

Unallocated sites are those sites that have not been identified through the plan-making process but come forward for development via the development control planning application process

- 3.2.12** Once all the completions and commitments have been deducted from the district housing requirement, the remaining number of homes that are left to build is known as the 'to-find' figure. It is this 'to-find' figure for which we must identify sufficient land through the LDF plan-making process.
- 3.2.13** In the past the methodology for identifying land for development was to undertake urban capacity studies. These were technical surveys that identified vacant and underused land that could theoretically be redeveloped for housing. This information along with suggested sites for development was then fed into the Local Plan process, whereby housing requirements were met by bringing forward a combination of allocated and **windfall sites** for development. For example, in addition to allocating a number of sites for development, the East Herts Local Plan 2007 assumed that 160 dwellings per annum would also come forward as windfall sites.

Windfall sites are those which have not been specifically identified as available or allocated for development in the local plan-making process. Rather, they have come through the planning application process and normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available. They could include, for example, large sites resulting from a factory closure or small sites such as a residential conversion or a new flat over a shop.

- 3.2.14** However, because of the lack of certainty over how many windfall sites may come forward, the Government has said that for plan-making purposes it is no longer acceptable to simply assume that enough sites will come forward for development.
- 3.2.15** Instead, the LDF should identify sufficient land in advance to meet its full housing requirement rather than rely on windfall sites. Whilst windfall sites can still be counted as part of our housing delivery once they have been completed (i.e. built), they cannot be used to accommodate the 'to-find' figure. This 'to-find' figure, therefore, must be accommodated on specifically identified sites through subsequent LDF documents.

### East Herts Housing Requirement

- 3.2.16** The number of new homes that East Herts must deliver is set out in Policy H1 of the East of England Plan. The 2008 East of England Plan sets this figure as 12,000 for the period 2001 to 2021 and assumes 6,600 for the additional ten years to 2031. The 2010 Draft East of England Plan Review sets the housing requirement figure for the period 2011 to 2031 as 11,000.
- 3.2.17** Following its anticipated adoption in 2013, the East Herts Core Strategy will run to 2031 to coincide with the Review of the East of England Plan. Because of the revisions to Policy H1 and the overlap between the 2008 East of

England Plan and the 2010 Draft East of England Plan Review, the East Herts housing requirement can be expressed as a range, rather than as a single figure.

- 3.2.18** As shown in Table 3.1, for the total 30 year period 2001 to 2031, therefore, the East Herts housing requirement is between 17,000 and 18,600 new homes (567 and 620 per annum). As explained above and shown in Table 3.1, we can deduct the 9,724 homes already built and committed between 2001 and 2009. Thus, the East Herts 'to-find' range for the period 2009 to 2031 is between 7,276 and 8,876 new homes.
- 3.2.19** It should be noted that following the anticipated abolition of the East of England Plan, the number of homes that East Herts must provide may be reduced. As the Core Strategy progresses through its preparation process, over the next couple of years, any such changes to the planning system will be taken into account and reflected as necessary before the Core Strategy is finalised.
- 3.2.20** Table 3.1 shows completions for the period 2001 to 2009. 470 homes were built in East Herts during 2009/10. A number of homes were also granted planning permission during 2009/10 and these will need to be accounted for when the information becomes available. Thus for simplicity, throughout this document we have used a rounded 'to-find' figure of approximately 8,500 homes (283 per annum), based on the requirement in the 2008 East of England Plan. This is because the East of England Plan Review is still subject to consultation and approval and its housing requirement could change. Given that we are still at an early stage of preparation of the East Herts Core Strategy itself, the actual 'to-find' figure is perhaps less important than the overarching development strategy, i.e. how the homes are distributed across the district.
- 3.2.21** This is a challenging amount of growth for East Herts to accommodate. To put it into context, previous housing requirements of the Hertfordshire County Structure Plans (which the East of England Plan replaced) have ranged from over 700 per annum in the 1980s to 550 per annum in the 1990s.

Table 3.1 East Herts Housing Numbers 2001/2002 - 2030/31 (as of 31st March 2009)

Settlement (Existing No. of dwellings - 2001 Census)	Completions and Commitments				
	Built 2001-2009	Unallocated sites with permission	Allocated sites with permission	Allocated sites without permission	Total
<b>Bishop's Stortford</b> (14,249)	1,259	202	235	3,586	5,282
<b>Buntingford</b> (2,069)	85	72	0	97	254
<b>Hertford</b> (9,468)	985	414	146	79	1,624
<b>Sawbridgeworth</b> (3,421)	115	68	90	80	353
<b>Ware</b> (7,321)	851	114	16	76	1,057
<b>Villages / Rural Area</b> (16,794)	737	178	162	77	1,151
<b>Total</b> (53,313)	<b>4,032</b>	<b>1,048</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>3,995</b>	<b>9,724</b>
East of England Plan	East Herts Housing Requirement				East Herts 'To-find' Range*
	2001-2011	2011-2021	2021-2031	2001-2031	
<b>2008 Plan</b>	6,000	6,000	6,600	18,600	<b>8,876</b>
<b>2010 Draft Review</b>	6,000*	5,500	5,500	17,000	<b>7,276</b>

Source: Hertfordshire County Council / East Herts Council

\*(2001-2031 figures minus 9,724)

Note to Table 3.1: The 2010 Draft Review covers the 20 year period 2011-2031. However, because housing supply is continuous the table shows the district housing requirement for the 30 year period 2001 to 2031. As such, for the period 2001-2011, the figure of 6,000 from the 2008 Plan is used.

**3.2.22** In addition to a **growing population**, the size of households has been reducing over recent years; which is why the number of houses we must build has increased. For example, in 1981, the average household size in England was 2.67 persons; in 2021, it is predicted to be 2.15. This implies that even if the total population of England did not change over this 40 year period, the number of households would still have increased by 25%.

2006 Sub-national population projections from the Office for National Statistics estimate that East Herts will have a population of 154,300 in 2031. This represents an increase of 19,200 people from 2009. Based on national trends, 55% of this change could be due to natural change of births over deaths.

**3.2.23** How this growth is distributed is up to us and this chapter sets out what we believe to be a series of realistic alternative development strategies for dealing with this growth. Given that the figures in the East of England Plan are minimum targets, subject to being able to demonstrate **continuous delivery**, we do not consider it appropriate to allocate significant amounts of additional land for housing to exceed this range.

Further information on the delivery of housing including its housing trajectory, completions and commitments can be found in the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) which is available to view on the Council's website at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/amr](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/amr)

**3.2.24** In addition to general needs housing East Herts also needs to make specific provision for Gypsies & Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. Policy H3 of the East of England Plan requires the provision of 25 Gypsy & Traveller pitches for the period from 2006 to 2011, with a further 21 pitches for the period 2011 to 2021. In respect of Travelling Showpeople, nine additional plots will need to be provided to meet the requirements of East of England Plan Policy H4.

## 3.3 How Much Housing Land Do We Need?

**3.3.1** Once we know how many new homes we have to build, we need to work out how much land would be required. This is known as the 'land-take' and it is dependent upon the **density** at which development is built. In addition to housing, land will also be required to provide infrastructure and other land-uses as appropriate, such as schools, parks, roads, community facilities and employment sites. This will further increase the land-take required.

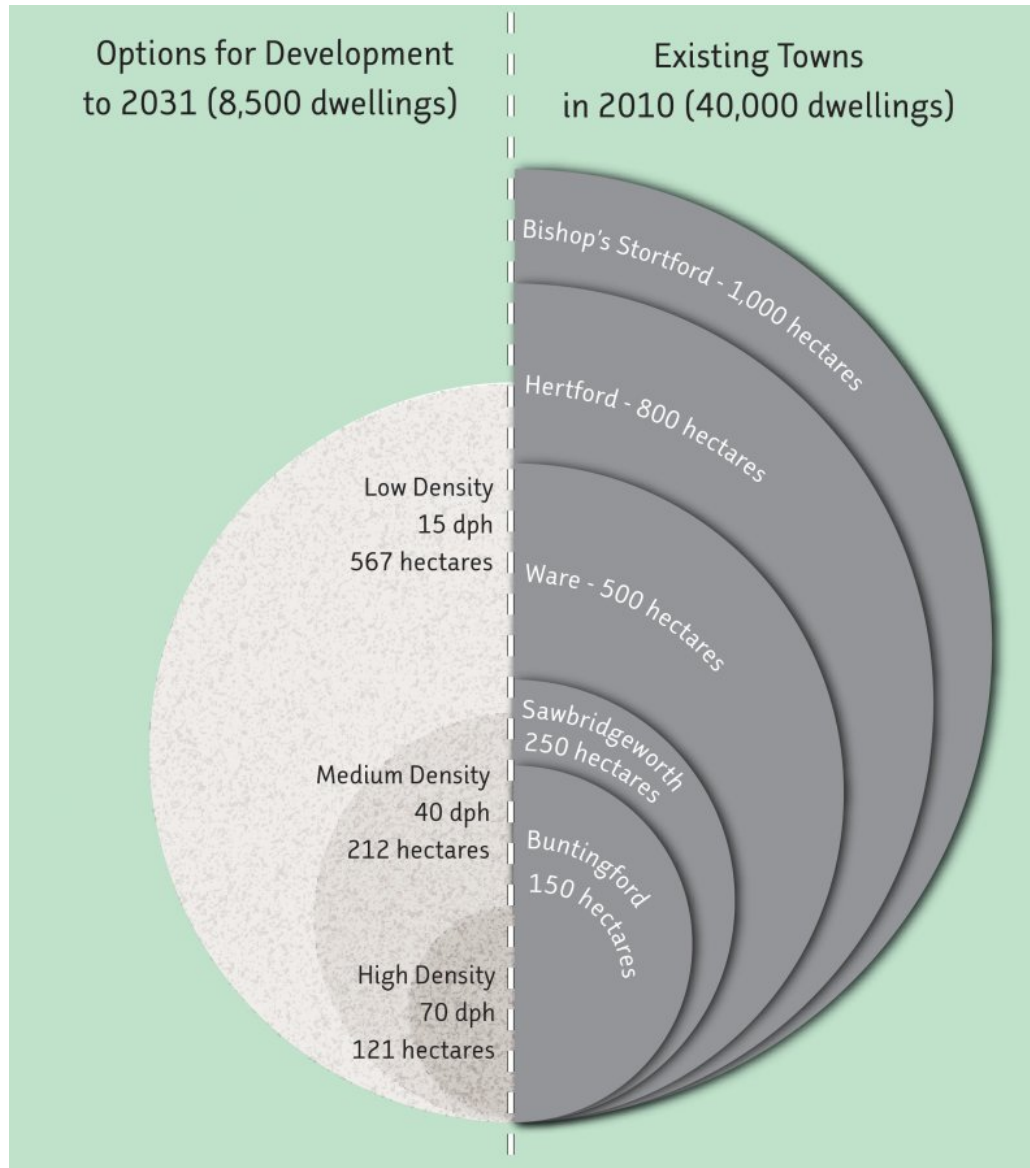


Density is a calculation of the number of houses that can be built on a particular area of land. It is usually expressed as the number of dwellings per hectare or dph. Density may go up or down depending on the amount of supporting infrastructure required as well as site-level design.

One hectare is approximately equivalent to 2.5 acres or 1 1/4 football pitches.

- 3.3.2** Figure 3.1 illustrates how land-take would vary at different densities to provide the same amount of dwellings. To give an idea of scale, these density levels are compared with the sizes of the five existing towns in 2010. This diagram is purely illustrative and it should be noted that rather than being concentrated in a single location, the development strategy (see Section 3.7) is likely to disperse development throughout the district rather than concentrate it into a single settlement (see paragraph 3.7.8).
- 3.3.3** The planning system should ensure the efficient and effective use of land. As can be seen, to accommodate 8,500 new homes in East Herts, housing development at low density e.g. 15dph would require 567 hectares; homes built at a medium density e.g. 40dph would require 212 hectares; whilst homes built at high density e.g. 70dph would require 121 hectares.
- 3.3.4** Increasing the density at which homes are built has important benefits as it minimises land-take. This can result in a more compact built form that can improve accessibility to services and reduce the reliance on the private car. Coupled with higher land costs, higher densities are often considered more appropriate in town centre locations.
- 3.3.5** However, density needs to be carefully judged in the context of overall design quality. Included within the portrait sections of Chapters 4 to 9 are examples of local housing development built at different densities.
- 3.3.6** Our approach to density in the LDF and the Core Strategy can only be addressed once we have a clearer idea of the preferred development strategy for the district. This is because the appropriate density for any given development depends on several factors including location, design and character, infrastructure, housing size, type and mix, and site viability.
- 3.3.7** Another potential source of housing supply is empty homes. Bringing empty homes back into use has other benefits and can reduce the reality and fear of crime and antisocial behaviour and improve the look and feel of the area. In East Herts 754 homes have been empty for more than six months. Whilst we will continue to work to bringing empty homes back into use through the Council's Empty Homes Strategy, as they represent just 1.4% of the East Herts housing stock, or just over one years worth of new homebuilding, it is not considered that empty homes will make a significant contribution to future housing supply and/or meeting housing need and demand across East Herts.

Figure 3.1 Land-take at high, medium and low density scenarios



Source: East Herts Council

### 3.4 How Many Jobs Do We Need?

- 3.4.1 In order to create sustainable communities, alongside housing growth we also need to plan for economic growth. With more housing comes the need to provide for more jobs. The number of new jobs that we have to create is therefore related to the number of new homes we have to provide.
- 3.4.2 The starting point therefore, is the district housing requirement of 18,600 as set out in the 2008 East of England Plan through to 2031. Based on the ratio of 0.81 jobs to homes, this equates to 15,066 jobs across the district for the period 2001 to 2031. It should be noted that following the anticipated abolition of the East of England Plan, the number of homes that East Herts must



provide may be reduced. Consequently the number of jobs may also be reduced. The ratio, however, of jobs to homes remains as this is based on separate employment trends and forecasts and not the East of England Plan. As the Core Strategy progresses through its preparation process, over the next couple of years, any such changes to the planning system will be taken into account and reflected as necessary before the Core Strategy is finalised.

- 3.4.3** In 2001, East Herts had 67,100 jobs, whilst in 2009 there were 67,900 jobs, an increase of only 800 jobs over the eight year period. However, these figures alone do not reflect the annual fluctuations that occur, nor can it accurately reflect a trend over this short timeframe. For example in 2007 East Herts had a peak of 71,400 jobs, indicating a 3,500 job loss over a two year period, almost certainly as a result of the recession.
- 3.4.4** As with housing, we need to take into account those jobs already provided in the period 2001 to 2009; thus the job requirement figure needs to be reduced by 800 jobs to give us the jobs 'to-find' figure of 14,266 for the period 2009 to 2031, equivalent to 649 jobs per year.
- 3.4.5** It should also be noted that revised Policy E1 of the 2010 Draft East of England Plan Review indicates net jobs growth for East Herts of 13,600 for the period 2011 to 2031. This equates to 680 jobs per year.
- 3.4.6** Given the historic shortfall of job creation in the district, the ambition of 649 or 680 new jobs per year is challenging and will require a significant change in the way we seek to deliver new jobs in East Herts. The target represents an uplift on the level of job growth that might otherwise be expected if the district were to retain its current share of economic growth. However, in order to ensure new developments create sustainable communities, it is vital to seek to provide local jobs for local people and to reduce the high levels of out-commuting and the overall need to travel.

### Employment Numbers

- 3.4.7** Most types of land-use will generate jobs and business opportunities and sufficient land needs to be provided for a range of employment uses such as offices, shops and schools.
- 3.4.8** For plan-making purposes, however, the term employment has a restricted definition and usually refers to land used for Business (Use Class B1), General Industrial (Use Class B2) and Storage or Distribution purposes (Use Class B8). This is set out in the Town and Country Planning Act's Use Classes Order (as amended) which identifies employment uses separately from other land uses such as retail and leisure.
- 3.4.9** Employment Land uses could take the form of purpose-built business parks covering a range of business types; specialist centres focusing on one type of industry such as pharmaceutical research and development; or ad-hoc

clusters of small to medium sized businesses that cater for new and growing enterprises. Jobs associated with retail, leisure or service industries are not counted within the employment figures.

**3.4.10** It should be noted that over half (54%) of the forecast jobs will be within non-‘B Class’ uses such as retail and leisure. Within the ‘B-Class’ uses, it is anticipated that some 71% of the requirement is in the ‘B1 use-class’ which includes offices, research and development and light industry. Significantly, there is also expected to be a decline in B2 employment uses.

### How Much Employment Land Do We Need?

**3.4.11** The number of employment jobs we need to provide for in East Herts between 2009 and 2031 is, therefore, 6,562 (i.e. 46% of 14,266). Unlike other job sectors, the employment jobs figure can be translated directly into a land requirement to understand how many hectares of employment land we need to provide. As shown in Table 3.2, a total of 13.16 hectares of employment land are required for the 22 year period 2009 to 2031 for B1, B2 and B8 uses.

Table 3.2 East Herts Employment Figures 2009 to 2031

Use Class	Total Jobs	Total Land (Hectares)	Jobs per Year	Land per Year (Hectares)
B1: Business	4,708	9.42	214	0.43
B2: General Industrial	856	1.50	39	0.07
B8: Storage or Distribution	999	2.25	45	0.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,562</b>	<b>13.16</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>0.60</b>

Source: Halcrow 2008 and East Herts 2010 (Figures may not sum due to rounding)

**3.4.12** East Herts has also undertaken an **Employment Land and Policy Review** technical study which estimated that between 2001 and 2021 we would require between 2 and 5 hectares of employment land rising to between 7 and 10 hectares, should 5 hectares of existing poorer quality employment land be released for other uses. It is important to note that the Employment Land and Policy Review was prepared prior to the economic recession and does not take into account the Government’s latest statistics and the 2010 Draft East of England Plan renewed drive for economic growth in the Eastern region. Although the Core Strategy will not deal with specific sites, this is useful background information that will inform the development strategy options themselves.

The East Herts Employment Land and Policy Review 2008 undertook an audit and assessment of existing land used for employment and graded these according to their quality, access and viability among other criteria. It also forecasts the employment land requirements for East Herts up to 2021.

The technical study is available to view and download from the Council's website at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/employmentlandreview](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/employmentlandreview)

- 3.4.13** East Herts is bordered by two Key Centres for Development and Change, namely Stevenage and Harlow. The Lee Valley is also noted as a location needing regeneration during the life span of the East of England Plan to 2031. It is therefore important that we work closely with neighbouring authorities to ensure that the benefits of future economic development are maximised for East Herts businesses and residents; there is the most effective distribution of economic growth, taking into account the needs of businesses, land availability, environmental constraints, and a sustainable relationship with proposals for housing growth.
- 3.4.14** The Local Development Framework through the Core Strategy and subsequent documents will need to take a proactive and flexible approach to allocating employment land to support wider sustainable economic development and to support the inter-relationships between the rural and urban areas in the district.
- 3.4.15** Although the Core Strategy does not identify a specific land requirement for other job sectors, in accordance with PPS4, the Core Strategy will seek to ensure adequate provision of land to provide for the majority of the East Herts job requirement, whilst recognising the relationship between East Herts and its surrounding environs.

### 3.5 Land Availability: Call for Sites

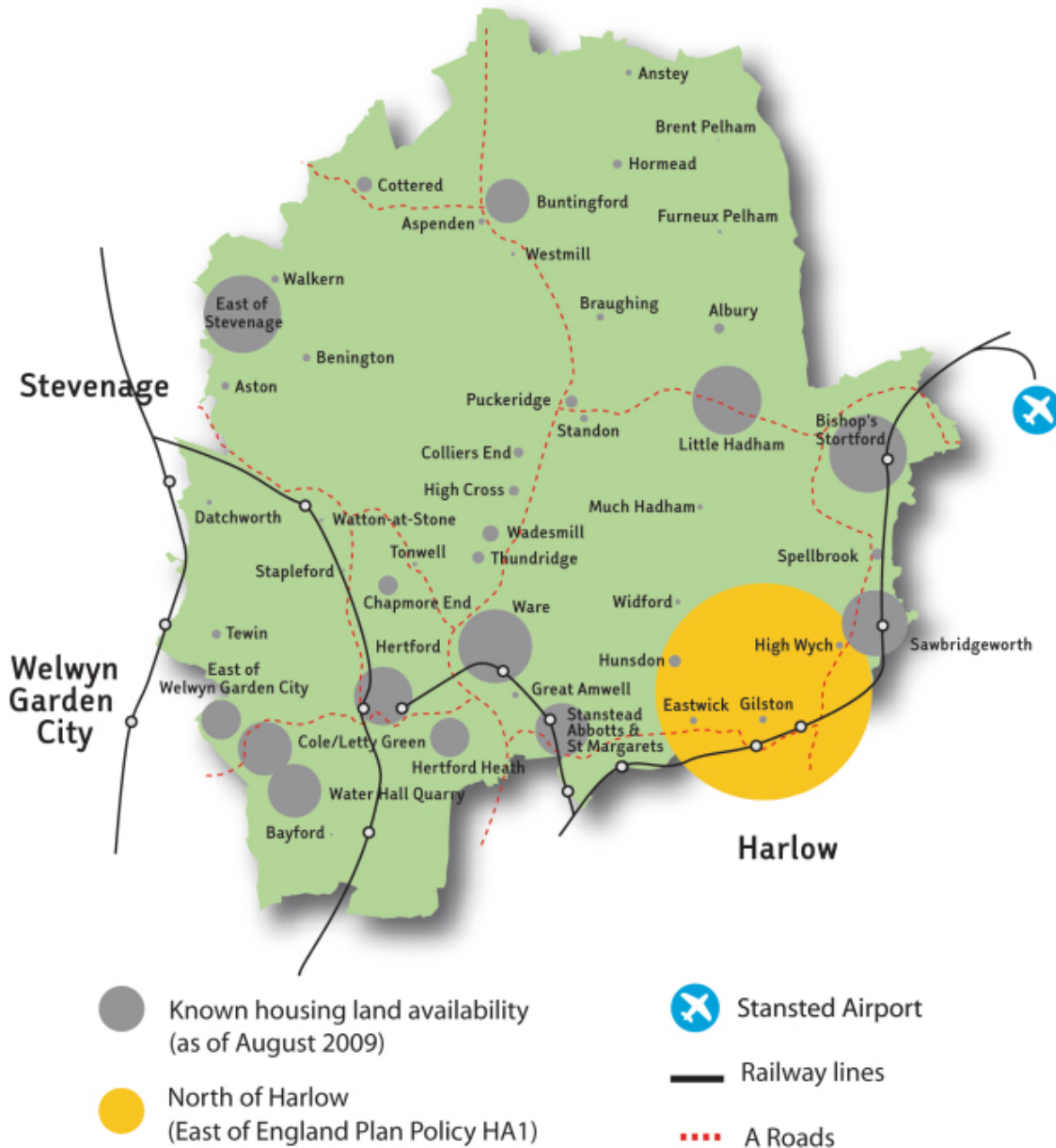
- 3.5.1** The starting point for identifying a development strategy and the broad locations for growth is to look at the potential availability of land for development. To assist with this process, in 2009 we initiated a **Call for Sites**: technical work that sought suggestions from landowners, developers and other interested parties for all types of potential future development and land-use in East Herts, including housing, employment, leisure and community uses.

The Call for Sites suggestions are simply being taken at 'face-value' to inform the initial options generation process. The suggestions have not been assessed in terms of their suitability and the inclusion of a site is in no way an endorsement by the Council of the suitability of a particular site for development.

Further information on the Call for Sites including an explanation of the purpose and methodology can be found at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/callforsites](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/callforsites)

- 3.5.2** The rationale for undertaking a Call for Sites early on in the plan-making process is to ensure that in theory, the development strategy options are deliverable; i.e. that there is sufficient land to deliver the approximate 'to-find' figure of 8,500 homes (Section 3.2). Following this Issues and Options consultation, we will agree our preferred approach and begin to assess the Call for Sites suggestions that conform to our preferred development strategy. Because the Core Strategy is not site specific, this information will then form the basis of the Site Allocations document.
- 3.5.3** The Call for Sites information is based on suggestions received as of April 2010. Further suggestions for development and/or land-use can be made via the Call for Sites process and these will also be taken into account to further inform the development strategy options.
- 3.5.4** Figure 3.2 maps the Call for Sites suggestions for housing and mixed-use. Suggestions for land to come forward as part of the development to the north of Harlow have been included on this map although this growth is dealt with specifically in Chapter 10 and does not form part of the development strategy options presented in this chapter.

Figure 3.2 Theoretical Availability of Housing Land in East Herts



Source: East Herts Council

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**3.5.5** As shown in Table 3.3, the total amount of theoretically available land in East Herts from the Call for Sites is 1,482.1 hectares. This equates to a theoretical total of 29,642 homes. Not all this land will come forward for development but there is clearly more than sufficient land to accommodate the approximate ‘to-find’ figure of 8,500 homes up to 2031.

Table 3.3 Total Theoretical Availability of Housing Land in East Herts to 2031 (excluding growth to the north of Harlow). Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Broad Location	Area (Hectares)	Homes
Bishop’s Stortford	66.5	1,330
Buntingford	86.5	1,730
Hertford	99.1	1,982
Sawbridgeworth	161.1	3,222
Ware	176	3,520
Villages and the Rural Area	671.1	13,422
Extensions to Stevenage and Welwyn Garden City	221.8	4,436
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,482.1</b>	<b>29,642</b>

### Employment Land

**3.5.6** Approximately 318.3 hectares have been suggested through the Call for Sites for employment, retail and mixed-uses, not including sites suggested for major urban extensions which would contain a mixture of uses including employment. Again, this is theoretically suitable to meet the employment land requirement of 13.16 hectares (see Section 3.4).

### Brownfield or Greenfield Land?

**3.5.7** Government policy is currently targeted towards making the most efficient use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed. PPS3 sets the annual target that at least 60% of new housing should be provided on previously developed or ‘brownfield’ land and this is reiterated in Policy SS2 of the East of England Plan.

**3.5.8** By focusing new development on brownfield land, the amount of undeveloped, open land (known as greenfield land) needed for development can be reduced. This is the approach of the Local Plan 2007 that sought to minimise development on greenfield land. In the monitoring year 2007/08 for example, we ensured that 96% of all development was on previously developed land.

Previously developed land (PDL) also known as ‘brownfield’ land, is land that has previously been occupied by a permanent structure. However, it specifically excludes land that has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings and land that has been used for mineral extraction and/or waste disposal (e.g. landfill). On the whole, brownfield land tends to be located within existing urban areas, but this is not always the case and there is no presumption that brownfield land is necessarily suitable for development.

Greenfield land is land that is currently undeveloped such as private residential gardens, parks, playing fields, allotments and land in agricultural and forestry use. Greenfield land is different from Green Belt land which is a specific planning designation, although the Green Belt does contain much greenfield land.

- 3.5.9** However, previously developed land is in limited supply and we cannot assume that the same amount of brownfield land will continue to come forward for development. Indeed, in the monitoring year 2008/09, only 86% of development was on brownfield land.
- 3.5.10** In terms of the availability of land, we will continue to encourage the following approach: firstly, re-use of brownfield land within existing built-up areas, followed by the use of greenfield land within existing built-up areas; and finally, the use of brownfield and greenfield land outside existing settlements.

## 3.6 Green Belt Review

- 3.6.1** Extensive areas of the East of England region are designated as **Green Belt** to constrain the growth of large urban areas, prevent coalescence, safeguard the countryside, preserve the setting of historic towns and assist urban regeneration.

Planning Policy Guidance note 2: Green Belts (PPG2) describes how Green Belts are designated and their land safeguarded. Green Belt land-use objectives are outlined and the presumption against inappropriate development is set out. It should be noted that although Green Belts often contain areas of attractive landscape, the quality of the landscape is not relevant to the inclusion of land within the Green Belt or its continued protection.

- 3.6.2** In East Herts the Green Belt, which forms part of the London Metropolitan Green Belt, contains the settlements of Bishop’s Stortford, Hertford, Ware, Sawbridgeworth and Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets, together with several villages. The Green Belt within East Herts is shown in Figure 3.3 below.



## Harlow Strategic Green Belt Review

- 3.6.3** Policy SS7 of the 2008 East of England Plan requires a strategic review of the Green Belt in East Herts in order to accommodate an urban extension to the north of Harlow (see Chapter 10). The new Green Belt boundary should be drawn so as to maintain the physical and visual separation of Harlow from smaller settlements to the north. The review of the Green Belt should test the most sustainable eventual scale of urban extension in this area to 2031 and beyond. Policy SS7 also states that the review should identify a compensating strategic extension to the Green Belt in East Herts, north of Harlow. The extension should contribute to ensuring the overall area of Green Belt in the region is increased. The 2010 Draft East of England Plan Review reiterates this policy approach to 2031.

## Stevenage Strategic Green Belt Review

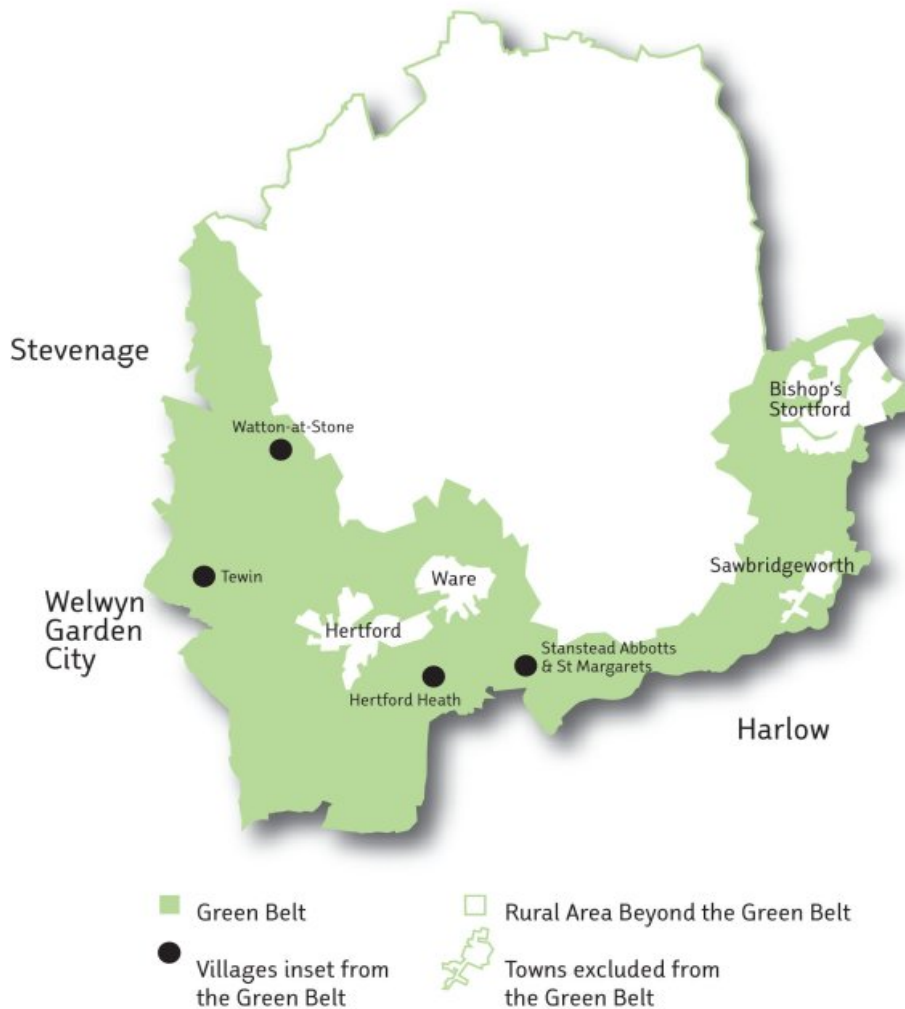
- 3.6.4** Policy SS7 of the 2010 Draft East of England Plan Review requires a strategic review of the Green Belt boundaries at Stevenage, including land in Stevenage and North Hertfordshire, and compensating strategic Green Belt extensions in North Hertfordshire.
- 3.6.5** Policy SV1 of the 2010 Draft East of England Plan Review requires a co-ordinated approach around the town, including a review of Green Belt boundaries, to allow scope for further growth of the Stevenage built-up area until at least 2031, with development to the west, north and possibly east being brought forward together, rather than sequentially, where this is consistent with making best use of existing infrastructure or with the availability of additional capacity, and prioritising the re-use of previously developed land.

## Local Green Belt Review

- 3.6.6** In addition to carrying out a strategic review of the Green Belt we also anticipate that a more local review of Green Belt boundaries will be required. As shown in Figure 3.3 below, four of our five main settlements in East Herts are surrounded by Green Belt. We already know that there is insufficient capacity within these settlements to accommodate the required housing 'to-find' figure (Section 3.5 above), which means that we may have to consider releasing some sites from the Green Belt. We will not know which sites may need to be released until we have agreed our preferred development strategy. If sites need to be released then they will be appraised and selected on the basis of sustainability criteria and least damage done to the purposes of the Green Belt.
- 3.6.7** Whilst we acknowledge that two-thirds of the district is not covered by Green Belt, we do not think that it would be either realistic or sustainable to propose a development strategy option which seeks to locate development exclusively outside the Green Belt (see Section 3.7).



Figure 3.3 The Green Belt in East Herts



Source: East Herts Council

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- 3.6.8** It is anticipated that work on both the strategic and the local review will commence later in 2010 following this Issues and Options consultation.
- 3.6.9** It should be noted that following the anticipated abolition of the East of England Plan, the strategic Green Belt Reviews in respect of both Harlow and Stevenage may no longer be required. As the Core Strategy progresses through its preparation process, over the next couple of years, any such changes to the planning system will be taken into account and reflected as necessary before the Core Strategy is finalised.

## 3.7 Generating the Options

- 3.7.1** The development strategy is the means by which the East of England Plan housing requirement will be distributed across East Herts over the plan period and simply seeks to establish the principal of development in particular settlements or broad locations for growth. The exact number of homes, the specific locations, and the phasing of development for each settlement will be determined once the development strategy has been agreed.
- 3.7.2** The Core Strategy does not allocate specific sites for development other than **strategic sites**. Specific sites will be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents that will follow once the Core Strategy has been adopted. It is a two-stage approach:
- Stage 1, the Core Strategy identifies the settlements where development will be focused;
  - Stage 2 then identifies specific sites within or adjoining these settlements taking into account site specific details.

A strategic site is a site that is central to the delivery of the Core Strategy itself. This could include, for example, a site for a key piece of infrastructure upon which further housing growth is dependent.

By allocating a strategic site in the Core Strategy, the site would not need to be included in subsequent LDF documents.

- 3.7.3** For the purposes of simplicity, the options focus on the distribution of the East Herts housing ‘to-find’ figure of approximately 8,500 homes. However, subject to the core policy options set out in Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision, the development strategy will also determine the distribution of jobs and facilities to support development.

### Interactive LDF Sessions: What You Told Us

- 3.7.4** During summer 2008 we held a series of **interactive LDF sessions** or ‘planning for real’ style events involving toy bricks and large maps of the district with residents and stakeholders across East Herts. The purpose of the interactive LDF sessions was to get your opinions on how best to accommodate development in East Herts by identifying broad locations for possible future development.
- 3.7.5** A summary of the main results from the interactive LDF sessions are summarised in Table 3.4 which shows the mean percentage of growth distributed to each settlement.

Nine interactive LDF sessions were held and attendees were split into small groups and asked to come up with and agree a realistic housing distribution strategy, distribute houses accordingly and consider any infrastructure issues arising from their agreed strategy.

A list of these events can be found in Section B of the Supporting Document and the feedback can be viewed at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/corestrategy)

- 3.7.6** The key conclusion that emerged from the interactive LDF sessions was that growth should be focused in the more sustainable and larger settlements but with the acknowledgement that some of the smaller villages should receive limited growth to sustain their vitality. A favoured approach was to focus development along road and rail corridors.
- 3.7.7** As can be seen, development to the East of Stevenage was also identified, as well as a new settlement in the countryside. The references to the A10 corridor and Across the Rural Area represent broader locations for growth rather than specific settlements.

Table 3.4 Key Results from the LDF Interactive Sessions

Settlement / Location	%	Settlement / Location	%	Settlement / Location	%
Hertford	13%	A10 Corridor	2%	Benington	1%
Buntingford	11%	Much Hadham	2%	New Settlement	1%
Bishop's Stortford	10%	Walkern	1%	Dane End	1%
Ware	9%	Hertford Heath	1%	Datchworth	1%
Sawbridgeworth	6%	Chipping	1%	Thundridge	1%
Watton-at-Stone	5%	Braughing	1%	Stapleford	1%
Standon & Puckeridge	5%	High Cross	1%	Furneux Pelham	1%
East of Stevenage	4%	Cottered	1%	Tonwell	1%
Stanstead Abbots & St Margarets	3%	Tewin	1%	Church End (nr Little Hadham)	1%
Bayford	2%	Hunsdon	1%	Across the Rural Area / Remainder	7%
Little Hadham	2%	Widford	1%		

## How we Generated the Options

**3.7.8** In generating the development strategy options, to ensure that they were feasible, we had to accommodate the following criteria:

- Options must account for the full approximate ‘to-find’ figure of 8,500 homes to 2031. Please note: this figure may change following the intended abolition of the East of England Plan. However, we still need new homes, jobs, services and facilities, and need to put in place an up-to-date local planning framework which guides development. The six options remain valid irrespective of how many homes East Herts must plan for.
- It is not an option to put development beyond the district borders to meet the East Herts housing requirement
- Options cannot rely on allocating development in the south-east corner of the district adjacent to Harlow District, since this area is required to accommodate a share of 16,000 homes as part of the regeneration and growth of Harlow New Town (see Chapter 10);
- Options should not avoid development in the Green Belt, since there may be good planning reasons for reviewing the Green Belt in some areas (see Section 3.6);
- Options must be pragmatic in relation to infrastructure and delivery. Based on this criterion, the proposal for a new settlement in the countryside was discounted as undeliverable within the plan period. Furthermore, the East of England Plan seeks to focus development on the existing network of settlements;
- Options should apportion some growth to the main settlements (Bishop’s Stortford, Buntingford, Hertford, Sawbridgeworth, Ware) since this will make the most use of existing infrastructure and the potential for improvements or extensions to it; and,
- A wide range of options should be generated in order to enable consideration of the diversity of types, sizes, functions and locations of settlements in the district.

## The Options we Selected

**3.7.9** Based on evidence from both the Call for Sites and the interactive LDF sessions, and subject to the six criteria set out above, the following six options have been generated. It was decided to include the current Local Plan strategy as a benchmark option (Option C). For the purposes of the issues and options process, we have assumed that those settlements listed in the Local Plan 2007 are considered to be sustainable locations for development.

- Option A: Towns
- Option B: Towns and Larger Service Villages
- Option C: Towns, Larger Service Villages, and Smaller Service Villages
- Option D: Towns, Larger Service Villages, Smaller Service Villages, and Other Villages / Hamlets
- Option E: Towns, Stevenage and Welwyn Garden City
- Option F: Settlements within Transport Corridors

**3.7.10** Each option is a distinct strategy that has the potential to uniquely shape the future of East Herts. However, due to the complex settlement pattern of East Herts, further refinement will be needed in order to determine how development is to be distributed. This will need to address the issue of which settlements will receive growth, and how much growth each settlement will receive. This will be refined as the Core Strategy evolves. Further information on this is provided in Section 3.15.

## 3.8 Option A: Towns

**3.8.1** This option focuses all development in and around the five towns of Bishop's Stortford, Buntingford, Hertford, Sawbridgeworth and Ware. Although their populations vary in size from 5,245 to 35,325, the five towns are existing sustainable locations for growth, owing to the wide range of services and facilities on offer. The five towns are shown in Figure 3.4.

**3.8.2** Whilst we believe that Option A is feasible, as with any strategy there are both advantages and disadvantages and further considerations. These are summarised below:

### **Option A: Summary of Advantages, Disadvantages and Further Considerations**

#### **Advantages**

- Conserves the countryside and the character of the rural area
- Potential to enhance passenger transport services within and between towns
- Potential to enhance existing services and facilities in addition to provision of new services and facilities

#### **Disadvantages**

- Potential to undermine the character of the five towns
- Risk of stress on existing infrastructure
- Denies possible benefits of development to all villages

#### **Further Considerations**

- How growth is apportioned between the five towns

Figure 3.4 Development Strategy Option A: Towns



Source: East Herts Council. Options based on feedback from community engagement undertaken in Summer 2008 and results of the Call for Sites in Summer 2009.

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## 3.9 Option B: Towns and Larger Service Villages

- 3.9.1** Option B focuses growth on the five towns and the larger service villages all of which are regarded as being sustainable locations for development. It acknowledges that in addition to the five towns there are several larger villages which also provide facilities to the wider rural area and act as service centres.
- 3.9.2** The identified settlements are shown in Figure 3.5. The identification of larger villages and the acknowledgement of the role they play as local service centres, especially for the rural area, recognises that East Herts has a dispersed settlement pattern where no single settlement dominates. The network of larger service villages was also identified in the Interactive LDF Sessions.
- 3.9.3** Whilst we believe that Option B is feasible, as with any strategy there are both advantages and disadvantages and a number of further considerations. These are summarised below:

### **Option B: Summary of Advantages, Disadvantages and Further Considerations**

#### **Advantages**

- Sustains and enhances the function of the larger service villages
- Conserves the countryside and the character of the rural area

#### **Disadvantages**

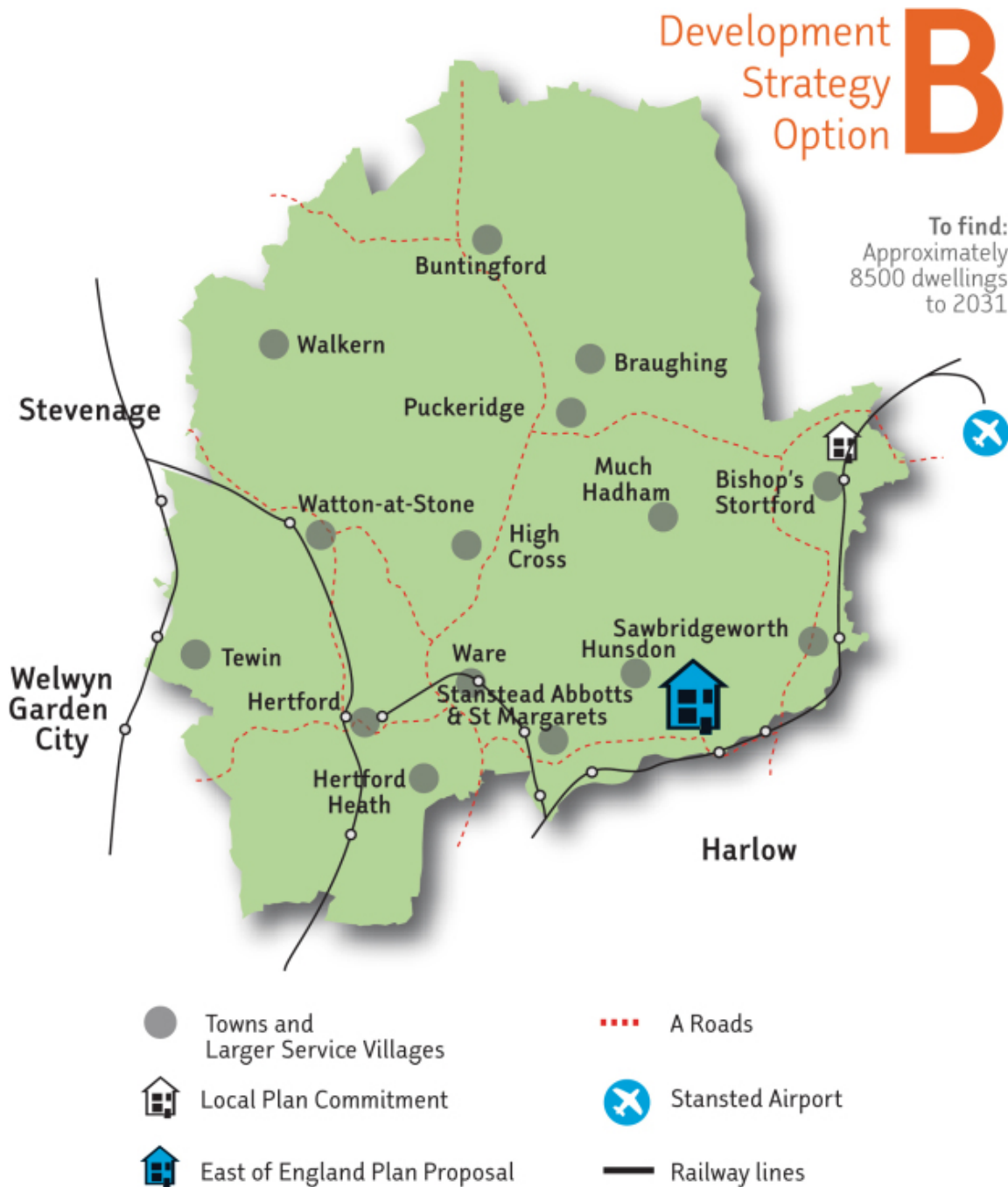
- Denies possible benefit of development to the smaller villages
- Some of the larger villages have poor accessibility by non-car transport

#### **Further Considerations**

- Which settlements are identified as Larger Service Villages?
- How growth is apportioned between each settlement?



Figure 3.5 Development Strategy Option B: Towns and Larger Service Villages



Source: East Herts Council. Options based on feedback from community engagement undertaken in Summer 2008 and results of the Call for Sites in Summer 2009.

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## 3.10 Option C: Towns, Larger Service Villages, and Smaller Service Villages

- 3.10.1** This is the approach of the Local Plan 2007 which identified six Main Settlements and three categorisations of villages depending on their level of facilities and services.
- 3.10.2** The identified settlements are shown in Figure 3.6. Broadly speaking, the six Main Settlements (i.e. the five towns of Bishop’s Stortford, Buntingford, Hertford, Sawbridgeworth and Ware plus the settlement of Stanstead Abbots & St Margarets) would receive the majority of growth; the larger service villages (Category 1 Villages) would receive some growth and the smaller service villages (Category 2 Villages) would receive limited growth. The remainder of the rural area (referred to as Category 3 Villages) would receive no growth.
- 3.10.3** Whilst we believe that Option C is feasible, as with any strategy there are both advantages and disadvantages and a number of further considerations. These are summarised below:

### Option C: Summary of Advantages, Disadvantages and Further Considerations

#### Advantages

- Acknowledges the role of many smaller villages as service centres
- Potential to enhance passenger transport services within and between the towns

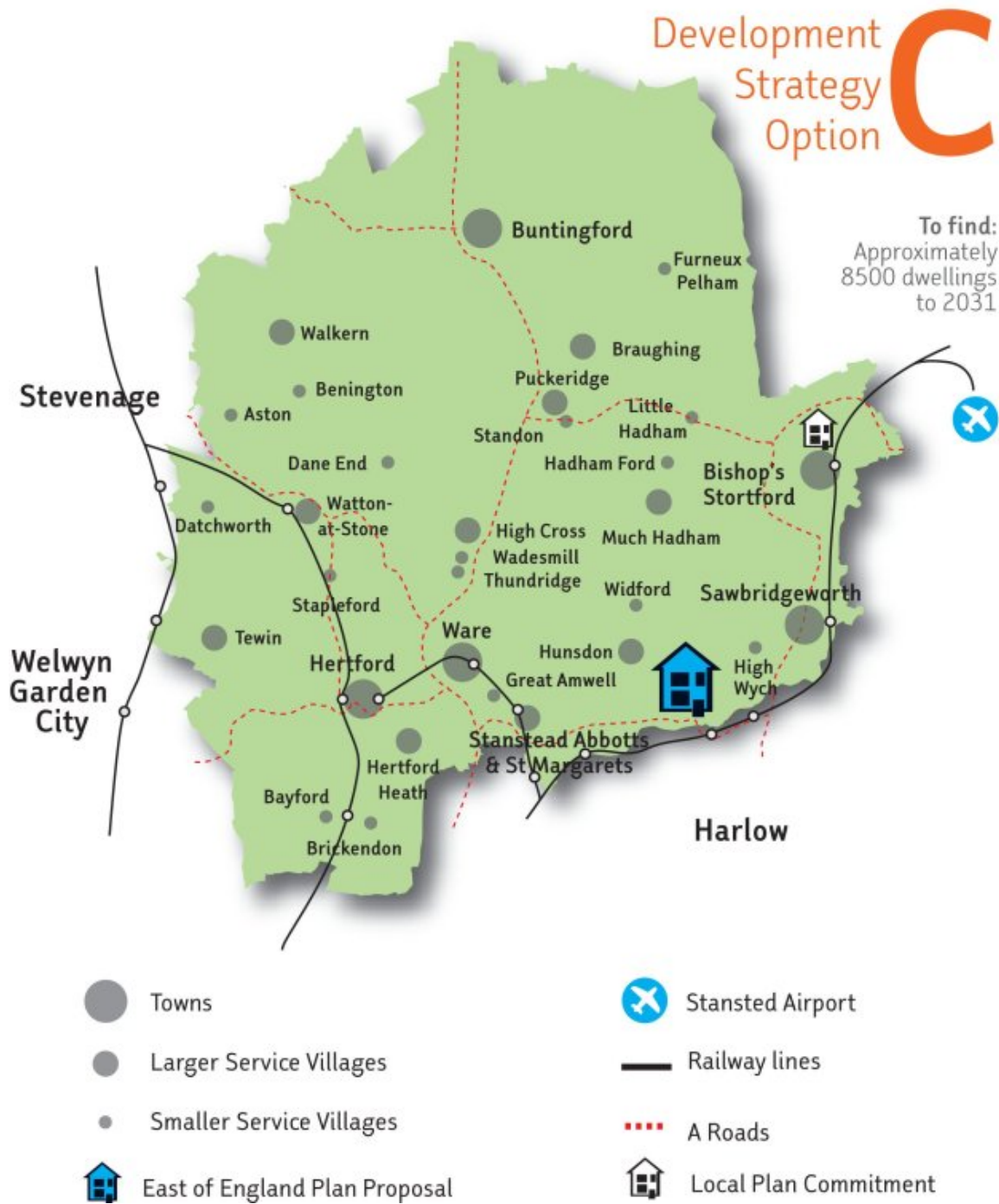
#### Disadvantages

- Many villages have poor accessibility by non-car transport

#### Further Considerations

- How growth is apportioned between the different types of villages?
- Which settlements fall into which village type?

Figure 3.6 Development Strategy Option C: Towns, Larger Service Villages, and Smaller Service Villages



Source: East Herts Council. Options based on feedback from community engagement undertaken in Summer 2008 and results of the Call for Sites in Summer 2009.

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## 3.11 Option D: Towns, Larger Service Villages, Smaller Service Villages and Other Villages / Hamlets

- 3.11.1** This ‘pepperpot’ approach acknowledges the dispersed settlement pattern of East Herts district and seeks to sustain and enhance the vitality of all settlements irrespective of size.
- 3.11.2** Unlike Option C, which identifies main settlements and 3 categories of villages, as shown in Figure 3.7 this option focuses development in the five towns and larger service villages but still disperses limited growth right across the whole of East Herts. Although it is perhaps the least sustainable option, it acknowledges the reality that East Herts has a dispersed settlement pattern.
- 3.11.3** Whilst we believe that Option D is feasible, as with any strategy there are both advantages and disadvantages and a number of further considerations. These are summarised below:

### **Option D: Summary of Advantages, Disadvantages and Further Considerations**

#### **Advantages**

- Reduced risk of over-development in any single settlement
- Potential to sustain the vitality of all settlements

#### **Disadvantages**

- Could increase car-dependency
- Risk of harm to rural setting and character
- Many smaller settlements have few/no services

#### **Further Considerations**

- How growth is apportioned between the different types of villages?
- Which settlements fall into which village type?
- What constitutes a ‘settlement’?

Figure 3.7 Development Strategy Option D: Towns, Larger Service Villages, and other Villages/Hamlets



Source: East Herts Council. Options based on feedback from community engagement undertaken in Summer 2008 and results of the Call for Sites in Summer 2009.

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## 3.12 Option E: Towns, Stevenage and Welwyn Garden City

- 3.12.1** Although East Herts is not responsible for planning in Stevenage and Welwyn Garden City, these towns lie on the boundary with East Herts and exert an influence on the surrounding rural area and many East Herts residents access these towns for services and facilities. It is considered sensible therefore, that alongside focusing growth in the five towns, that growth could be accommodated in large sustainable urban extensions located within East Herts district to the east of each of these towns.
- 3.12.2** The identification of a large scale (e.g. 1000+ homes) sustainable urban extension to the east of Stevenage was identified at the interactive LDF sessions whilst the Call for Sites has suggested development to the east of Welwyn Garden City. It is therefore sensible to include settlement extensions as a realistic option as shown in Figure 3.8.
- 3.12.3** Whilst we believe that Option E is feasible, as with any strategy there are both advantages and disadvantages and a number of further considerations. These are summarised below:

### Option E: Summary of Advantages, Disadvantages and Further Considerations

#### Advantages

- Conserves the countryside and the character of the rural area away from the urban extensions
- Potential to enhance passenger transport services
- Potential to extend infrastructure and service provision from adjacent towns

#### Disadvantages

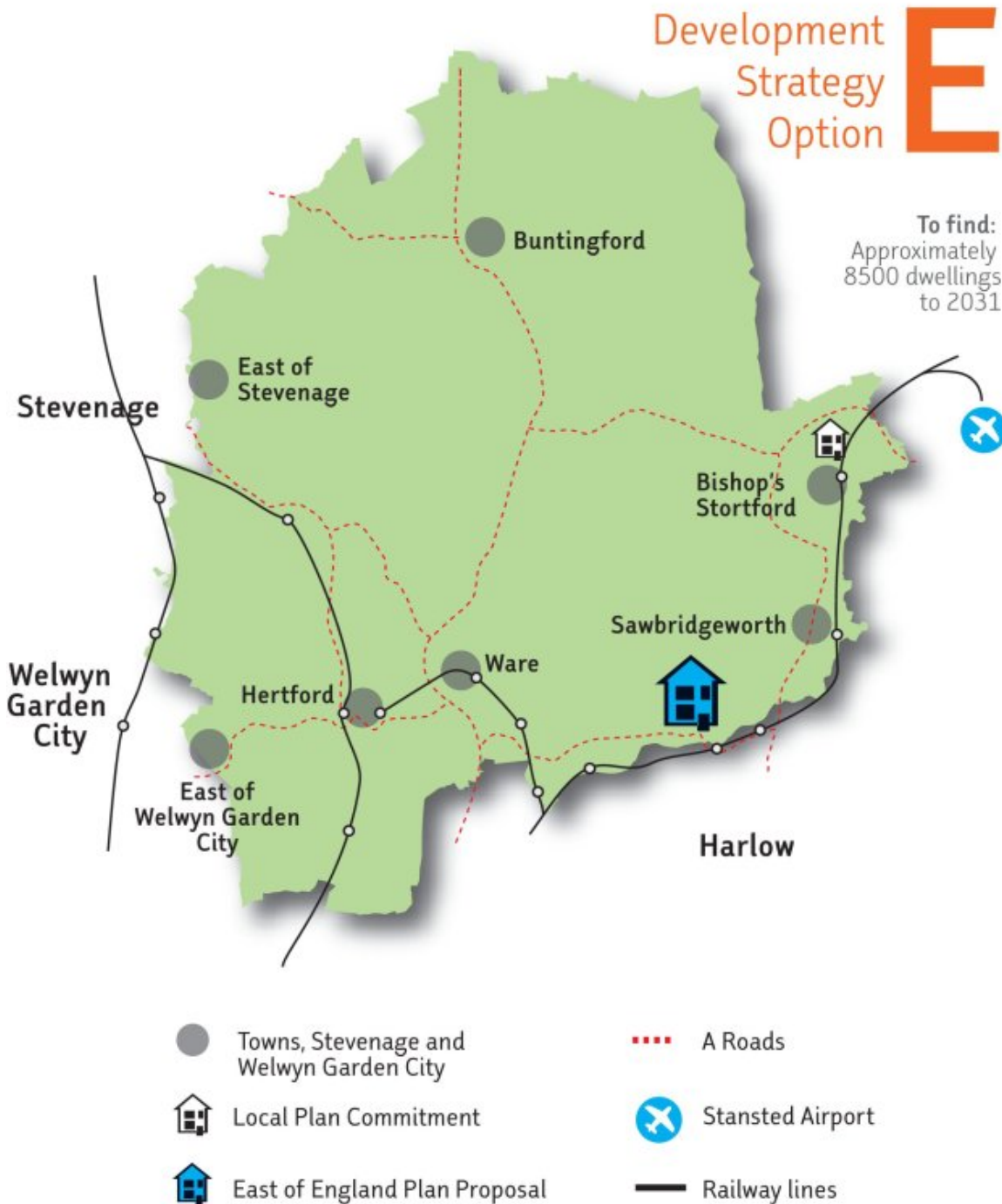
- Impact on the Green Belt and on the character of surrounding landscape and villages

#### Further Considerations

- Extent of settlement extensions?
- How growth is apportioned between each settlement?



Figure 3.8 Development Strategy Option E: Towns, Stevenage and Welwyn Garden City



Source: East Herts Council. Options based on feedback from community engagement undertaken in Summer 2008 and results of the Call for Sites in Summer 2009.

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## 3.13 Option F: Settlements within Transport Corridors

- 3.13.1** Option F seeks to focus growth in settlements located within the identified transport corridors including towns, larger villages and other villages. The distribution of development based on transport routes emerged from the interactive LDF sessions where suggestions for new passenger transport routes were also made. However, such infrastructure is extremely costly and careful consideration needs to be given to capacity and viability issues.
- 3.13.2** Because of the lack of east-west rail routes, the transport corridors include rail, road and bus routes as shown in Figure 3.9. Although development would be focused along transport corridors, this approach would not result in continuous urban sprawl. Rather, each settlement would retain its separate identity through the identification of strategic open space. In essence, a settlement pattern based on the notion of ‘beads on a string’ would emerge.
- 3.13.3** Whilst we believe that Option F is feasible, as with any strategy there are both advantages and disadvantages and a number of further considerations. These are summarised below:

### **Option F: Summary of Advantages, Disadvantages and Further Considerations**

#### **Advantages**

- Potential to enhance passenger transport services and accessibility to passenger transport networks
- Conserves the countryside and the character of the rural area outside the transport corridors
- Potential to enhance existing services and facilities in addition to provision of new services and facilities at selected settlements

#### **Disadvantages**

- Denies possible benefits of development to settlements outside corridors
- Could increase car-dependency, even if additional passenger transport services are provided.
- Risk of ‘ribbon development’ or coalescence between settlements in the transport corridors, which could affect their setting and character

#### **Further Considerations**

- Identification of transport corridors?
- Identification of settlements within corridors?
- How growth is apportioned between each settlement?



Figure 3.9 Development Strategy Option F: Settlements within Transport Corridors



Source: East Herts Council. Options based on feedback from community engagement undertaken in Summer 2008 and results of the Call for Sites in Summer 2009.

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## 3.14 Assessment of Options A - F

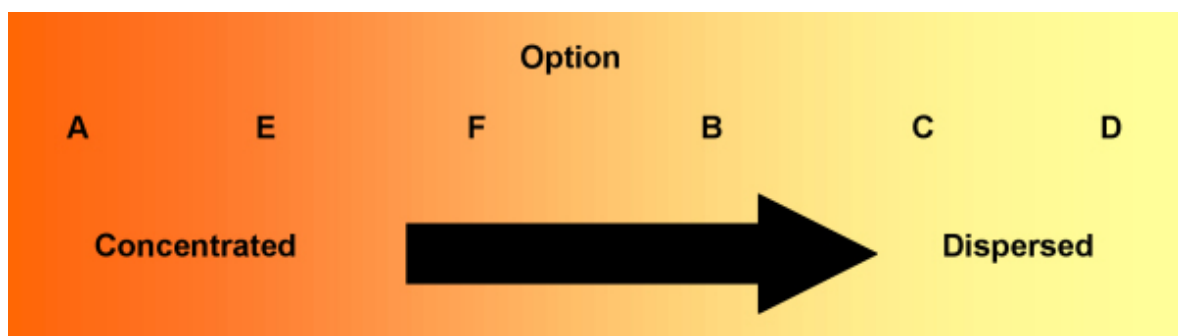
**3.14.1** The six development strategy options represent what we believe to be feasible alternative approaches to how we accommodate the East Herts ‘to-find’ figure of approximately 8,500 homes to 2031. The six options are based on what you have told us and information received from the Call for Sites. This section compares the six development strategy options.

- Option A: Towns
- Option B: Towns and Larger Service Villages
- Option C: Towns, Larger Service Villages and Smaller Service Villages
- Option D: Towns, Larger Service Villages, Smaller Service Villages and Other Villages / Hamlets
- Option E: Towns, Stevenage and Welwyn Garden City
- Option F: Settlements within Transport Corridors

### Distribution Pattern

**3.14.2** Figure 3.10 compares how development could be distributed across East Herts. As can be seen, Option A concentrates all development in the five towns whilst at the other end of the scale Option D represents the most dispersed approach. Although Option F would see development in all types of settlement, from the larger towns to the smaller villages, it would focus development in selected settlements along transport routes. In this sense, Option F results in a relatively concentrated pattern of development.

Figure 3.10 Distribution Pattern



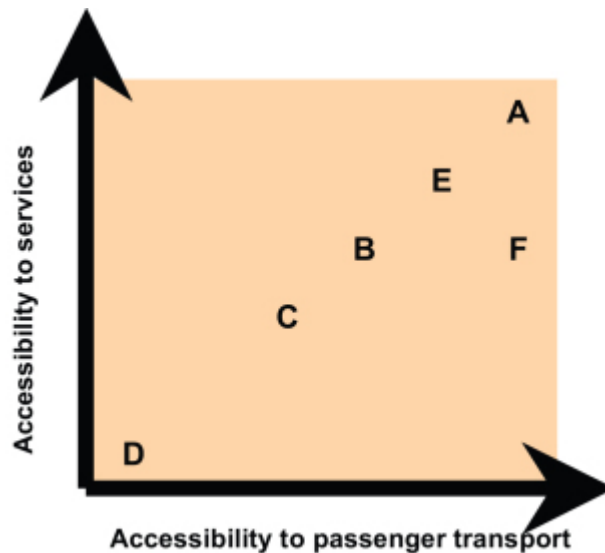
Source: East Herts Council

### Accessibility

**3.14.3** As identified in Chapter 2, owing to its dispersed settlement pattern, accessibility is a key issue facing East Herts. Accessibility is about how individuals are able to use services. If services cannot be provided locally, then we will need to travel to access these services. As the cost of providing services locally has increased and services have been rationalised and/or

centralised, so the distance travelled has increased. However, it is useful to compare the issue of accessibility in respect of the six development strategy options, as set out in Figure 3.11.

Figure 3.11 Accessibility



Source: East Herts Council

**3.14.4** Not surprisingly, Option D ranks as the least accessible as it is the most dispersed settlement pattern, whilst Option A that concentrates development in just five settlements ranks as having the greatest accessibility. It should be noted that Figure 3.11 is included simply to demonstrate the key differences between the six options. In reality, accessibility is a complex issue determined by the location of development in relation to existing services. The impact of the provision of new services to meet the requirements of new development also needs to be taken into account.

### Land Availability

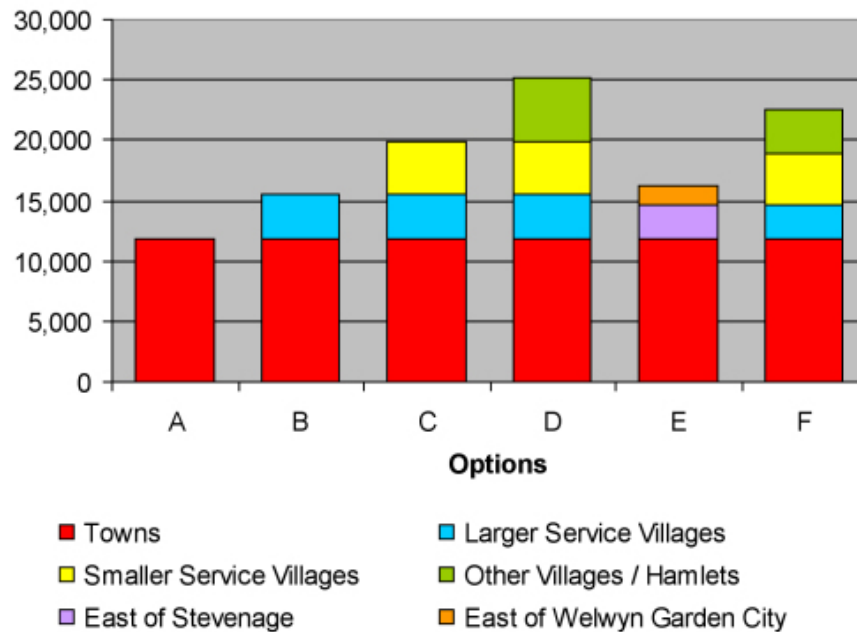
**3.14.5** Using evidence from the Call for Sites, the amount of land theoretically available under each option is as follows:

Table 3.5 Theoretical Land Availability

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Option A: 589.2 hectares</li> <li>● Option B: 773.8 hectares</li> <li>● Option C: 988.3 hectares</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Option D: 1260.3 hectares</li> <li>● Option E: 811 hectares</li> <li>● Option F: 1130.1 hectares</li> </ul>
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**3.14.6** Figure 3.12 compares the availability of housing land for each option from the Call for Sites. As can be seen, theoretically, there is sufficient availability under each option to meet the ‘to-find’ figure of approximately 8,500 homes to 2031.

Figure 3.12 Availability of Housing Land by Number of Homes (based on 20dph to allow for provision of infrastructure)



Source: East Herts Call for Sites

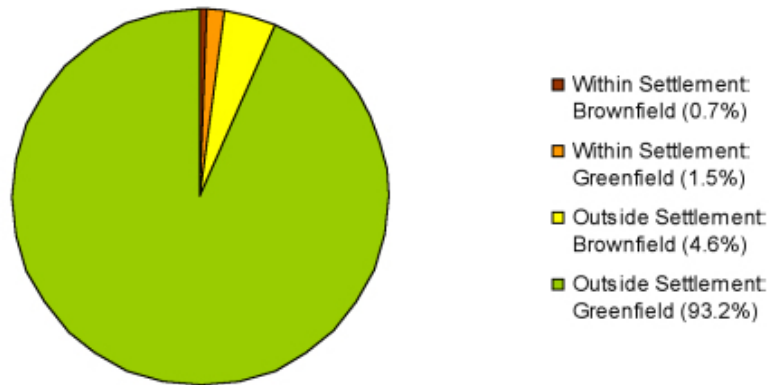
**3.14.7** It is perhaps not surprising that Option D, the most dispersed approach, results in the highest amount of availability, as this option identifies the highest number of settlements and therefore the maximum amount of available land. It is also worth noting that under Option F: Settlements within Transport Corridors, there is less land available in the villages. This is because only certain villages are located within the identified transport corridors.

**3.14.8** It should be stressed that the availability of land based on the Call for Sites is theoretical and no assessment has been made as to the suitability of any suggestion.

### Greenfield or Brownfield

**3.14.9** Figure 3.13 below shows the availability of housing land based on the Call for Sites by land type. As can be seen, of the 1,483 hectares theoretically available, 0.7% is brownfield land within the existing urban areas (i.e. within current settlement boundaries) and 1.5% is on greenfield land within the existing urban areas. Outside the urban area, 4.6% is brownfield and 93.2% is on greenfield land.

Figure 3.13 Availability of Land by Land Type



Source: East Herts Call for Sites

**3.14.10** It should be noted however, that the information submitted as part of the Call for Sites has been taken at face value and not all the land suggested will come forward for development.

**3.14.11** Based on the Call for Sites, it is clear that whichever development strategy option is deemed most appropriate, to accommodate our 'to-find' figure of approximately 8,500 homes, there will need to be significant greenfield development in East Herts. Ensuring that this development occurs in suitable locations will be a key challenge. It is imperative therefore that the development strategy options seek to deliver development in sustainable locations.

## Question 22

### Broad Locations for Growth

Which development strategy do you think is the most appropriate to meet the challenges facing East Herts and achieve sustainable development?

Please rank in order of preference.

Is there another option we have not considered?

## 3.15 Housing Distribution Options

**3.15.1** Whichever development strategy option we choose, we still need to decide how to distribute the approximate 'to-find' figure of 8,500 homes between the identified settlements e.g. settlement A receives X number of homes; settlement B receives Y number of homes; settlement C receives Z number of homes, and so forth.

**3.15.2** Whilst more detailed work is required to determine actual numbers for each particular settlement, based on the suitability of available land, we would welcome your views on the broad approach.

**3.15.3** We have identified the following six approaches to housing distribution:

- Approach I: Proportional Distribution
- Approach II: Adjusted Proportional Distribution
- Approach III: Reversed Proportional Distribution
- Approach IV: Equal Distribution
- Approach V: Distribution by Land Availability
- Approach VI: Distribution by Settlement Type

### Approach I: Proportional Distribution

**3.15.4** Each settlement receives a proportion of growth based on their existing number of homes, taking into account commitments, completions and outstanding allocations. For example, Bishop's Stortford would have 29% of the East Herts housing stock and would therefore receive 29% of 8,500; 2,465 homes. A settlement with 1% of East Herts housing stock would receive eighty five homes (1% of 8,500).

### Approach II: Adjusted Proportional Distribution

**3.15.5** The starting point for this approach would be that each settlement would receive growth based on the existing number of homes, taking into account commitments, completions and outstanding allocations (as in Approach I above). However, the figures would be adjusted so that half of the growth allocated to the villages would be re-distributed to the towns. This approach is similar to the Proportional Catchment Based Distribution (PCBD) used in the Local Plan 2007.

### Approach III: Reversed Proportional Distribution

**3.15.6** The starting point for this approach would be that each settlement would receive growth based on the existing number of homes, taking into account commitments, completions and outstanding allocations. It is the reverse of Approach I. The smaller the settlement, the larger the amount of growth it

would receive. Conversely, the larger the settlement, the less growth it would receive. This approach could potentially have the biggest impact on, and provide the greatest opportunities for, the smaller settlements.

### Approach IV: Equal Distribution

**3.15.7** This approach simply distributes the approximate 'to-find' figure of 8,500 homes by the number of settlements under each development strategy option. For example, under Option A: Towns, there are 5 settlements. Thus, each town would receive  $\frac{1}{5}$  of 8,500 or 1,700 homes. Under Option B: Towns and Larger Service Villages there are 15 settlements; thus each settlement would receive  $\frac{1}{15}$  of 8,500 or 567 homes. This approach takes no account of the existing size of settlements.

### Approach V: Distribution by Land Availability

**3.15.8** The most laissez-faire approach would see the approximate 'to-find' figure of 8,500 simply distributed according to the availability of land, subject of course, to establishing the suitability of actual sites.

### Approach VI: Distribution by Settlement Type

**3.15.9** Reflecting the hierarchy of settlements (towns, larger service villages, smaller service villages), this approach apportions an equal amount of growth to each settlement type. For example, under Option B the five towns would receive  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the growth and the Larger Service Villages would also receive  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the growth. Under Option C, the split would be Towns  $\frac{1}{3}$ , Larger Service Villages  $\frac{1}{3}$  and Smaller Service Villages  $\frac{1}{3}$ . Housing figures would then be distributed to each settlement using one of the approaches outlined above.

### Question 23

#### Approaches to Housing Distribution

Which housing distribution approach do you think is the most appropriate to meet the challenges facing East Herts and achieve sustainable development?

Please rank in order of preference.

Is there another approach we have not considered?





## Chapter 4

# Bishop's Stortford

## 4.1 Purpose of the Bishop's Stortford Chapter

**4.1.1** This chapter deals with issues and options in respect of Bishop's Stortford. It should be read in conjunction with Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision and Chapter 3: Development Strategy to enable the necessary appreciation of issues in a wider context. This chapter includes sections on the following:

- A portrait of Bishop's Stortford setting out how the town has evolved and its main characteristics (Section 4.2);
- The key issues facing Bishop's Stortford arranged by theme (Section 4.3);
- The current planning context for Bishop's Stortford as set out in the Local Plan 2007 (Section 4.4);
- A series of options for the growth of Bishop's Stortford to 2031, including the availability of land and the approach to development (Section 4.5); and,
- An emerging LDF vision for Bishop's Stortford to 2031 (Section 4.6).

**4.1.2** The purpose of the Core Strategy is to establish the district-wide development strategy for East Herts. This will set out how much development each identified settlement will receive to 2031. The Core Strategy does not deal with detailed planning issues such as design and amenity. These issues, along with the identification of specific sites, will be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents.

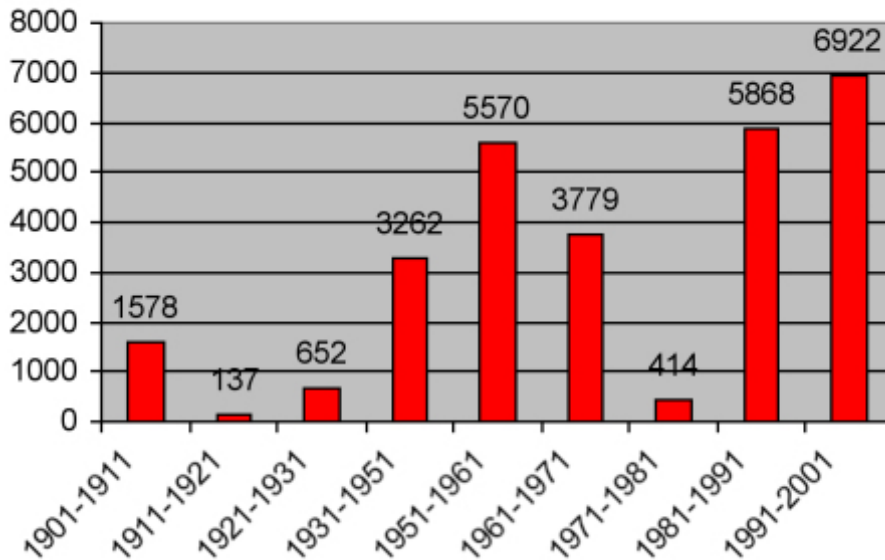
**4.1.3** To inform the development strategy we are seeking your views in respect of the following two aspects: firstly, regarding future development options for Bishop's Stortford, and secondly, regarding an emerging LDF vision for the town.

This chapter includes questions 24, 25 and 26.

## 4.2 A Portrait of Bishop's Stortford

**4.2.1** This portrait aims to capture the key characteristics of Bishop's Stortford today. It is derived from an assessment of the various aspects of the evidence base and is a factual statement of its attributes. The portrait seeks to capture what makes Bishop's Stortford unique, while the following section discusses the key planning issues facing the town.

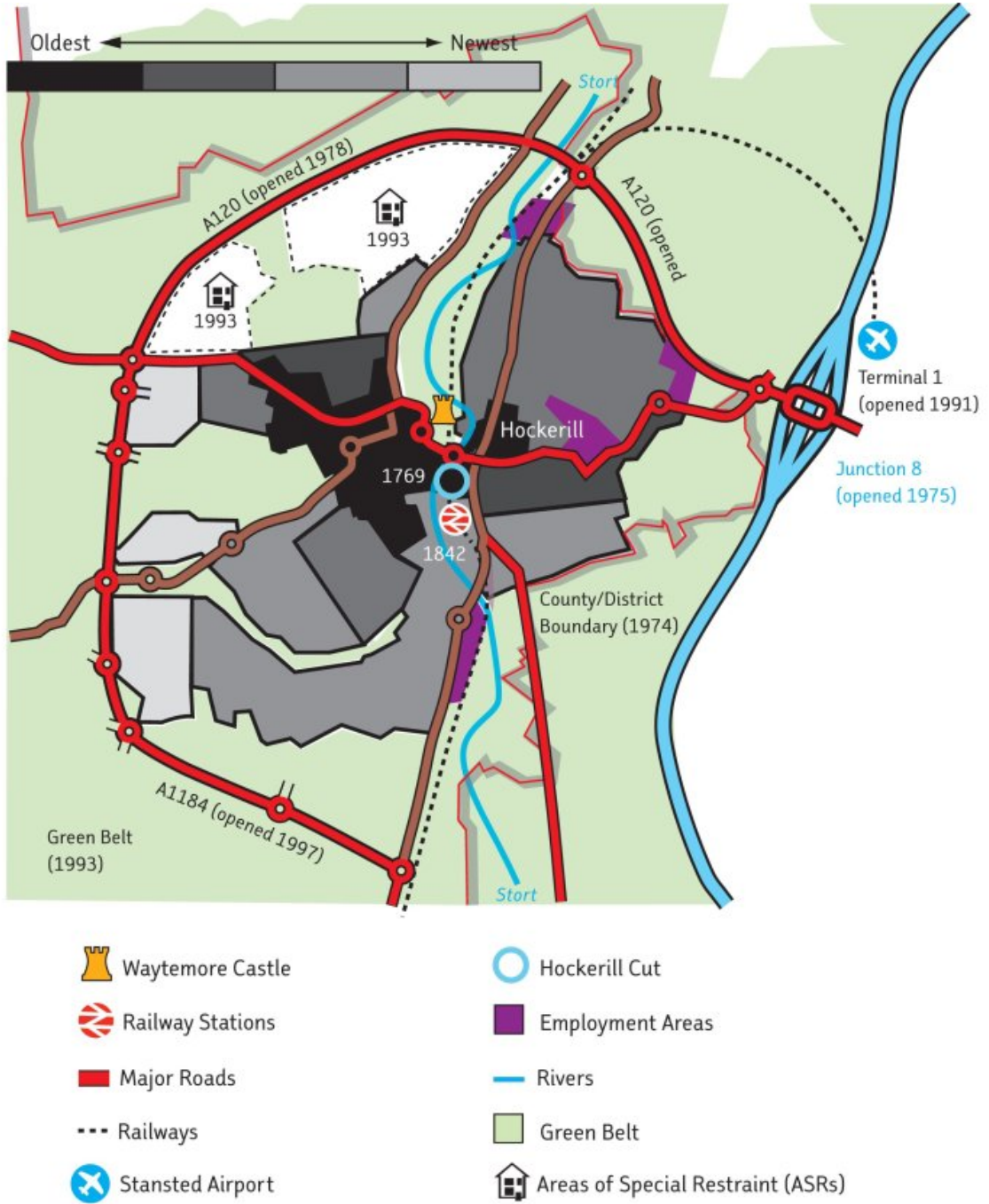
Figure 4.1 Population Growth of Bishop's Stortford (1901-2001)



Source: Office for National Statistics

- 4.2.2** Figure 4.1 shows the population growth of Bishop's Stortford. In 1901 the population was 7,143, and by 2001 it had reached 35,325: i.e. the population by the end of the century was five times greater than the population at the start of the century. This exceeds the population growth of other main towns in the district over the same period, e.g. in Hertford, the population by the end of the century was 2.6 times greater than in 1901.
- 4.2.3** As shown in Figure 4.2, the town originated near Waytemore Castle (now Castle Mound) in the Stort Valley. In the 18<sup>th</sup> Century the town grew to encompass Hockerill, which had become prosperous with the advent of the Hockerill Turnpike Trust. With the coming of the railway in 1842 the terraced cottages of the New Town were built.
- 4.2.4** Two major periods of expansion occurred in the 1950s/1960s (e.g. at Havers Estate west of the New Town and at the Parsonage Lane area in the east), and from the 1970s to the 1990s on the western edges of the town within the newly constructed bypass (e.g. at Thorley Park, Bishop's Park and St Michaels Mead). Transport infrastructure (e.g. canals, railways, roads and the airport) has shaped growth throughout the history of the town.
- 4.2.5** Figure 4.3 shows examples of housing development in the town, which are of differing ages and density levels. Other examples are also shown in the other settlement chapters.

Figure 4.2 Historical Development of Bishop's Stortford



Source: East Herts Council

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Figure 4.3 Examples of Development in Bishop's Stortford



Source: East Herts Council

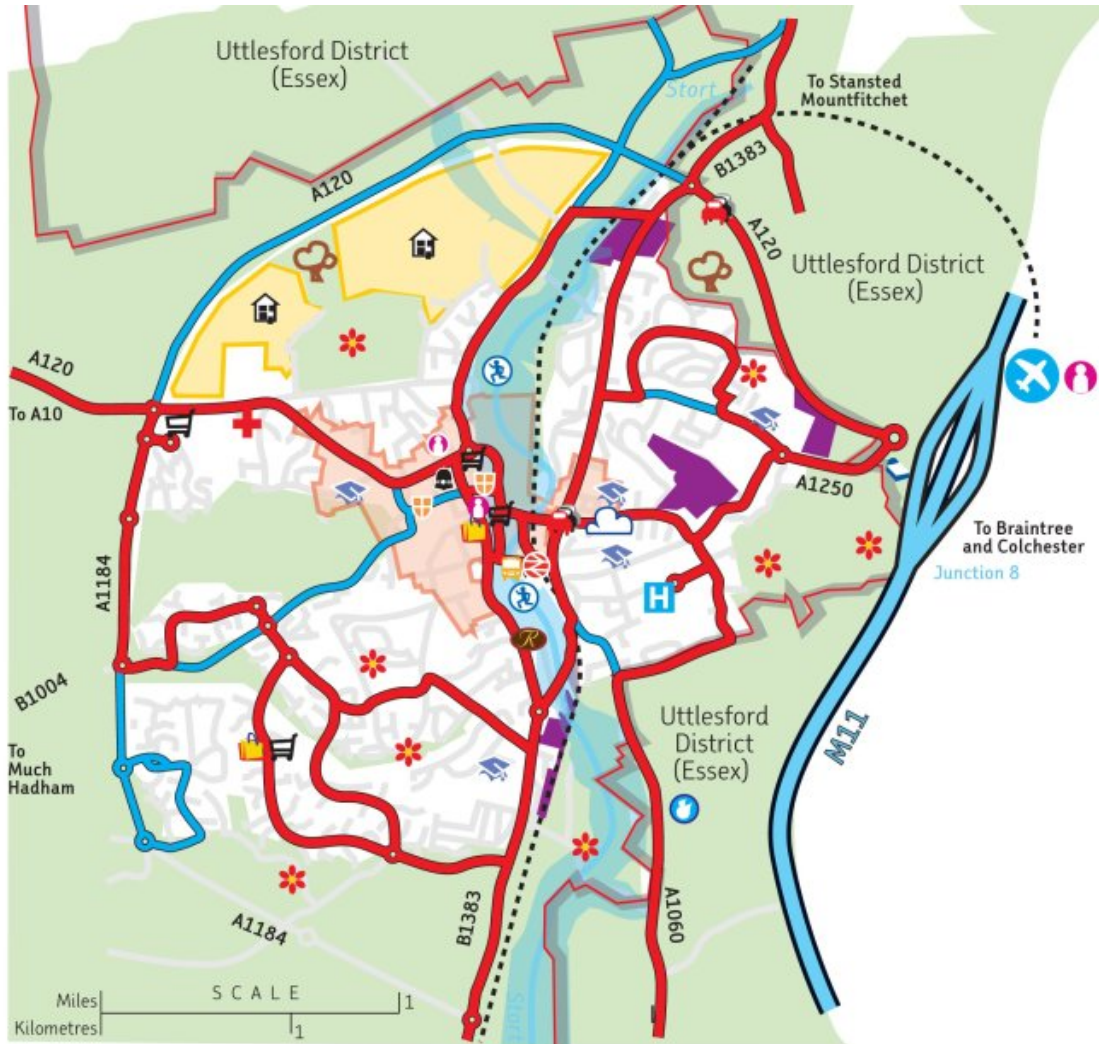
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- 4.2.6** Bishop's Stortford lies on the eastern edge of East Herts and is bordered by Uttlesford District in Essex to the east. The present shape of the town is defined by the river Stort, a number of 'green wedges', the County boundary, and a bypass which surrounds it on three sides.
- 4.2.7** By the 17th Century the natural position of Bishop's Stortford at the centre of vast cereal growing lands led to the creation of a malting industry. Such was the scale of this industry that the Stort Navigation was built in 1769 to accommodate it, and prior to 1800 Bishop's Stortford supplied more malt to the London brewers of Porter than any other town in England. The historic core of the town is centred on North Street, Windhill and Market Square.
- 4.2.8** Most shops and services are located in the town centre, but there are also secondary shopping centres located to the west in Bishop's Park and to the south-west in Thorley Park. There is a market in the town centre on Thursdays and Saturdays. Jackson Square shopping centre was redeveloped and extended with a new multi-storey car park which opened in 2007.
- 4.2.9** There are six secondary schools (five state and one private) and twelve state primary schools. The Herts and Essex Hospital includes a Minor Injuries Unit.
- 4.2.10** In terms of transport, Bishop's Stortford lies on the West Anglian Main Line between London Liverpool Street and Cambridge. The town is also located just off Junction 8 of the M11 and the A120 provides connections to the A10 and to Essex. Parking is a recognised problem in the town centre, especially on Thursdays and Saturdays. Road congestion can cause local air pollution, and there is an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) at the Hockerill traffic lights. Stansted Airport lies three miles north-east of the town, and is a major source of employment but it also creates problems including noise and traffic congestion.
- 4.2.11** The town benefits from numerous cultural and recreational facilities, some of which include: the Rhodes Arts Complex which includes a theatre, museum and a cinema; the Anchor Street Leisure Park which includes a cinema, bowling, and a health club; Grange Paddocks Leisure centre, which includes a swimming pool, gym, and sports pitches; and the Cricketfield Lane recreation area which includes a play area, cricket pitches and tennis courts; and there is a central play facility maintained by the Town Council at Sworder's Field next to the Castle Mound and Gardens.
- 4.2.12** Development is planned to the north of Bishop's Stortford at the Areas of Special Restraint (ASRs). The ASRs are divided into a western part and an eastern part, separated by an important 'green wedge' containing Hoggate's Wood, and Dane O'Coys Meadows lie just to the south (see Section 4.4).
- 4.2.13** Figure 4.4 illustrates the context of Bishop's Stortford and identifies its main facilities.



Figure 4.4 Context of Bishop's Stortford



- |                                         |                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Secondary Schools                       | Supermarkets                      | Retail Centres          |
| District & Town Council Offices         | Designated Employment Areas       | Hotels                  |
| Leisure Facilities                      | Rhodes Arts Complex/Museum        | Herts & Essex Hospital  |
| Woodland                                | Fire and Ambulance Station        | Police Station          |
| Green Belt                              | Air Quality Management Area       | Conservation Area       |
| District Boundary                       | Areas of Special Restraint (ASRs) | Railway Station         |
| Stansted Airport                        | Flood Plain                       | Bus Station             |
| Non-designated Key Employment Locations | Sewage Treatment Works            | Wildlife Site           |
| Congestion Hotspots                     | Frequent Bus Services             | Infrequent Bus Services |

Source: East Herts Council

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## 4.3 Bishop's Stortford: Key Issues

- 4.3.1** This section looks at some of the key planning issues facing Bishop's Stortford. It is organised under a series of nine themes, which are used throughout this Issues and Options document to provide consistency and structure.
- 4.3.2** Many of the issues that relate to Bishop's Stortford apply equally to other parts of East Herts. To avoid repetition, these generic district-wide issues have been dealt with under the relevant theme in Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision. The following sections set out those particular issues that apply specifically to Bishop's Stortford. We therefore suggest that you read this section in conjunction with Chapter 2. For information, the specific policy context, the relevant sources from the evidence base and the linkages to the SCS for each theme are set out in Sections F to O of the Supporting Document.

### Theme 1: Bishop's Stortford Energy and Climate Change

- 4.3.3** As identified in Figure 4.6 below, 65% of all daily journeys to work within the town are by car. This generates a large amount of greenhouse gas emissions. Strategies to encourage other transport modes could significantly reduce this and other local pollution issues. Development opportunities, (for example the Causeway Car Park and the ASRs) may offer the potential for widening the benefits of community energy schemes such as district heating and Combined Heat and Power (CHP) networks to other nearby areas within the existing town. Public facilities in particular may offer opportunities to connect to such a grid.
- 4.3.4** In terms of climate change adaptation, development along the River Stort will need to address flood risk. In addition, public realm improvements to the town centre as part of any future town centre strategy or public realm strategy could provide opportunities for tree planting to provide additional shade and reduce the urban heat island effect.

### Theme 2: Bishop's Stortford People and Community Safety

- 4.3.5** There are over 130 clubs, societies, interest groups and community venues operating in the town. Compared against national statistics, crime levels are low in Bishop's Stortford and people can generally expect to feel safe in the area. However, in common with many other towns, there are a few places where limited incidences of crime and anti-social behaviour are reported on occasion, such as around the town centre and Anchor Street Leisure Park. Bishop's Stortford has a Police Station located on Windhill.
- 4.3.6** Some areas of the town were constructed during periods in the past which limited their occupancy to a single tenure (social or market). This is no longer current practice, as more socially inclusive developments are encouraged.

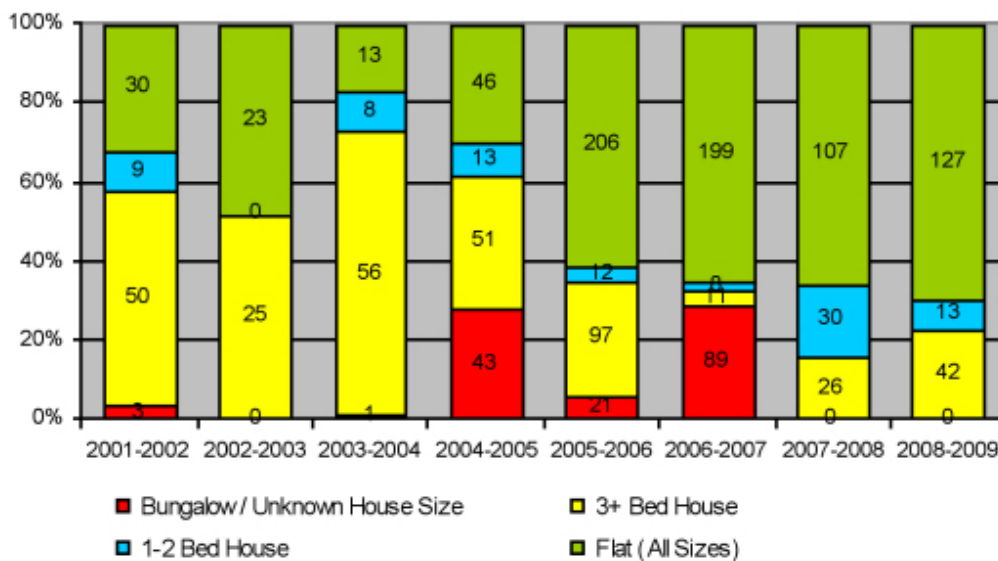
Some of the district's socially segregated developments of the past have had experience of higher crime rates than average for the area. For example, the Havers Estate has received investment in regeneration in recent years.

### Theme 3: Housing Bishop's Stortford

**4.3.7** In the decades from the second world war until the turn of the new millennium, most new housing in Bishop's Stortford was located on greenfield sites at the edge of town, as shown in Figure 4.2 (see Section 4.2), for example at Bishop's Park and St. Michael's Mead (1990s) and at Thorley (1970s-1990s). This period saw the outwards expansion of the town and provision of three and four bedroom family homes, but very little accommodation for single and younger people.

**4.3.8** Over the last ten years planning policy has focused on brownfield town centre sites rather than greenfield sites. This was partly due to the availability of certain brownfield sites, and partly due to a desire to avoid further greenfield development. The effect of this was that private housebuilders focused on provision of flats as opposed to houses, as shown in Figure 4.5 below. This is the case not only in Bishop's Stortford but also in many towns across the country, and is even more pronounced in some other towns within East Herts (for example, see Chapter 8: Ware).

Figure 4.5 Gross Housing Completions by Type in Bishop's Stortford 2001-2009



Source: Hertfordshire County Council

**4.3.9** In order to maintain a balanced housing mix, the emphasis may need to shift away from encouraging flatted development towards the promotion of homes more suited to family occupation. This could imply the need to utilise greenfield land, where the location may be more suitable for family housing than

constrained town centre sites. However, it should be noted that, given the large amount of recent town centre brownfield regeneration, this may be the case in any event as (with the exception of the Goods Yard, the Mill, and the Causeway) future central urban site availability is likely to be less abundant in coming years.

### Theme 4: Bishop's Stortford Character

- 4.3.10** Landscape and topography play a central role in Bishop's Stortford's form and character. The valley bottom provides a reference point, with its flood plain and water meadows extending into the centre. Viewed from the river valley, the historic core rises up the valley sides, punctuated by the tower of St. Michael's Church to the west and All Saints, Hockerill, to the east.
- 4.3.11** The Victorian New Town is characterised by strong grid-based route patterns, whereas late 20<sup>th</sup> Century developments based on loop-and cul-de-sac route patterns are somewhat disorientating. Topography shapes the layout of streets and neighbourhoods. For example, Barrells Down Road runs along a ridge, Elm Road up a valley and Rye Street along a contour.
- 4.3.12** There are a number of important features which create an attractive relationship between town and countryside. The river, woodlands, public rights of way, public open space, allotments, and sports pitches make up what are known as the town's 'green wedges'. Typical of this is the land between Cricketfield Lane and Hoggate's Wood.
- 4.3.13** Bishop's Stortford includes buildings from a wide range of periods in its history. A small sample is provided in Figure 4.3 (see Section 4.2). Windhill, North Street and Market Square form the centrepiece of the town's architectural interest. Traditional materials typical of the area include walls of timber frame (exposed and weather boarded), brick, flint, or render; and plain tiled or slate roofs.
- 4.3.14** The Green Belt, designated in 1993, has limited the outwards expansion of the town and helped to preserve its compact character. One of the consequences of attempting to balance the need for new housing whilst limiting expansion has been development at higher densities on previously developed or 'brownfield' land in the town centre. Examples of this include John Dyde Close and the recently completed riverside apartments. However, density can have many different forms and high density does not necessarily mean flatted development, as the example of the New Town demonstrates (see Figure 4.3 in Section 4.2).

### Theme 5: Bishop's Stortford Economy, Skills and Prosperity

- 4.3.15** Bishop's Stortford has the second highest proportion of the district's employment land (23%), after Hertford (26%). Of the 28 hectares of employment land in Bishop's Stortford, a high proportion is B2 (general

industrial) and a very low proportion is B1 (offices, research and development, light industry). This bias partly reflects the accessibility of the town to the national motorway network. It is anticipated that there will be decline in demand for B2 and an increase in demand for B1 land.

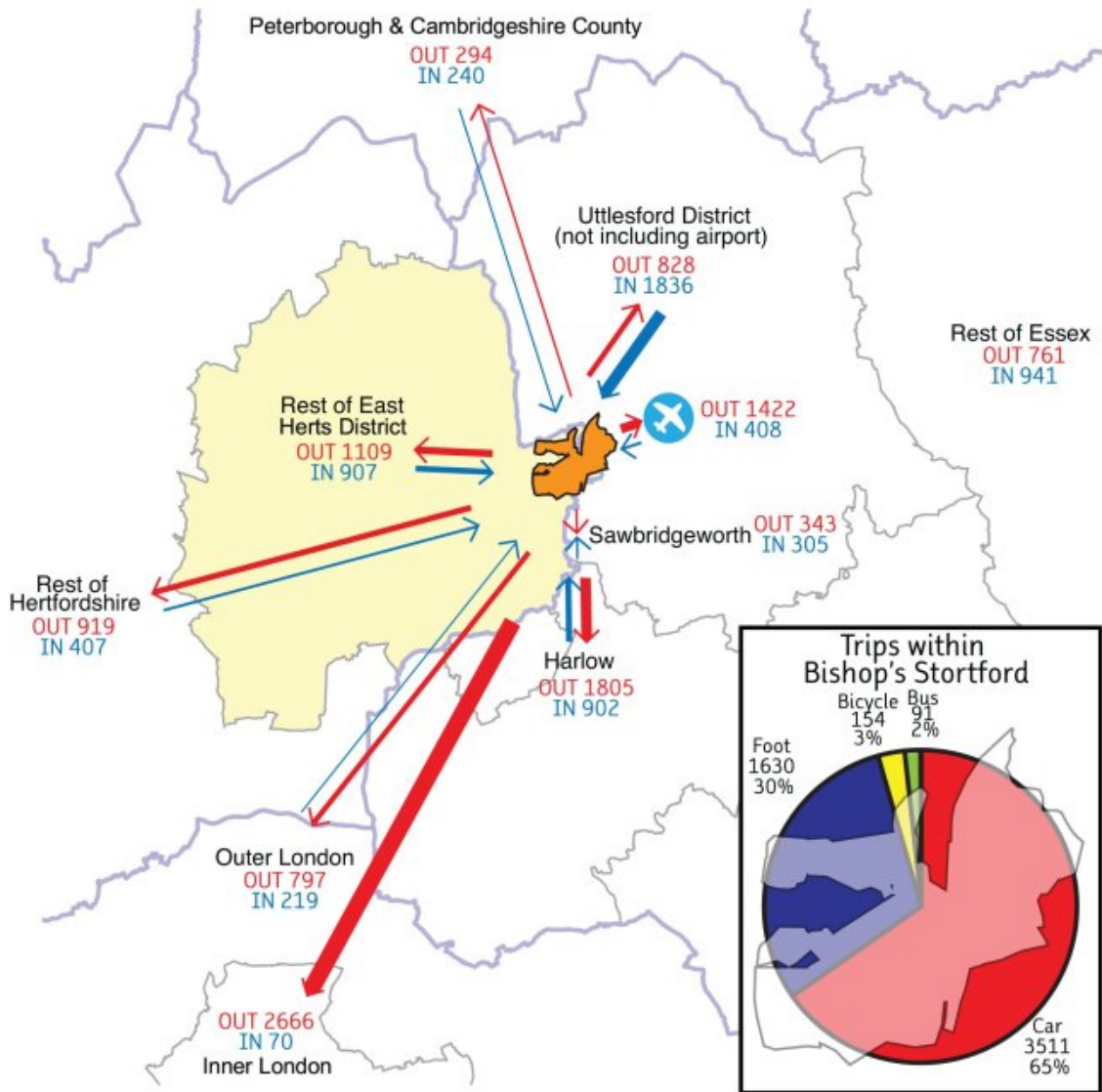
- 4.3.16** The Local Plan 2007 designates three employment areas in Bishop's Stortford, at Raynham/Dunmow Road Industrial Estate, Woodside Industrial Estate, Stansted Road and Hazlemere/Twyford Road area. Some of these sites score lower than the district as a whole in terms of accessibility within the sites, parking provision, and flexibility. The Employment Land and Policy Review (2008) recommends potential new employment allocations at the Woodside Estate (which has recently received planning permission), the ASRs, and at Whittington Way.
- 4.3.17** Bishop's Stortford is an important retail and service centre for the surrounding area in both Hertfordshire and neighbouring Essex. There is a good range of shops in the town centre focused on Potter Street/South Street and the recent Jackson Square development, with smaller shopping centres at Thorley Park and Bishop's Park. However, there is a general outflow of shopping trips to Harlow and Cambridge for major purchases. The lack of a national department store and relative congestion in the town centre are cited as two of the reasons for this.
- 4.3.18** There is a need for improved school accommodation within the town, and some of the schools occupy sub-standard and overcrowded accommodation. There is continuing uncertainty over whether two schools will be relocated to a shared Green Belt location south of Whittington Way or whether a new school should be built at the Reserve Secondary School Site, Hadham Road. Planning applications for the former were withdrawn in 2008 and are likely to be resubmitted in 2010.

### **Theme 6: Bishop's Stortford On the Move**

- 4.3.19** Figure 4.6 below shows the main daily work-related flows in and out of Bishop's Stortford, including the large proportion of internal car trips. The flows help to explain congestion problems in the town centre and peak-time overcrowding on the train line into Harlow and London and on the A1184.



Figure 4.6 Daily trips to and from Bishop's Stortford



Source: 2001 Census and East Herts Council

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**4.3.20** Despite five public car parks and a town bypass, there are problems with parking and congestion in the town centre at peak times, especially on Thursdays and Saturdays. Without measures to address congestion, future development in the town is likely to exacerbate the problem.

**4.3.21** The **Bishop's Stortford Transport Study (2006)** suggests that a park and ride scheme should form part of the longer-term strategy, in combination with future developments and complementary parking policies. It is suggested that in a town the size of Bishop's Stortford there is considerable scope for reducing traffic by increasing the numbers of people walking and cycling

through planned improvements. An Urban Transport Plan for Bishop's Stortford is also scheduled to be undertaken by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) in 2011/12.

The Bishop's Stortford Transport Study (2006) is available online at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/technicalstudies](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/technicalstudies).

Recommendations from the Study were incorporated into Herts Highways' Eastern Herts Area Plan (2007), available at: [www.tinyurls.co.uk/Q8308](http://www.tinyurls.co.uk/Q8308)

Information on Urban Transport Plans can be found on the HCC website at [www.tinyurls.co.uk/P8310](http://www.tinyurls.co.uk/P8310)

### Theme 7: Bishop's Stortford Health, Wellbeing and Play

- 4.3.22** Leisure and cultural facilities include Grange Paddocks, the Rhodes Arts Centre, and the Anchor Street leisure complex and cinema. There are several community halls available for hire in different neighbourhoods around the town, some run by the Town Council and others privately owned, such as those associated with churches, the library, etc. There are also a number of allotments and there is currently a waiting list for those operated by the Town Council.
- 4.3.23** The 'green wedges' linking town and countryside are important for health, wellbeing and play. They contain several sports pitches, rights of way and woodland walks (such as that through Hoggate's Wood). The River Stort Towpath is a popular walking route.
- 4.3.24** The Herts and Essex Community Hospital provides a range of outpatient services and a minor injuries unit, but there is no A&E unit or Urgent Care Centre. The PCT is considering the need for a new health centre, although there are no firm proposals at present.

### Theme 8: Green Bishop's Stortford

- 4.3.25** An Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) has been declared due to traffic related pollution in the Hockerill Street junction area. There are also issues of noise pollution from the overflying of aircraft into and out of Stansted Airport, particularly at the southern edge of the town.
- 4.3.26** Flood risk along the river Stort continues to be an issue, even though very low river levels have been a problem in the past. However, natural flood storage measures, for example at Grange Paddocks, offer opportunities for nature conservation. The 'green wedges' first designated as Green Belt in the 1993 Local Plan, play an essential function in preserving and linking wildlife habitats, including the river corridor, ancient woodlands and meadows.



## Theme 9: Bishop's Stortford Monitoring and Delivery

- 4.3.27** The final adopted Core Strategy will be accompanied by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan which will set out what infrastructure is needed, how much it will cost, who will pay for it and a broad outline of the phasing of delivery.
- 4.3.28** Without supporting investment in infrastructure, development of the ASRs will exacerbate existing traffic congestion and put increased strain on town centre services and facilities. Any future Town Centre Strategy or Site Development Briefs will need to take account of this and plan for the expansion of services and facilities to cater for the increased population.
- 4.3.29** Growth proposals in **Uttlesford District** will need to be carefully monitored and planned for. The Council will take an ongoing interest in proposals for the development of Stansted Airport. In addition, there is possible large-scale development at Elsenham (see Figure 2.1 Chapter 2, Section 2.2). Finally, there is the possibility of a growth corridor along the A120, particularly at Takeley and Braintree.

Further details are available in the Uttlesford Core Strategy Preferred Options document, available on the Uttlesford District Council website: [www.tinyurls.co.uk/W8312](http://www.tinyurls.co.uk/W8312)

## 4.4 Current Planning Context

- 4.4.1** The current planning context for East Herts is set out in the Local Plan 2007, which identifies Bishop's Stortford as one of six Main Settlements within East Herts. Under this Plan the majority of development is directed to the four largest towns of Bishop's Stortford, Hertford, Sawbridgeworth and Ware, while Buntingford and the settlement of Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets also receives some development.
- 4.4.2** Under the Local Plan 2007, each of the six Main Settlements received a proportional share of the district-wide housing requirement, with an additional allowance diverted from the rural area. The Local Plan 2007 sought to accommodate as much of this requirement as possible on brownfield land. Where this was not possible within specific settlements, greenfield sites were identified and allocated for housing development.
- 4.4.3** However, it should be noted that in addition to the identification of allocated sites, a number of unallocated sites will also come forward for development. In these circumstances, each proposal is judged on a case-by-case basis against the policies in the Local Plan 2007, having regard to the East of England Plan and national planning policy.

- 4.4.4** As set out in Table 3.1 (Chapter 3, Section 3.2), 1,259 homes were built in Bishop's Stortford during the period 2001 to 2009. A further 437 homes have planning permission but are still to be built. As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009, the following allocated housing sites representing at least 3,586 homes were still to come forward for development in Bishop's Stortford.
- 4.4.5** The Local Plan 2007 identifies three key sites in the town centre for redevelopment (Policy BIS10). The Riverside/Adderley Road site has recently been completed. The other two sites remain undeveloped:
- The Mill Site, Dane Street (Site specific Policy BIS12)
  - The Goods Yard Site (Site specific Policy BIS11)
- 4.4.6** These sites are to the east and south-east of the town centre, and are acknowledged to offer superb opportunities for redevelopment for a variety of uses. Policy BIS10 includes a number of specific requirements for these town centre sites, including:
- channelling market demand to the town centre;
  - introducing a variety of new civic, commercial, retail, residential, and leisure buildings to stimulate and encourage all aspects of town centre life;
  - improving and completing open areas in the townscape and strengthening and enhancing pedestrian and cycling movement in the town;
  - respecting and taking into account both the recreational and leisure potential of the river frontage;
  - creation of new public spaces;
  - establishing civic quality in the town;
  - alleviating traffic pressures; and
  - accommodating car parking demand.

### The Mill Site, Dane Street

- 4.4.7** This site lies on the opposite side of the river to the town centre shops and the recently completed Riverside/Adderley Road site. Under Policy BIS12 the Mill Site is allocated for a mix of small scale office development and residential development (around 100 homes). Whilst not seeking to encourage the closure or relocation of this important local employer, the Council recognises that the site is constrained by its size and shape, and problems associated with the heavy vehicle movements which the mill generates.

### The Goods Yard Site

- 4.4.8** This site is known in Policy BIS11 as the **Goods Yard/John Dyde Training College Site**. The site lies between the railway line and the River Stort, to the south of Station Road. Redevelopment of the John Dyde training college section of the site was completed in 2007.

**4.4.9** Policy BIS11 requires a minimum of 700 homes at the site, consisting predominantly of one and two bedroom apartments. 208 homes have already been completed at the John Dyde training college redevelopment. Under Policy BIS11 therefore, the balance of 492 remain to be built at the Goods Yard Site. Policy BIS11 also sets out further requirements as follows:

- provision for a road through the site linking Station Road with Dane Street and London Road;
- accommodation of adequate rail commuter car parking plus land sufficient for additional town centre parking; and
- a fully integrated rail-bus passenger interchange.

A Site Development Brief for the Goods Yard was prepared in 2004. It is available to view and download from the Council's website at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/bsgoodsyard](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/bsgoodsyard)

### Other Sites

**4.4.10** There are three other sites allocated for development in the Local Plan 2007, which as yet remain undeveloped. These are as follows:

- Apton Road Car Park (above retained car park)
- Reserve Secondary School Site, Hadham Road
- The Areas of Special Restraint

### Apton Road Car Park (above retained public car park)

**4.4.11** This central site just off Potter Street is allocated under Policy BIS2 for 16 homes, including 10 open market and 6 affordable. Policy BIS2 requires the retention of the car park. The site lies within the Bishop's Stortford Conservation Area and design considerations will therefore be particularly important in any forthcoming planning application.

### Reserve Secondary School Site, Hadham Road

**4.4.12** Under the 1993 Local Plan, this site was reserved by the County Council for an additional secondary school, but East Herts Council was informed by the County Council that the site was unlikely to be used for such a purpose. The Local Plan 2007 therefore redesignated the site for residential use, given a requirement for additional housing land. Policy BIS7 of the Local Plan 2007 requires that the site will only be released for development if sufficient additional secondary school capacity is provided elsewhere in the town.

**4.4.13** In 2008 the County Council submitted linked applications relating to Policy BIS7. These included applications for development of land for new school sites to the South of Whittington Way and the redevelopment for residential purposes of the Reserve Secondary School Site, Hadham Road. However, these applications were later withdrawn.

### The Areas of Special Restraint (ASRs) and the Special Countryside Area

**4.4.14** Much of the land within the A120 bypass to the north and northwest of the town is designated as **Areas of Special Restraint (ASRs)** within the Local Plan 2007. The ASRs are inset from the Green Belt, and their purpose is to safeguard land for development until such time as required for the planned provision of housing.

**4.4.15** The ASRs are divided into eastern and western sections separated by a corridor containing Hoggate's Wood. The western section incorporates ASRs 1 and 2 (Policy BIS3), and the eastern section incorporates ASRs 3, 4 and 5 (Policy BIS8). In addition, a further site, known as the Special Countryside Area, lies adjacent to the eastern ASRs (3, 4 and 5). Policy BIS1 states that this land will be retained under Green Belt provisions until such time as a strategic need for development is established.

Further information in respect of the ASRs is contained in two reports to the LDF Executive Panel: 24<sup>th</sup> April 2008, (item 7), and 6<sup>th</sup> November 2008 (item 7). Both reports are available on the Council's website at <http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=2842>

Technical studies on the implications of development of the ASRs are contained within the Bishop's Stortford Masterplanning Study (2005) and the Bishop's Stortford Transport Study (2006), both available online at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/technicalstudies](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/technicalstudies)

**4.4.16** The Local Plan 2007 requires that the land to the east (Hoggate's Wood) and south-east of ASR2 (the Wildlife Site to the south of Dane O'Coys Road, known as Dane O'Coys Meadow), should be set aside for public recreational purposes, and that appropriate arrangements are made to ensure that the land remains under such uses in perpetuity, before any development proposals are approved.

**4.4.17** In terms of housing numbers, it is anticipated that 2,700 homes could be accommodated in total on the ASRs and Special Countryside Area. However, since at the time of writing the Local Plan 2007 it was not anticipated that ASRs 3, 4 and 5 would be brought forward during the plan period, no dwelling numbers have been included in the policy BIS8.

**4.4.18** It has been demonstrated that there are insufficient sites within the district to provide a five year supply of housing land covering the period to 2013/14, in accordance with PPS3. For this reason, the Council has no realistic option but to bring forward the ASRs and the Special Countryside Area for development. It was therefore agreed in 2008 that the Local Plan Reserve Housing (RHL) Sites and the Bishop's Stortford Areas of Special Restraint (ASRs) and the Special Countryside Area, be brought forward for development.

**4.4.19** Planning applications are expected within the next year (i.e. prior to completion of the Core Strategy) and should take account of the recommendations of the technical studies mentioned above.

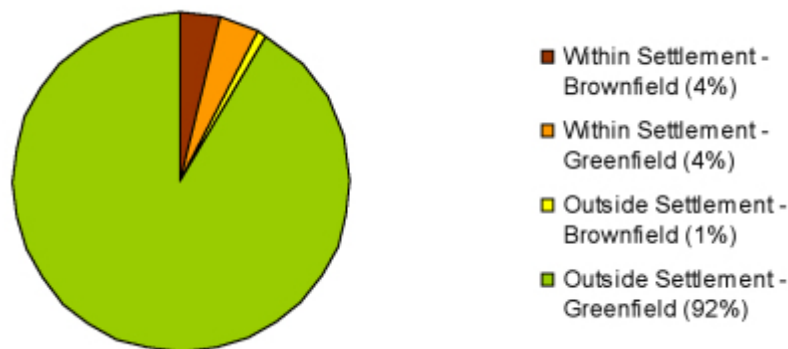
### 4.5 Bishop's Stortford: Future Growth Options

**4.5.1** Before deciding which future district-wide development strategy to adopt to 2031 and how we distribute growth to each identified settlement (Chapter 3), we need to understand how development could be accommodated in and around Bishop's Stortford itself.

**4.5.2** In terms of the availability of land, 66.5 hectares have been suggested for housing and associated uses through the Call for Sites, in and around Bishop's Stortford. This equates to approximately 1,330 homes.

**4.5.3** Figure 4.7 shows that there is currently only limited capacity within the existing urban area of Bishop's Stortford to accommodate further development. Therefore whichever development strategy option is adopted, it is highly likely that all of the towns, including Bishop's Stortford will need to accommodate significant greenfield development beyond the current edge of the settlement.

Figure 4.7 Land Availability at Bishop's Stortford (figures may not sum due to rounding)

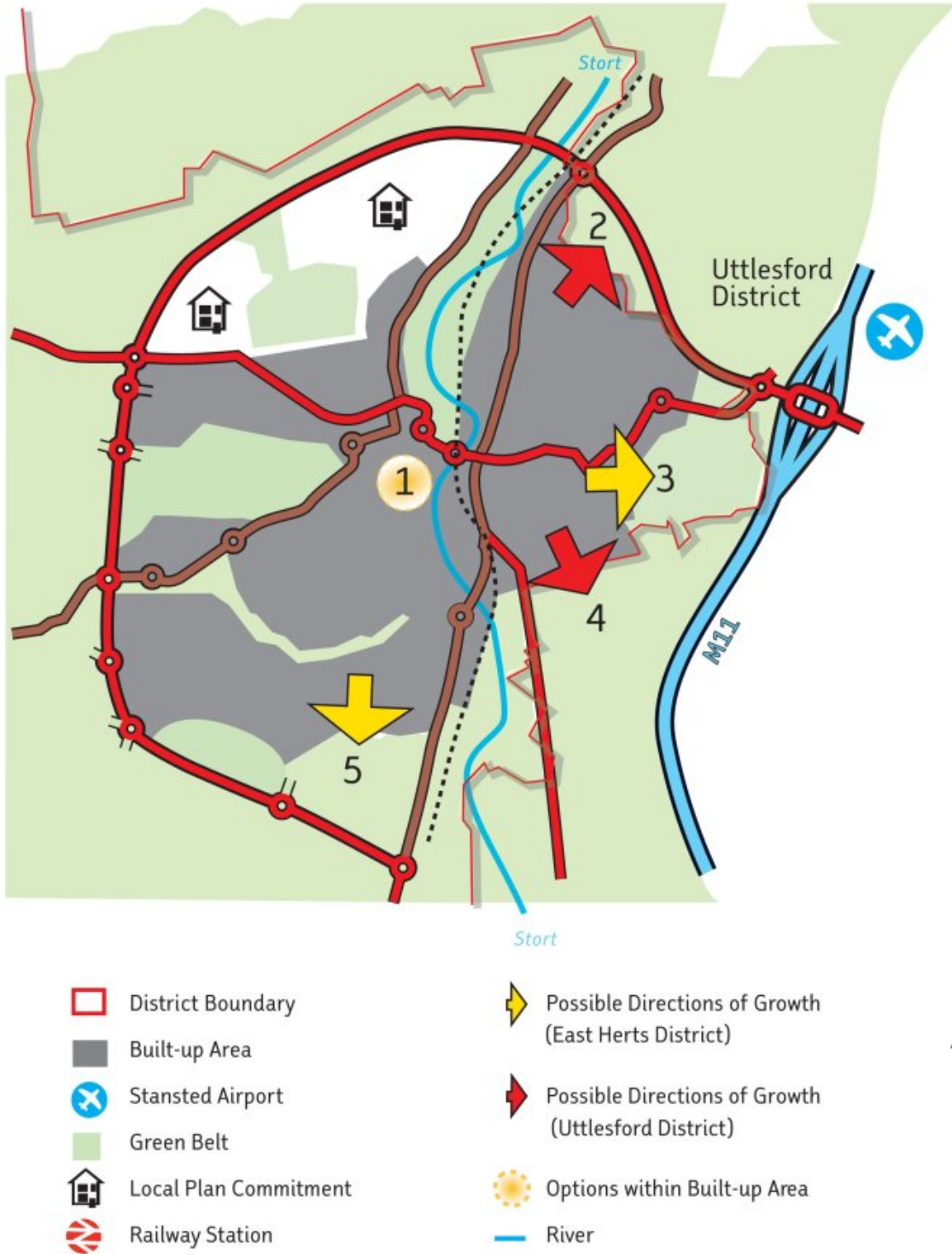


Source: East Herts Call For Sites

- 4.5.4** To accommodate growth in and around Bishop's Stortford, five potential growth options have been identified. These are shown in Figure 4.8 and considered in more detail below.
- 4.5.5** The purpose of these options is not to identify specific sites (which will be identified in subsequent LDF Documents) but rather to flag up potential issues, such as infrastructure constraints, that may shape how Bishop's Stortford grows to 2031. Please note that these options may not be mutually exclusive and that growth could occur in more than one direction, subject to the development strategy and distribution strategy we adopt (see Chapter 3, Sections 3.7 to 3.15).
- 4.5.6** As set out in Chapter 3, Section 3.2, the growth options presented in Figure 4.8 seek to deal with Bishop's Stortford's share of the approximate 'to-find' figure of 8,500 homes and are therefore in addition to the development of any remaining Local Plan allocations. As such, these sites have not been shown.
- 4.5.7** It should be noted that it is not too late for further options arising from this consultation to be considered.



Figure 4.8 Growth Options for Bishop's Stortford to 2031 (indicative only)



Source: East Herts Council

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**4.5.8** A summary of the issues for the five growth options for Bishop's Stortford are as follows:

### **Option 1: Within the Existing Built-up Area**

- Good accessibility
- Brownfield land: priority, but expensive to develop
- Lead to increased congestion
- Land available for development (Call for Sites)

### **Option 2: To the northeast**

- Within Uttlesford District (Birchanger Parish)
- Greenfield – currently agricultural
- Land available for development (Call for Sites)
- Sensitivity of adjacent woodland (Birchanger Wood)
- Would require a Green Belt Review

### **Option 3: To the east**

- Concerns with visual separation from M11
- Greenfield - currently golf course
- Would require a Green Belt Review
- Land available for development (Call for Sites)

### **Option 4: To the southeast**

- Greenfield land bounded by the M11
- Would require a Green Belt Review
- Concerns about physical separation from the M11
- Lies within Uttlesford District (Great Hallingbury Parish)

### **Option 5: To the south**

- Greenfield land within the A1184 by-pass
- Would require a Green Belt Review
- Sloping site: landscape concern regarding the setting of the town
- Potential to include other community uses such as new schools
- Land available for development (Call for Sites)
- Aircraft noise

## Question 24

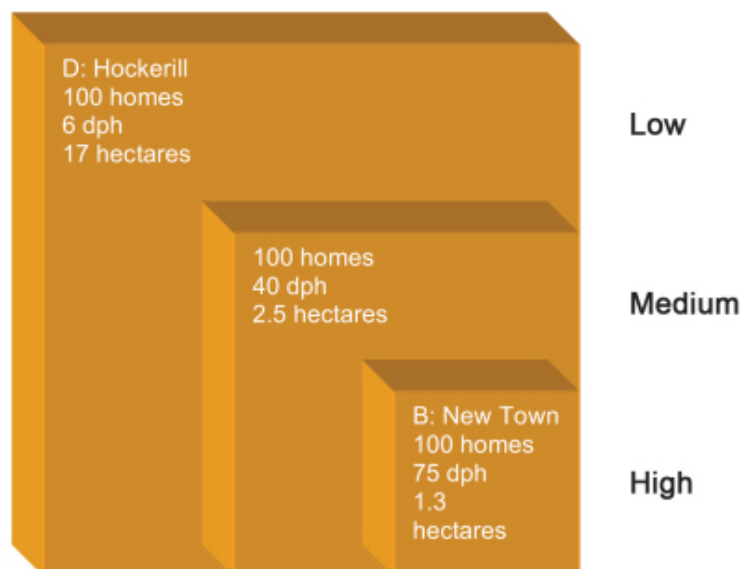
Growth Options for Bishop's Stortford

Please rank the growth options for Bishop's Stortford in order of preference, and comment on their suitability.

Are there any other options we have not considered?

**4.5.9** As explained in Chapter 3, Section 3.3, the amount of land that would be required for new development (the land-take) will vary depending on the density at which homes are built. For example, using the illustrations in Figure 4.3 (see Section 4.2), Figure 4.9 shows that at the density of B: New Town (75dph), 100 homes would require 1.3 hectares, whereas at the density of D: Hockerill (6dph), 17 hectares would be required. Density therefore has clear implications for the amount of land required and the future shape of Bishop's Stortford, but this clearly needs to be judged in the context of overall design quality. Density and design quality are two of the chief determinants of character in the built environment.

Figure 4.9 Illustration of Land-Take at Different Densities  
(illustrative only - not to scale)



Source: East Herts Council

**4.5.10** As can be seen from Figure 4.3 (Section 4.2) and the examples shown in the other settlement chapters, there are a variety of development designs and densities. There are many fine examples of higher density developments

around the district, such as Victorian terraces and three and four storey Edwardian town-houses, which are now valued for their historic interest and contribution to quality of place.

**4.5.11** Whilst the specific characteristics of a site will determine the actual density at which a development is built, understanding the approach to the development and the relationship between density and land-take in a particular town is important.

**4.5.12** Theoretically, there are three general approaches to development in Bishop's Stortford:

1. Lower density - therefore higher land-take
2. Medium density - therefore medium land-take
3. Higher density - therefore lower land-take

### Question 25

Approach to Development in Bishop's Stortford

Please rank the approaches to development in Bishop's Stortford in order of preference.

Is there another approach we have not considered?

## 4.6 Bishop's Stortford: Emerging LDF Vision

**4.6.1** As discussed in Chapter 2, it will not be possible to finalise an LDF vision for any town in the district until the development strategy is decided, since the amount and location of new development will have considerable implications for the size, shape and character of the town.

**4.6.2** However, given the wealth of information gained from people interacting in the Awareness Raising process, it is possible to produce a first tentative vision based on an analysis of the evidence including the results of community and stakeholder engagement and various strategies and studies. For example, in writing this Issues and Options document we have been able to draw upon **four documents** produced by the Town Council, British Waterways, the Civic Federation and the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group.

Bishop's Stortford Town Plan produced by Bishop's Stortford Town Council:  
[www.bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk](http://www.bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk)

"A People's Vision for Bishop's Stortford" produced by the Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation: [www.stortfordcf.org.uk](http://www.stortfordcf.org.uk)

"A Vision for the Future: Bishop's Stortford Waterspace and Landscape Strategy" produced by British Waterways: [www.tinyurls.co.uk/K8313](http://www.tinyurls.co.uk/K8313)

"A Vision for Bishop's Stortford", produced by the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group:  
[www.eastherts.gov.uk/bishopsstortford2020](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/bishopsstortford2020)

**4.6.3** This vision for Bishop's Stortford will be subject to further refinement and will be greater informed when our preferred option for the development strategy and our distribution strategy (see Chapter 3) are agreed, as these strategies will determine the amount of growth Bishop's Stortford will receive to 2031.

**4.6.4** It should be noted, however, that the LDF vision for Bishop's Stortford will be different in scope from any other vision for the town. This is because the LDF Core Strategy:

- forms part of the legal planning framework for East Herts;
- is a high-level strategic document that covers the whole district, and therefore will not encompass the same level of detail as a town plan;
- can only address matters within the scope of the LDF;
- will set the context for subsequent LDF documents and other policy documents such as town centre strategies or site-specific development briefs.

Nevertheless, these other documents represent a valuable source of information for the Core Strategy and will inform the emerging vision.

**4.6.5** Our emerging LDF vision for Bishop's Stortford in 2031 is as follows:

*Bishop's Stortford will function as a medium-sized service centre offering a wide range of services and facilities to local residents and those in surrounding villages and towns in eastern Hertfordshire and western Essex. Potential stresses from development within the town or in Essex will be planned for and avoided by the timely provision of appropriate infrastructure, services and facilities.*

*The design of new development will complement the historic features of the town to create a place where people want to live, work, and visit. The town will benefit from excellent leisure, health, and cultural facilities for all age groups. Existing green infrastructure will be protected and enhanced for people and for wildlife, and will be added to wherever feasible.*

*Bishop's Stortford town centre will be lively and welcoming, and public realm improvements will make it pleasant and safe for pedestrians and cyclists. The railway station will be better integrated with the town centre, and air quality at Hockerill will be improved. The waterfront will be a key amenity, enhancing the setting of the town. Bishop's Stortford will be a bustling shopping centre supported by national retailers, whilst keeping a strong independent retail presence and a thriving market.*

*Access in and around the town should be easy and attractive and not limited by congestion. Flexible and accessible employment land will be provided to enable improvement in local employment opportunities. Suitable primary and secondary school sites will enable all Bishop's Stortford's children to be educated within the town.*

*There will be a housing supply that meets the wide range of housing needs in and around the town in terms of desirability, affordability, and sustainability. Development of the ASRs will be well integrated with the rest of the town; provide excellent opportunities for walking, cycling and passenger transport; preserve and enhance access to the countryside through Dane O'Coys Meadows and Hoggate's Wood; and preserve the character of Dane O'Coys Road.*

### Question 26

Bishop's Stortford Vision

Do you agree with the emerging LDF vision for Bishop's Stortford?



## Chapter 5

# Buntingford



## 5.1 Purpose of the Buntingford Chapter

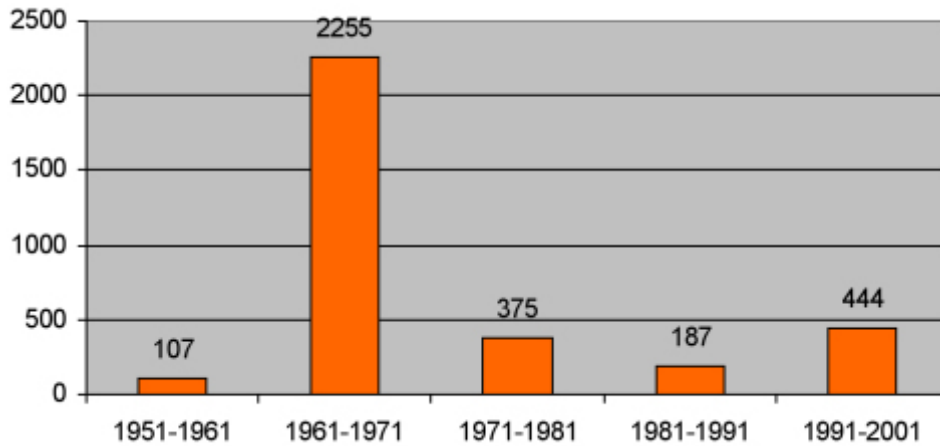
- 5.1.1** This chapter deals with the issues and options in respect of Buntingford. It should be read in conjunction with Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision and Chapter 3: Development Strategy to enable the necessary appreciation of issues in a wider context. This chapter includes sections on the following:
- A portrait of Buntingford setting out how the town has evolved and its main characteristics (Section 5.2);
  - The key issues facing Buntingford arranged by theme (Section 5.3);
  - The current planning context for Buntingford as set out in the Local Plan 2007 (Section 5.4);
  - A series of options for the growth of Buntingford to 2031, including the availability of land and the approach to development (Section 5.5); and,
  - An emerging LDF vision for Buntingford to 2031(Section 5.6).
- 5.1.2** The purpose of the Core Strategy is to establish the district-wide development strategy for East Herts. This will set out how much development each identified settlement will receive to 2031. The Core Strategy does not deal with detailed planning issues such as design and amenity. These issues, along with the identification of specific sites, will be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents.
- 5.1.3** To inform the development strategy we are seeking your views in respect of the following two aspects: firstly, regarding future development options for Buntingford, and secondly regarding an emerging vision for the town.

This chapter includes questions 27, 28 and 29.

## 5.2 A Portrait of Buntingford

- 5.2.1** This portrait aims to capture the key characteristics of Buntingford today. It is derived from an assessment of the various aspects of the evidence base and is a factual statement of its attributes. The portrait seeks to capture what makes Buntingford unique, while the following section discusses the key planning issues facing the town.
- 5.2.2** Situated in the northern half of the district, Buntingford is currently the smallest town in East Herts. It sits astride the River Rib and the Roman Road Ermine Street just over half way between the towns of Ware and Royston, the latter in neighbouring North Hertfordshire District.

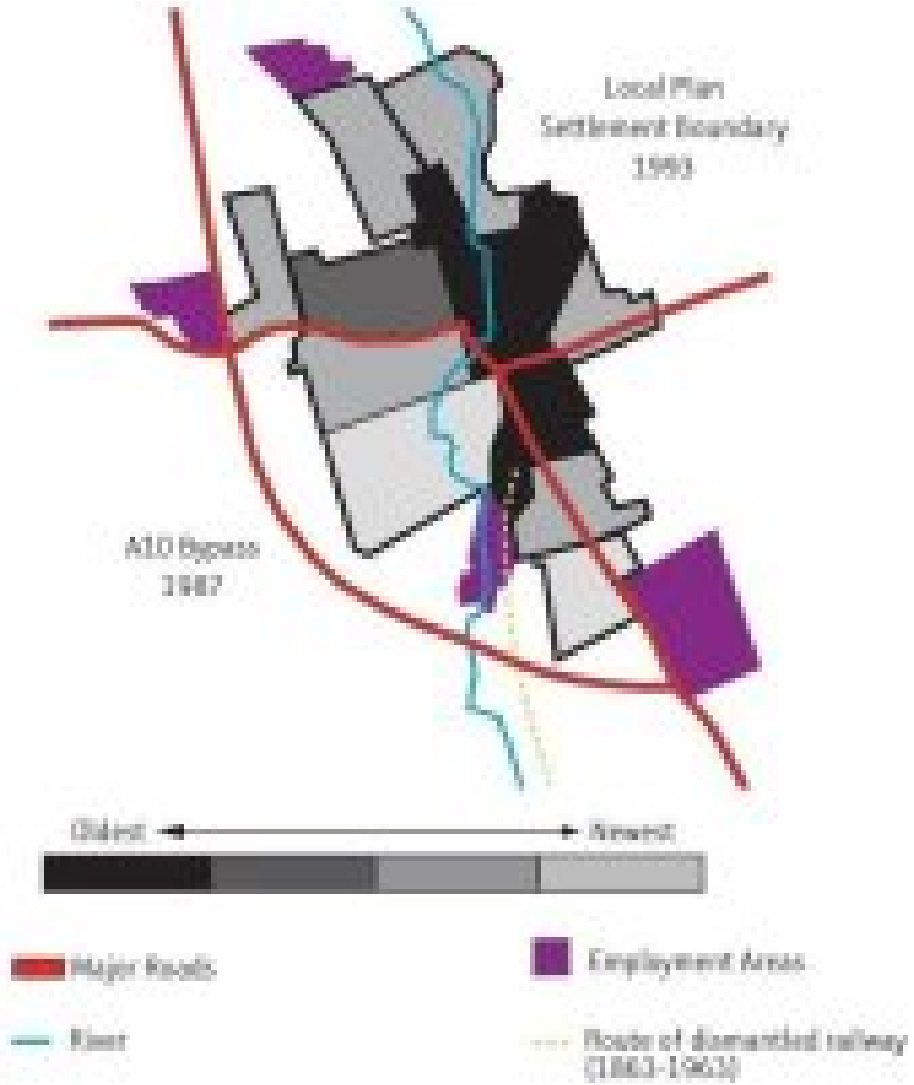
Figure 5.1 Population Growth of Buntingford (1951-2001)



Source: Office of National Statistics

- 5.2.3** In 1951 the population was 1,452; fifty years later it had reached 4,820. This represents a trebling of the population over the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. As can be seen in Figure 5.1, the town grew rapidly in the 1960s. One of the drivers of this growth was the construction of a supermarket distribution centre to the southeast of the town and new homes to accommodate the influx of workers, mainly from London.
- 5.2.4** The historic core of the town is medieval in date having shifted westwards from the ancient church of St Bartholomew at Layston to the staggered crossroads of Ermine Street with Baldock Road. In 1253 Henry III granted a charter to hold a weekly market to the Manor of Corneybury. In 1663, Parliament authorised England's first turnpike running through Buntingford from Wadesmill to Huntingdon.
- 5.2.5** As can be seen in Figure 5.2, extending from the historic core, the town has grown in stages including for example, the Newtown in the 1930s. More recent development has been to the west including Monks Walk, circa 1970s; Freman Drive, circa 1980s; and the informally named 'Bovis' estate (Luynes Rise), circa 1990s. These developments reflect the growth in population of the town.
- 5.2.6** Figure 5.3 shows examples of housing development in Buntingford. Other examples are also shown in the other settlement chapters.

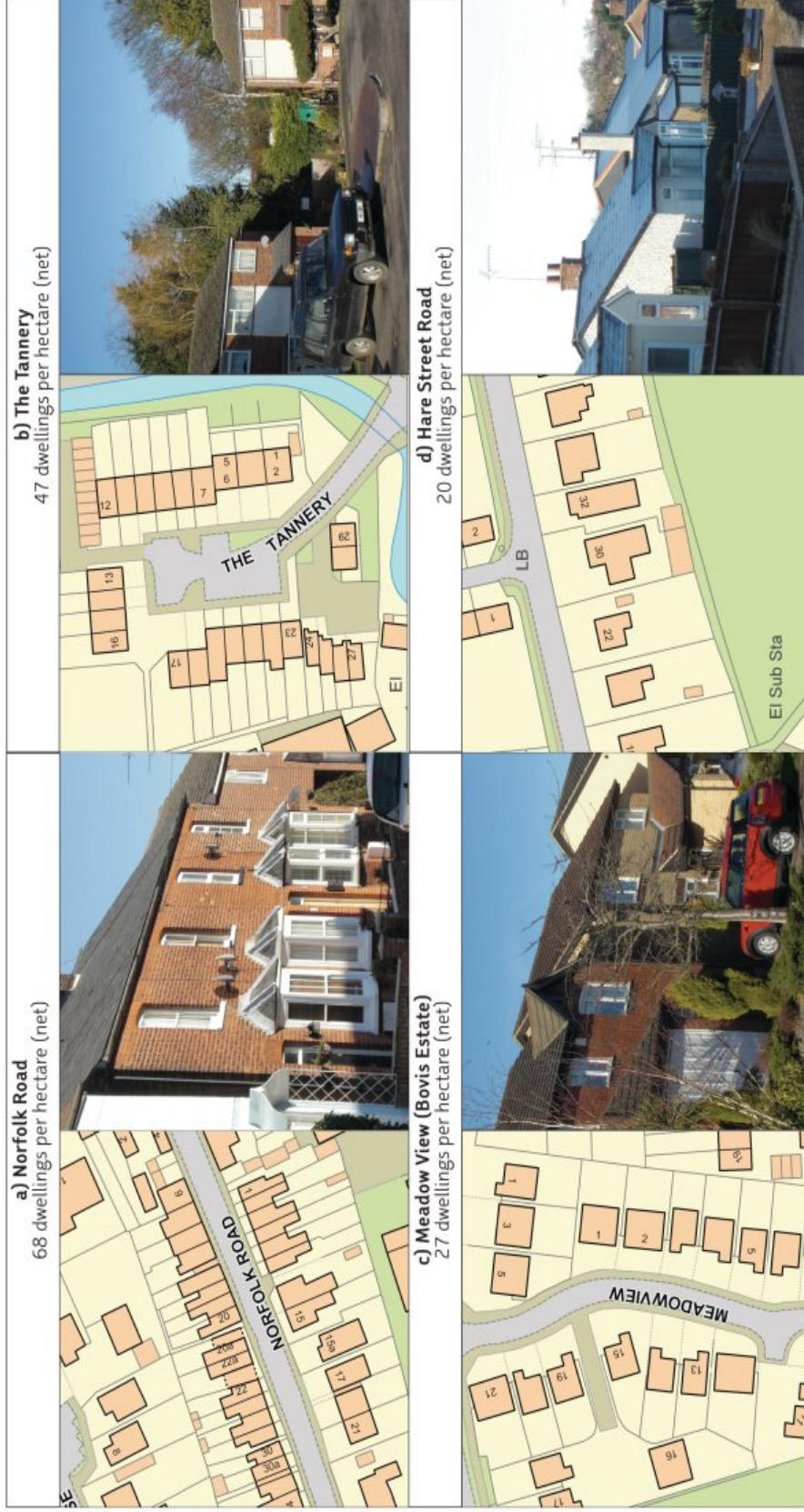
Figure 5.2 Historical Development of Buntingford



Source: East Herts Council

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Figure 5.3 Examples of Housing Development in Buntingford



Source: East Herts Council

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- 5.2.7** As can be seen, there is a variety of styles and built-form reflecting changes to housing design and living requirements over the years. As a result, the density of these homes varies from 68 dwellings per hectare in terraced housing in Norfolk Road (a), circa 19<sup>th</sup> Century, to just 20 dwellings per hectare for the detached bungalows in Hare Street Road (d), from the 1920s.
- 5.2.8** Being surrounded by an extensive rural hinterland enables Buntingford to function as an important rural service centre for the outlying villages in the north of the district. Buntingford is the only town in East Herts not surrounded by Green Belt although its settlement boundary was first established in 1993 to manage the growth of the town into the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt.
- 5.2.9** A large Conservation Area extends along much of Ermine Street encompassing Market Hill as well as extending to the east to conserve the setting of the River Rib as it winds its way through the town. There are two wildlife sites within the town itself: Down Hall Ley and Porters Close.
- 5.2.10** Although originally bypassed by the mainline railways to the east and west, Buntingford was served by a railway station between 1863 and 1964. The 14 mile branch line, known locally as ‘the bunt’, was never particularly successful meandering as it did across the undulating and rural landscape of eastern Hertfordshire. Two frequent bus services connect the town to Baldock, Bishop’s Stortford, Royston and Ware supplemented by a number of less frequent services connecting neighbouring villages.
- 5.2.11** The town boasts a range of independent and specialist shops, as well as some high street chains including two supermarkets. A vibrant market is held every Monday. Buntingford has a range of local services including above standard provision of amenity green space and outdoor sports facilities. In terms of education provision, there are four schools operating over a three tier system (two first schools, a middle school, and an upper school and sixth form).
- 5.2.12** Buntingford has a vibrant community as demonstrated by the numerous clubs and societies that are active in the town. The Seth Ward Centre provides a venue for many of these groups as well as offering function rooms and hosting regular exercise and sports classes. The centre was named after Seth Ward, Bishop of Salisbury, a mathematician and a founder of the Royal Society born in nearby Aspenden.
- 5.2.13** There are four designated employment areas in Buntingford, although the former Sainsbury’s distribution centre to the south of the town has been vacant for some time and presents a unique opportunity for mixed-use re-development.
- 5.2.14** The key characteristics and issues facing Buntingford are set out in the context map in Figure 5.4.

Figure 5.4 Context of Buntingford



Source: East Herts Council

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## 5.3 Buntingford: Key Issues

- 5.3.1** This section looks at some of the key planning issues facing Buntingford. It is organised under a series of nine themes, which are used throughout this Issues and Options document to provide consistency and structure.
- 5.3.2** Many of the issues that relate to Buntingford apply equally to other parts of East Herts. To avoid repetition, these generic district-wide issues have been dealt with under the relevant theme in Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision. The following sections set out those particular issues that apply specifically to Buntingford. We therefore suggest that you read this section in conjunction with Chapter 2. For information, the specific policy context, the relevant sources from the evidence base and the linkages to the SCS for each theme are set out in Sections F to O of the Supporting Document.

### Theme 1: Buntingford Energy and Climate Change

- 5.3.3** Due to its historic nature, there are few adaptations that can be made to the centre of Buntingford. However it will be crucial to ensure that new development makes the most of opportunities to reduce carbon emissions through building orientation and technology.

### Theme 2: Buntingford People and Community Safety

- 5.3.4** On a national scale, Buntingford has relatively little crime and the town benefits from a neighbourhood policing team. However, there are some issues of anti-social behaviour which, although may not be significant on a national scale, are nevertheless of importance to many local residents and businesses. New growth should maintain the highly valued sense of community in Buntingford. The Town Council represents the interests of residents and is currently preparing its town plan (see Section 5.6).

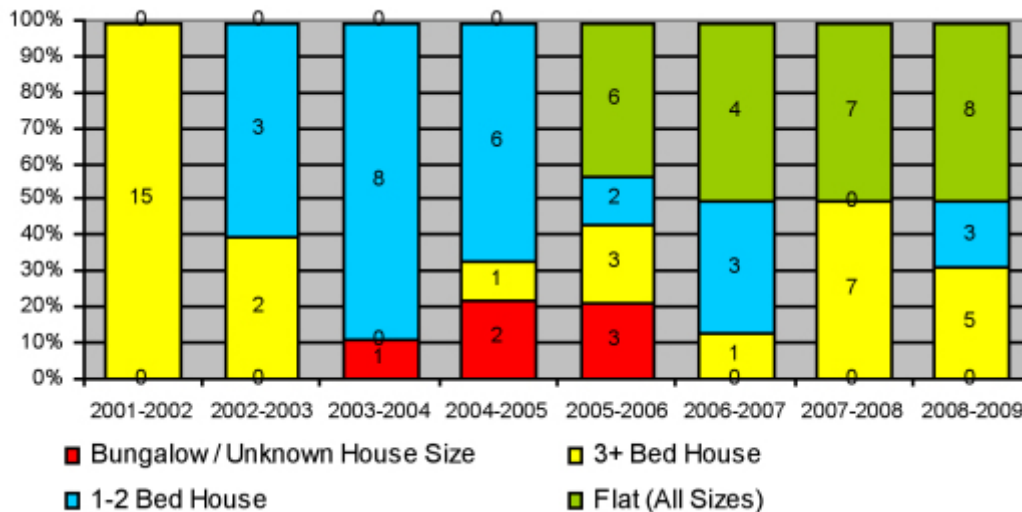
### Theme 3: Housing Buntingford

- 5.3.5** Figure 5.5 shows the gross housing completions by type for the period 2001-2009. In the last three years, 50% of completions (19 homes) have been flats. Whilst this may be a reflection of the nature of the sites that have come forward for development (e.g. small infill sites) it does also respond with the action in the Buntingford Community Plan 2003 to 2005 to “*explore opportunities to increase housing density on brownfield sites*” via the Local Plan 2007. However, that is not to say that flats are the only solution to higher density.
- 5.3.6** The location of Buntingford means that in terms of housing markets it functions as part of the Cheshunt / A10 corridor that includes Hertford, Ware, Broxbourne and Waltham Abbey. What this means is that, excluding those who commute to London, the majority of residents in these locations work within these locations and will also look within this housing market when



moving house, choosing schools and even when shopping. Therefore the type of homes that will be needed in future in Buntingford will need to reflect the nature of provision and need within this wider housing market.

Figure 5.5 Gross Housing Completions by Type in Buntingford (2001-2009)



**Theme 4: Buntingford Character**

- 5.3.7** Perhaps due to the loss of its rail link, Buntingford has retained the atmosphere of a small market town. This has undoubtedly, contributed to its current form and the retention of some of its historic market town features including the rare one-handed town clock.
- 5.3.8** In addition to the Conservation Area there are numerous historic buildings, many Georgian in date, that provide a visual record of the history of the town. New development needs to be carefully managed to ensure that the character of the historic core is preserved and enhanced. Many of the older areas of the town have a more regular street pattern reflecting the linear nature of Buntingford. This is in contrast to late 20<sup>th</sup> Century development that favours the use of cul-de-sacs. This differing approach and the differing use of materials and styles means that even in a small town like Buntingford, each neighbourhood has its own ‘sense of place’.
- 5.3.9** Buntingford nestles in the valley of the River Rib and as such the constrained extent of the town enhances its sense of compactness. Ensuring that growth can be sensitively accommodated will be a key challenge. This will be dependent not only on the location of new development, but its design and density. As shown in the examples in Figure 5.3 (Section 5.2), the higher the density, the less land is required.

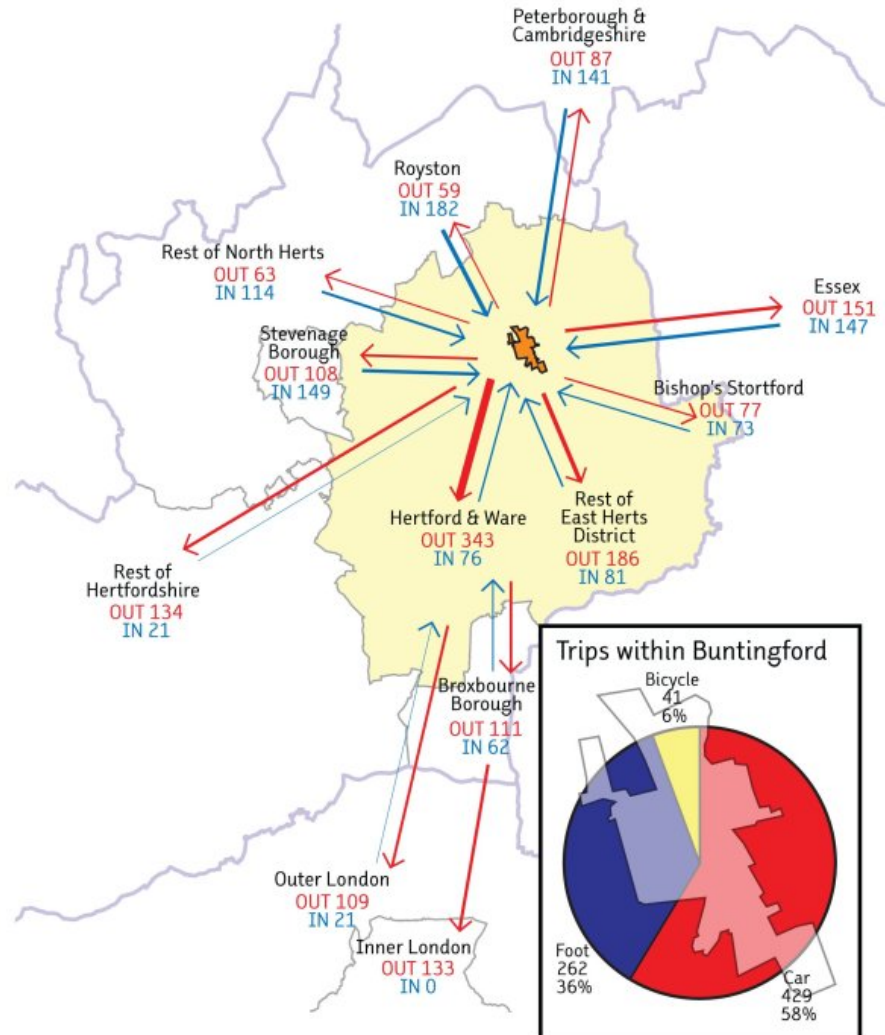
## Theme 5: Buntingford Economy, Skills and Prosperity

- 5.3.10** The small size of Buntingford and its relative isolation challenges the continued viability of the provision of services and facilities. Although Buntingford is comparatively well served in terms of grocery shopping through its two small supermarkets, and the quality of shops are considered good, there is a limited offer of shops selling comparison goods such as clothes and household items. There are perceived weaknesses in the accessibility of the town, both through passenger transport and parking. As such Buntingford often loses out to larger shopping destinations such as Stevenage and Bishop's Stortford.
- 5.3.11** Buntingford has four designated employment areas, and their location to the north of the district in close proximity to the A10 makes them attractive to occupiers. Overall, the variety of employment land in Buntingford contributes to the strength of the economy in the more rural northern part of the district. The older industrial estates, such as Park Farm offer smaller, cheaper units that are vital to small and start-up businesses, while the more modern Buntingford Business Park provides larger, high quality units in a highly accessible location.
- 5.3.12** Although the former Sainsburys' Distribution Depot to the south of the town has been vacant for some years, its highly accessible location provides a unique opportunity for mixed-use re-development including housing, employment and community uses.

## Theme 6: Buntingford On the Move

- 5.3.13** Buntingford suffers from poor accessibility and is relatively poorly served by passenger transport services. Figure 5.6 shows the main daily work-related flows in and out of Buntingford as of 2001. As can be seen whilst Buntingford attracted workers from quite far a-field, there is a net loss of workers from the town on a daily basis. However, it should be noted that these figures do not reflect the closure of the Sainsbury's Distribution Depot.
- 5.3.14** Although the A10 bypass which was built in the 1980s has significantly improved the quality of the town centre, the private motor car still dominates and problems with traffic congestion, parking, pedestrian safety and highway maintenance prevail. This is due in no small part to the fact that, despite its small size, 58% of daily trips within Buntingford itself are made in the car. Encouraging a modal shift away from the private car for journeys within Buntingford will be a key challenge for the Core Strategy. This will require us to ensure that new development is well connected to the existing built-form.

Figure 5.6 Daily trips to and from Buntingford



Source: East Herts Council

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**Theme 7: Buntingford Health, Wellbeing and Play**

**5.3.15** In terms of the amount of open space in Buntingford, there is below standard provision of parks and gardens and open space for children and young people. However, this can be addressed by ensuring that new development contributes to the provision of additional open space facilities within the town.

**5.3.16** Buntingford has a healthy community spirit with numerous clubs and societies. There are calls for further community facilities in Buntingford, but the level of facilities on offer reflects the small size of the town and the viability of providing such services. New development and population growth may be a useful means of funding additional facilities to supplement, for example, the existing library, community centre and skate ramps and multi-games area.

### Theme 8: Green Buntingford

**5.3.17** Climatic change has seen water levels in the River Rib fall, yet at times of heavy rain the river is still prone to flooding. Congestion in the town centre also leads to pollution as well as noise from aircraft at both Luton and Stansted airports. Linking in the provision of Green Infrastructure, networks of green space, in new developments with existing wildlife corridors will help to maintain biodiversity in Buntingford.

### Theme 9: Buntingford Monitoring and Delivery

**5.3.18** The final adopted Core Strategy will be accompanied by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan which will set out what infrastructure is needed in Buntingford to support growth, how much it will cost, who will pay for it and a broad outline of the phasing of delivery. Improving accessibility through viable passenger transport services will be key to delivering growth in Buntingford.

## 5.4 Current Planning Context

**5.4.1** The current planning context for East Herts is set out in the Local Plan 2007 which identifies Buntingford as one of six Main Settlements within East Herts. Whilst under this Plan the majority of development is directed to the four larger towns of Bishop's Stortford, Hertford, Sawbridgeworth and Ware, Buntingford (along with the settlement of Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets) also receives some development.

**5.4.2** Under the Local Plan 2007, each of the six Main Settlements received a proportional share of the district-wide housing requirement, with an additional allowance diverted from the rural area. The Local Plan 2007 sought to accommodate as much of this requirement as possible on brownfield land. Where this was not possible within specific settlements, greenfield sites were identified and allocated for housing development.

**5.4.3** However, it should be noted that in addition to the identification of allocated sites, a number of unallocated sites will also come forward for development. In these circumstances, each proposal is judged on a case-by-case basis against the policies in the Local Plan 2007, having regard to the East of England Plan and national planning policy.

**5.4.4** As set out in Table 3.1 (Chapter 3, Section 3.2), over the period 2001 to 2009, 85 homes have been built in Buntingford and a further 72 have planning permission but are still to be built. As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009, the following allocated housing sites representing at least 97 homes were still to come forward for development in Buntingford.

### Land East of Bowling Green Lane, West of the Allotments

**5.4.5** Located within the built-up area, this small parcel of greenfield land is designated under Policy BUN1 for eight homes. Owing to access issues onto Bowling Green Lane, the intention is to swap this piece of land with part of the allotments fronting Ermine Street. Improved replacement allotments will be established on the allocated site, prior to commencement of development.

### Land West of St Francis Close

**5.4.6** Designated under Policy BUN2 for 30 homes, in conjunction with the allocation below, this site is expected to provide up to 40% affordable housing and the provision of open space. The existing pre-school should also be retained on site.

### Land Between London Road and A10 Bypass

**5.4.7** Designated under Policy BUN3 for 52 homes, this site would come forward in conjunction with the above allocation.

### Park Farm Employment Area Extension

**5.4.8** This small parcel of land to the northeast of the employment area has been designated under Policy BUN6 for housing development in the guise of seven live/work units. Live/work units are a specific type of accommodation that provide dedicated work space (usually office) alongside the dwelling itself. Importantly, the emphasis of the live/work unit should always be on the work element and this should be reflected in the percentage of the internal floor space (e.g. 65%) afforded to the workspace. The benefit of the live/work unit is that it removes the need for the occupier to travel to work; thus removing both the cost and time spent getting to and from work. Live/work units are considered to be a sustainable form of development.

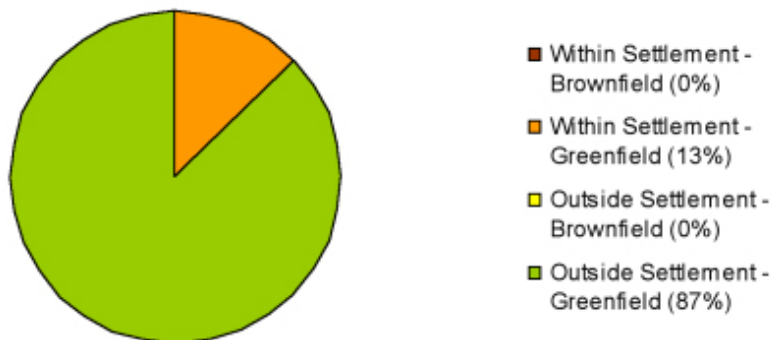
## 5.5 Buntingford: Future Growth Options

**5.5.1** Before deciding which district-wide development strategy to adopt to 2031 and how we distribute growth to each identified settlement (see Chapter 3), we need to understand how development could be accommodated in and around Buntingford itself.

**5.5.2** In terms of the availability of land, 86.5 hectares have been suggested for housing and associated uses through the Call for Sites, in and around Buntingford. This equates approximately to 1,730 homes.

**5.5.3** Figure 5.7 shows that there is currently only limited capacity within the existing urban area of Buntingford to accommodate further development. Therefore whichever development strategy option is adopted, it is highly likely that all of the towns, including Buntingford, will need to accommodate significant greenfield development beyond the current edge of the settlement.

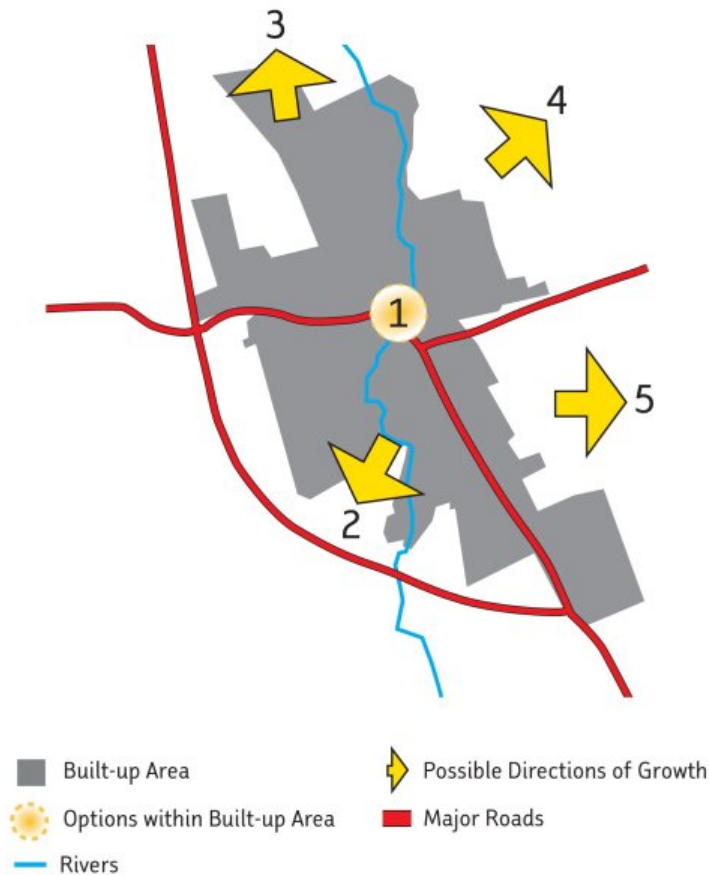
Figure 5.7 Land Availability at Buntingford



Source: East Herts Call for Sites

- 5.5.4** To accommodate growth in and around Buntingford, five potential growth options have been identified. These are shown in Figure 5.8 and considered in more detail below.
- 5.5.5** The purpose of these options is not to identify specific sites (which will be identified in subsequent LDF Documents) but rather to flag up potential issues such as infrastructure constraints that may shape how Buntingford grows to 2031. Please note that these options may not be mutually exclusive and that growth could occur in more than one direction, subject to the development strategy and distribution strategy we adopt (see Chapter 3, Sections 3.7 to 3.15).
- 5.5.6** The growth options presented in Figure 5.8 seek to deal with Buntingford’s share of the approximate ‘to-find’ figure of 8,500 homes and are therefore in addition to the development of any remaining Local Plan allocations. As such, these sites have not been shown.
- 5.5.7** It should also be noted that it is not too late for further options arising from this consultation to be considered.

Figure 5.8 Growth Options for Buntingford to 2031 (indicative only)



Source: East Herts Council

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**5.5.8** A summary of the issues for the five growth options for Buntingford are as follows:

**Option1: Within the Existing Built-up Area**

- Brownfield land
- Limited availability of land
- Substantial land-costs (potential contamination and viability issues)
- Re-development of former Sainsbury’s Distribution Centre

**Option 2: To the South and West**

- Greenfield land
- Land available for development (Call for Sites)
- Bypass forms limit to development



## Option 3: To the North

- Greenfield land
- Land available for development (Call for Sites)
- Infilling of area of land between the bypass and Ermine Street

## Option 4: To the Northeast

- Greenfield land
- Land not currently available for development
- Lack of physical boundary to development / landscape issues

## Option 5: To the East

- Greenfield land
- Land available for development
- Lack of physical boundary to development / topographical issues

### Question 27

#### Growth Options for Buntingford

Please rank the growth options for Buntingford in order of preference and comment on their suitability.

Are there any other options we have not considered?

- 5.5.9** As explained in Chapter 3, Section 3.3, the amount of land that would be required for new development (the land-take) will vary depending on the density at which homes are built. For example, using the illustrations in Figure 5.3 (Section 5.2), Figure 5.9 shows that at the density of A: Norfolk Road, built at 68dph, 100 homes would require 1.5 hectares, whereas at the density of D: Hare Street Road built at 20dph, 5 hectares of land would be required. Density therefore has clear implications for the amount of land required and the future shape of Buntingford, but this clearly needs to be judged in the context of overall design quality. Density and design quality are two of the chief determinants of character in the built environment.

Figure 5.9 Illustration of Land-Take at Different Densities (illustrative only - not to scale)



Source: East Herts Council

**5.5.10** As can be seen from Figure 5.3 (Section 5.2) and the examples shown in the other settlement chapters, there are a variety of development designs and densities. There are many fine examples of higher density developments around the district, such as Victorian terraces and three and four storey Edwardian town-houses, which are now valued for their historic interest and contribution to quality of place.

**5.5.11** Whilst the specific characteristics of a site will determine the actual density at which a development is built, understanding the approach to the development and the relationship between density and land-take in a particular town is important.

**5.5.12** Theoretically, there are three general approaches to development in Buntingford:

1. Lower density - therefore higher land-take
2. Medium density - therefore medium land-take
3. Higher density - therefore lower land-take

### Question 28

Approach to Development in Buntingford

Please rank the approaches to development in Buntingford in order of preference.

Is there another approach we have not considered?

## 5.6 Buntingford: Emerging LDF Vision

**5.6.1** Drawing upon the issues set out in this consultation document we have prepared an emerging LDF vision for Buntingford. The issues that have been identified are based on an analysis of the evidence including the results of community and stakeholder engagement, various strategies and studies. The Town Council is also in the early stages of preparing a **Town Plan** and this important document will be taken into account, as appropriate, in due course.

The Buntingford Town Plan is being prepared by Buntingford Town Council. Its purpose is to set out the community's aspirations for the town.

More information can be found on the town council's website at [www.buntingfordtowncouncil.co.uk/index.php](http://www.buntingfordtowncouncil.co.uk/index.php)

**5.6.2** However, it is not possible to finalise the vision for Buntingford until we have agreed our preferred option for the development strategy and our preferred approach for the distribution strategy (see Chapter 3). This is because these strategies will determine the amount of growth Buntingford will receive to 2031.

**5.6.3** It should be noted that the LDF vision for Buntingford will be different in scope from any other vision for the town e.g. the town plan. This is because the Core Strategy:

- forms part of the legal planning framework for East Herts;
- is a high-level strategic document that covers the whole district, and therefore will not encompass the same level of detail as the town plan;
- can only address matters within the scope of the LDF;
- will set the context for subsequent LDF documents and other policy documents such as town centre strategies or site-specific development briefs.

**5.6.4** Nevertheless, the Buntingford Town Plan represents a valuable source of information for the Core Strategy and will inform the emerging LDF vision.

**5.6.5** Our emerging LDF vision for Buntingford in 2031 is as follows:

*Buntingford will function as a vibrant rural service centre and market town meeting the day-to-day needs of its residents and those living within the large rural hinterland of the northern part of East Herts. Accessibility to neighbouring towns and villages will have been improved.*

*The town centre will have been protected and enhanced, especially its range of small shops and the amount of open space increased. The former Sainsbury's Depot will have been redeveloped providing a mix of housing, employment and community uses.*

*Additional housing will be well connected to the town and encourage walking and cycling and have been provided to help meet the needs of local people and families wishing to move to the town. Growth will have been accommodated without compromising the setting of the town within the wider landscape.*

### Question 29

Buntingford Vision

Do you agree with the emerging vision for Buntingford?



# Chapter 6

## Hertford

## 6.1 Purpose of the Hertford Chapter

**6.1.1** This chapter deals with issues and options relating to Hertford. It should be read in conjunction with Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision and Chapter 3: Development Strategy to enable the necessary appreciation of issues in a wider context. This chapter includes sections on the following:

- A portrait of Hertford setting out how the town has evolved and its main characteristics (Section 6.2);
- The key issues facing Hertford arranged by theme (Section 6.3);
- The current planning context for Hertford as set out in the Local Plan 2007 (Section 6.4)
- A series of options for the growth of Hertford to 2031, including the availability of land and the approach to development (Section 6.5)
- An emerging LDF vision for Hertford to 2031 (Section 6.6)

**6.1.2** The purpose of the Core Strategy is to establish the district-wide development strategy for East Herts. This will set out how much development each identified settlement will receive to 2031. The Core Strategy does not deal with detailed planning issues such as design and amenity. These issues, along with the identification of specific sites, will be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents.

**6.1.3** To inform the development strategy we are seeking your views in respect of the following two aspects: firstly, regarding future development options for Hertford, and secondly, regarding an emerging LDF vision for the town.

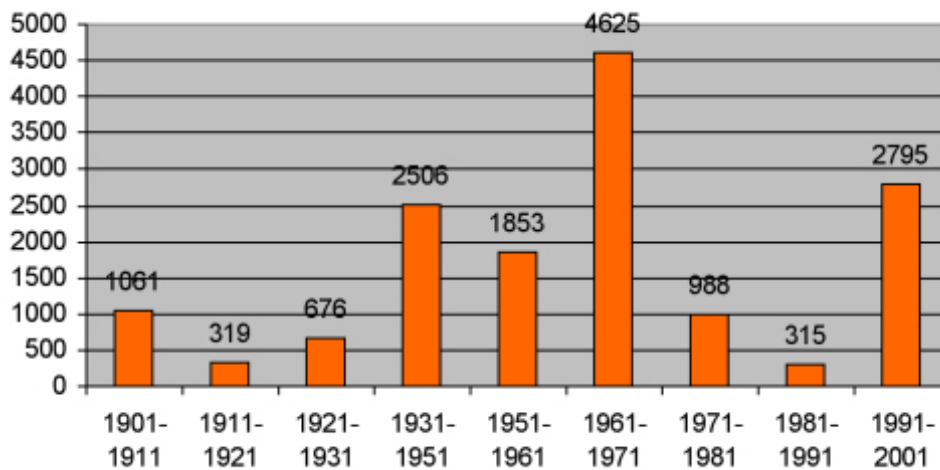
This chapter includes questions 30, 31 and 32.

## 6.2 A Portrait of Hertford

**6.2.1** This portrait aims to capture the key characteristics of Hertford today. It is derived from an assessment of the various aspects of the evidence base and is a factual statement of its attributes. The portrait seeks to capture what makes Hertford unique, while the following section discusses the key planning issues facing the town.



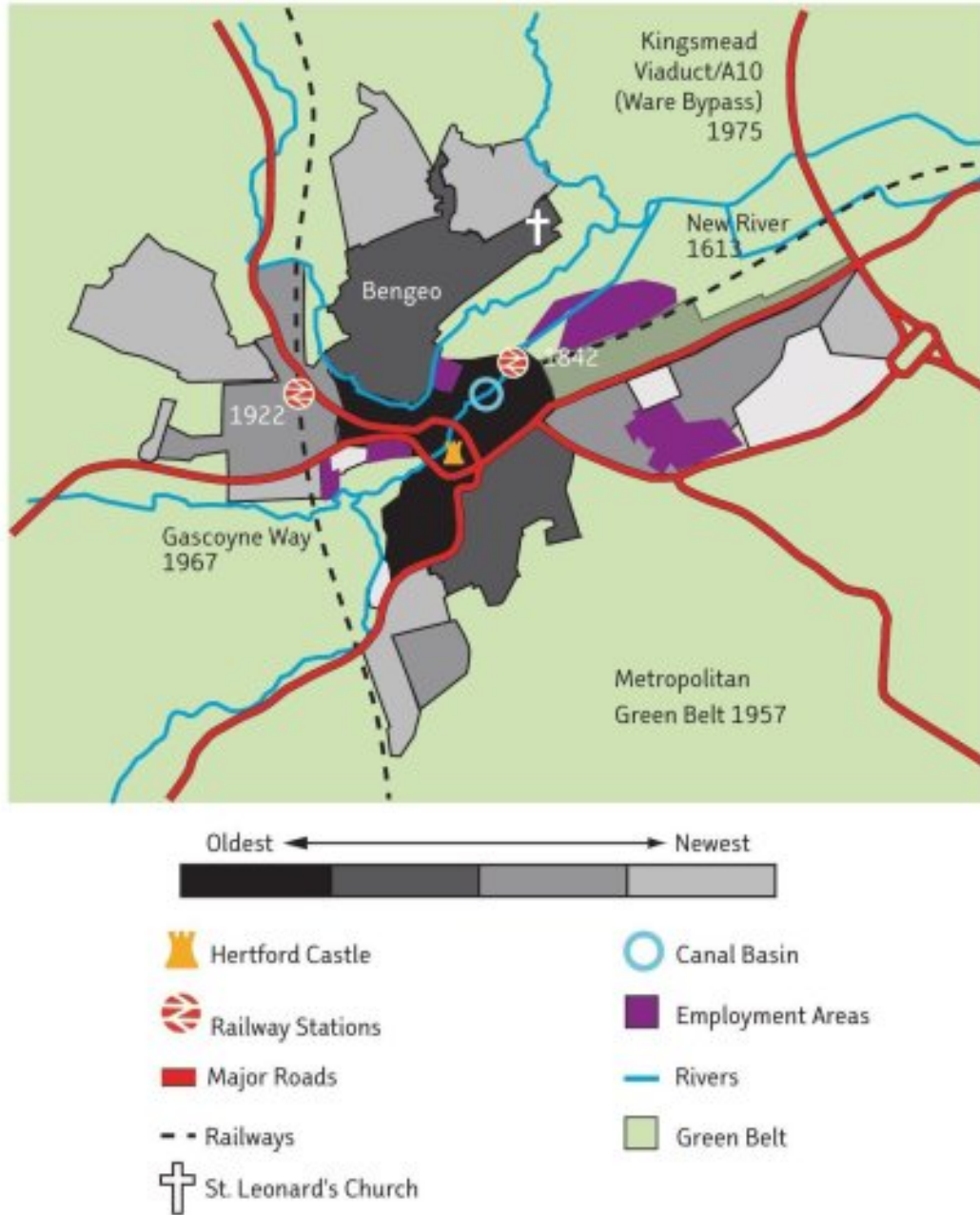
Figure 6.1 Population Growth in Hertford (1901-2001)



Source: Office for National Statistics

- 6.2.2** Figure 6.1, shows the growth in population during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, which increased from 9,322 in 1901 to 24,460 by 2001. While development has been a continuous process in Hertford, two main decades of growth occurred during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Firstly, in the 1960s with the significant construction of homes in the Sele Farm, Mandeville Road, and Molewood areas, and secondly, in the 1990s with developments at Beane Road and Foxholes.
- 6.2.3** Figure 6.2 looks back further and demonstrates in basic form how Hertford has gradually evolved over time from the first evidence of settlement in the area in Saxon times (when two defensive positions against the Danes were constructed to the north and south of the River Lea), to the present day. In reaching its current form the confluence of the four rivers Beane, Lea, Mimram and Rib, has significantly influenced the town's historical growth pattern. Road infrastructure and introduction of the two railway lines have also had major impacts on the development of the town.
- 6.2.4** Figure 6.3 below, provides examples of housing developments in Hertford, which are of differing ages and density levels. Other examples are also shown in the other settlement chapters.

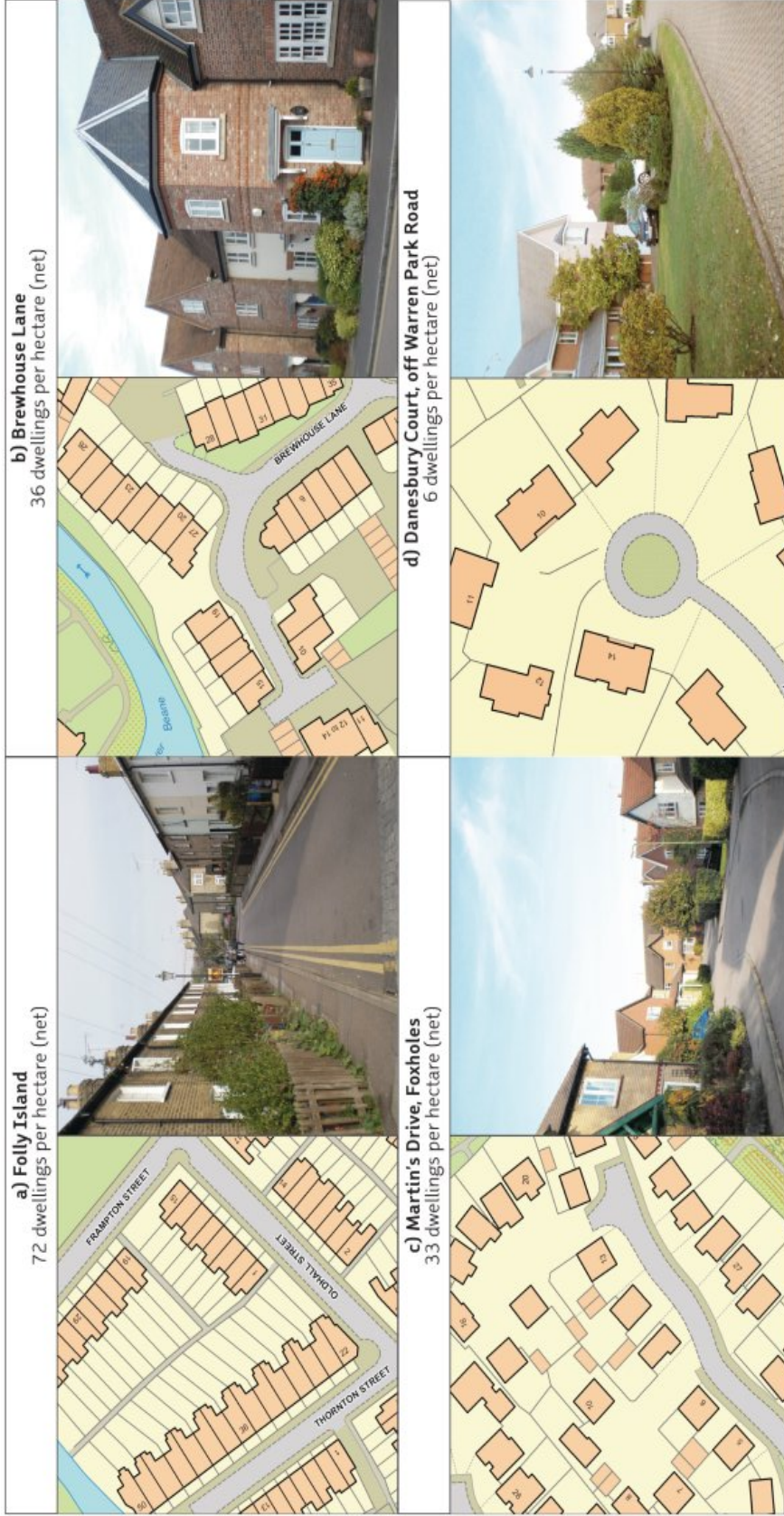
Figure 6.2 Historical Development of Hertford



Source: East Herts Council

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Figure 6.3 Examples of Housing Development in Hertford



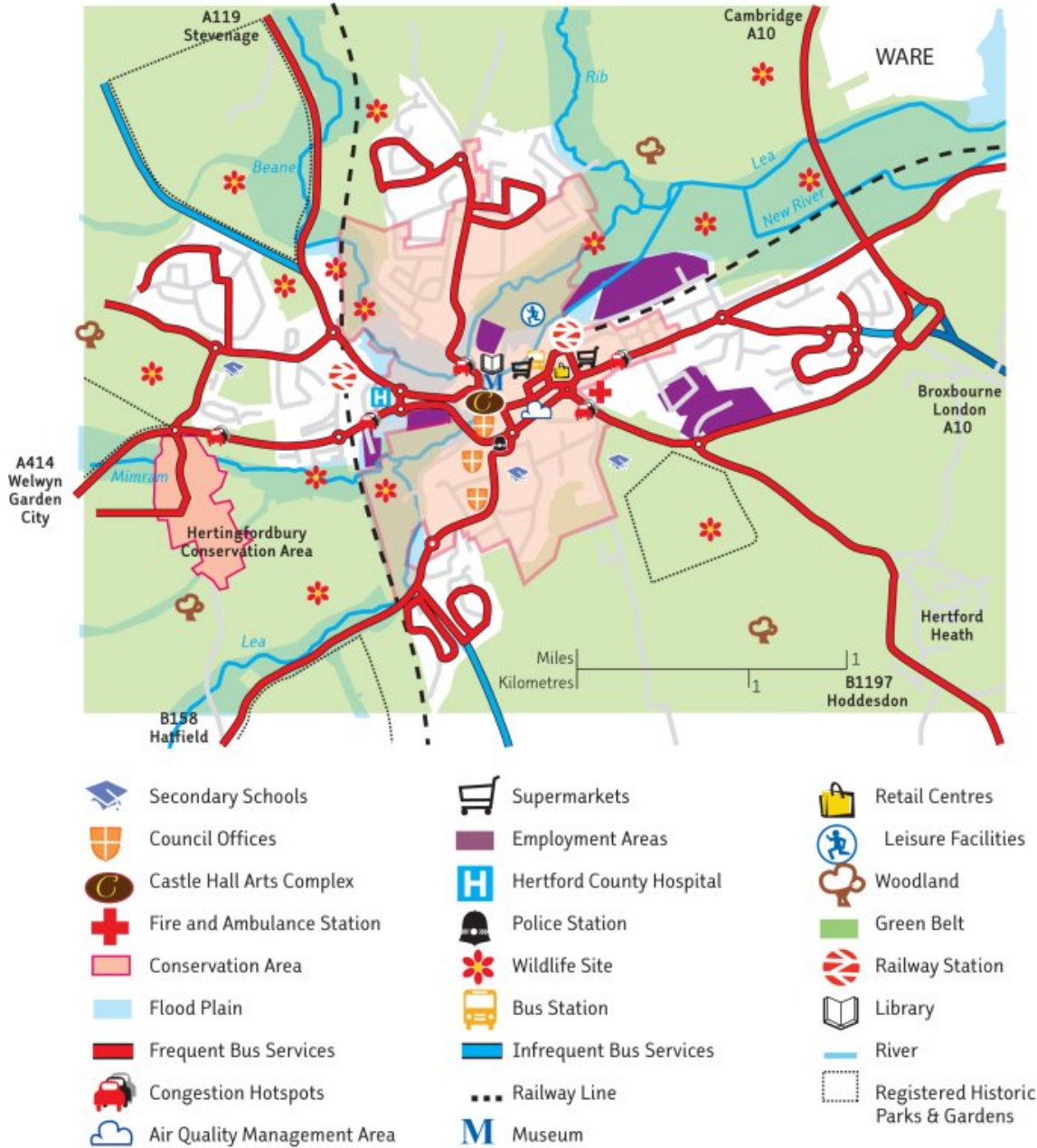
Source: East Herts Council

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- 6.2.5** Situated in the south-west of the district, the County town of Hertford lies in a wide river valley in close proximity to its neighbouring town of Ware, from which it is only separated by The Meads and the A10 viaduct. The villages of Chapmore End, to the north, Hertingfordbury, to the south-west, and Hertford Heath to the south-east are also located close by. The confluence of the River Lea with the three other Rivers Beane, Mimram and Rib has had a marked past impact in influencing its evolution as a thriving centre, particularly in respect of the brewing and printing industries. The rivers continue to have an important effect in presenting both opportunities and constraints in shaping the future development of the town.
- 6.2.6** Apart from its closeness to the four settlements above, Hertford is mostly surrounded by open countryside, and its boundaries are characterised by areas of open land which penetrate towards the centre of the town, mainly along the lines of the rivers. These 'Green Fingers' are an environmental asset of value to local people and visitors alike. However, its low-lying areas have the potential for flooding.
- 6.2.7** Hertford has an extensive Conservation Area, which covers a large proportion of the town and includes areas with varying characteristics. The town centre itself retains much of its medieval core, including many listed buildings of historic significance, and has high townscape quality. This presents an attractive environment for leisure and business purposes, with its retail offer characterised by both major multiples and independent outlets. It has a chartered market which operates weekly on Saturdays.
- 6.2.8** The town boasts good transport connections, including a bus station which provides access to both local and long-distance destinations, and two railway stations, which offer services into London via Liverpool Street and Kings Cross/Moorgate. Hertford's close proximity to the A1, M25 and M11 enable good regional transport links; however, the corollary of this is that the town suffers from peak time congestion in both the town centre and along the A414, which bisects the town. This congestion causes air pollution and an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) is shortly to be declared in the Gascoyne Way area.
- 6.2.9** Hertford's healthcare provision includes an Urgent Care Centre situated within the Hertford County Hospital.
- 6.2.10** The town also benefits from numerous cultural and recreational facilities, some of which include: its Museum; Hertford Castle and grounds; Castle Hall; and the various facilities such as the Leisure Centre, tennis courts and skate park at Hartham Common. However, the town currently lacks a permanent cinema.
- 6.2.11** The map at Figure 6.4 sets the context of Hertford and identifies its main facilities.



Figure 6.4 Context of Hertford



Source: East Herts Council

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## 6.3 Hertford: Key Issues

- 6.3.1** This section looks at some of the key planning issues facing Hertford. It is organised under a series of nine themes, which are used throughout this Issues and Options document to provide consistency and structure.
- 6.3.2** Many of the issues that relate to Hertford apply equally to other parts of East Herts. To avoid repetition, these generic district-wide issues have been dealt with under the relevant theme in Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision. The following sections set out those particular issues that apply specifically to Hertford. We therefore suggest that you read this section in conjunction with Chapter 2. For information, the specific policy context, the relevant sources from the evidence base and the linkages to the SCS for each theme are set out in Sections F to O of the Supporting Document.

### Theme 1: Hertford Energy and Climate Change

- 6.3.3** As identified in Figure 6.6 below, 62% of all daily journeys to work within the town are made by car which generates a large amount of greenhouse gas emissions. Changes proposed as part of the Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan could help address this and other local pollution and air quality issues. Future development opportunities may offer the potential for widening the benefits of community energy schemes such as district heating and Combined Heat and Power. It may also be possible for public buildings such as Council offices, Castle Hall (soon to be re-branded as Hertford Theatre), and Hartham Common Leisure Centre, to act as anchor points for such schemes.
- 6.3.4** In terms of climate change adaptation, Hertford is noteworthy as being located at the confluence of four rivers, and this poses considerable risk to the town, which should be addressed by new development. Although some past public realm improvements to the town centre have included tree planting, which provides additional shade and reduces the urban heat island effect, additional provision could be of benefit to the local area.

### Theme 2: Hertford People and Community Safety

- 6.3.5** Hertford has a vibrant community with many voluntary groups, local societies and organisations offering opportunity for social interaction. It is home to a Museum, Library, Job Centre Plus and a Citizens' Advice Bureau, all of which are valuable social assets to the town, in addition to its leisure offer described below.
- 6.3.6** Compared against national statistics, crime levels are low in Hertford and people can generally expect to feel safe in the area. However, in common with many other towns, there are a few places where limited incidences of crime and anti-social behaviour are reported on occasion, such as night time activity on Hartham Common.

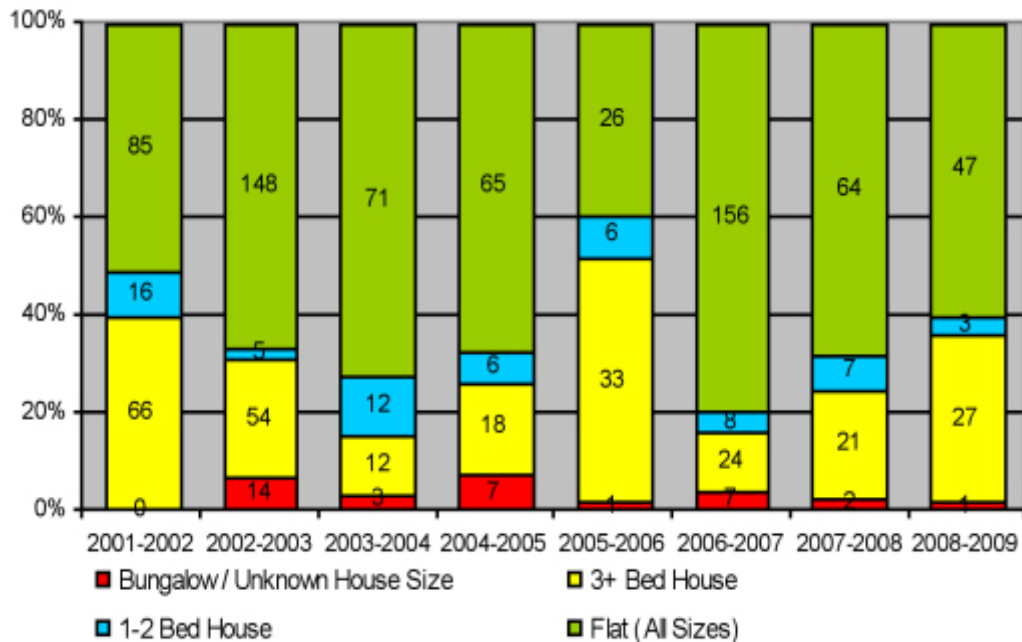
- 6.3.7** Some areas of the town were constructed during periods in the past which limited their occupancy to a particular tenure (social or market). This is no longer current practice, as more socially inclusive developments are encouraged. Some of the district's socially segregated developments of the past have had experience of higher crime rates than average for the area. However, measures can be employed to aid the regeneration of these developments. Of particular note in Hertford is the Sele Farm estate where significant levels of social deprivation are apparent. Investment in renovation projects coupled with community initiatives have led to improvements in this area.
- 6.3.8** Hertford benefits from a recently opened part-time Police Station which relocated from the former Hertford and Ware Police Station, at an edge of centre site in Ware Road, to a more central location in Hale Road (together with an additional part-time station in Ware). This allows a greater visible Police presence in the area. The town is also home to both Magistrates' and County Courts.

### Theme 3: Housing Hertford

- 6.3.9** Housing in Hertford takes many varied forms, from medieval through to contemporary homes. Often located in areas of distinctive character, e.g. the Victorian homes of Lower Bengo, the various housing types provide choice to residents and serve different housing markets.
- 6.3.10** Much of the post-war housing in Hertford has been provided in greenfield locations on the edge of the settlement. However, over the last decade the regeneration of brownfield sites located more centrally in the town has resulted in much of the recent development being achieved on more sustainable sites. In part this was made possible by the decision of some operators to cease their presence in Hertford, e.g. the Addis site (now Newland Gardens) where over 200 homes were provided on an edge of centre former factory location.
- 6.3.11** From Figure 6.5 below it can be seen that much of the recent development in Hertford has consisted of flats with very little provision of one or two bedroom houses.



Figure 6.5 Gross Housing Completions by Type in Hertford (2001 - 2009)



Source: Hertfordshire County Council

**6.3.12** In order to maintain a balanced housing mix, the emphasis may need to shift away from encouraging flatted development towards the promotion of homes more suited to family occupation. This could imply the need to utilise greenfield land, where the location may be more suitable for family housing than constrained town centre sites. However, it should be noted that, given the large amount of recent town centre brownfield regeneration, this may be the case in any event as (with the exception of the Mead Lane area) future central urban site availability is likely to be less abundant in coming years.

#### Theme 4: Hertford's Character

**6.3.13** Hertford's geographical and historical setting at the confluence of four rivers has shaped this market town and led to its unusual character and unique development pattern.

**6.3.14** Hertford retains 'green fingers' of countryside which penetrate into the very centre of the town at five different points. One of the town's main charms is this attractive relationship between town and country. The sharply rising ground to the north and south of the town provide further interest to the townscape.

**6.3.15** Hertford's evolution has been such that it includes areas with very different characteristics in terms of age and pattern of built form, which are representative of all periods of architecture from medieval times to the present. The town centre itself is the most historic part of Hertford and benefits from

many listed buildings, including the prominent Shire Hall (Grade I listed) which is said to be the inspiration for the Assembly Rooms at Meryton in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Hertford benefits from a Castle, the occupation of which has been continuous since the first Motte and Bailey structure was erected during Norman times as a fortification to protect London from incursions from the north. The site of the Castle, of which only the 15<sup>th</sup> Century Gatehouse, ancient walls and site of the original motte remain, is a Scheduled Monument.

- 6.3.16** The town centre is not solely limited to historic buildings and newer erections have been assimilated into the townscape with varying success. The Bircherley Green Shopping Centre is the largest of these developments and also incorporates the town's bus station.
- 6.3.17** Outside of Hertford's centre, other parts of the town are of differing ages and architectural styles, with most of the residential developments on the outer limits being of 20<sup>th</sup> Century construction. Latterly, the focus has been directed towards achieving residential provision in more central locations to limit urban expansion.
- 6.3.18** One of the consequences of attempting to balance the need for new housing with constraint on the outward expansion of the town has been recent examples of development at higher densities on previously developed or 'brownfield' land. Examples of this include The Waterfront and The Meads developments in the Mead Lane area. However, density can have many different forms and high density does not necessarily mean flatted development, as the example above of Folly Island demonstrates (Figure 6.3).

#### **Theme 5: Hertford Economy, Skills and Prosperity**

- 6.3.19** Hertford has the highest proportion of the district's employment land (26%) reflecting its history as the principle centre in East Herts. Of the 32 hectares of employment land in Hertford there is a balanced mix between B1 (offices, research and development, light industry), B2 (general industrial) and B8 (warehousing and storage) uses. Employment provision within Hertford is of a varied nature, from small-scale independent concerns to the largest single employer, Hertfordshire County Council at County Hall. Other employers in the Pegs Lane area include East Herts Council and the Police and, because of their proximity to the town centre, the employees of these three operations are able to make a direct contribution to the town's economy.
- 6.3.20** The Mead Lane area and Foxholes Business Park are the two largest clusters of employment land in Hertford. The majority of employment sites in Hertford are of average or above average quality, but many sites have lower than average and poor accessibility, reflecting the limitations of the road network in the historic town. Evidence suggests that there is a greater concentration of vacant units in Hertford than elsewhere in the district.

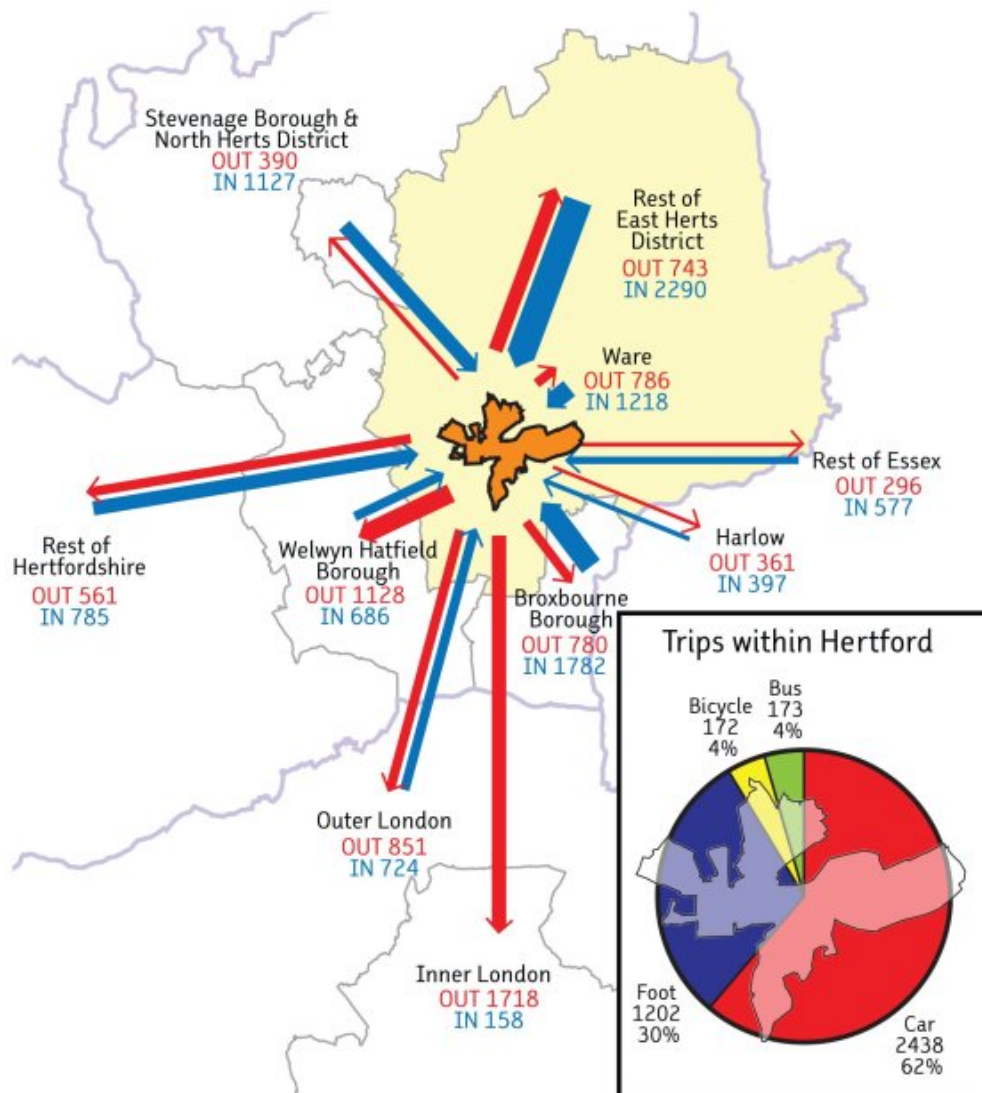
- 6.3.21** The East of England Plan stipulates a general need for the provision of additional employment facilities within the district over the Plan period. However, to ensure that sustainable communities are created, any decision on the location of future employment development would be much dependent on the ultimate choices made over dwelling distribution. It has been documented that loss of employment land from any settlement would require replacement, either at an alternative location in that settlement or elsewhere in the district.
- 6.3.22** In terms of its retail offer, Hertford town centre provides a good range of local services, convenience and comparison stores, and is well provided for in terms of DIY goods in the nearby Madford Retail Park in Ware Road.
- 6.3.23** The majority of convenience expenditure is currently spent in the Tesco in Ware Road. However, planning permission has recently been granted for a Sainsbury's store on a surplus part of the McMullen's Brewery site at the opposite side of the town in Hartham Lane. This will provide a greater choice for shoppers in and around Hertford and enable the restoration and conversion of the Grade II listed Victorian Brewery building. The town also benefits from a regular Saturday chartered market as well as a popular monthly farmers' market, which supports local producers and attracts visitors from further afield.
- 6.3.24** Hertford has a thriving night-time economy, with numerous bars and restaurants as well as the entertainment offer at Castle Hall and the Corn Exchange. Perceptions of the quality of Hertford town centre are very good; however, the potential for growth or change in Hertford's retail offer is limited by its compact street layout leading to relatively poor accessibility and parking. As a result, Hertford suffers competition from the enhanced retail facilities available at nearby Welwyn Garden City, Harlow and the Brookfield Centre in Cheshunt.
- 6.3.25** Hertford has a high standard of educational achievement and its schools cover pre-school to secondary level. However, the town is currently under-resourced in primary provision, where a need has been identified for a two form entry school in the central area which would require a site of approximately 2.5ha. This need is likely to prove challenging to meet given the constraints of the urban area.

### Theme 6: Hertford On the Move

- 6.3.26** Transportation has had a major effect on the development of the town. Firstly, through road and river transport and later through the introduction of two separate railway lines serving Hertford East and North stations. Hertford is located in relatively close proximity to the A1M, M25 and M11 which increases its connectivity to the wider road network and with it, travel options. A bus station offers the ability for passengers to access wide reaching destinations.

The compact nature of the town means that it is possible for an able-bodied person to walk from the perimeter of the built-up area to the town centre. Car parking is available at several town centre locations.

Figure 6.6 Daily trips to and from Hertford



Source: 2001 Census and East Herts Council

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**6.3.27** However, traffic congestion in Hertford is acute at peak times, both within the historic core and especially on the A414, Gascoyne Way, which bi-sects the town. Figure 6.6, above, shows the main daily work-related flows in and out of Hertford, which partially explains the congestion problems. However, as the A414 is a main east-west link, a major contributor to congestion issues in this area is the amount of through traffic using the limited road space to access other destinations. This is especially apparent if problems are

experienced on the M25 when the A414 is utilised as an alternative route. It is a concern that the congestion issue, coupled with the enhanced retail facilities other nearby towns have to offer, could pose a threat for the town's future vitality.

- 6.3.28** Furthermore, in addition to the congestion issues, there are other matters that affect movement in the town. Because the town's central development pattern mainly evolved prior to the introduction of motorised transport, the limited availability of space has led to difficulties in reconciling the conflicting needs of road users and pedestrians. Partial pedestrianisation and traffic management schemes have ameliorated the situation to some extent, but more could be achieved in this area.
- 6.3.29** Likewise, provision for cyclists is inconsistent, with some areas of the town having better routes and facilities than others, where provision can be non-existent. The town does, however, benefit from being part of the National Cycle Network where Route 61 links the Cole Green Way with the towpath between Hertford and Ware.
- 6.3.30** All of the above issues are being taken into account in the emerging **Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan**. Hertfordshire County Council and East Herts Council are working together with consultants WSP to produce a Plan that examines transport problems within and between the two towns and suggests ways in which transport systems could be improved to help meet the future needs. The document, which is expected to be finalised late 2010, will contain a programme of measures to help tackle the issues raised in the period up to 2021 and will largely focus on schemes aimed at persuading people to make greener travel choices.

Information on the Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan can be found on the HCC website at [www.tinyurls.co.uk/V8318](http://www.tinyurls.co.uk/V8318)

### Theme 7: Hertford Health, Wellbeing and Play

- 6.3.31** Hertford has numerous GPs and dentists surgeries within the town and further benefits from facilities at the modern Hertford County Hospital in North Road, which includes an Urgent Care Centre.
- 6.3.32** Hertford has many leisure and cultural facilities. Hartham is a key location in this respect, where a leisure centre including gym and swimming facilities sits alongside Hartham Common, with its playing pitches, tennis courts, putting, skatepark, and children's play area. These facilities are provided within an open setting that offers further informal recreational use. Other open spaces are provided and of particular note are the areas that make up the 'green fingers' that penetrate the town, many of which are used for recreational

purposes. The towpath, which runs alongside the River Lea through the Meads between Hertford and Ware, offers walking and cycling opportunities. A number of allotment sites are also provided in various locations around the town.

- 6.3.33** More centrally located in the town are the facilities provided at Castle Hall (soon to be re-branded as Hertford Theatre), the Corn Exchange and the Museum. However, the town currently lacks a permanent cinema. Hertford Castle is not only home to the Town Council offices, but also offers access to its grounds and holds civil ceremonies including weddings. There are many fine churches within the town (the earliest being St Leonard's in Bengoe, a Grade I listed Building dating from 1120) and other meeting places serving various denominations, including the oldest Quaker Meeting House in the world that is still in use today. In addition to the various burial grounds associated with the more historic churches, a cemetery is located in North Road.

#### **Theme 8: Green Hertford**

- 6.3.34** While Hertford is generally a pleasant and healthy place to live, the traffic congestion issue on Gascoyne Way is a cause for concern in terms of vehicle emissions. East Herts Council is proposing the declaration of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and measures should be sought to tackle the polluting effects in this area.
- 6.3.35** While Hertford's development has historically centred around the confluence of the four rivers and much of its past economy has been dependent on water-sourced industries, this also leaves the town exposed to flooding potential. This is likely to continue to be an issue, particularly in the more vulnerable areas and the impacts of future development proposals must be assessed against this risk.
- 6.3.36** Although flooding risk may be problematic in terms of human activity, for wildlife the fluctuating water levels can be beneficial. This is especially true in the Meads area between Hertford and Ware, where a wide diversity of flora and fauna is apparent. This area also forms one of the five 'green fingers' that penetrate the town and act as green lungs in the urban context, while providing valuable recreational use.
- 6.3.37** Hertford lies within the catchment of Rye Meads Sewage Treatment Works. There are known issues about the future capacity of Rye Meads, particularly in light of any potential development to the north of Harlow.

#### **Theme 9: Hertford Monitoring and Delivery**

- 6.3.38** The final adopted Core Strategy will be accompanied by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan which will set out what infrastructure is needed, how much it will cost, who will pay for it and a broad outline of the phasing of delivery.



**6.3.39** Any large-scale development in Hertford that is not achieved in a sustainable town centre location will undoubtedly exacerbate existing traffic congestion and put increased strain on town centre services and facilities. The emerging Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan (UTP) contains a package of measures aimed at reducing congestion levels through smarter travel choices. While the effects of these UTP schemes will be annually monitored by the County Council as Highway Authority, air quality management issues are monitored by East Herts Council.

### 6.4 Current Planning Context

**6.4.1** The current planning context for East Herts is set out in the Local Plan 2007, which identifies Hertford as one of six Main Settlements within East Herts. Under this Plan the majority of development is directed to the four largest towns of Bishop's Stortford, Hertford, Sawbridgeworth and Ware, while Buntingford and the settlement of Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets also receive some development.

**6.4.2** Under the Local Plan 2007, each of the six Main Settlements received a proportional share of the district-wide housing requirement, with an additional allowance diverted from the rural area. The Local Plan 2007 seeks to accommodate as much of this requirement as possible on brownfield land. Where this was not possible within specific settlements, greenfield sites were identified and allocated for housing development.

**6.4.3** However, it should be noted that in addition to the identification of allocated sites, a number of unallocated sites will also come forward for development. In these circumstances, each proposal is judged on a case-by-case basis against the policies in the Local Plan 2007, having regard to the East of England Plan and national planning policy.

**6.4.4** As set out in Table 3.1 (Chapter 3, Section 3.2), 985 homes were built in Hertford during the period 2001 to 2009. A further 560 homes have planning permission but are still to be built. As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009, the following allocated housing sites representing at least 79 homes were still to come forward for development in Hertford.

#### Riverside Yards

**6.4.5** The majority of the **Riverside Yards** site is now either complete or under construction, with residential forming a key use in the area. Development also includes the construction of a new library as part of the mixed use development and increased public riverside access. Only the Adam's Yard site remains to be developed. Proposals for this location have been submitted and it is anticipated that the completion of the redevelopment of this important area will occur in due course.



The Riverside Yards Planning Brief, January 1998, provided a planning framework for the regeneration and revitalisation of this area in the core of Hertford and is available to view online at: [www.eastherts.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/localplan).

Policy HE7 supports the principle of redevelopment for retail, residential and community purposes.

### Land off Sacombe Road

- 6.4.6** This area of agricultural land sited between Bengoe Primary School and a recreation area to the north of Bengoe, is identified as **Reserve Housing Land** under Policy HE2 of the Local Plan 2007. The policy estimates that approximately 70 homes may be provided on this site, with a requirement that 40% of all homes would consist of affordable housing. In 2008 East Herts Council agreed that Reserve Housing Land should be brought forward for development and it is therefore likely that the site at Sacombe Road will be developed in due course.

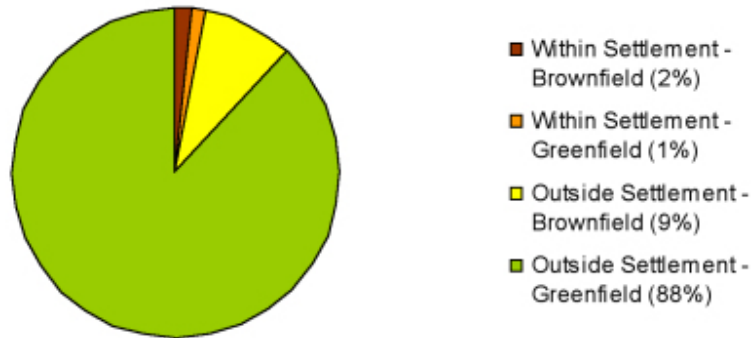
In 2008 the Council agreed to bring forward its Reserve Housing Land sites together with the Bishop's Stortford Areas of Special Restraint (ASRs) and the Special Countryside Area in order to maintain a five year supply of housing land.

The report to the LDF Executive Panel on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2008 (Item 7) is available on the Council's website at <http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=2842>

## 6.5 Hertford: Future Growth Options

- 6.5.1** Before deciding which future district-wide development strategy to adopt to 2031 and how we distribute growth to each identified settlement (Chapter 3), we need to understand how development could be accommodated in and around Hertford itself.
- 6.5.2** In terms of the availability of land, 99.1 hectares have been suggested for housing and associated uses through the Call for Sites, in and around Hertford. This equates to approximately 1,982 homes.
- 6.5.3** Figure 6.7 shows that there is currently only limited capacity within the existing urban area of Hertford to accommodate further development. Therefore, whichever development strategy option is adopted, it is highly likely that Hertford will need to accommodate significant greenfield development beyond the current edge of the settlement.

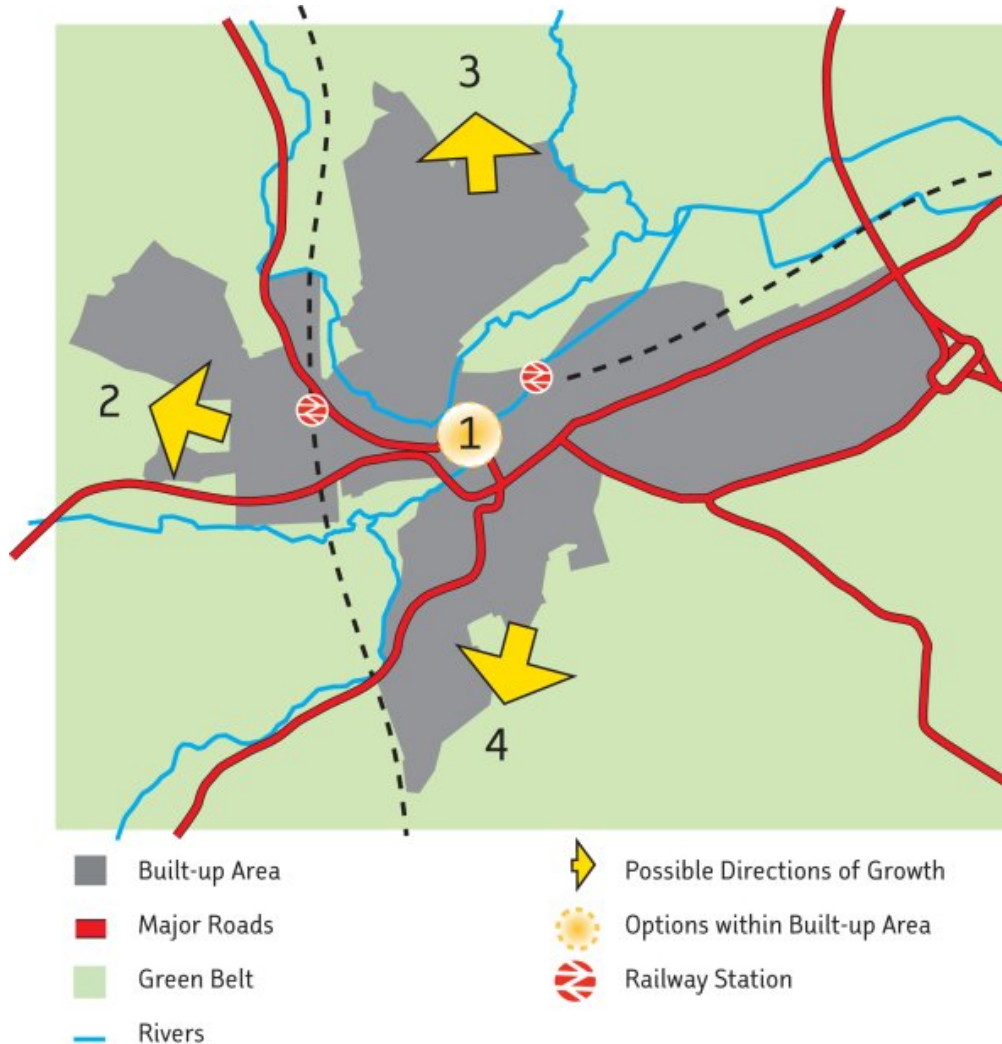
Figure 6.7 Land availability at Hertford



Source: East Herts Council

- 6.5.4** To accommodate growth in and around Hertford, four potential growth options have been identified. These are shown in Figure 6.8 and considered in more detail below.
- 6.5.5** The purpose of these options is not to identify specific sites (which will be identified in subsequent LDF documents) but rather to flag up potential issues, such as infrastructure constraints that may shape how Hertford grows to 2031. Please note that these options are not mutually exclusive and that growth may occur in more than one direction, subject to the development strategy and distribution strategy we adopt (see Chapter 3, Sections 3.7 to 3.15).
- 6.5.6** As set out in Chapter 3, Section 3.2, the growth options presented in Figure 6.8 seek to deal with Hertford’s share of the approximate ‘to-find’ figure of 8,500 homes and are therefore, in addition to the development of any remaining Local Plan allocations. As such, these sites have not been shown.
- 6.5.7** It should also be noted that it is not too late for further options arising from this consultation to be considered.

Figure 6.8 Growth Options for Hertford to 2031 (indicative only)



Source: East Herts Council

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**6.5.8** A summary of the issues for the four growth options for Hertford are as follows:

#### Option 1: Within the Existing Built-up Area

- Good accessibility / close to existing services and facilities
- Brownfield land
- Increased congestion
- Limited land available for development (Call for Sites)
- Substantial land-costs (potential contamination and viability issues)
- Potential flooding issues
- Reduces potential expansion of the town beyond its boundaries

## Option 2: To the West

- Greenfield land – currently mainly agricultural
- Land available for development (Call for Sites)
- Potential effect on sensitive wildlife sites and ancient woodland
- Potential impact on Registered Garden
- Possibly visible from much wider area
- Would require a Green Belt Review

## Option 3: To the North

- Greenfield land
- Limited land available for development (Call for Sites)
- Possibly visible from much wider area
- Route into town centre suffers existing congestion at peak times
- Would require a Green Belt Review

## Option 4: To the South

- Greenfield land
- Within a 'Green Finger'
- Land available for development (Call for Sites)
- Potential impact on Registered Garden
- Difficult to access town centre by sustainable modes due to road/route limitations
- Close to existing secondary school
- Would require a Green Belt Review

### Question 30

Growth Options for Hertford

Please rank the growth options for Hertford in order of preference, and comment on their suitability.

Are there any other options we have not considered?

- 6.5.9** As explained in Chapter 3, Section 3.3, the amount of land that would be required for new development (the land-take) will vary depending on the density at which homes are built. For example, using the illustrations in Figure 6.3 (Section 6.2), Figure 6.9 shows that new development built at the density of A: Folly Island (72dph), 100 homes would require 1.4 hectares, whereas at the density of D: Danesbury Court, off Warren Park Road, Bengeo (6dph), 17 hectares would be required. Density therefore has clear implications for

the amount of land required and the future shape of Hertford, but this clearly needs to be judged in the context of overall design quality. Density and design quality are two of the chief determinants of character in the built environment.

Figure 6.9 Illustration of Land-Take at Different Densities (illustrative only - not to scale)



Source: East Herts Council

**6.5.10** As can be seen from Figure 6.3 above and the examples shown in the other settlement chapters, there are a variety of development designs and densities. There are many fine examples of higher density developments around the district, such as Victorian terraces and three and four storey Edwardian town-houses, which are now valued for their historic interest and contribution to quality of place.

**6.5.11** Whilst the specific characteristics of a site will determine the actual density at which a development is built, understanding the approach to the development and the relationship between density and land-take in a particular town is important.

**6.5.12** Theoretically, there are three general approaches to development in Hertford:

1. Lower density - therefore higher land-take
2. Medium density - therefore medium land-take
3. Higher density - therefore lower land-take

### Question 31

Approach to Development in Hertford

Please rank the approaches to development in Hertford in order of preference.

Is there another approach we have not considered?

## 6.6 Hertford: Emerging LDF Vision

- 6.6.1** As discussed in Chapter 2, it will not be possible to finalise a LDF vision for any town in the district until the development strategy is decided, since the amount and location of new development to be accommodated will have considerable implications for the size, shape and character of the town.
- 6.6.2** However, given the wealth of information gained from people interacting in the Awareness Raising process, it is possible to produce a first tentative vision based on an analysis of the evidence including the results of community and stakeholder engagement and various strategies and studies.
- 6.6.3** This vision for Hertford will be subject to further refinement and will be greater informed when our preferred option for the development strategy and our preferred approach for the distribution strategy (see Chapter 3) are agreed, as these strategies will determine the amount of growth Hertford will receive to 2031.
- 6.6.4** Hertford Town Council is also in the process of developing the [Hertford Town Plan](#), although this is currently at an early stage of preparation. When finalised, the Town Plan and accompanying Action Plan, will represent a valuable source of information for the Core Strategy and will inform the emerging LDF vision for Hertford.

The Hertford Town Plan is currently being prepared by Hertford Town Council. Its purpose is to enable the Town Council to identify areas which require development or resources in order to meet the town's needs.

More information can be found on the town council's website at: [www.tinyurls.co.uk/Z8316](http://www.tinyurls.co.uk/Z8316)

- 6.6.5** It should be noted, however, that the LDF vision for Hertford will be different in scope from any other vision for the town e.g. the Town Plan. This is because the LDF Core Strategy:
- forms part of the legal planning framework for East Herts;
  - is a high-level strategic document that covers the whole district, and therefore will not encompass the same level of detail as the town plan;
  - can only address matters within the scope of the LDF;
  - will set the context for subsequent LDF documents and other policy documents such as town centre strategies or site-specific development briefs.
- 6.6.6** Clearly, any LDF vision for Hertford will also be informed to a large degree by potential growth scenarios for the town to 2031, albeit the exact levels of growth will not be known until the development strategy is decided.

**6.6.7** Our emerging LDF vision for Hertford is as follows:

*The County town of Hertford will retain its unique character and continue to meet the day-to-day needs of its residents and those living in the rural hinterland in the south of the district. Its town centre will continue as a thriving retail and employment base, with an improved range of services and facilities that will attract an increasing number of visitors. High educational attainment will continue and suitably sited primary and secondary schools will enable all of Hertford's children to be educated within appropriate catchment areas. Hertford's sense of community will persist and opportunities for social interaction will increase.*

*New residential developments will successfully integrate into the existing townscape, be socially inclusive, contribute towards residents feeling safe living in Hertford, and be adaptable to changing lifestyle needs. The individual identity of the town will be retained and coalescence with Ware, Chapmore End, Hertingfordbury and Hertford Heath will be avoided. The Mead Lane area will be regenerated with improved access arrangements and high quality development including riverside enhancement. Continued protection and enhancement of the town's rivers, 'green fingers' and open spaces, together with the preservation of existing trees and new landscaping within the town, will help Hertford adapt to climate change.*

*With a greater range and availability of sustainable travel options, more people will find it easier to move around the town and be inclined to choose greener travel modes. This will aid a reduction in congestion, improved air quality for the town and healthier residents. Hertford's improved leisure offer will include a cinema.*

**Question 32**

Hertford Vision

Do you agree with the emerging LDF Vision for Hertford?





# Chapter 7

## Sawbridgeworth

## 7.1 Purpose of the Sawbridgeworth Chapter

**7.1.1** This chapter deals with issues and options in respect of Sawbridgeworth. In order to understand the wider context it should be read alongside Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision and Chapter 3: Development Strategy. It includes sections on the following:

- A portrait of Sawbridgeworth setting out how the town has evolved and its main characteristics (Section 7.2);
- The key issues facing Sawbridgeworth arranged by theme (Section 7.3);
- The current planning context for Sawbridgeworth as set out in the Local Plan 2007 (Section 7.4);
- A series of options for the growth of Sawbridgeworth to 2031, including the availability of land and the approach to development (Section 7.5); and
- An emerging LDF vision for Sawbridgeworth to 2031 (Section 7.6)

**7.1.2** The purpose of the Core Strategy is to establish the district-wide development strategy for East Herts. This will set out how much development each identified settlement will receive to 2031. The Core Strategy does not deal with detailed planning issues such as design and amenity. These issues, along with the identification of specific sites, will be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents.

**7.1.3** To inform the development strategy we are seeking your views in respect of the following two aspects: firstly, regarding future development options for Sawbridgeworth, and secondly, regarding an emerging LDF vision for the town.

This chapter includes questions 33, 34 and 35.

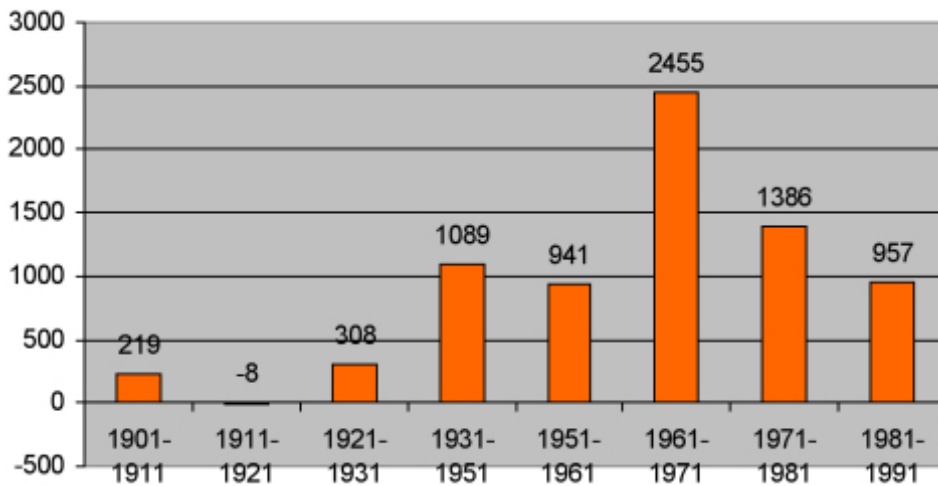
## 7.2 A Portrait of Sawbridgeworth

**7.2.1** This portrait aims to capture the key characteristics of Sawbridgeworth today. It is derived from an assessment of the various aspects of the evidence base and is a factual statement of its attributes. The portrait seeks to capture what makes Sawbridgeworth unique, while the following section discusses the key planning issues facing the town.

**7.2.2** Although located in close proximity to Bishop's Stortford to the north and Harlow to the south, Sawbridgeworth's strong identity is protected by clear separation from either town. Sawbridgeworth is an historic market town lying to the west of the River Stort, which forms part of the County boundary with neighbouring Essex, dividing Sawbridgeworth and the village of Lower

Sheering. Although Lower Sheering lies within the administrative area of Epping Forest in Essex it functions very much as part of Sawbridgeworth and shares Sawbridgeworth Station.

Figure 7.1 Population Growth in Sawbridgeworth (1901-1991)

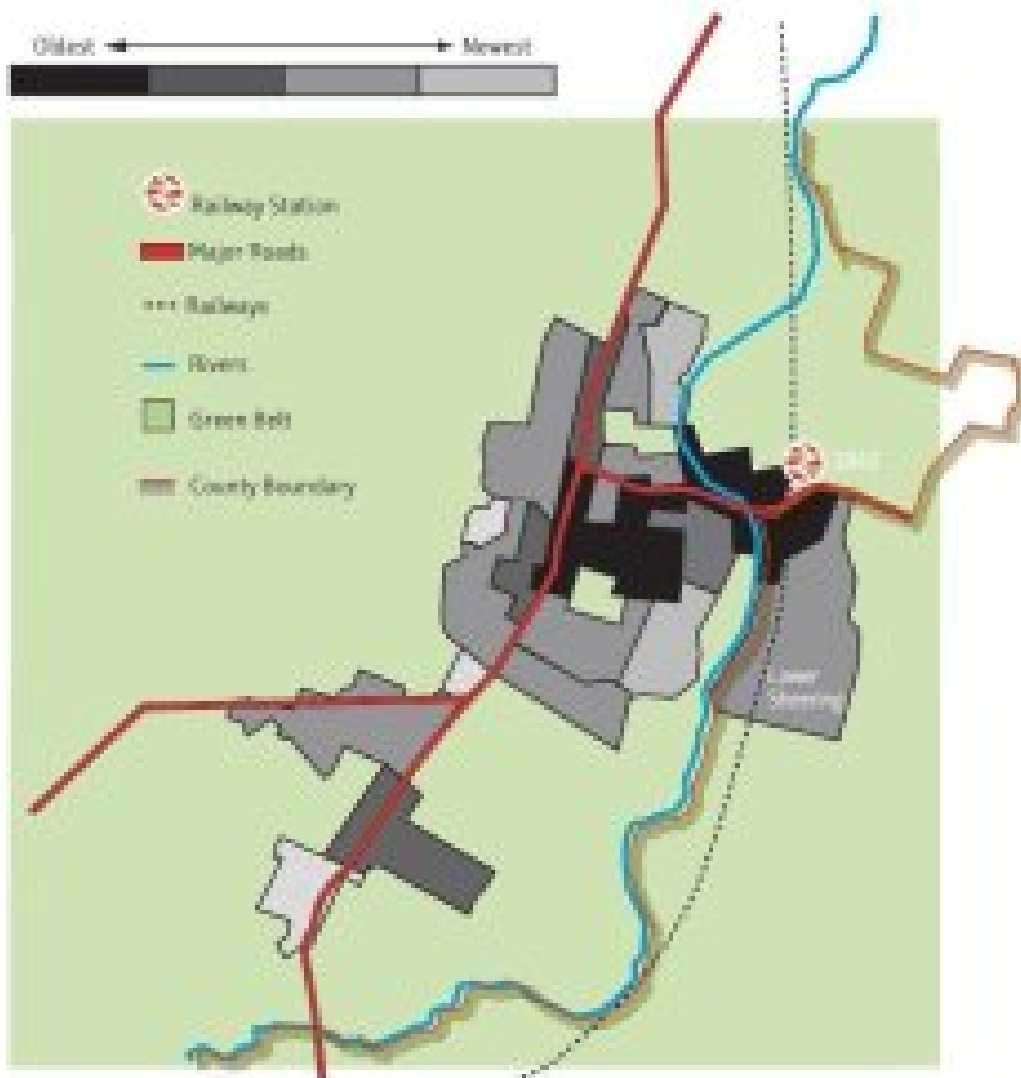


**7.2.3** Figure 7.1 shows that the population of the urban area in 1901 was 2,085 and had reached 9,432 by 1991, a growth of almost 4.5 times the population at the start of the century. The town grew rapidly in the 1960s with the building of new homes to house an influx of workers, mainly from London taking advantage of rail connections to Liverpool Street. The villages of Sheering and Lower Sheering, to the east of the river in Epping Forest district, also grew considerably during this time.

**7.2.4** The historic commercial core of the town is centred on Bell Street, which lies on an east-west axis running from the 13<sup>th</sup> Century church of St. Mary's to London Road, the old stage-coach route that runs north-south. Much of the town centre lies within a Conservation Area and many of the buildings are listed for their historic significance and date from the Tudor, Stuart and Georgian periods.

**7.2.5** As shown on Figure 7.2, the town has grown in stages. Initially, construction extended away from the historic core and spread along the main roads through the town (London Road, Sayesbury Road and Cambridge Road) before wrapping around Sawbridgeworth's historic core (Sayes Gardens and Church Walk to the east, Springhall Road to the south, Burnside, Gilders and Crofters to the west and Bullfields to the north). More recent residential developments have been constructed on the periphery of the built up area of the town. The railway line, the River Stort, wildlife sites and the Maltings industrial area have limited construction to the east of the town.

Figure 7.2 Historical Development of Sawbridgeworth



Source: East Herts Council

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Figure 7.3 Examples of Housing Development in Sawbridgeworth



Source: East Herts Council

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- 7.2.6** Figure 7.3 shows examples of housing development in Sawbridgeworth. As can be seen, there is a variety of styles and built-form reflecting changes to housing design and living requirements over the years. As a result, the density of these homes varies from 100 dwellings per hectare in Station Road to four dwellings per hectare in Pishiobury Drive. Other examples are shown in the other settlement chapters.
- 7.2.7** Historically a thriving agricultural town, its more recent prosperity came with the local malting works in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, which took advantage of the town's proximity to London via the River Stort. Many of the Maltings buildings have since been reused by small scale industrial units, mainly relating to antique trading, and by residential developments.
- 7.2.8** Both road and rail transport are major issues in Sawbridgeworth. Despite being on the West Anglia Main Line, owing to the size of the town and issues with route capacity, Sawbridgeworth has a limited train service. The town also suffers from significant congestion on the A1184 London Road and there are conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians in the historic town centre.
- 7.2.9** The range of services and facilities within Sawbridgeworth is limited, reflecting the small population and location between two larger towns. There is a small convenience supermarket and there are a number of independent retailers. There is dedicated employment land in Lower Sheering but not within Sawbridgeworth itself. There is one infant school, two primary schools and Leventhorpe Secondary school, which accepts some children from beyond Sawbridgeworth. There are also primary schools in nearby High Wych and Spellbrook. There is no cinema, theatre, museum or art gallery, but there is a community centre and a library. Sporting facilities are provided through the Leventhorpe School leisure complex together with a range of private facilities. The Rivers Hospital is a private facility and serves the town and the wider area.
- 7.2.10** The context map at Figure 7.4 sets out the key planning issues for the town. As the map illustrates, Sawbridgeworth is constrained by its current road network and its historic core. Open space forms a key component of the town's character and includes part of the Manor of Pishiobury, now a registered historic park and garden, the Rivers Nursery Orchard, Fair Green and the meadows of the Stort Valley. The River Stort flood plain is the greatest environmental constraint through the east of the town along with the railway line. Sawbridgeworth has many areas of environmental and ecological importance which have historically influenced the development of the town.



Figure 7.4 Context of Sawbridgeworth



Source: East Herts Council

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## 7.3 Sawbridgeworth: Key Issues

- 7.3.1** This section looks at some of the key planning issues facing Sawbridgeworth. It is organised under a series of nine themes, which are used throughout this Issues and Options document to provide consistency and structure.
- 7.3.2** Many of the issues that relate to Sawbridgeworth apply equally to other parts of East Herts. To avoid repetition, these generic district-wide issues have been dealt with under the relevant theme in Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision. The following sections set out those particular issues that apply specifically to Sawbridgeworth. We therefore suggest that you read this section in conjunction with Chapter 2. For information, the specific policy context, the relevant sources from the evidence base and the linkages to the SCS for each theme are set out in Sections F to O of the Supporting Document.

### Theme 1: Sawbridgeworth Energy and Climate Change

- 7.3.3** The Leventhorpe School has invested in two wind turbines which are proving to be of significant benefit to the school. This installation of small-scale renewable technology will serve as an example of how new technology can be integrated into the urban fabric successfully. Any future development in Sawbridgeworth may offer opportunities for a District Heating scheme.
- 7.3.4** In terms of climate change adaptation, new development in Sawbridgeworth will need to take account of building orientation and design as well as careful consideration of planting and green infrastructure. Due to the historic nature of the core of Sawbridgeworth there are few alterations that could be made to reduce the impacts of climate change. For example, narrow streets and building layouts prevent the planting of trees and vegetation to absorb carbon and reduce heat island effects of rising temperatures.
- 7.3.5** The potential impacts of development on environmental assets such as wildlife sites and the River Stort floodplain will also have to be considered. The potential impact of climate change on the biodiversity and quality of the wildlife sites in the area is also a consideration. It is therefore important to manage these sites and monitor their changes over time.

### Theme 2: Sawbridgeworth People and Community Safety

- 7.3.6** There is a vibrant voluntary sector and sense of community in Sawbridgeworth with many local groups and organisations. The town benefits from a library and Sure Start Centre as well as the Town Council offices, which provide a focus point for the gathering of community groups. The Bullfields Centre provides a dedicated facility for those under 21 and the Hailey Day Centre offers facilities for the elderly.

- 7.3.7** On a national scale, Sawbridgeworth has relatively little crime. However, there are some issues of anti-social behaviour which, although they may not be significant on a national scale, are nevertheless of importance to many local residents and businesses.
- 7.3.8** Some areas of the town were built in periods when it was common practice to segregate housing by tenure (social, market) or with little concern for inclusive mixed-use development. Over the years these areas have naturally become more mixed as people took advantage of the Right-to-Buy scheme in the 1980s and each time properties have changed hands since. In order to make any new population feel part of the existing community of Sawbridgeworth, it is important that new developments are integrated as much as possible into the existing built fabric of the town.

### Theme 3: Housing Sawbridgeworth

- 7.3.9** While planning policy over the last ten years has focused on brownfield town centre sites rather than greenfield sites, for Sawbridgeworth very few brownfield sites have been available. As such the Local Plan 2007 allocated greenfield sites on the edge of the urban area for development. The status of these sites is discussed in Section 7.4 below.
- 7.3.10** It is often perceived that there have been too many flats built over recent years. The rising cost of land and the installation of infrastructure on greenfield sites has encouraged developers to seek to make most efficient use of sites. The effect of which was that private housebuilders focused on provision of flats as opposed to houses, as shown in Figure 7.5 below. However, in Sawbridgeworth the construction of flats has been a relatively low proportion of the total residential properties constructed, with the exception of 2007 - 2008, when 40 flats were built on the Sawbridgeworth Motor Company site. As a proportion of the total stock of residential properties in the town only a small amount are flats.
- 7.3.11** Looking ahead over the next few years, it is likely that the trend for building flats will continue as part of schemes providing a range of house type. There is certainly demand for affordable family sized homes rather than one or two bedroom properties. However, the relative affordability of flats compared to houses will always mean there is a demand for them. Given the larger size of family-sized properties it implies that there will be a need for larger greenfield sites rather than smaller and more constrained town centre sites.

Figure 7.5 Gross Housing Completions by Type in Sawbridgeworth 2001-2009



Source: East Herts Council

**7.3.12** The location of Sawbridgeworth means that in terms of housing markets it functions alongside Bishop’s Stortford and Harlow, Epping Forest and Uttlesford districts, all sharing the M11 as a common factor. As such, the residents in these locations are likely to live and work within this corridor and will look within these locations when moving house, choosing schools and even when shopping. Therefore the nature of properties that will be needed in future in Sawbridgeworth will need to reflect the nature of provision and need within this corridor of locations.

#### Theme 4: Sawbridgeworth Character

**7.3.13** Open space forms a key component of the town’s character and includes the manor of Pishiobury, now a registered historic park and garden, the Rivers Nursery Orchard, Fair Green and the meadows of the Stort Valley. There is significant public open space within the town, including greens, cricket and recreation grounds. The Stort Valley is readily accessible by means of the Stort towpath and other rights of way, and serves important recreational and wildlife functions.

**7.3.14** Tightly constrained by the Metropolitan Green Belt, the town has remained relatively compact although there has been some ribbon development to the north and south, especially towards the village of High Wych. The strategic importance of the Green Belt in this location in preventing the coalescence of Harlow, High Wych and Sawbridgeworth can not be understated.

**7.3.15** The town still retains much of its historic character and benefits from numerous medieval, Tudor, Stuart and Georgian buildings (many of which are listed) set within a large central Conservation Area. Such traditional building forms

consisted of modest, narrow properties and were of a high density. Nowadays the term high density invokes visions of high-rise flats with no gardens but as has been seen in Figure 7.3 (see Section 7.2), density can have many different forms and it is clear that high density does not have to equal blocks of flats.

### Theme 5: Sawbridgeworth Economy, Skills and Prosperity

- 7.3.16** Sawbridgeworth town centre boasts a range of independent and specialist shops, high quality schools and local services. However, the small size of the town also challenges the continued viability of service provision and the limited convenience and comparison retail offer means that Sawbridgeworth often loses out to the larger shopping destinations of Bishop's Stortford and Harlow.
- 7.3.17** Whilst Sawbridgeworth has no designated employment land of its own, the Maltings Industrial Estate lies just outside the district boundary and functions as part of Sawbridgeworth. However, much of this land has now been converted to other uses and no longer provides general industrial space that can accommodate future business needs. Hayters in the nearby village of Spellbrook, Clarklands Industrial Estate to the north and Italstyle to the south are relatively small estates though are all considered to be of average overall quality benefiting from good locations with good occupancy rates. The town benefits from its proximity to the many industrial areas in Harlow and Bishop's Stortford. This is reflected in the degree of travel that occurs between the three towns. Stansted Airport also lies within easy reach of Sawbridgeworth providing a source of employment.
- 7.3.18** The potential development of land to the north of Harlow could have significant implications on Sawbridgeworth in terms of providing alternative sources of employment and could increase access to a greater range of services and educational opportunities. However, the proximity of any new development to Sawbridgeworth could also have implications for increasing the amount of traffic and congestion through the town and could encourage existing businesses to move out of Sawbridgeworth town centre seeking financial opportunities elsewhere.
- 7.3.19** The Leventhorpe School provides a range of education opportunities for the community through a consortium scheme with secondary schools in Bishop's Stortford, offering adult learning courses in a variety of subjects. The school was awarded a Business and Enterprise award in 2004, which specialises in all aspects of business education leading to all pupils having a business qualification by the age of 16. The school has a community programme that responds to the needs of local partners, delivering high quality training and education.

**7.3.20** While there may be a small surplus of primary school places in Sawbridgeworth, there is no capacity at secondary school level in either the Leventhorpe School nor in secondary schools in Bishop's Stortford. Should development occur to the north of Harlow, this could provide further choice in educational opportunities for those living in and around Sawbridgeworth and Harlow.

### Theme 6: Sawbridgeworth On the Move

**7.3.21** Sawbridgeworth is well served by train links into Cambridge and London, however high speed trains linking the town to Stansted Airport do not stop at Sawbridgeworth station. This has contributed to the retention of some of its historic market town features, particularly its size. Several local bus routes serve the town and connect with Bishop's Stortford and Harlow. However, no local bus route serves the station or nearby industrial areas.

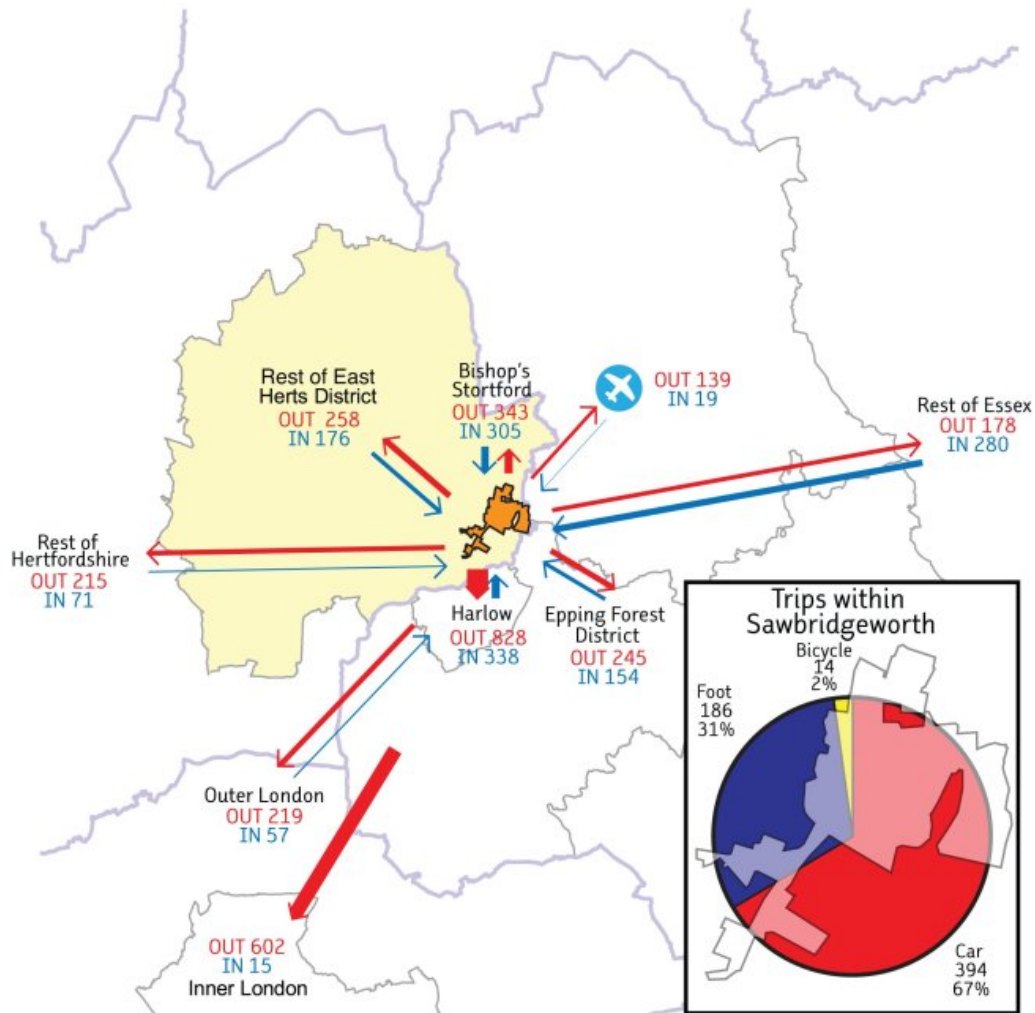
**7.3.22** The historic design of the town means that buses cannot move through the historic core, but this helps to retain its largely unspoilt character. However, this character means that the town suffers from accessibility problems, with significant congestion on the A1184 London Road, and there are conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians in the historic town centre. The compact nature of the town means that it is possible for an able-bodied person to walk from the perimeter of the built-up area to the town centre in around 15 minutes, a distance of at most 1 mile or 1.6 kilometres. Notwithstanding this, 67% of people who live and work in Sawbridgeworth use their car for trips, within Sawbridgeworth, as shown in Figure 7.6 below. This appears to have significant consequences for town centre parking and congestion problems.

**7.3.23** The proximity of the town to Bishop's Stortford and Harlow plays a significant part in the travel patterns in and around Sawbridgeworth. There is a significant amount of traffic that runs through Sawbridgeworth from Bishop's Stortford to Harlow (Chapter 4: Bishop's Stortford, Figure 4.6). Figure 7.6 shows the main daily work-related flows in and out of Sawbridgeworth. Most noticeable is the number of trips to Harlow and London compared to the rest of the district and neighbouring parts of Essex (828 and 602 daily trips respectively). Interestingly, there are almost as many trips from Sawbridgeworth to Bishop's Stortford (305) as there are from Bishop's Stortford to Sawbridgeworth (343).

**7.3.24** One possible solution to the traffic problems could be a bypass to the west of the town, although whilst the environmental benefits to the town centre would be welcomed, there is some debate as to whether the resultant loss of through traffic would be detrimental to the town's economy. In addition, there is concern amongst residents of High Wych (to the south-west of Sawbridgeworth) that a bypass could result in severance and disruption to their village. An [Urban Transport Plan](#) for Sawbridgeworth is scheduled to be undertaken by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) in 2011/12.



Figure 7.6 Daily trips to and from Sawbridgeworth



Source: East Herts Council

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Information on Urban Transport Plans can be found on the HCC website at [www.tinyurls.co.uk/P8310](http://www.tinyurls.co.uk/P8310)

### Theme 7: Sawbridgeworth Health, Wellbeing and Play

**7.3.25** The town boasts above average provision of amenity green space and outdoor sports facilities. There are six areas of open space, some containing play equipment for varying age ranges, and maintained by different bodies. Leisure facilities are available in the Leventhorpe Pool and Gym complex adjacent to the school, providing a wealth of high quality sport provision. Pishiobury Manor and Park to the south of the town along with the attractive countryside



that surrounds the town provide for outdoor pursuits such as walking and wildlife watching. The town is linked to the surrounding countryside and villages via river towpaths, bridleways and footpaths. However, there are few cycle paths and no cycle storage within the town centre itself. There are also a number of well-used allotments around the town which have active waiting lists operated by the Town Council.

- 7.3.26** Whilst the town lacks cultural facilities such as a museum or cinema, it does benefit from a library and community centre provided for under 21s, a Sure Start Centre and a Memorial Hall available for community gatherings. There is a strong network of community groups for all age ranges in Sawbridgeworth, all contributing to the strong community identity.

### **Theme 8: Green Sawbridgeworth**

- 7.3.27** Much of the land within the vicinity of the River Stort is designated as a Flood Zone. Sawbridgeworth Brook runs from the north-west of the town, discharging into the River Stort in the east. The Brook suffers from drought in the summer and floods in the winter, with decreasing bank quality and stability. The long term management of the river is of strategic importance to the town to ensure that not only is the town protected from flooding, but that future developments in and around Sawbridgeworth do not cause harm to the river environs and nearby wildlife sites.

- 7.3.28** Sawbridgeworth lies within the Rye Meads Sewage Treatment catchment. There are known issues about the future capacity of Rye Meads, particularly in the light of any potential development to the north of Harlow.

- 7.3.29** Pollution is an issue along congested road routes. This is exacerbated by the flight paths of Stansted Airport. One method of reducing congestion would be to construct a bypass around the town. However, the environmental considerations may be such that this could cause more damage rather than alleviating the problems that already exist.

### **Theme 9: Sawbridgeworth Monitoring and Delivery**

- 7.3.30** The final adopted Core Strategy will be accompanied by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan which will set out what infrastructure is needed, how much it will cost, who will pay for it and a broad outline of the phasing of delivery.

- 7.3.31** It follows that any increase in population will increase demand for services, facilities and the road and passenger transport networks. Without supporting investment in infrastructure it is likely that residents of Sawbridgeworth will need to travel outside the town to fulfil their needs, be it for shopping, for jobs or for education. It is therefore vital that appropriate investments are made in the existing infrastructure to accommodate increases in population and that new infrastructure is provided where necessary. To prevent further loss of expenditure out of Sawbridgeworth, the town needs to ensure it evolves

while maintaining all that is attractive about the town. For example, by finding a niche in the market for independent traders and those making and selling locally produced goods. The creation of new employment and education opportunities within the town would also reduce out-commuting and would boost the town's economic prosperity and self-sufficiency.

- 7.3.32** There is great pressure to develop land around Sawbridgeworth for housing, but more significant is any potential development to the north of Harlow. It is therefore important that all changes in and around Sawbridgeworth do not harm the intrinsic qualities of the town itself.

### 7.4 Current Planning Context

- 7.4.1** The current planning context for East Herts is set out in the Local Plan 2007, which identifies Sawbridgeworth as one of six Main Settlements within East Herts. Under this Plan the majority of development is directed to the four largest towns of Bishop's Stortford, Hertford, Sawbridgeworth and Ware, while Buntingford and the settlement of Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets also receives some development.
- 7.4.2** Under the Local Plan 2007, each of the six Main Settlements received a proportional share of the district-wide housing requirement, with an additional allowance diverted from the rural area. The Local Plan 2007 seeks to accommodate as much of this requirement as possible on brownfield land. Where this was not possible within specific settlements, greenfield sites were identified and allocated for housing development.
- 7.4.3** However, it should be noted that in addition to the identification of allocated sites, a number of unallocated sites will also be developed. In these circumstances, each proposal is judged on a case-by-case basis against the policies in the Local Plan 2007, having regard to the East of England Plan and national planning policy.
- 7.4.4** As set out in Table 3.1 (Chapter 3, Section 3.2), 115 homes were built in Sawbridgeworth during the period 2001 to 2009. A further 158 homes have planning permission but are still to be built. As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009, the following allocated sites representing at least 80 homes were still to come forward for development in Sawbridgeworth.

#### Land at Crofters

- 7.4.5** This area comprises the Sawbridgeworth Sports Association football ground at Crofters, adjoining the southern part of the Leventhorpe School grounds. It is estimated that this greenfield site could accommodate 80 homes, including up to 40% affordable homes.

**7.4.6** Whilst part of the Maltings site in neighbouring Essex has been redeveloped for flats and houses, there are currently no other large schemes planned for Sawbridgeworth.

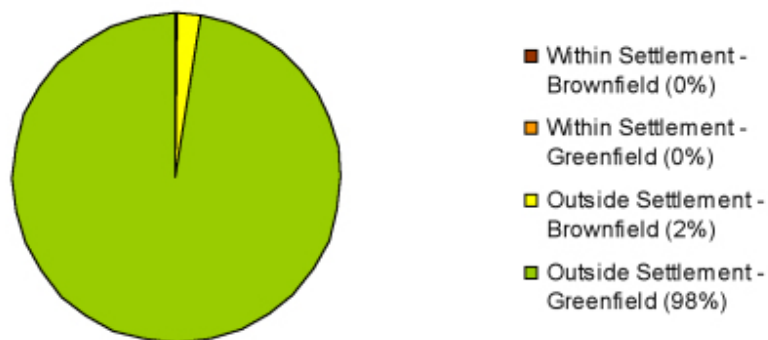
## 7.5 Sawbridgeworth: Future Growth Options

**7.5.1** Before deciding which future district-wide development strategy to adopt to 2031 and how we distribute growth to each identified settlement (see Chapter 3), we need to understand how development could be accommodated in and around Sawbridgeworth itself.

**7.5.2** In terms of the availability of land, 161 hectares have been suggested for housing and associated uses, through the Call for Sites, in and around Sawbridgeworth. This equates to approximately 3,222 homes.

**7.5.3** Figure 7.7 shows that there is currently no capacity within the existing urban area of Sawbridgeworth to accommodate further development. All sites which came forward in the 2009 Call for Sites were located outside the urban area, only 2% of which were on previously developed land. Therefore whichever development strategy option is adopted, it is highly likely that all of the towns, including Sawbridgeworth, will need to accommodate significant greenfield development beyond the current edge of the settlement.

Figure 7.7 Land Availability at Sawbridgeworth



Source: East Herts Call for Sites

**7.5.4** To accommodate growth in and around Sawbridgeworth, four potential growth options have been identified. These are shown in Figure 7.8 and are considered in more detail below.

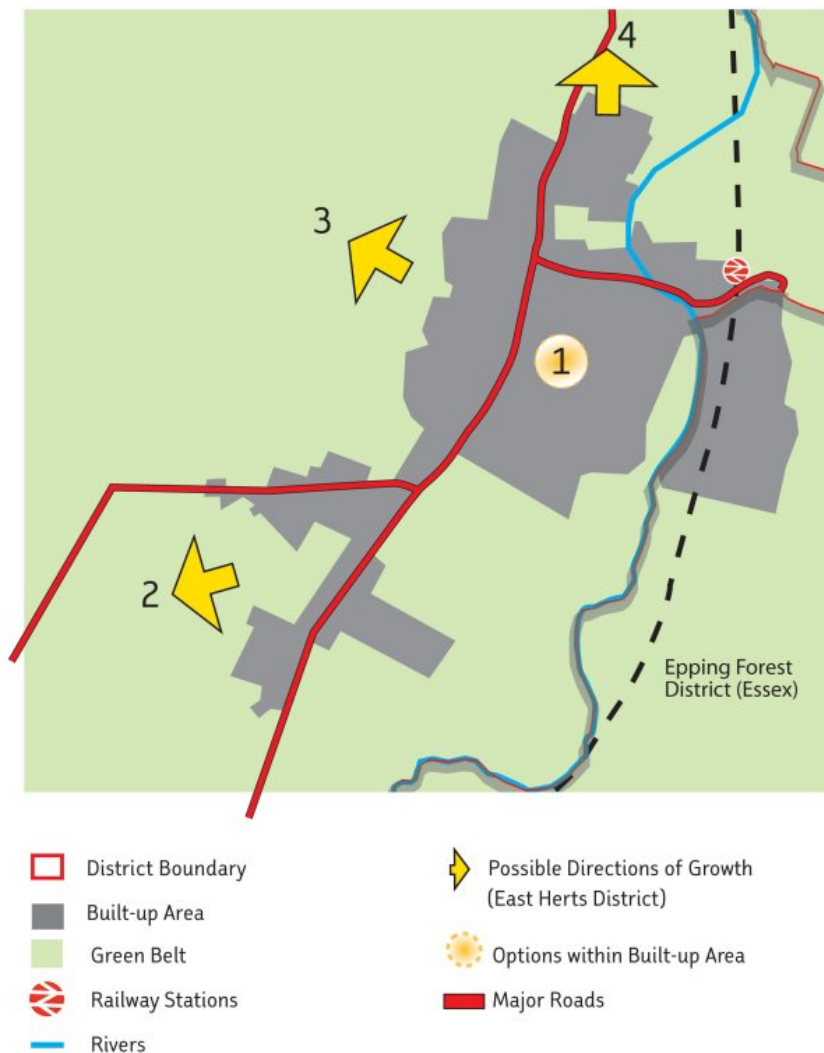
**7.5.5** The purpose of these options is not to identify specific sites but rather to flag up potential issues such as infrastructure constraints that may shape how Sawbridgeworth grows to 2031. Please note that these options may not be

mutually exclusive and that growth could occur in more than one direction, subject to the development strategy and distribution strategy we adopt (see Chapter 3, Sections 3.7 to 3.15).

**7.5.6** As set out in Chapter 3, Section 3.2, the growth options presented in Figure 7.8 seek to deal with Sawbridgeworth’s share of the approximate ‘to-find’ figure of 8,500 and are therefore, in addition to the development of any remaining Local Plan allocations. For the purpose of this diagram, potential growth to the north of Harlow is not included as this is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 10: North of Harlow.

**7.5.7** It should be noted that it is not too late for further options arising from this consultation to be considered.

Figure 7.8 Growth Options for Sawbridgeworth to 2031 (indicative only)



Source: East Herts Council

*Crown copyright. All rights reserved. 2009. LA Ref: 100018528*

**7.5.8** A summary of the issues for the four growth options for Sawbridgeworth are as follows:

**Option 1: Within the Existing Built-up Area**

- Good accessibility
- Brownfield land
- Lead to increased congestion
- Substantial land-costs (potential contamination and viability issues)
- No land available for development (Call for Sites)

**Option 2: To the southwest**

- Possible coalescence between Sawbridgeworth and Harlow and potential development to the north of Harlow
- Would engulf village of High Wych
- Removed from central shopping core and services
- Proximity to Harlow services and amenities
- Sensitivity of adjacent wildlife sites and high quality natural environment
- Would require a Green Belt Review
- Land available for development (Call for Sites)

**Option 3: To the west**

- Greenfield land – currently agricultural
- Sensitivity of adjacent wildlife sites and Rivers Nursery and Orchard
- Possible coalescence between High Wych and Sawbridgeworth
- Would require a Green Belt Review
- Land available for development (Call for Sites)

**Option 4: To the north**

- Greenfield land – currently agricultural
- Removed from central shopping core and services
- Close to Bishop's Stortford services and amenities
- Possible coalescence between Sawbridgeworth and Bishop's Stortford
- Would require a Green Belt Review
- Land available for development (Call for Sites)

**Question 33****Growth Options for Sawbridgeworth**

Please rank the growth options for Sawbridgeworth in order of preference, and comment on their suitability.

Are there any other options we have not considered?

- 7.5.9** As explained in Chapter 3, Section 3.3, the amount of land that would be required for new development (the land-take) will vary depending on the density at which homes are built. For example, using the illustrations shown in Figure 7.3 (see Section 7.2), Figure 7.9 shows that at the density of A: Station Road (100 dph), 100 homes would require 1 hectare, whereas at the density of D: Pishiobury Drive (4 dph), 25 hectares would be required. Density therefore has clear implications for the amount of land required and the future shape of Sawbridgeworth, but this clearly needs to be judged in the context of overall design quality. Density and design quality are two of the chief determinants of character in the built environment.

Figure 7.9 Illustration of Land-Take at Different Densities (illustrative only - not to scale)



Source: East Herts Council

- 7.5.10** As can be seen from Figure 7.3 (see Section 7.2) and the examples shown in the other settlement chapters, there are a variety of development designs and densities. There are many fine examples of higher density developments around the district, such as Victorian terraces and three and four storey Edwardian town-houses, which are now valued for their historic interest and contribution to quality of place.

**7.5.11** Whilst the specific characteristics of a site will determine the actual density at which a development is built, understanding the approach to the development and the relationship between density and land-take in a particular town is important.

**7.5.12** Theoretically, there are three general approaches to development in Sawbridgeworth:

1. Lower density - therefore higher land-take
2. Medium density - therefore medium land-take
3. Higher density - therefore lower land-take

## Question 34

Approach to Development in Sawbridgeworth

Please rank the approaches to development in Sawbridgeworth in order of preference.

Is there another approach we have not considered?

## 7.6 Sawbridgeworth: Emerging LDF Vision

**7.6.1** Drawing upon the issues set out in this consultation document we have prepared an emerging LDF vision for Sawbridgeworth. The issues that have been identified are based on an analysis of the evidence including the results of the community and stakeholder engagement, various strategies and studies, and the Sawbridgeworth [Town Action Plan 2009-2013](#).

The Sawbridgeworth Town Action Plan 2009-2013 is available online at:

[www.sawbridgeworth-tc.gov.uk](http://www.sawbridgeworth-tc.gov.uk)

**7.6.2** However, it is not possible to finalise the LDF vision for Sawbridgeworth until we have agreed our preferred option for the development strategy and our preferred approach for the distribution strategy (see Chapter 3). This is because these strategies will determine the amount of growth Sawbridgeworth will receive to 2031.

**7.6.3** It should be noted that the LDF vision for Sawbridgeworth will be different in scope to any other vision for the town e.g. the Town Action Plan. This is because the LDF Core Strategy:

- forms part of the legal planning framework for East Herts



- is a high-level strategic document for the district as a whole, and therefore will not encompass the same level of detail as the Town Action Plan;
- will only address matters within the scope of planning policy; and
- will set a context for other policy documents such as town centre strategies or site-specific development briefs.

**7.6.4** Nevertheless, the Sawbridgeworth Town Action Plan represents a valuable source of information for the Core Strategy and will inform the emerging LDF vision.

**7.6.5** Our emerging LDF vision for Sawbridgeworth in 2031 is as follows:

*Sawbridgeworth will function as a thriving market town meeting the day-to-day needs of its residents and those living in the rural areas in the south-east of the district. It will be a well-connected town with improved road and passenger transport links and a town centre that is pedestrian and cycle-friendly. Sawbridgeworth's town centre will have been protected and enhanced, with a thriving range of independent retailers and local employment opportunities. The Farmers Market and antique trading at the Maltings will continue attracting visitors to the town ensuring its economic prosperity.*

*New developments will be well connected to the town, and will be designed in a way that encourages walking and cycling. They will provide housing and facilities that will help to meet the needs of local people and families wishing to live in the town. Sawbridgeworth's high quality open spaces and sports facilities will be protected and enhanced, with links to the town's surrounding natural assets.*

*Growth will have been accomplished without compromising the setting of the town within the wider landscape and without causing harm to the town's valued wildlife and river environment. The example of Leventhorpe School's investment in renewable energy sources and commitment to providing community facilities will be encouraged in all appropriate developments.*

### Question 35

Sawbridgeworth Vision

Do you agree with the emerging LDF Vision for Sawbridgeworth?



# Chapter 8

## Ware

## 8.1 Purpose of the Ware Chapter

**8.1.1** This chapter deals with issues and options relating to Ware. It should be read in conjunction with Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision and Chapter 3: Development Strategy to enable the necessary appreciation of issues in a wider context. This chapter includes sections on the following:

- A portrait of Ware setting out how the town has evolved and its main characteristics (Section 8.2);
- The key issues facing Ware arranged by theme (Section 8.3);
- The current planning context for Ware as set out in the Local Plan 2007 (Section 8.4);
- A series of options for the growth of Ware to 2031, including the availability of land and the approach to development (Section 8.5); and,
- An emerging LDF vision for Ware to 2031 (Section 8.6).

**8.1.2** The purpose of the Core Strategy is to establish the district-wide development strategy for East Herts. This will set out how much development each identified settlement will receive to 2031. The Core Strategy does not deal with detailed planning issues such as design and amenity. These issues, along with the identification of specific sites, will be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents.

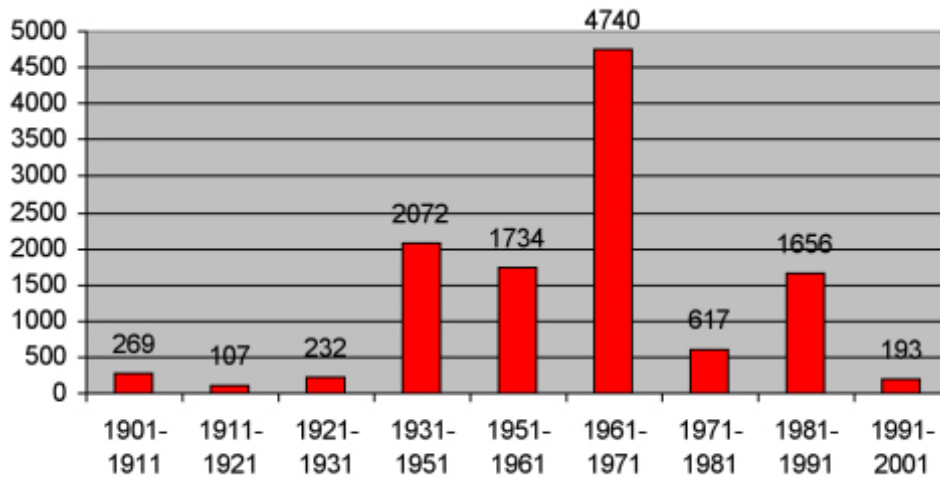
**8.1.3** To inform the development strategy we are seeking your views in respect of the following two aspects: firstly, regarding future development options for Ware, and secondly, regarding an emerging LDF vision for the town.

This chapter includes questions 36, 37 and 38.

## 8.2 A Portrait of Ware

**8.2.1** This portrait aims to capture the key characteristics of Ware today. It is derived from an assessment of the various aspects of the evidence base and is a factual statement of its attributes. The portrait seeks to capture what makes Ware unique, while the following section discusses the key planning issues facing the town.

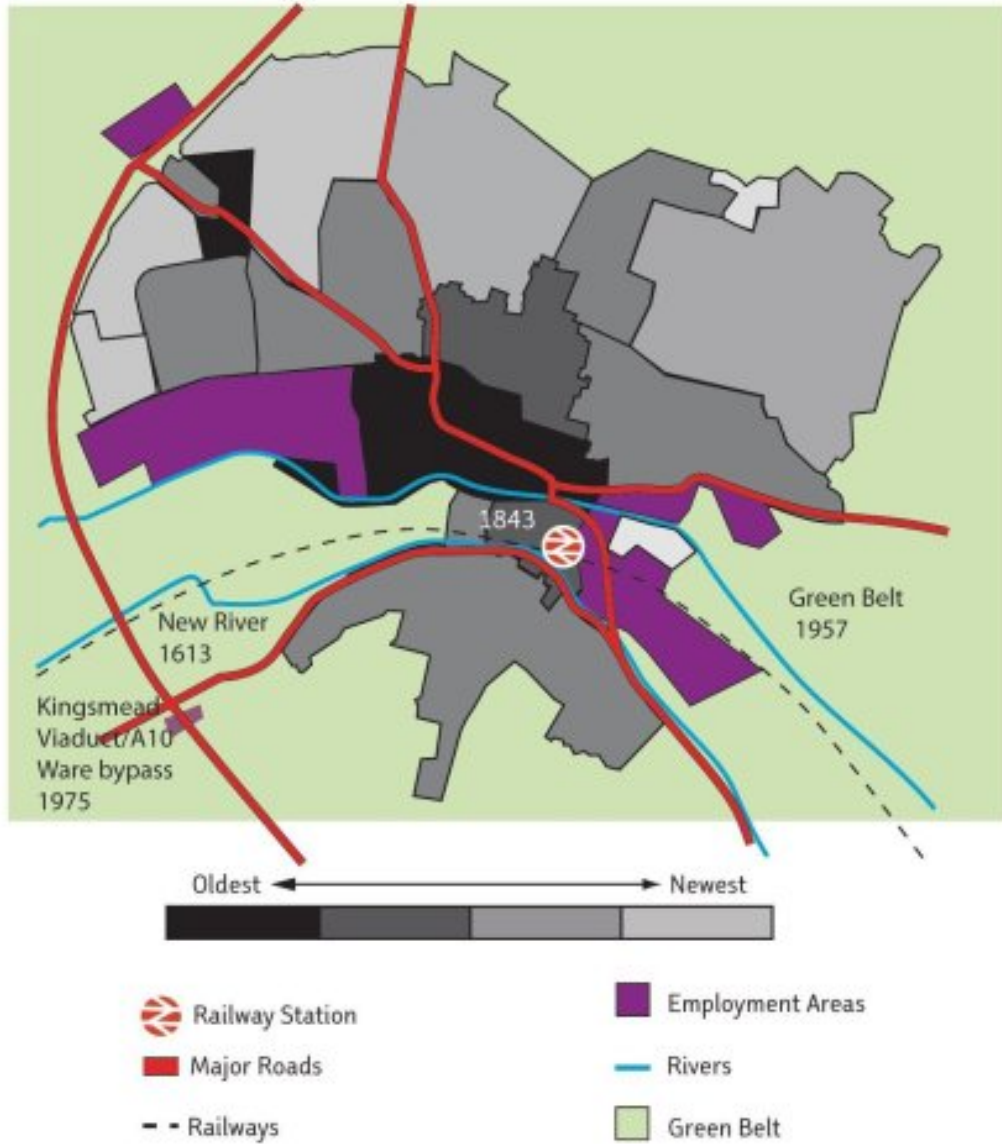
Figure 8.1 Population Growth in Ware (1901-2001)



Source: Office for National Statistics

- 8.2.2** Figure 8.1 shows the growth in the population of Ware during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, which increased from 5,573 in 1901 to 17,193 by 2001. Development has been a continuous process in Ware, although little growth occurred during the first three decades. After that time, higher levels of development were apparent with the main decade of growth occurring in the 1960's. The Kingshill and Fanhams Hall estates were two of the largest areas constructed in the town during this period.
- 8.2.3** Figure 8.2 looks back further and demonstrates in basic form how Ware has gradually evolved over time, from the first evidence of settlement dating back to the Mesolithic, or Middle Stone Age, to the present day. In reaching its current form, the greatest influences have been the presence of Ermine Street and the River Lea, which both run through the town centre. These features have significantly influenced the town's growth pattern with historical coaching inn links to the Old North Road and the malting industry. The introduction of the railway line further shaped the development of the town.
- 8.2.4** Figure 8.3 below provides examples of residential developments in Ware, which are of differing ages and density levels. Other examples are also shown in the other settlement chapters.

Figure 8.2 Historical Development of Ware



Source: East Herts Council

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Figure 8.3 Examples of Housing Development in Ware



Source: East Herts Council

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- 8.2.5** Positioned towards the south of the district, Ware lies in a valley with the River Lea running through its central historic area. From the south, Ware is a separate, self-contained market town, which is surrounded by countryside, despite being close to the end of an almost continuous ribbon of suburban development which runs from the centre of London to Hailey.
- 8.2.6** To the north and east of the town, Ware is mainly surrounded by countryside and scattered small villages and hamlets. To the west, the town is separated from the neighbouring County town of Hertford only by The Meads and the A10 viaduct but, despite this close proximity, Ware has always maintained its own distinct character and identity.
- 8.2.7** Dating back to the Middle Stone Age, Ware is one of the oldest continuously occupied sites in Western Europe. It is an attractive chartered market town which retains much of its medieval heritage and has a large Conservation Area containing many buildings listed for their historic significance. The general high townscape quality, coupled with its unique features such as its long burgage plots (formerly gardens) and famous 18<sup>th</sup> Century riverside gazebos, mean that Ware presents a very attractive environment in which to live and work.
- 8.2.8** Ware's retail core mainly offers the services of small independent businesses with a limited number of major multiple outlets. Its High Street follows the line of the River Lea and the town is included in the northern end of the Lee Valley Regional Park, which follows the valley of the river along its length between Ware and London. This river link with the capital was particularly important in the past for the success of the town's former malting industry, which lasted for approximately 600 years. However, the river also brings with it the potential for flooding in low-lying areas.
- 8.2.9** The town has good transport connections, which are of long-standing given its location on the Roman Ermine Street and its historic coaching inn associations. A bypass constructed in the 1970's eliminated much of the town's through traffic; however, the town still suffers from congestion in the central area, especially at peak times and when deliveries are made in the High Street.
- 8.2.10** Ware's healthcare provision includes various doctors and dental surgeries and a health clinic in Bowling Road.
- 8.2.11** The town also benefits from numerous cultural and recreational facilities, some of which include: its Museum; Ware Arts Centre, Scott's Grotto; Ware Priory, and grounds (including Fletcher's Lea, which inter alia offers cinema facilities); Drill Hall; an indoor swimming pool and gym; outdoor pool (summer operation only); Bowling Club; Football Club and extensive facilities at the Wodson Park sports and leisure centre.
- 8.2.12** The map at Figure 8.4 sets the context of Ware and identifies its main facilities.

Figure 8.4 Context of Ware



Source: East Herts Council

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## 8.3 Ware: Key Issues

- 8.3.1** The following section looks at some of the key planning issues facing Ware. It is organised under a series of nine themes, which are used throughout this Issues and Options document to provide consistency and structure.
- 8.3.2** Many of the issues that relate to Ware apply equally to other parts of East Herts. To avoid repetition, these generic district-wide issues have been dealt with under the relevant theme in Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision. The following sections set out those particular issues that apply specifically to Ware. We therefore suggest that you read this section in conjunction with Chapter 2. For information, the specific policy context, the relevant sources from the evidence base and the linkages to the SCS for each theme are set out in Sections F to O of the Supporting Document.

### Theme 1: Ware Energy and Climate Change

- 8.3.3** As identified in Figure 8.6 below, 57% of all daily journeys to work within the town are made by car, which generates a large amount of greenhouse gas emissions. Changes proposed as part of the Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan (see below) could help address this and other local pollution and air quality issues. Future development opportunities may offer the potential for widening the benefits of community energy schemes such as district heating and Combined Heat and Power. It may also be possible for public buildings such as Council offices, Wodson Park, and Fanshawe Pool and Gym, to act as anchor points for such schemes.
- 8.3.4** In terms of climate change adaptation, Ware Town Centre's location close to the River Lea poses considerable flood risk to the town. New development can help mitigate flooding through the use of technological solutions such as sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS). Although the Priory Grounds and St Mary's Churchyard have many trees, and some past public realm improvements to the town centre have also included limited tree planting which, provide shade and reduces the urban heat island effect, additional provision could be of benefit to the local area.

### Theme 2: Ware People and Community Safety

- 8.3.5** Ware has a vibrant community that includes various voluntary groups, local societies and organisations, which all offer opportunity for social interaction. It has a Museum and Library as well as many churches and various other meeting place venues. These are all valuable social assets to the town, in addition to the town's leisure facilities which are described below.
- 8.3.6** Compared against national statistics, crime levels are low in Ware and people can generally expect to feel safe in this very pleasant town. However, in common with many other settlements, there are a few places where limited

incidences of crime and anti-social behaviour are reported on occasion, such as night time activity that was previously associated with the operation of the former nightclub in Amwell End.

- 8.3.7** Also, some areas of the town were constructed during periods in the past which limited their occupancy to a particular tenure (social or market). This is no longer current practice, as more socially inclusive developments are encouraged, but some of the district's socially segregated developments of the past have experienced higher crime rates than average for the area. However, measures can be employed to assist these areas. For example, a Section 30 Dispersal Order was imposed in the King George Road area in 2008 to combat anti-social behaviour in the vicinity and improve the amenity of local residents. Due to the success of the scheme, the Order is no longer considered necessary and was therefore not renewed when it expired in 2009.
- 8.3.8** Ware also benefits from a recently opened part-time Police Station, which resulted from reorganisation following the closure of the larger Hertford and Ware Police Station in Ware Road, Hertford to two smaller sites in Hale Road, Hertford and Meade House, High Street, Ware. The new arrangement not only allows a greater visible Police presence in the area, but also makes the Police more accessible to the community. PCs and PCSOs are also personally assigned to specific areas in the town, which encourages familiarity.

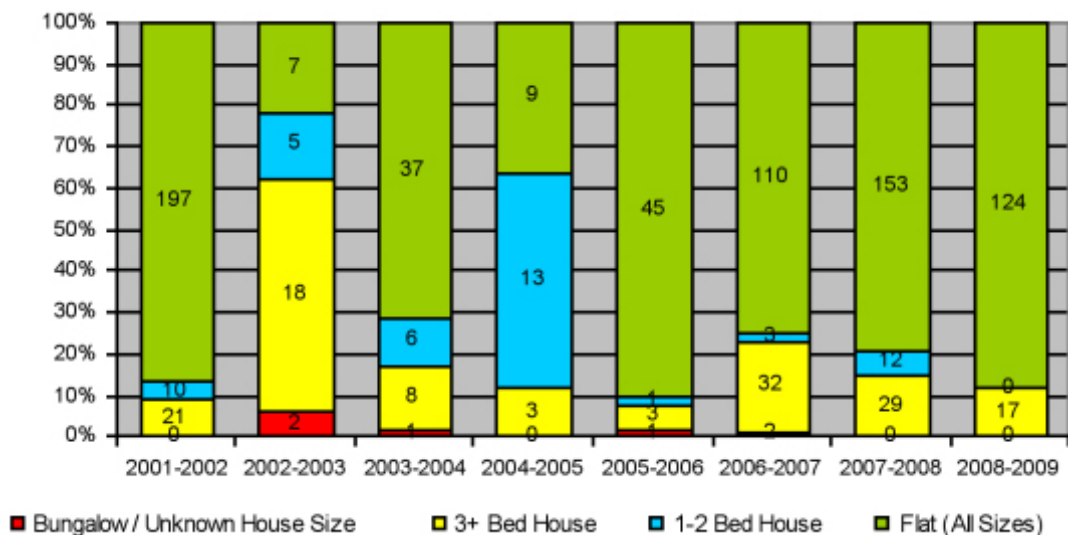
### Theme 3: Housing Ware

- 8.3.9** Housing in Ware takes many different forms, from examples of medieval buildings in the town centre through to homes of contemporary construction. Often located in areas of distinctive character, e.g. the Victorian and Edwardian homes to the immediate north of the town centre, the various housing types provide choice to residents and serve different housing markets.
- 8.3.10** Much of the post-war housing in Ware has been provided in greenfield locations on the edge of the settlement, although a significant amount of homes have resulted from conversion of riverside wharfs formerly associated with malting and other industrial operations. Within the last decade, further regeneration of brownfield sites situated more centrally in the town has resulted in a significant proportion of recent development being achieved in sustainable locations e.g. the Former Goods Yard and Station Car Park in Viaduct Road and the Former Gas Works Site in Star Street.
- 8.3.11** However, there are concerns that the balance of dwelling type may have tipped too far away from houses in the recent past with much of the latest residential development in Ware consisting of flats. Figure 8.5 below demonstrates that flats have been the predominant form of provision in the last few years in Ware and that very few one or two bedroom houses have been constructed. In fact, of the 869 homes built between 2001 and 2009,

only 50 of these were one or two bedroom houses while 682 were flats, which represent 79% of all the residential development completed in the town over this period.

**8.3.12** Consideration may therefore need to be given to whether any future development strategy for the town should attempt to redress the balance of dwelling types by encouraging a shift of emphasis towards the construction of more accommodation suited to family occupation.

Figure 8.5 Gross Housing Completions by Type in Ware 2001-2009



Source: Hertfordshire County Council

### Theme 4: Ware’s Character

**8.3.13** Although dating back to the Mesolithic or Mid Stone Age, with evidence also of Roman occupation, much of the surviving built heritage of Ware’s town centre dates back only as far as medieval times. By the 13<sup>th</sup> Century the town was quite widely known, being mentioned in Chaucer’s ‘Canterbury Tales’ as the area from which the cook originated. The current historic core of Ware is largely based around its former 600 year old links with the water based malting industry and its coaching inn associations; the latter due to its location on the Roman road of Ermine Street, connecting London to York and Scotland. Samuel Pepys was one famous visitor to the town during the coaching inn heyday. Several of the waggonways of the former Inns that were operating during this period still remain, especially along the High Street.

**8.3.14** At the western end of the High Street, is located the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, Grade I listed, St Mary’s Church. The churchyard and gardens around it form an important open space in the central area and combine with the Priory Gardens opposite to provide a valuable parkland setting in the centre of the town. The Priory itself, actually a former Franciscan Friary, was constructed in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Centuries and is a Grade I listed building and a Scheduled Monument.



The building is of considerable historic interest and presents attractive views, not only on its main frontage, but also from the river at the rear. Nearby, Ware's famous 18<sup>th</sup> Century gazebos also grace the riverside and hark back to a bygone age when they were used by guests of the former inns. These, along with many other historic buildings and attractive features, provide a scenic backdrop that defines the character of this area of the town.

- 8.3.15** Outside of the immediate central area, the town's residential buildings were largely erected during or after the Victorian period, with much development occurring in the mid and towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Distinct areas of varying character have been created in the town. In the Watton Road area, some (Grade II listed) examples of properties, circa 1830, remain that were constructed of 'Hitch' bricks, which were notably of larger than average size and produced during a limited run of production at local brickfields in nearby Park Road. Latterly, the construction of new homes has been balanced by the conversion of former maltings and other industrial premises, which has successfully combined the reuse of redundant buildings with the need for accommodation in the area.

#### **Theme 5: Ware Economy, Skills and Prosperity**

- 8.3.16** Ware has the greatest concentration of high quality employment sites in the district. This is largely due to it containing East Herts' biggest single employment site at GSK, Park Lane/Priory Street with over 19 hectares of employment land classed as B1 and B2 (covering manufacturing, offices, research and development). The site is considered to be of strategic importance within the district in employment terms. Although much of the site was constructed between the 1950s and 1980s, it has been subject to continual modernisation, with the latest improvement to the site consisting of the large R&D Building 9, which was opened in 2010. Because of the site's close proximity to the town centre, GSK's employees are also able to make a direct contribution to the town's economy via spending in the local shops and businesses.
- 8.3.17** The rest of the employment sites in Ware provide valuable smaller units of mainly average or good quality in accessible locations. However, there are pockets of poor quality employment land within the Marsh Lane and Crane Mead Business Parks and at Widbury Hill, the latter of which has recently received permission for part redevelopment via a mixed-use scheme.
- 8.3.18** The East of England Plan stipulates a general need for the provision of additional employment facilities within the district over the Plan period. However, to ensure that sustainable communities are created, any decision on the location of future employment development would be much dependent on the ultimate choices made over dwelling distribution. It has been documented that loss of employment land from any settlement would require replacement, either at an alternative location in that settlement or elsewhere in the district.

- 8.3.19** In terms of its retail offer, Ware town centre mainly offers the services of small independent businesses with a limited number of major multiple outlets. However, these have a significant combined draw in terms of household expenditure. A chartered market is held weekly on Tuesdays. While Ware's retail core provides a varied range of local services and has one major foodstore, it is lacking in terms of its comparison goods offer. Much of this expenditure leaks from the town to Harlow and Welwyn Garden City for items such as clothing, household furnishings and electrical goods. Although there are a number of small outlets in the town with limited provision of goods, the main destination for grocery shopping is the Tesco superstore in West Street. The potential for growth or change of this market within the town centre itself is limited by Ware's linear layout; however, there has been continuing interest from Asda for the provision of an alternative new superstore on the vacant Cintel Site in Watton Road, which, if permitted, could provide a greater choice for shoppers in and around the Ware area.
- 8.3.20** Ware has a high standard of educational achievement and its schools cover pre-school to secondary level, including provision for children with special educational needs. The town also benefits from Hertford Regional College having one of its two main bases in Scotts Road. The College delivers academic and vocational courses for students aged 16+; higher education programmes delivered in partnership with local universities; non-vocational leisure programmes for adults; plus a growing range of provision for 14-16 year olds in partnership with local schools.
- 8.3.21** Also located in the area is Scott's Grotto. Created in the 1760's by the Quaker poet and reformer John Scott and decorated with shells, fossils and minerals, it is the country's largest grotto. This Grade I listed structure delivers a unique visitor experience and is a tourist draw to the town along with other attractions, some of which include the famous riverside Gazebos, Priory and grounds, Museum and St Mary's Church.

### Theme 6: Ware On the Move

- 8.3.22** Good medieval road and river connections were the catalyst for much of the development that occurred in the central area of Ware, mainly due to the malting and coaching inn trades. Ware is located in relatively close proximity to the A1M, M25 and M11, which increases its connectivity to the wider road network and with it, travel options. A train station offers the ability for passengers to access wide reaching destinations. The compact nature of the town means that it is possible for an able-bodied person to walk from the perimeter of the built-up area to the town centre. Car parking is available at several town centre locations.
- 8.3.23** However, while traffic was positively welcomed in Ware during earlier times, its 20<sup>th</sup> Century legacy was one of congestion and a declining town centre. The introduction of a bypass in 1975 did much to alleviate through traffic utilising the town centre, and traffic management schemes, together with later



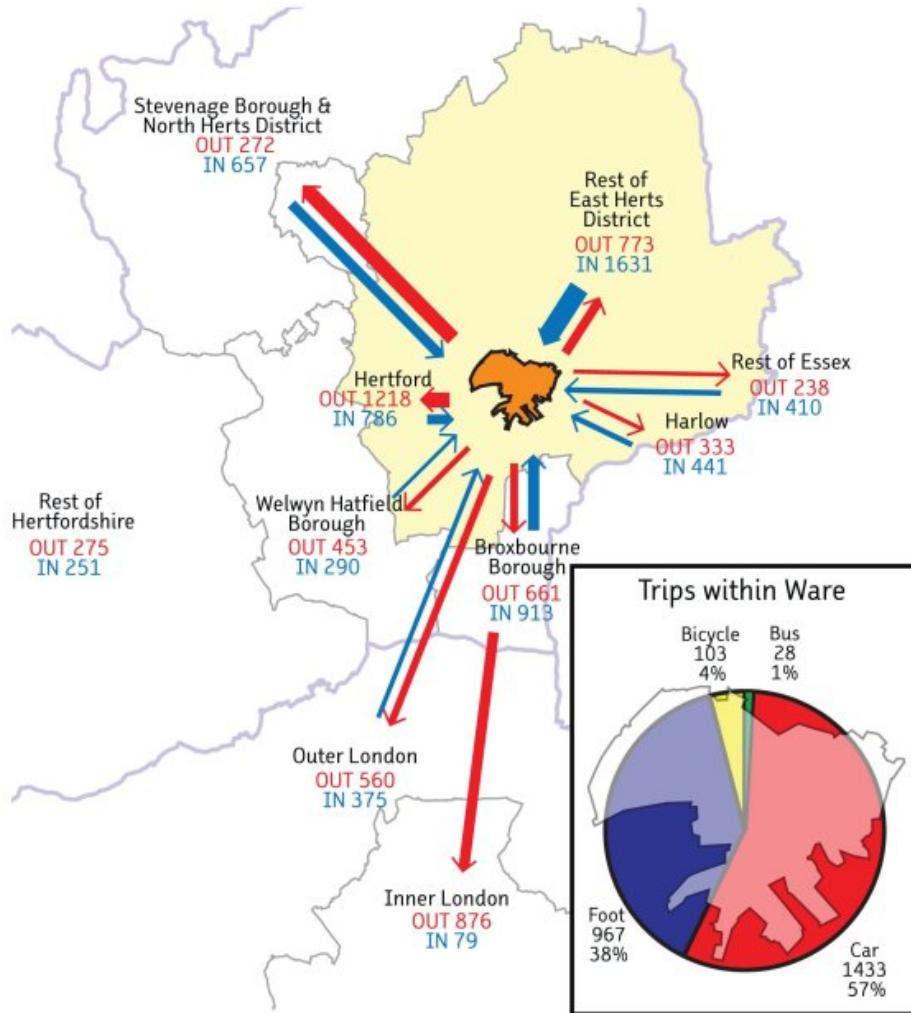
town centre enhancements, have significantly improved the general environment. However, in common with many other ancient towns which evolved prior to the advent of motorised transport, Ware continues to suffer from congestion in its town centre, especially when deliveries in the High Street impede the free flow of traffic and at peak times when considerable traffic flows in and out of the town.

- 8.3.24** Figure 8.6 shows the main daily work-related flows in and out of Ware.
- 8.3.25** In addition to the congestion issues caused by motorised traffic, there are other movement issues in the town. Provision for cyclists is inconsistent; for while the town benefits from being located on part of the National Cycle Network Route 61 which links Hertford and Ware along the towpath, provision elsewhere in the town is limited. Likewise, although there have been partial pedestrianisation schemes in East Street and West Street, and toucan crossings provided in the High Street and Baldock Street, there is a general acceptance that more could be done to improve the situation for pedestrians in the town centre. An even greater need for permeability is apparent beyond the central core, especially in terms of linkages between residential areas and key facilities in the town e.g. schools (especially at secondary level) and key leisure facilities.
- 8.3.26** All of the above issues are being taken into account in the emerging **Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan**. Hertfordshire County Council and East Herts Council are working together with consultants WSP to produce a Plan that examines transport problems within and between the two towns and suggests ways in which transport systems could be improved to help meet the future needs.

Information on the Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan can be found on the HCC website at: [www.tinyurls.co.uk/V8318](http://www.tinyurls.co.uk/V8318)

- 8.3.27** The document, which is expected to be finalised late 2010, will contain a programme of measures to help tackle the issues raised in the period up to 2021 and will largely focus on schemes aimed at persuading people to make greener travel choices.

Figure 8.6 Daily trips to and from Ware



Source: East Herts Council

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**Theme 7: Ware Health, Wellbeing and Play**

- 8.3.28** Ware has a number of GPs and dentists surgeries within the town and further benefits from the provision of a health clinic in Bowling Road.
- 8.3.29** Ware has good availability of indoor sporting and community facilities, outdoor leisure opportunities and green spaces. Its key sporting venue is at Wodson Park, which offers a variety of indoor and outdoor sporting and social activities for all age groups. This location is also home to Ware Football Club, a senior side, while Ware Youth teams have their own facilities off Fanhams Hall Road. Hertford Rugby Football Club is based in Hoe Lane.

- 8.3.30** Various equipped play areas provided throughout the town are well used by children along with informal recreational spaces such as The Bourne, Lower Bourne Gardens/rear of Demontfort Rise; and King George's playing fields. Allotments are also located off of King George Road and additionally at Widbury Hill.
- 8.3.31** The Lee Valley Regional Park also has its northern boundary entrance at the south of the town and this enables the towpath route to be travelled by foot or cycle in a southerly direction all the way through to London. In a northerly direction, the towpath continues to run alongside the River Lea and offers walking and cycling opportunities, along Route 61 of the National Cycle Network through the Meads between Ware and Hertford.
- 8.3.32** An indoor swimming pool and gym are located at the Fanshawe site, while The Priory Lido, situated in grounds of The Priory offers heated open air swimming during summer months. Tennis courts and The Ware Bowling Club are also located alongside in The Priory Grounds. Other facilities in the town include: Ware Arts Centre, the Age Concern Centre, Place House, The Drill Hall and the recently constructed Fletcher's Lea, which offers meeting and function facilities and operates occasional film showings.
- 8.3.33** Churches serving many denominations are located in Ware and a cemetery is situated to the north of the town.
- 8.3.34** However, there are cultural shortfalls that have been identified in the town, including below standard provision of parks and gardens, netball courts and provision for children and young people. The town also currently lacks a theatre, permanent cinema and concert facilities.

### Theme 8: Green Ware

- 8.3.35** Ware is generally a pleasant and healthy place to live; however, peak time traffic congestion in the town centre and its approach roads can have an effect on air quality in the area due to vehicle emissions. East Herts Council will continue monitoring the situation and, should an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) need to be declared in any location, measures will be sought to tackle the polluting effects in that area.
- 8.3.36** Due to much of its past economy having been dependent on water-sourced industries, a significant part of the town's central core was constructed around its river frontage. While meeting the employment needs of the town at that time, it also now leaves the area exposed to flooding potential. This is likely to continue to be an issue, particularly in the more vulnerable areas and the impacts of future development proposals must be assessed against this risk. Ware lies within the catchment of Rye Meads Sewage Treatment Works. There are known issues about the future capacity of Rye Meads, particularly in light of any potential development to the north of Harlow.

**8.3.37** Although flooding risk may be problematic in terms of human activity, for wildlife the fluctuating water levels can be beneficial. This is especially true in the Meads area between Ware and Hertford to the south-west of the town, and in the area covered by the Lee Valley Regional Park to the south-east, where a wide diversity of flora and fauna is apparent. These areas, together with green spaces in the town centre; The Bourne; Lower Bourne Gardens/rear of Demontfort Rise; and King George’s playing fields, act as green lungs in the urban context, while also providing valuable recreational resources.

## **Theme 9: Ware Monitoring and Delivery**

**8.3.38** The final adopted Core Strategy will be accompanied by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan which will set out what infrastructure is needed, how much it will cost, who will pay for it and a broad outline of the phasing of delivery.

**8.3.39** Any large-scale development in Ware that is not able to be delivered in a sustainable town centre location will undoubtedly exacerbate existing traffic congestion throughout the area and put increased strain on town centre services and facilities. The emerging Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan (UTP) contains a package of measures aimed at reducing congestion levels through smarter travel choices. While the effects of these UTP schemes will be annually monitored by the County Council as Highway Authority, air quality management issues are monitored by East Herts Council.

## **8.4 Current Planning Context**

**8.4.1** The current planning context for East Herts is set out in the Local Plan 2007, which identifies Ware as one of six Main Settlements within East Herts. Under this Plan the majority of development is directed to the four largest towns of Bishop’s Stortford, Hertford, Sawbridgeworth and Ware, while Buntingford and the settlement of Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets also receive some development.

**8.4.2** Under the Local Plan 2007, each of the six Main Settlements received a proportional share of the district-wide housing requirement, with an additional allowance diverted from the rural area. The Local Plan 2007 seeks to accommodate as much of this requirement as possible on brownfield land. Where this was not possible within specific settlements, greenfield sites were identified and allocated for housing development.

**8.4.3** However, it should be noted that in addition to the identification of allocated sites, a number of unallocated sites will also come forward for development. In these circumstances, each proposal is judged on a case-by-case basis against the policies in the Local Plan 2007, having regard to the East of England Plan and national planning policy.

**8.4.4** As set out in Table 3.1 (Chapter 3, Section 3.2), 851 homes were built in Ware during the period 2001 to 2009. A further 130 homes have planning permission but are still to be built. As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009, the following allocated housing sites representing at least 76 homes were still to come forward for development in Ware.

### 103 New Road

**8.4.5** Policy WA1 of the Local Plan 2007 allocates this site comprising former County Council offices within a temporary structure for six homes. Despite an application for six homes being refused in 2008, it is anticipated that this site will be redeveloped in due course.

### Land East of the Trinity Centre

**8.4.6** This site lies adjacent to the area formerly occupied by the Trinity Centre and which has now been redeveloped as Westgate House care home and Lady Margaret Gardens. A **Development Brief** covering both the developed area (Phase 1) and 'Land to the East of the Trinity Centre' (Phase 2) was adopted by the Council in August 2002.

**8.4.7** Policy WA2 of the Local Plan 2007 identifies the Land to the East of the Trinity Centre site as **Reserve Housing Land** and estimates that, in accordance with the Development Brief, approximately 70 homes could be provided on the site. In 2008 East Herts Council agreed that Reserve Housing Land should be brought forward for development and it is therefore likely that the Land to the East of the Trinity Centre will be developed in due course.

The Trinity Centre Development Brief is available to view online at: [www.eastherts.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/localplan).

In 2008 the Council agreed to bring forward its Reserve Housing Land sites together with the Bishop's Stortford Areas of Special Restraint (ASRs) and the Special Countryside Area in order to maintain a five year supply of housing land.

The report to the LDF Executive Panel on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2008 (Item 7) is available on the Council's website at <http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=2842>

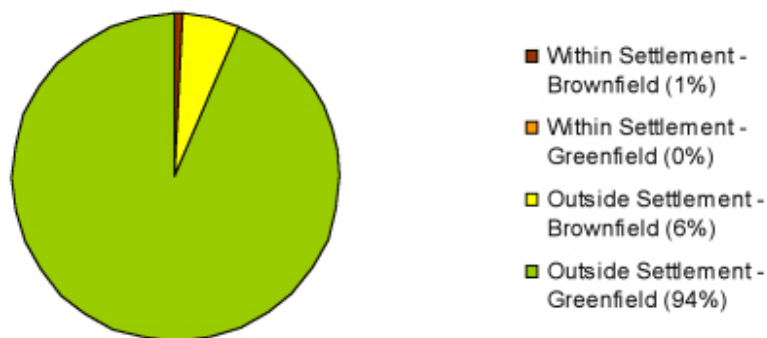
## 8.5 Ware: Future Growth Options

**8.5.1** Before deciding on which future district-wide development strategy to adopt to 2031 and how we distribute growth to each identified settlement (Chapter 3), we need to understand how development could be accommodated in and around Ware itself.

**8.5.2** In terms of the availability of land, 176 hectares have been suggested for housing and associated uses through the Call for Sites, in and around Ware. This equates to approximately 3,522 homes.

**8.5.3** Figure 8.7 shows that there is currently only very limited capacity within the existing urban area of Ware to accommodate further development. Therefore, whichever strategy option is adopted, it is highly likely that Ware will need to accommodate significant greenfield development beyond the current edge of the settlement.

Figure 8.7 Land Availability at Ware (figures may not sum due to rounding)



Source: East Herts Call for Sites

**8.5.4** To accommodate growth in and around Ware, five potential growth options have been identified. These are shown in Figure 8.8 and considered in more detail below.

**8.5.5** The purpose of these options is not to identify specific sites (which will be identified in subsequent LDF Documents) but rather to flag up potential issues, such as infrastructure constraints, that may shape how Ware to 2031. Please note that these options may not be mutually exclusive and that growth could occur in more than one direction, subject to the development strategy and distribution strategy we adopt (see Chapter 3, Sections 3.7 to 3.15).

**8.5.6** As set out in Chapter 3, Section 3.2, the growth options presented in Figure 8.8 seek to deal with Ware’s share of the approximate ‘to-find’ figure of 8,500 homes and are therefore in addition to the development of any remaining Local Plan allocations. As such, these sites have not been shown.

**8.5.7** It should be noted that it is not too late for further options arising from this consultation to be considered.



Figure 8.8 Growth Options for Ware to 2031 (indicative only)



Source: East Herts Council

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**8.5.8** A summary of the issues for the five growth options for Ware are as follows:

#### Option 1: Within Existing Built-up Area

- Good accessibility
- Close to existing services and facilities
- Brownfield land
- Very limited land available for development (Call for Sites)
- Reduces potential expansion of the town beyond its boundaries

#### Option 2: To the North

- Greenfield land – majority currently agricultural
- Land available for development (Call for Sites)



- Good bus accessibility (existing routes and stops) for areas closest to existing residential development
- Potential impact on two Registered Gardens
- Good connectivity with A10
- Potential noise impact for residents closest to A10
- Good access to sports and leisure facilities
- Two existing primary schools located to north of town
- Reduces gap between Ware and Thundridge
- Would require a Green Belt Review

### Option 3: To the East

- Greenfield land – currently mainly agricultural
- Land available for development (Call for Sites)
- Existing primary school located to east of town
- Potential effect on sensitive wildlife site
- Reduces gap between Ware and Wareside
- Would require a Green Belt Review

### Option 4: To the South East

- Greenfield land
- In a floodplain
- Limited land available for development (Call for Sites)
- Potential noise/environmental impact for residents from nearby employment operations
- Coalescence issues with Great Amwell and Stanstead Abbots
- Would require a Green Belt Review

### Option 5: To the South West

- Greenfield land
- Land available for development (Call for Sites)
- Coalescence issues with Hertford, Hertford Heath and Great Amwell
- Potential noise impact for areas closest to A10
- Poor pedestrian access to town centre due to road/route limitations
- Close to existing schools
- Potential reduction in existing recreational provision
- Would require a Green Belt Review

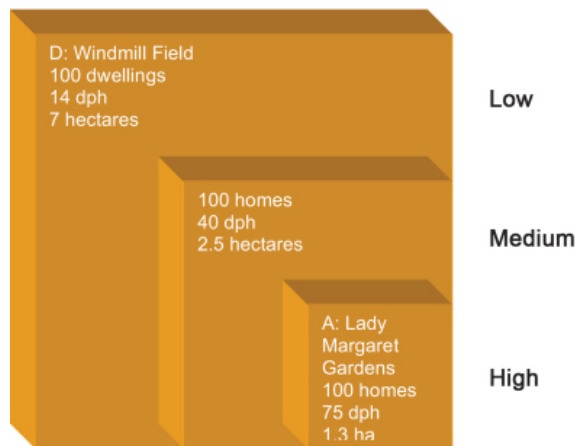
## Question 36

Growth Options for Ware

Please rank the growth options for Ware in order of preference, and comment on their suitability. Are there any other options we have not considered?

**8.5.9** As explained in Chapter 3, Section 3.3, the amount of land that would be required for new development (the land-take) will vary depending on the density at which homes are built. For example, using the illustrations in Figure 8.3 (see Section 8.2), Figure 8.9 shows that new development built at the density of A: Lady Margaret Gardens at the former Trinity Centre site (75dph), 100 homes would require 1.3 hectares, whereas at the density of D: Windmill Field, Hoe Lane, (14dph), 7 hectares would be required. Density therefore has clear implications for the amount of land required and the future shape of Ware, but this clearly needs to be judged in the context of overall design quality. Density and design quality are two of the chief determinants of character in the built environment.

Figure 8.9 Illustration of Land-Take at Different Densities (illustrative only - Not to scale)



Source: East Herts Council

**8.5.10** As can be seen from Figure 8.3 above and the examples shown in the other settlement chapters, there are a variety of development designs and densities. There are many fine examples of higher density developments around the district, such as Victorian terraces and three and four storey Edwardian town-houses, which are now valued for their historic interest and contribution to quality of place.

**8.5.11** Whilst the specific characteristics of a site will determine the actual density at which a development is built, understanding the approach to the development and the relationship between density and land-take in a particular town is important.

**8.5.12** Theoretically, there are three general approaches to development in Ware:

1. Lower density - therefore higher land-take
2. Medium density - therefore medium land-take
3. Higher density - therefore lower land-take

## Question 37

### Approach to Development in Ware

Please rank the approaches to development in Ware in order of preference. Is there another approach we have not considered?

## 8.6 Ware: Emerging LDF Vision

- 8.6.1** As discussed in Chapter 2, it will not be possible to finalise a LDF vision for any town in the district until the development strategy is decided, since the amount and location of new development to be accommodated will have considerable implications for the size, shape and character of the town.
- 8.6.2** However, given the wealth of information gained from people interacting in the Awareness Raising process, it is possible to produce a first tentative LDF vision based on an analysis of the evidence including the results of community and stakeholder engagement, various strategies and studies.
- 8.6.3** This LDF vision for Ware will be subject to further refinement and will be greater informed when our preferred option for the development strategy and our preferred approach for the distribution strategy (see Chapter 3) are agreed, as these strategies will determine the amount of growth Ware will receive to 2031.
- 8.6.4** It should be noted, however, that the LDF vision for Ware will be different in scope from any other vision for the town e.g. if the Town Council should decide to develop a Town Plan in the future. This is because the LDF Core Strategy:
- forms part of the legal planning framework for East Herts;
  - is a high-level strategic document that covers the whole district, and therefore will not encompass the same level of detail as a town plan;
  - can only address matters within the scope of the LDF;
  - will set the context for subsequent LDF documents and other policy documents such as town centre strategies or site-specific development briefs.
- 8.6.5** Clearly, any LDF vision for Ware will also be informed to a large degree by potential growth scenarios for the town to 2031, albeit the exact levels of growth will not be known until the development strategy is decided.

**8.6.6** Our emerging LDF vision for Ware is as follows:

*Ware will retain its distinctive character and will meet the day-to-day needs of its residents and those living in its rural hinterland. Its town centre will continue to provide a range of retail services and other facilities and its vitality will be maintained. The high quality historic townscape and unique features will attract an increasing number of visitors.*

*Ware's function as a key employment base for the district will continue and poor quality areas will have been upgraded. High educational attainment will be maintained and suitably sited primary and secondary schools will enable all of Ware's children to be educated within appropriate catchment areas. Ware's community spirit will endure and opportunities for social interaction will increase.*

*New residential developments will successfully integrate into the existing townscape, be socially inclusive, contribute towards residents feeling safe living in Ware, and be adaptable to changing lifestyle needs. The individual identity of the town will be retained and coalescence with Hertford, Hertford Heath, Great Amwell, Stanstead Abbots, Thundridge and Wareside will be avoided.*

*Continued protection and enhancement of the River Lea and other open spaces, together with the preservation of existing trees and new landscaping within the town, will help Ware adapt to climate change. With a greater range and availability of sustainable travel options, people will find it easier to move around the town and be inclined to choose greener travel modes. This will aid a reduction in congestion, improved air quality for the town and healthier residents. Leisure opportunities in Ware will be enhanced and may include a cinema and theatre facilities.*

**Question 38**

Ware Vision

Do you agree with the emerging LDF Vision for Ware?



# Chapter 9

## Villages

## 9.1 Purpose of the Villages Chapter

- 9.1.1** This chapter sets out the issues and options facing the villages and considers which villages should be identified as suitable for growth, bearing in mind the six development strategy options, as set out in Chapter 3: Development Strategy.
- 9.1.2** It should also be read in conjunction with Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision to enable the necessary appreciation of the issues in a wider context. This chapter includes sections on the following:
- Explaining what a village is and outlining their historical evolution (Section 9.2);
  - The key issues facing the villages arranged by theme (Section 9.3);
  - The current planning context for the villages as set out in the Local Plan 2007 (Section 9.4);
  - The approach to development in the villages (Section 9.5);
  - A series of options for identifying villages for development (Section 9.6); and,
  - An emerging vision for the villages to 2031 (Section 9.7).
- 9.1.3** The purpose of the Core Strategy is to establish the district-wide development strategy for East Herts. This will set out how much development each identified settlement will receive to 2031. The Core Strategy does not deal with detailed planning issues such as design and amenity. These issues, along with the identification of specific sites, will be dealt with in subsequent LDF documents.
- 9.1.4** To inform the development strategy we are seeking your views in respect of the following two aspects: firstly, regarding future development options and which villages should be identified, and secondly regarding an emerging vision for those villages to 2031.

This chapter includes questions 39 to 42.

To respond to these questions please complete the separate Issues and Options Consultation Questionnaire.

## 9.2 What is a Village?

- 9.2.1** A village is a settlement that can be defined as a collection of buildings (usually at least 20) that is larger than a hamlet, yet smaller than a town, and which contains at least one communal or public building e.g. a public house or church. A hamlet is a smaller grouping of buildings that doesn't necessarily



have any public or service buildings to support it. A significant difference is that it won't have a parish church like a village does, and most hamlets contain only between three and twenty buildings.

- 9.2.2** The point at which a village becomes a town is more difficult to determine, and is probably best defined by those who live there. However, since the Middle Ages the term 'town' has been a legal term that refers to the fact that the community has a borough charter. East Herts has five towns: Bishop's Stortford, Buntingford, Hertford, Sawbridgeworth and Ware.
- 9.2.3** A parish is an ecclesiastical and civil administrative area based on a village or series of villages. There are some 100 villages in East Herts distributed across 50 parishes represented by 48 parish councils and meetings, including five town councils. Although they vary in size and function, parish councils provide valuable local services including the management of some halls, public gardens, allotments and cemeteries. Parish councillors also provide a useful conduit as representatives of local residents. Many parishes have produced **Parish Plans** and/or **Village Design Statements**. These valuable documents set out the community's aspirations for their parish or village and have been used to inform, along with town plans, the content of this Issues and Options document.

Parish Plans set out a vision for how a community wants to develop. They can include everything that is relevant to the people who live and work in that community, from employment and playgrounds to the design of new buildings and protection of hedges and ponds. They can include any social, environmental or economic issues.

Village Design Statements are produced by communities to identify local character and set out design guidance to help guide new development.

## The Evolution of Villages

- 9.2.4** Villages grew as farming settlements and their fortunes have matched the growth in the agricultural economy. In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, however, the agricultural economy witnessed significant structural change involving mechanisation of food production and the subsequent loss of labour.
- 9.2.5** House prices in the countryside have however continued to rise and villages have suffered particularly from high house prices. Coupled with the fact that agricultural wages are low, villagers have often found themselves priced out of the village they grew up in.

- 9.2.6** These changes have meant that many villages are no longer ‘farming settlements’. They have become dormitory or commuter villages that simply house residents who work and socialise in neighbouring towns and in London. However, these changes, lamented by many, simply reflect society today.
- 9.2.7** Figure 9.1 shows some examples of recent village housing development in East Herts. As can be seen, there is a variety of styles and built-form reflecting changes to housing design and living requirements over the years. As a result, the density of these homes varies from 41 dwellings per hectare in Watton-at-Stone, to just 20 dwellings per hectare in Much Hadham. More examples of housing developments in East Herts can be found in the portrait sections in the other settlement chapters.

### Historical Planning Approach

- 9.2.8** Historically the planning system has viewed villages in the context of the wider countryside and as such, has applied a general policy of restraint that seeks to protect the countryside (and therefore villages) from development.
- 9.2.9** In addition, in rural areas like East Herts that lie within the orbit of large metropolitan areas such as London, the policy of restraint has been reinforced through the application of Green Belt policy. The Green Belt seeks to safeguard land from inappropriate development and maintain the openness of such land. Further explanation of the Green Belt in East Herts can be found in Chapter 3, Section 3.6.

Figure 9.1 Examples of recent housing developments in the villages



Source: East Herts Council

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## 9.3 Villages: Key Issues

- 9.3.1** This section looks at some of the key planning issues facing the villages. It is organised under a series of nine themes, which are used throughout this Issues and Options document to provide consistency and structure.
- 9.3.2** Many of the issues that relate to the villages apply equally to other parts of East Herts or are in fact district-wide issues. To avoid repetition, these generic district-wide issues have been dealt with under the relevant theme in Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision. The following sections set out those particular issues that apply specifically to the villages. We therefore suggest that you read this section in conjunction with Chapter 2. For information, the specific policy context, the relevant sources from the evidence base and the linkages to the SCS for each theme are set out in Sections F to O of the Supporting Document.

### Theme 1: Energy and Climate Change

- 9.3.3** Many villages are located off the national gas grid, and are therefore potentially well placed to take advantage of local opportunities for sustainable heating supplies, such as local coppiced timber. There is also potential for use of agricultural waste products to be used for local heat or energy generation and as such, the villages may be particularly well suited to community energy schemes.
- 9.3.4** Many villages are located adjacent to rivers, and development in these locations will need to address flood risk. Natural flood storage in upstream river basins may help to mitigate flooding. Planting of new woodland in the countryside adjacent to development may offer opportunities for coppicing as above and also help to reduce heat effects in summer. New development will need to maximise the benefits of existing features of the landscape which provide shade or cooling to adapt to climate change.

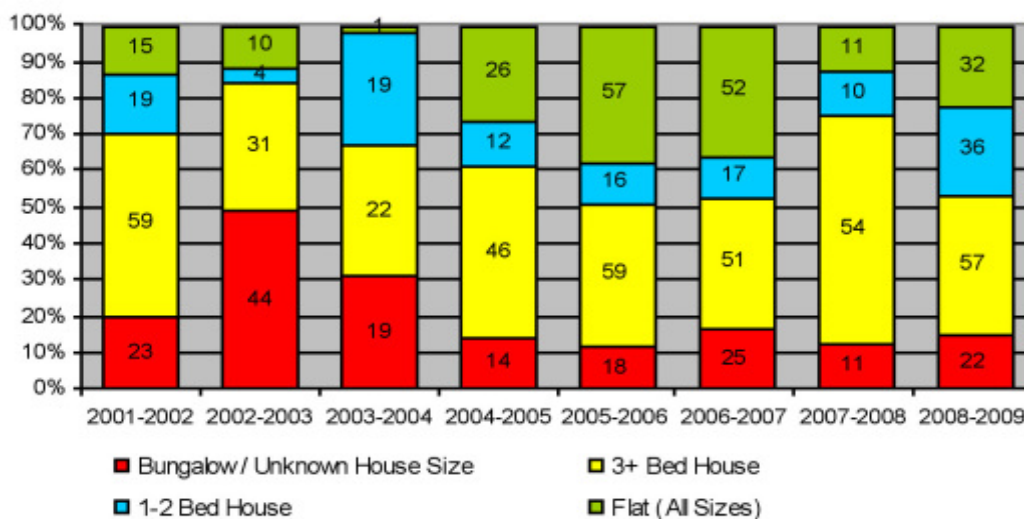
### Theme 2: People and Community Safety

- 9.3.5** Maintaining a balanced age-range and mix of population will be one of the principal challenges in the villages to 2031. It is likely that problems of housing affordability in the countryside will continue to drive young people out of the villages and into towns in neighbouring districts. It is also likely that as village residents become older, they will become increasingly isolated from everyday social interaction as well as basic facilities. Planning can address these issues by ensuring that there is a continuing supply of rural affordable housing which can in turn support community infrastructure.

**Theme 3: Housing**

**9.3.6** Housing affordability continues to be one of the key concerns in the villages, reflecting planning restrictions on housing and the premium placed on village life. Historically there has been a narrow range of accommodation in the villages, but, as Figure 9.2 shows, over the past ten years there have been some small-scale flatted developments in addition to houses.

Figure 9.2 Gross Housing Completions by Type in the Villages and the Rural Area



Source: Hertfordshire County Council

**Theme 4: Character**

**9.3.7** Over the past fifty years, strict planning policies have preserved the setting of the villages in open countryside and limited their growth. Although most villages do not have a distinct architectural style, many of them do have a recognisable centre and some buildings of significant architectural merit, the setting of which should be conserved and enhanced. 37 villages in East Herts benefit from designated Conservation Areas which befit their unique historic character. Quality of new development in the villages is also an important contributor to the character of the villages. Figure 9.1 above gives some examples of recent development in a selection of villages. Many of the smaller villages are seen in the context of the countryside and the desire to conserve and enhance the character of the landscape.

**Theme 5: Economy, Skills and Prosperity**

**9.3.8** There are numerous employment opportunities in the villages including offices and employment sites. However, village employment is usually seen in the context of the wider countryside and employment uses such as light industry and distribution are often located in redundant farm buildings. Viewing villages



in this wider context potentially allows for significant business opportunities in relation to rural diversification, for example energy generation (Theme 1 above) and sustainable agriculture. However, any diversification needs to be balanced against the need to preserve the character of the countryside and the openness of the Green Belt. Consideration also needs to be given to the issue of food security and biodiversity.

### Theme 6: On the Move

- 9.3.9** The issue of accessibility and lack of passenger transport is considered under East Herts On the Move, in Chapter 2, Section 2.9. Villages are usually compact enough to warrant travel by foot or bicycle within them, although lack of suitable footpaths and street lighting can be a disincentive for many younger and older residents. As a result of both the lack of passenger transport and local facilities, the private car is the only practical solution for villagers to access services. Those villagers without access to a car, such as those on low incomes, young people and disabled people, can find themselves at a significant disadvantage.
- 9.3.10** The issue of accessibility sums up the conundrum facing the villages. On the one hand, we need to improve accessibility by providing growth and a greater range of services; on the other hand, we need to retain their rural character by potentially limiting growth and facilities. Perhaps one solution will be to focus development at those larger villages that have good accessibility or potential accessibility in terms of passenger transport.

### Theme 7: Health, Wellbeing and Play

- 9.3.11** Facilities such as doctors' surgeries, primary schools, post offices, village shops, pubs, village halls and employment sites are essential to maintaining the continued vitality of rural communities. However the viable provision of such facilities is under continued pressure. Breathing new life into the villages via new development may help to sustain such facilities but expectations need to be managed. As indicated in Figure 1.5 (Chapter 1, Section 1.12) significant housing and employment development may be required not just to sustain existing facilities but to provide new services.
- 9.3.12** There are 43 village halls across the rural area. These are often located adjacent to play areas used by local children. Many play areas are maintained by Parish Councils. In addition, some rural schools make their play facilities available for the use of local children.

**Theme 8: Green**

**9.3.13** Increasing levels of traffic on village roads can cause pollution, noise and dirt. Many villages themselves are havens for wildlife. Often wildlife habitats are located in close proximity to popular recreational areas, village greens and rights of way, and any potential conflicts should be carefully managed and monitored in consultation with relevant bodies.

**Theme 9: Monitoring and Delivery**

**9.3.14** Subject to our preferred development strategy, the villages as a whole are unlikely to require large-scale infrastructure. However, where specific villages are identified for growth, it will be necessary to ensure that supporting infrastructure is phased in parallel with development.

**9.3.15** As discussed, the key issue regarding the villages is ensuring the viability of services and facilities. Many service providers appear to prefer centralised services rather than a larger number of dispersed rural services. This is not to say that existing services will be neglected, but rather that it is unlikely that dispersed development will be able to attract significant investment in new infrastructure and services.

**9.4 Current Planning Context**

**9.4.1** The general approach of restraint to development in the villages and the countryside is currently replicated at the local level in the **Local Plan 2007** which includes policies on both the Green Belt and the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt. The latter policy operates a similar level of restraint to the Green Belt.

Chapter 4 of the Local Plan 2007 includes policies relating to the Green Belt and the countryside. Policy GBC2 relates to inappropriate development in the Green Belt and Policies GBC2 and GBC3 relates to the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt.

The Local Plan 2007 can be viewed and downloaded at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/localplan)

**9.4.2** The approach in the Local Plan 2007 to development in the villages is based on a **Village Development Strategy** that seeks to locate development in suitable locations. This strategy identifies three categories of villages: Category 1 Villages, Category 2 Villages and Category 3 Villages.

**9.4.3** To be considered suitable for development, villages were selected on the basis of the level of their facilities and services, size, availability of passenger transport, capacity of the highway network and capacity to accommodate development.



**Category 1 Villages** - villages where limited small-scale and infill development for housing, employment, service and community facilities may be permitted, in order to help sustain vital and viable rural communities.

**Category 2 Villages** - villages where infill development only, that meets an identified need of the village or parish, may be permitted.

**Category 3 Villages** - the remaining villages where no new building will be permitted except for that appropriate in the rural area.

**9.4.4** The villages identified as Category 1 and 2 Villages in the Local Plan 2007 are listed below in Table 9.1.

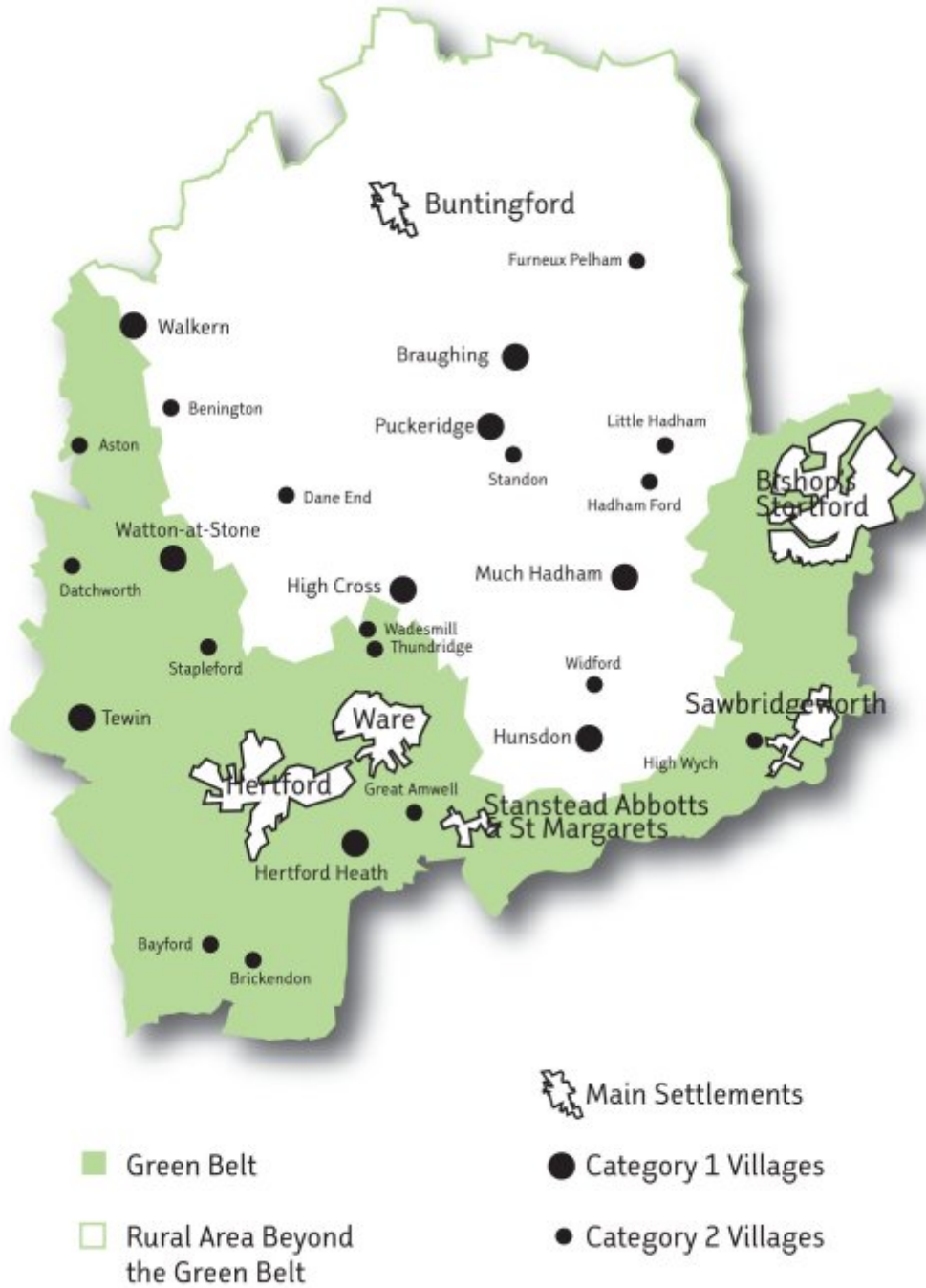
Table 9.1 Category 1 and 2 Villages

Category 1 Villages		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Braughing</li> <li>• Hertford Heath</li> <li>• High Cross</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hunsdon</li> <li>• Much Hadham</li> <li>• Puckeridge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tewin</li> <li>• Walkern</li> <li>• Watton-at-Stone</li> </ul>
Category 2 Villages		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aston (excluding Aston End)</li> <li>• Bayford</li> <li>• Benington</li> <li>• Brickendon</li> <li>• Dane End</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Datchworth</li> <li>• Furneux Pelham</li> <li>• Great Amwell</li> <li>• Hadham Ford</li> <li>• High Wych</li> <li>• Little Hadham</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standon</li> <li>• Stapleford</li> <li>• Thundridge</li> <li>• Wadesmill</li> <li>• Widford</li> </ul>

**9.4.5** The Village Development Strategy aims to give a degree of flexibility to growth in the villages by allowing limited development in appropriate locations. This approach marks a shift from previous local plans where no development was permitted. The reasoning for this change in approach was the acknowledgement that, as elsewhere in the country, villages have suffered from the closure of village shops, schools and pubs, the centralisation of healthcare facilities and the loss of bus routes. Changes in agricultural practices have also meant that there are fewer employment opportunities. Coupled with increasing house prices, there was insufficient affordable housing available. By allowing limited growth, it was hoped that the vitality of villages would be sustained.

**9.4.6** Figure 9.3 below illustrates the current planning policy context as set out in the Local Plan 2007.

Figure 9.3 Local Planning context



Source: East Herts Council

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**9.4.7** As set out in Table 3.1 (Chapter 3, Section 3.2), over the period 2001 to 2009, 737 homes have been built in the villages and the rural area and a further 340 have planning permission but are still to be built. In terms of housing allocations, the Local Plan 2007 allocated a number of sites for housing development in Category 1 Villages. As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009 the following allocated sites, representing at least 77 homes, were still to come forward for development.

### **Braughing, Pentlows Farm**

**9.4.8** This allocated site of former farm buildings can accommodate at least 30 units, including the provision of up to 40% affordable homes. Whilst the allocation is for general housing needs, a previous application sought permission for an elderly persons' residential scheme.

### **Puckeridge, West of Buntingford Road and North of Mentley Lane East**

**9.4.9** This greenfield site lies within the triangle of Buntingford Road, Mentley Lane East and the A10 bypass. It can accommodate at least 47 homes including the provision of up to 40% affordable homes.

## **9.5 The Approach to Development in the Villages**

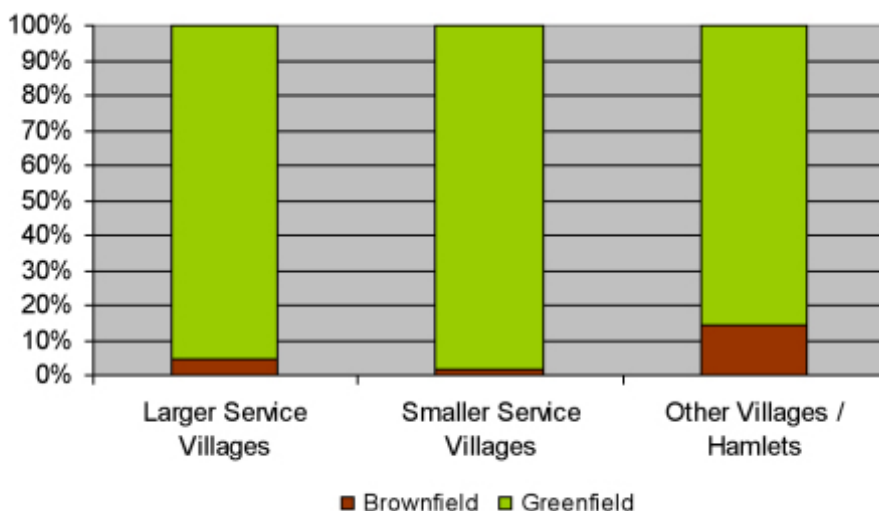
**9.5.1** Before deciding which district-wide development strategy to adopt and which villages should be identified, we need to understand how development could be accommodated in and around the villages.

**9.5.2** In terms of the availability of land, 672 hectares have been suggested for housing and associated uses through the Call for Sites, in and around the villages. This equates to approximately 13,434 homes, which is more than sufficient to meet the 'to-find' figure of 8,500 homes itself. However, it should be noted that as set out in Chapter 3, Section 3.7 it is not considered reasonable to exclude development from the towns.

**9.5.3** Figure 9.4 shows that there is a currently only a limited supply of brownfield land available in and around the villages. For information, Chapter 3, Section 3.5 includes an explanation of the difference between brownfield and greenfield land.

**9.5.4** What is clear is that whichever development strategy option is adopted, growth will occur on greenfield land beyond the edge of the existing built-up areas of some of the villages. Some of this growth will also be on land designated as Green Belt. Please see Chapter 3, Section 3.6 for the implications of growth on the Green Belt in East Herts. As explained in Chapter 1, the Core Strategy will not deal with specific sites. Instead, its purpose is to identify the broad locations for growth, including the identification of villages.

Figure 9.4 Land Availability in the Villages



Source: East Herts Council

**9.5.5** As explained in Chapter 3, Section 3.3, the amount of land that would be required for new development (the land-take) will vary depending on the density at which homes are built. For example, using the illustrations shown in Figure 9.1 (see Section 9.2), Figure 9.5 shows that at the density of D: High Street Watton-at-Stone (41dph), 100 homes would require 2.4 hectares, whereas at the density of C: Windmill Way, Much Hadham (20dph) 5 hectares would be required.

Figure 9.5 Illustration of Land-Take at Different Densities (Illustrative only - Not to scale)



**9.5.6** Density therefore has clear implications for the amount of land required and the future of the villages, but this clearly needs to be judged in the context of overall design quality. Density and design quality are two of the chief determinants of character in the built environment. As can be seen from

Figure 9.1 (see Section 9.2) and the examples shown in the other settlement chapters, there are a variety of development designs and densities. However, to achieve higher densities in the villages it would probably be inappropriate to construct large blocks of flats and cottages with smaller gardens would be more appropriate.

- 9.5.7** Whilst the specific characteristics of a site will determine the actual density at which a development is built, understanding the approach to the development and the relationship between density and land-take in a particular village is important.
- 9.5.8** Theoretically, there are three general approaches to development in the Villages:
1. Lower density - therefore higher land-take
  2. Medium density - therefore medium land-take
  3. Higher density - therefore lower land-take

## Question 39

### Approach to Development in the Villages

Please rank the approaches to development in the Villages in order of preference. Is there another approach we have not considered?

## 9.6 Identifying Villages for Development

**9.6.1** The district wide development strategy options for accommodating growth to 2031 are set out in Chapter 3, Sections 3.7 to 3.14. To accommodate the approximate 'to-find' figure of 8,500, six development strategy options have been generated that identify which settlements in East Herts will receive growth to 2031. These are as follows:

- Option A: Towns
- Option B: Towns and Larger Service Villages
- Option C: Towns, Larger Service Villages, and Smaller Service Villages
- Option D: Towns, Larger Service Villages, Smaller Service Villages, and Other Villages / Hamlets
- Option E: Towns, Stevenage and Welwyn Garden City
- Option F: Settlements within Transport Corridors

**9.6.2** As can be seen, under Options B, C, D and F, growth is directed to the villages. The starting point for identifying which villages will receive a proportion of the growth under which option is to group them according to their size and level of services. The development strategy is important as it

will not only determine what role the villages play in accommodating development in East Herts, but also determine their future as rural communities. The six options have different effects on the villages. This could range from no growth under Option A to witnessing some growth in even the smallest of hamlets under Option D.

- 9.6.3** Figure 9.6 shows the main public facilities in the villages. As can be seen, the larger villages have a fuller range of facilities whilst several villages just have a primary school. The remaining villages in the district without facilities are not shown. For a fuller picture this map should be read in conjunction with the key district-wide issues in Chapter 2: Key Issues and Vision. Those villages with more facilities are generally regarded as more suitable locations for growth. However, there is no guarantee that additional homes will ensure that existing facilities are retained; that is down to whether residents use the local facilities on offer.
- 9.6.4** Accordingly, we have identified the following three types of villages:
- **Larger Service Villages** - the largest villages with a wide range of local facilities that act as local service centres to their rural hinterland;
  - **Smaller Service Villages** - medium sized villages with a limited range of local facilities;
  - **Other Villages / Hamlets** - the smallest villages with little or no facilities.
- 9.6.5** It should be noted that the approach to the villages and the amount of growth they will receive is heavily dependent on the particular development strategy option that we choose. However, is the principle of identifying three types of village correct?

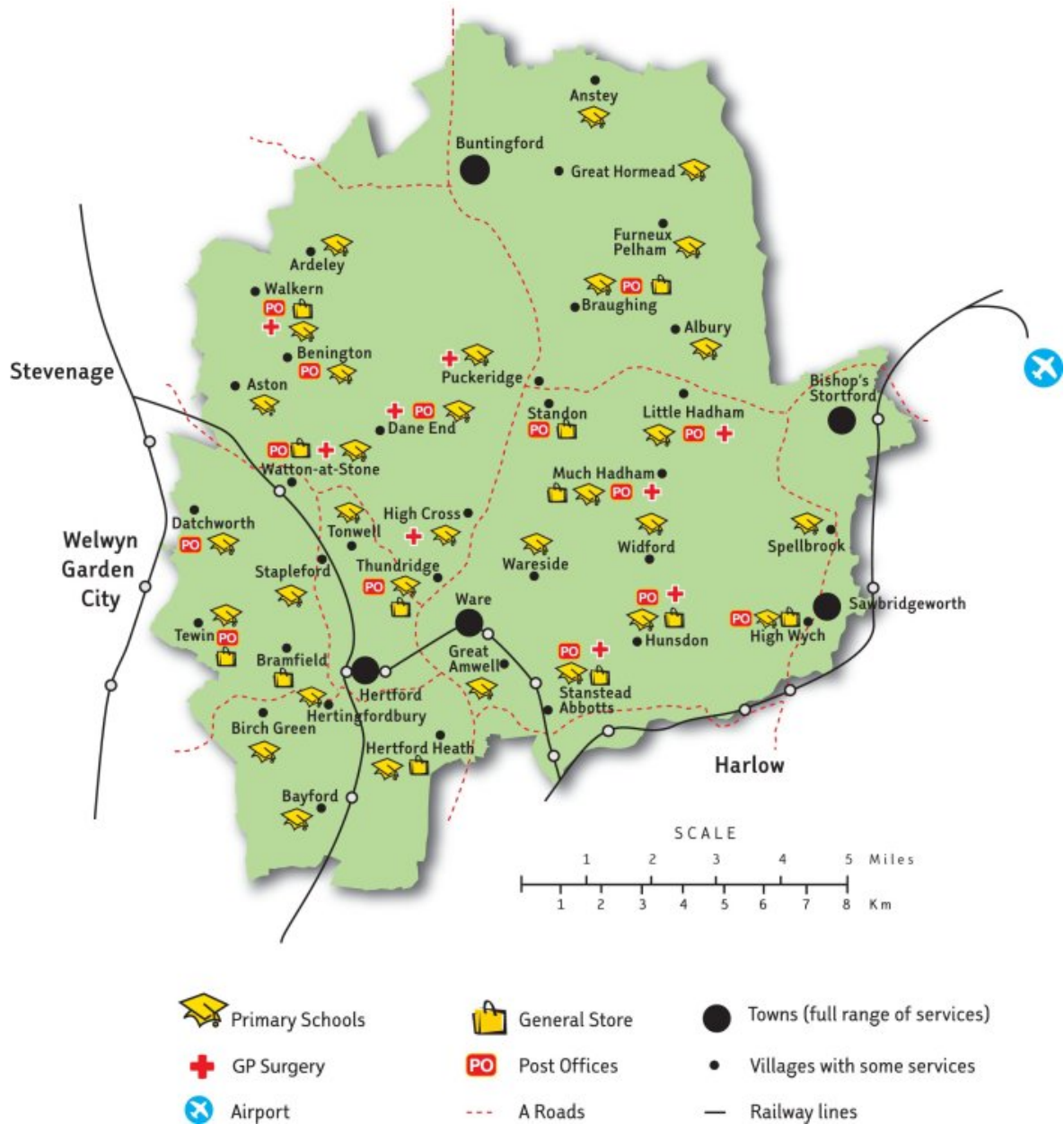
### Question 40

#### Identifying Types of Villages

Is our approach to identifying three types of village (Larger Service Villages, Smaller Service Villages and Other Villages / Hamlets) correct?



Figure 9.6 Village Facilities



Source: East Herts Council

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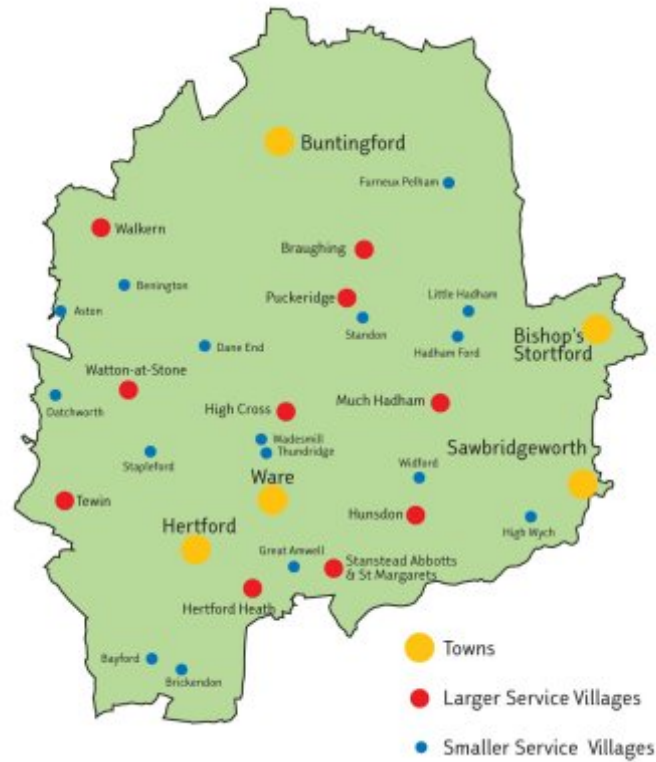
**9.6.6** Table 9.2 and Figure 9.7 show the Larger and Smaller Service Villages that are referred to in development strategy Options B, C and D. The Other Villages / Hamlets referred to in Option D have not been identified at this stage. Should Option D be our preferred option, further detailed work will be required to specifically identify these settlements.



Table 9.2 Identification of Villages under Options B, C and D

<b>Larger Service Villages</b> (e.g. Options B, C and D)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Braughing</li> <li>● Hertford Heath</li> <li>● High Cross</li> <li>● Hunsdon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Much Hadham</li> <li>● Puckeridge</li> <li>● Stanstead Abbots &amp; St Margarets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Tewin</li> <li>● Walkern</li> <li>● Watton-at-Stone</li> </ul>
<b>Smaller Service Villages</b> (e.g. Options C and D)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Aston (excluding Aston End)</li> <li>● Bayford</li> <li>● Benington</li> <li>● Brickendon</li> <li>● Dane End</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Datchworth</li> <li>● Furneux Pelham</li> <li>● Great Amwell</li> <li>● Hadham Ford</li> <li>● High Wych</li> <li>● Little Hadham</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Standon</li> <li>● Stapleford</li> <li>● Thundridge</li> <li>● Wadesmill</li> <li>● Widford</li> </ul>
<b>Other Villages / Hamlets</b> (e.g. Options C and D)		
(Identified as appropriate)		

Figure 9.7 Larger Service Villages and Smaller Service Villages



Source: East Herts Council

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**9.6.7** These are based on the Local Plan 2007 Category 1 and 2 Villages. The Local Plan 2007 identified the five towns and the settlement of Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets as the ‘Six Main Settlements’. However, because Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets is not a town, we did not feel that this was an appropriate starting point for the Issues and Options process. We have therefore, re-designated the settlement of Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets as a Larger Service Village.

**9.6.8** The villages identified under Option F: Settlements within Transport Corridors are listed in Table 9.3. These include those villages listed as Larger Service Villages, Smaller Service Villages, and Other Villages / Hamlets.

Table 9.3 Identification of Villages Under Option F

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Braughing</li> <li>• Bayford</li> <li>• Brickendon</li> <li>• Great Amwell</li> <li>• Birch Green</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hertford Heath</li> <li>• Hertingfordbury</li> <li>• High Cross</li> <li>• Letty Green</li> <li>• Little Hadham</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stapleford</li> <li>• Thundridge</li> <li>• Tonwell</li> <li>• Wadesmill</li> <li>• Waterford</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buckland</li> <li>• Cole Green</li> <li>• Colliers End</li> <li>• Cottered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Puckeridge</li> <li>• Spellbrook</li> <li>• Standon</li> <li>• Stanstead Abbots &amp; St Margarets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watton-at-Stone</li> <li>• Westmill (nr Buntingford)</li> </ul>
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**9.6.9** The transport corridors have been identified based on both road and rail infrastructure. It is intended that the villages would form ‘beads on string’ rather than urbanised corridors of growth.

**9.6.10** The extent of the growth to the north of Harlow will also influence which villages in the southeast of the district are identified for development.

**Question 41**

Village Identification

Have we identified the correct villages under each village type?

## 9.7 Villages: An Emerging LDF Vision

**9.7.1** Although we have set out an emerging LDF vision for each town (see Chapters 4 to 8), it is not feasible to have a LDF vision for every village. We can however, establish a LDF vision for the particular types of village; that is, the Larger Service Villages, Smaller Service Villages and the Other Villages / Hamlets. Furthermore, the identification of a final LDF vision will be dependent upon whichever development strategy we choose. The different approaches are considered below.

### The Villages under Development Strategy Option A

**9.7.2** As set out in Chapter 3, Section 3.8 this option directs all growth to the five towns. As a consequence, the villages, regardless of size will receive no growth. The emerging LDF vision for the villages under Option A is as follows:

**9.7.3** We believe that in 2031:

- *The villages of East Herts will have been protected from all development. Although their historic character will have been preserved they will have limited facilities with residents travelling to the five towns to access most services.*

### The Villages under Development Strategy Option B

**9.7.4** As set out in Chapter 3, Section 3.9 this option directs all growth to the five towns and the series of larger service villages. The emerging LDF vision for the villages under Option B is as follows:

**9.7.5** We believe that in 2031:

- *The larger service villages will have accommodated a significant amount of growth between them. They will be vibrant rural communities with a healthy balance of homes, jobs and community facilities serving not only the needs of their residents but acting as local service centres for the surrounding rural hinterland. They may even attract commuters from neighbouring towns. They will function as part of a network of places and be large enough to compete with, but not undermine the vitality of the five towns.*
- *The remaining villages will have been protected from development and will continue to serve their existing residents.*

### **The Villages under Development Strategy Option C**

**9.7.6** As set out in Chapter 3, Section 3.10 this option directs growth to the five towns, the larger service villages and the smaller service villages. The emerging LDF vision for the villages under Option C is as follows:

**9.7.7** We believe that in 2031:

- *Between them the larger service villages will have accommodated the majority of growth allocated to the villages. They will be vibrant rural communities with a healthy balance of homes, jobs, and community facilities, serving not only the needs of their residents but acting as local service centres for the surrounding rural hinterland.*
- *Between them, the smaller service villages will have accommodated the remaining proportion of the growth allocated to the villages. This will help to balance the need to maintain the vitality of smaller villages with the need to protect the countryside from development.*
- *The remaining villages will have been protected from development.*

### **The Villages under Development Strategy Option D**

**9.7.8** As set out in Chapter 3, Section 3.11 this option directs growth to the five towns, the larger service villages, the smaller service villages and the other villages / hamlets. The emerging LDF vision for the villages under Option D is as follows:

**9.7.9** We believe that in 2031:

- *Between them the larger service villages will have accommodated most of the growth allocated to the villages. They will be vibrant rural communities with a healthy balance of homes, jobs and community*

*facilities serving not only the needs of their residents but acting as local service centres for the surrounding rural hinterland.*

- *Between them, the smaller service villages will have accommodated some of the growth allocated to the villages helping to maintain the vitality of smaller villages.*
- *Between them, the other villages / hamlets will have accommodated the remainder of the growth, providing local housing for local people.*

### **The Villages under Development Strategy Option E**

**9.7.10** As set out in Chapter 3, Section 3.12 this option directs growth to the five towns and to the east of Stevenage and Welwyn Garden City. As a consequence, the villages, regardless of size will receive no growth. The emerging LDF vision for the villages under Option E is as follows:

**9.7.11** We believe that in 2031:

- *The villages of East Herts will have been protected from all development. Although their historic character will have been preserved they will have limited facilities with residents travelling to the five towns and neighbouring settlements of Stevenage and Welwyn Garden City to access services.*

### **The Villages under Development Strategy Option F**

**9.7.12** As set out in Chapter 3, Section 3.13 this option directs growth to settlements within the transport corridors. The emerging LDF vision for the villages under Option F is as follows:

**9.7.13** We believe that in 2031:

- *Between them, those villages lying within the identified transport corridors will accommodate a significant proportion of growth. They will function as part of a network of well connected places, and as viable communities providing a healthy balance of homes, jobs and community facilities well served by high quality passenger transport.*
- *The remaining villages of varying sizes lying within the more remote rural areas will have been protected from development, continuing to serve their existing residents.*

## Summary

**9.7.14** The LDF vision statements set out above have entailed some ‘crystal ball gazing’. They are very broad statements in which we have tried to capture the essence of the potential effect of different levels of development on different types of village. Our final approach to the villages will be dependent upon whichever development strategy we choose. Notwithstanding this, it is still useful at this early stage to get your views on the general approach.

### Question 42

An Emerging Vision for the Villages

Subject to whichever development strategy option we chose, do you agree with our emerging vision for the villages?

Chapter 10  
North of Harlow



## 10.1 Purpose of the North of Harlow Chapter

**10.1.1** Chapter 10 sets out the options for development north of Harlow within East Herts district as identified in the East of England Plan.

**10.1.2** Development identified to the North of Harlow in East Herts is in addition to the East Herts district-wide growth identified in chapter 3. This chapter focuses on the following:

- Current Planning Context as set out in the East of England Plan (Section 10.2)
- North of Harlow Context (Section 10.3)
- The Consultants' Study: Background and Scope (Section 10.4)
- The Consultants' Study: Methodology and Options (Section 10.5)
- The Consultants' Study: Options Testing and Suggested Approach (Section 10.6)
- Further technical work (Section 10.7)

This chapter includes question 43

## 10.2 Current Planning Context

**10.2.1** The current planning context is set out in the East of England Plan. As explained in Chapter 1, Section 1.8, the Core Strategy is required to be in general conformity with the East of England Plan.

**10.2.2** The **East of England Plan** contains four policies that relate to the growth of Harlow and these are listed below. For information, the full text of Policy H1 is provided in Section P of the Supporting Document accompanying this Issues and Options Consultation.

- Policy SS3: Key Centres for Development and Change (KCDC)
- Policy SS7: Green Belt
- Policy H1: Regional Housing Provision 2001 to 2021
- Policy HA1: Harlow Key Centre for Development and Change

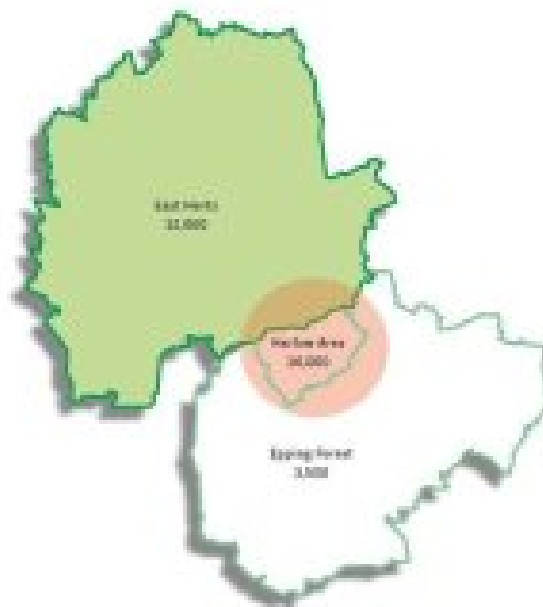
The East of England Plan is available to view on the Government Office for the East of England's website at: [www.tinyurls.co.uk/J8618](http://www.tinyurls.co.uk/J8618)

**10.2.3** In accordance with Policy H1, Harlow is required to provide a minimum of 16,000 dwellings in the period April 2001 to March 2021. This figure includes urban extensions in East Herts as well as Epping Forest district, the split

between the districts to be determined through Development Plan Documents. This is in addition to the requirement to deliver 12,000 new homes in the district in the period 2001 - 2021 (see Section 3.2 and Figure 10.1 below).

- 10.2.4** Policy HA1 provides more detailed information on the strategy for Harlow and the requirement for a Green Belt Review to the north of the town (i.e. within East Herts) to provide for an eventual development of at least 10,000 dwellings (see Section 3.6 above).

Figure 10.1 East of England Plan Policy H1: Housing Provision 2001 - 2021



Source: East Herts Council

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- 10.2.5** Policy HA1 also requires Harlow, East Herts and Epping Forest District Councils working with the county transport authorities, the Regional Assembly, the Government Office and Harlow Renaissance to undertake an appraisal of planning and transport options to inform the preparation of joint or coordinated Local Development Documents. This work should establish the planning framework for Harlow and its urban extensions in accordance with the East of England Plan.
- 10.2.6** Scott Wilson consultants were appointed to undertake this work, known as the 'Harlow Options Appraisal'. This chapter sets out the findings of the consultants study and seeks your views on their 'suggested spatial approach' (see Sections 10.5 and 10.6). Section 10.4 sets out the background to the study.

**10.2.7** There is still a substantial amount of further technical work which will need to be completed prior to the next stage of the Core Strategy. This is addressed in Section 10.7 below.

### 10.3 North of Harlow Context

**10.3.1** Section 10.3 is only concerned with East Herts district. Detail on the proposed urban extensions within Harlow and Epping Forest districts can be found within their respective Core Strategy Issues and Options documents. All three local authority Core Strategy Issues and Options documents are anticipated to be subject to separate consultation during Summer/Autumn 2010.

**10.3.2** Figure 10.2 shows the general context for the area north of Harlow. At this stage it is uncertain exactly how far any development would extend. Figure 10.2 does not therefore attempt to cover all the issues in the area but gives a broad indication of some of the principal ones.

**10.3.3** Harlow lies to the south of the area on the opposite side of the River Stort. Temple Fields industrial estate adjoins the area within Harlow. Sawbridgeworth and High Wych lie to the east. To the north, the area is mostly comprised of open countryside extending to the small settlements of Perry Green and Allen's Green. To the west lie the villages of Widford and Hunsdon.

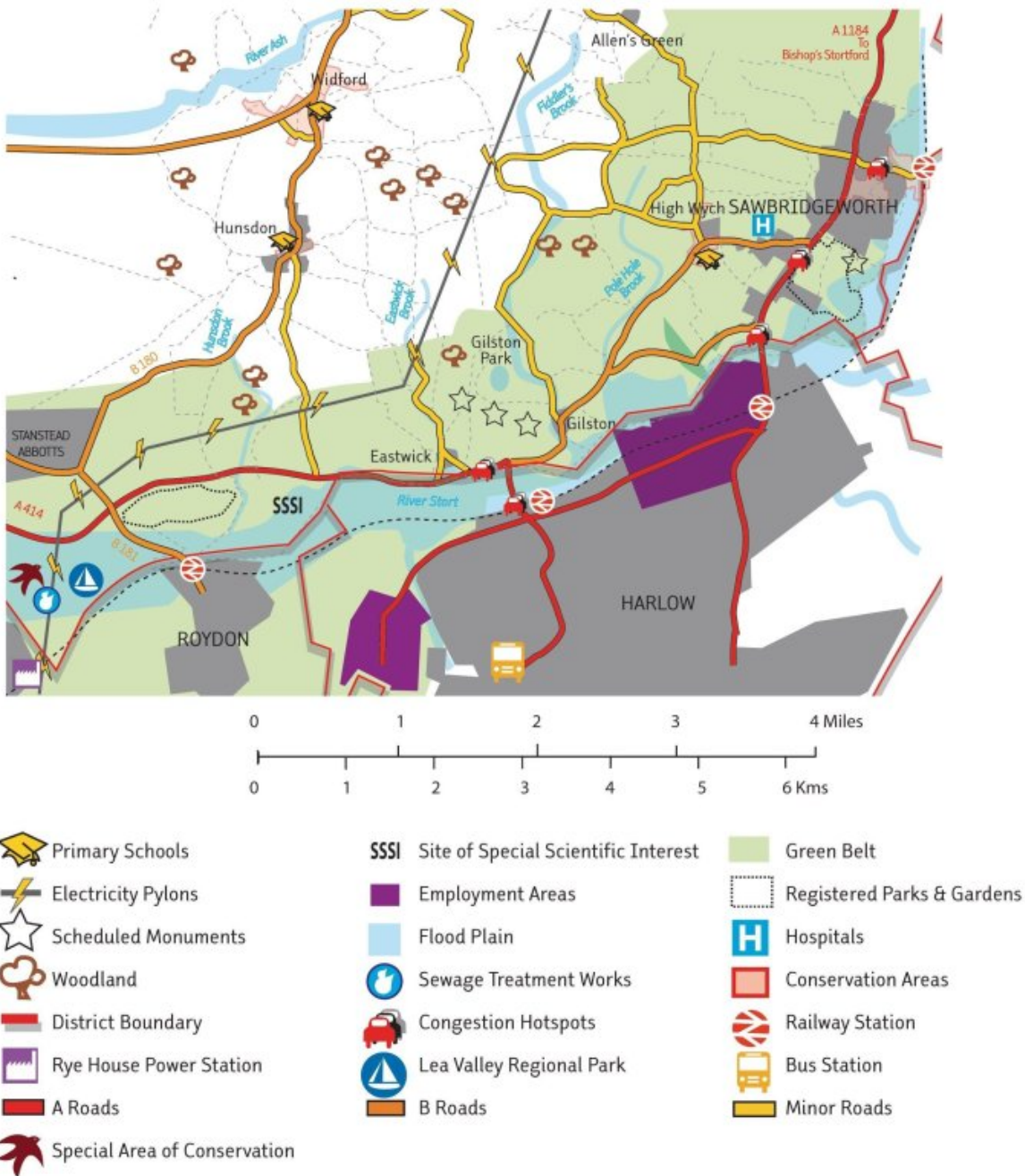
**10.3.4** The area is characterised by open countryside scattered with farms, largely protected by Green Belt. The area is criss-crossed by public rights of way, including through the landscaped grounds of Gilston Park.

**10.3.5** There are 80 listed buildings in Hunsdon Parish, including Hunsdon House and St. Dunstan's Church near Eastwick, which are both Grade 1 listed buildings. There are Registered Parks at Pishiobury in Sawbridgeworth and at Stanstead Bury. There are Conservation Areas adjacent to the area at High Wych, Widford, and Hunsdon.

**10.3.6** Four streams flow south into the River Stort and create the characteristic undulating landscape as well as being important wildlife habitats. Hunsdon Mead is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and there are a number of woodlands in the area. The large electricity pylons crossing the area have considerable landscape impact.

**10.3.7** Two stations, located at Harlow Mill and Harlow Town, lie to the south of the area, but away from the stations there is little access by passenger transport. The main road serving the area is the A414, but there is no direct access to the M11. There are issues of congestion on the A414 into Harlow and the A1184 at Sawbridgeworth.

Figure 10.2 North of Harlow Context



Source: East Herts Council

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### 10.4 The Consultants' Study: Background and Scope

10.4.1 As set out in paragraph 10.2.4 above, Policy HA1 of the East of England requires an appraisal of planning and transport options to inform the preparation of joint or co-ordinated Local Development Documents. Government Growth Area funding was made available to Harlow, Epping

Forest and East Herts Councils to appoint independent consultants to undertake this appraisal (known as the ‘**Harlow Options Appraisal**’). In January 2009 Scott Wilson consultants were appointed to undertake the work.

The Harlow Options Appraisal was considered by East Herts Council’s Executive on 9 March 2010 and agreed as a piece of technical work to inform the LDF. The minutes of that meeting are available on the Council’s website at [www.eastherts.gov.uk](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk).

The complete study and appendices are available online at [www.eastherts.gov.uk/harlowarea](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/harlowarea), and also on the websites of Harlow and Epping Forest Councils. Copies for public viewing are available at the Council’s offices in Hertford and Bishop’s Stortford.

- 10.4.2** The Harlow Options Appraisal is the view of Scott Wilson consultants. It comprises a technical study which forms part of the LDF Evidence Base. It does not constitute the policy of East Herts Council. There are still several stages of production to complete before the Core Strategy is finalised. Policy in respect of north of Harlow will only come into effect once the Core Strategy has been adopted, anticipated in 2013.
- 10.4.3** The scope of the study relates to Policy HA1 and the need to “determine the appropriate distribution between the urban extensions, including the more detailed location and scale of required development”. The study acknowledges that further work in relation to transport, Green Belt and infrastructure are needed, but these are beyond the scope of the study. Further information on this is provided in Section 10.7.

## 10.5 The Consultants’ Study: Methodology and Options

- 10.5.1** The study defined and profiled 34 areas in and around Harlow. The results of this exercise indicated broad directions for the growth of urban extensions.
- 10.5.2** The consultants developed six options based on the requirements of Policy HA1 and also a range of local characteristics identified at the profiled areas. A further option based on constraints (flooding, landscape sensitivity and Green Belt) was discounted on the basis that it offered no specific directional guidance. This further option is not shown.
- 10.5.3** The numbers in Figures 10.3-10.7 each add up to 11,000 dwellings, shared between Harlow, East Herts and Epping Forest districts. This reflects the 16,000 figure given in Policy H1 and HA1 (see Section 10.2) and then subtracts 5,000 dwellings which have either been completed within Harlow District since 2001, or those under construction or with planning permission. The study notes that should opportunities for infill or intensification of Harlow’s

existing urban area occur, these figures should be deducted from the 11,000 dwelling figure. However, the study notes that such opportunities are likely to be relatively small.

- 10.5.4** The study stresses that the options indicate broad directions of growth, rather than drawing definitive boundaries of development. Therefore, it is not possible to allocate fixed levels of new dwellings to be provided within each urban extension. These will be determined at a later date as part of the LDF process.
- 10.5.5** The dwelling allocations shown in Figures 10.3-10.7 do not imply undue precision, since they were derived by identifying the amount of land available in each direction as a proportion of the total land available as part of the option.

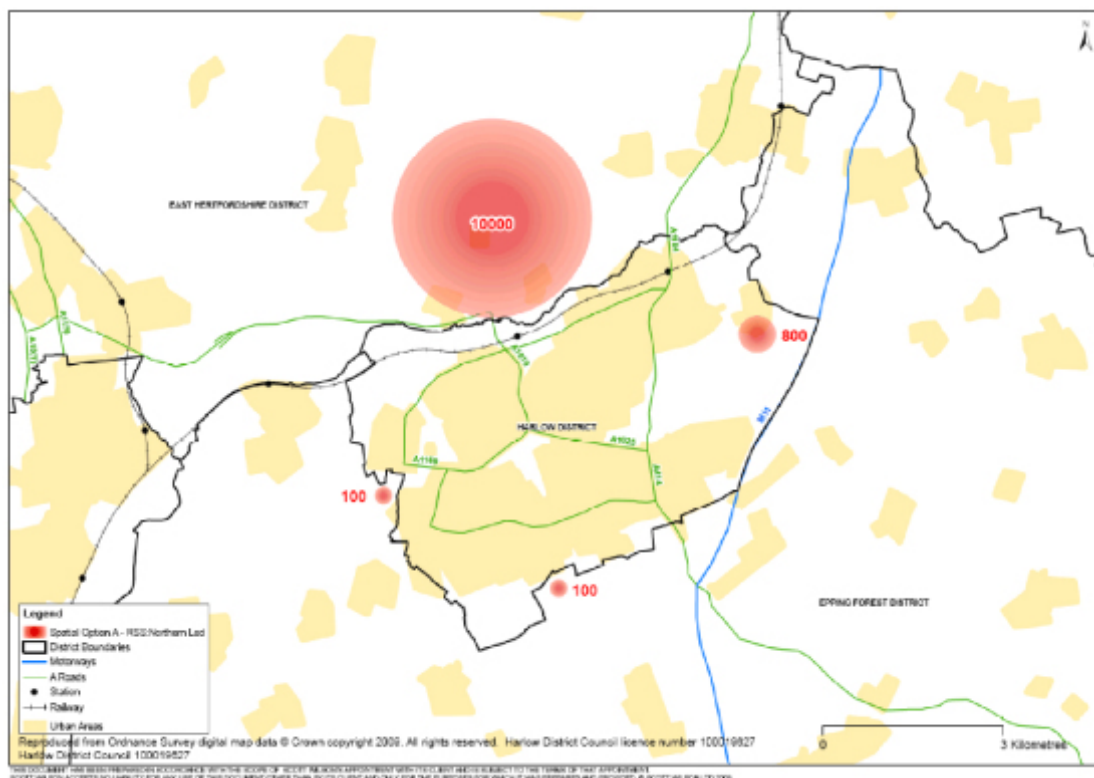


## Option A – RSS: Northern-led

**10.5.6** Option A emerged from Policy HA1’s emphasis on development towards the north (“eventual development of at least 10,000 dwellings”). It is not a literal interpretation of Policy HA1 since the time frame is “to 2021 and beyond”; nevertheless it reflects the northern bias of the policy and provides a distinct option for testing purposes. The Option is entitled ‘RSS’ which means ‘Regional Spatial Strategy’, another name for the East of England Plan.

**10.5.7** Under this option the majority of development is directed immediately north of the River Stort and towards the eastern half of this area but avoiding coalescence with Sawbridgeworth. Given the large amount of land distributed to the north under this option, distribution in other directions is correspondingly small, as shown in Figure 10.3.

Figure 10.3 Option A: RSS: Northern-led



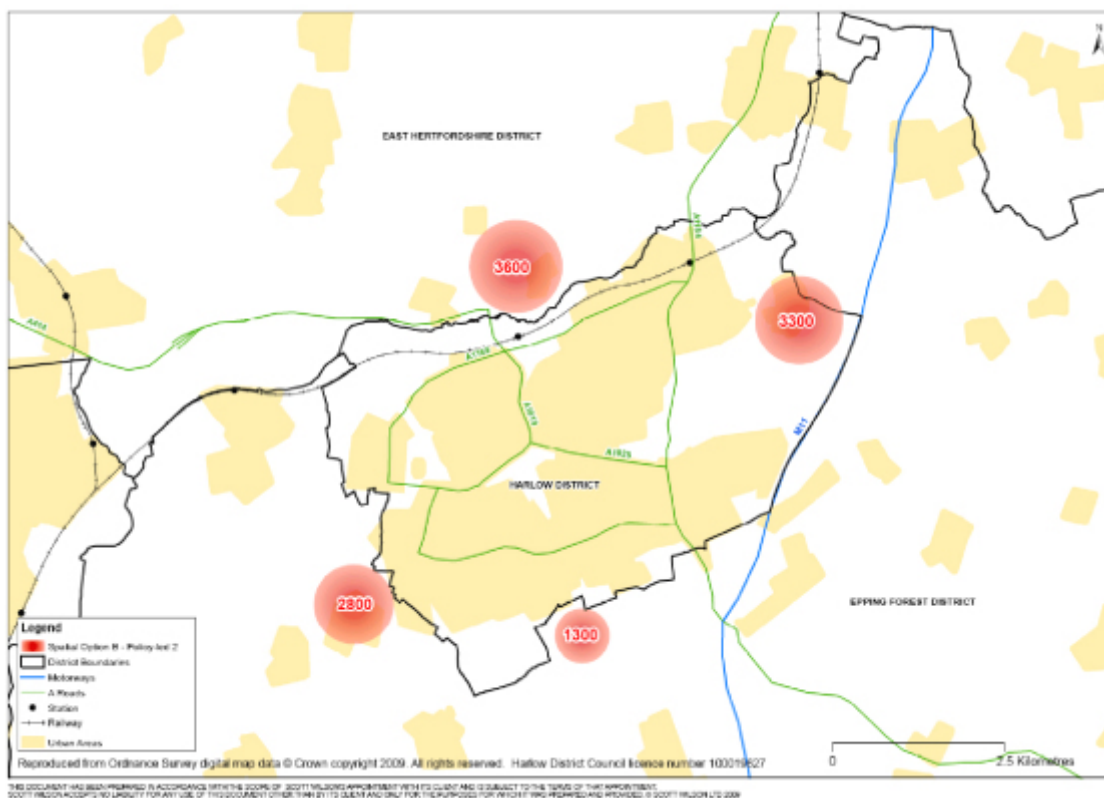
*Note to Figure 10.3: distributions of development are purely illustrative and do not represent fixed boundaries. The specific location of new development will be identified at subsequent stages of the planning process.*



## Option B - Policy-led 2

- 10.5.8** Option B was based on another main emphasis of Policy HA1, regarding the requirement for urban extensions to the north, east, and on a smaller scale the south and west. The option allowed the consultants to compare the relative opportunities and constraints associated with larger-scale development to the north (Option A).
- 10.5.9** Under this option a similar volume of dwellings are allocated to the north (weighted towards the eastern half but avoiding coalescence with Sawbridgeworth) and to the east of Harlow. The northern part of land to the west of Harlow receives a smaller volume of new dwellings and an even smaller amount is allocated to the south. This distribution is shown in Figure 10.4.

Figure 10.4 Option B: Policy-led 2



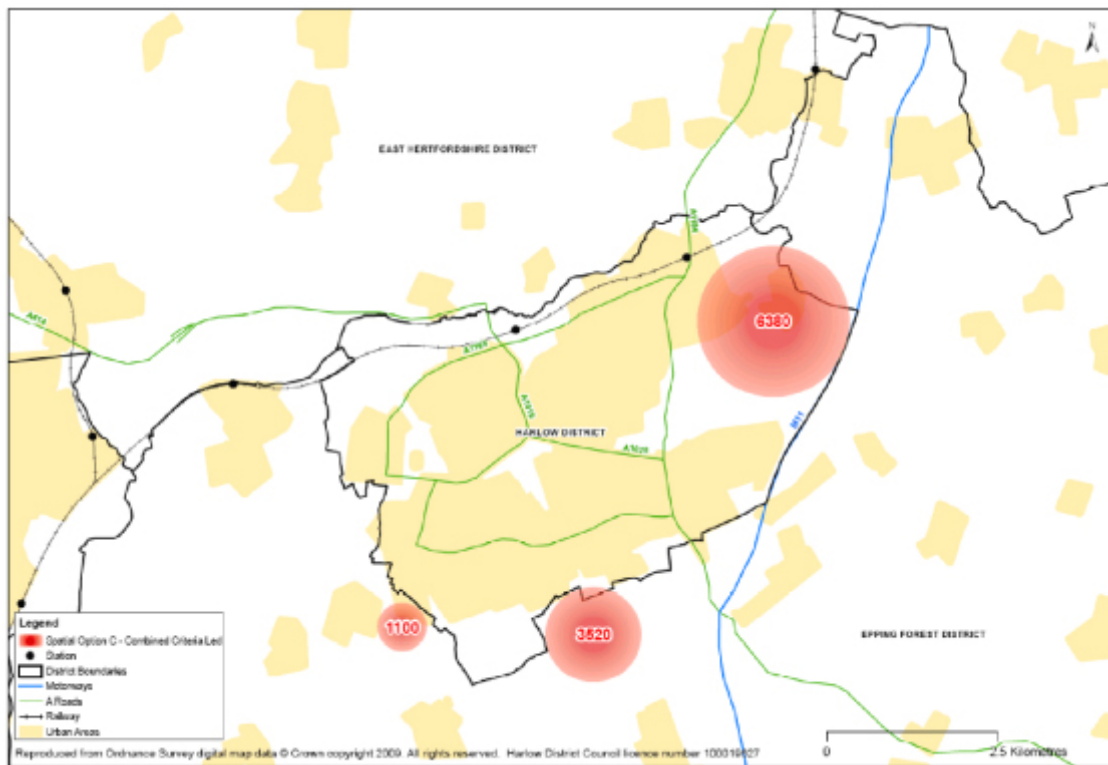
*Note to Figure 10.4: distributions of development are purely illustrative and do not represent fixed boundaries. The specific location of new development will be identified at subsequent stages of the planning process.*

## Option C - Combined criteria-led

**10.5.10** Option C is based on the areas of land which cumulatively perform the best against a range of criteria, reflecting greater emphasis on the situation on the ground (by removing the constraints provided by Policy HA1). This option does not correspond to key elements within Policy HA1, such as the requirement for substantial development to the north of Harlow, nor the relative distributions of urban extensions to the north, east, south and west of Harlow.

**10.5.11** Under this option the majority of new dwellings are allocated to the east of Harlow, with a substantial proportion to the south and a smaller amount to the west of Harlow, as shown in Figure 10.5.

Figure 10.5 Option C: Combined criteria-led



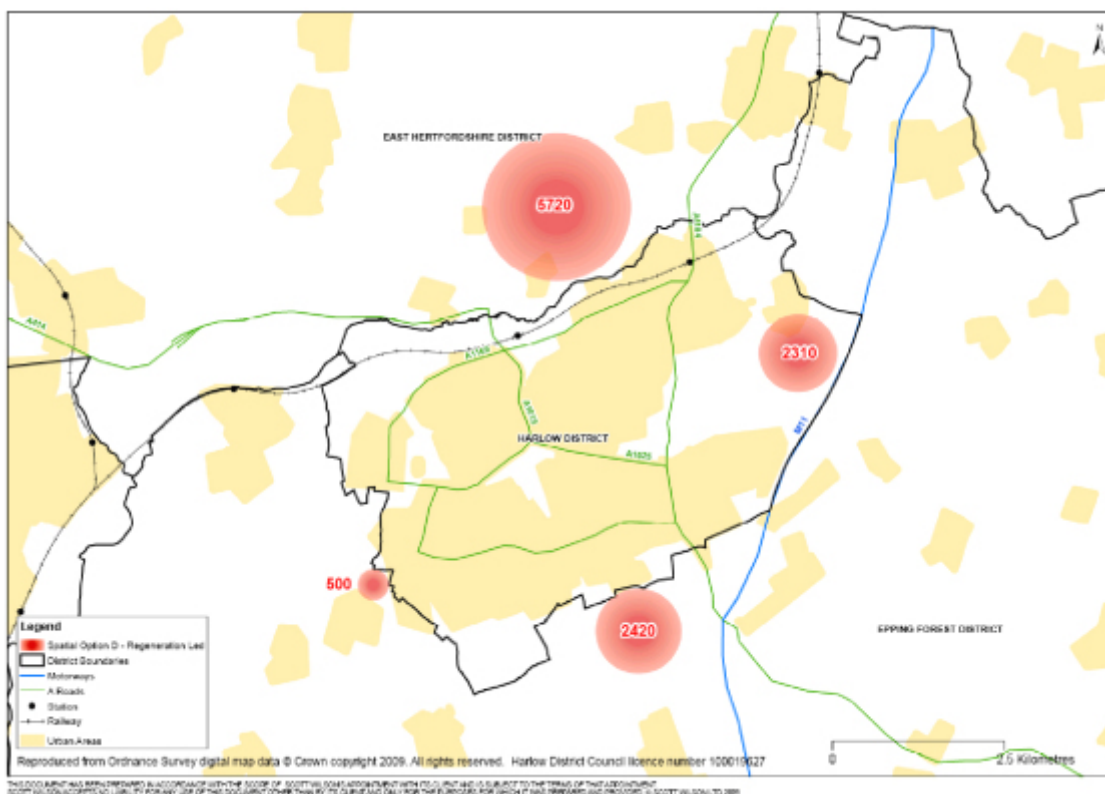
*Note to Figure 10.5: distributions of development are purely illustrative and do not represent fixed boundaries. The specific location of new development will be identified at subsequent stages of the planning process.*

## Option D: Regeneration-led

**10.5.12** Option D is based on proximity to urban deprivation within Harlow. Analysis of these results suggested a distribution for a regeneration-led option.

**10.5.13** The distribution of development for this option would be focused to the north (centred around Eastwick) and south of Harlow (to the ridgeline), with additional capacity provided in the east and to a much smaller scale in the west. This is shown in Figure 10.6.

Figure 10.6 Option D: Regeneration-led



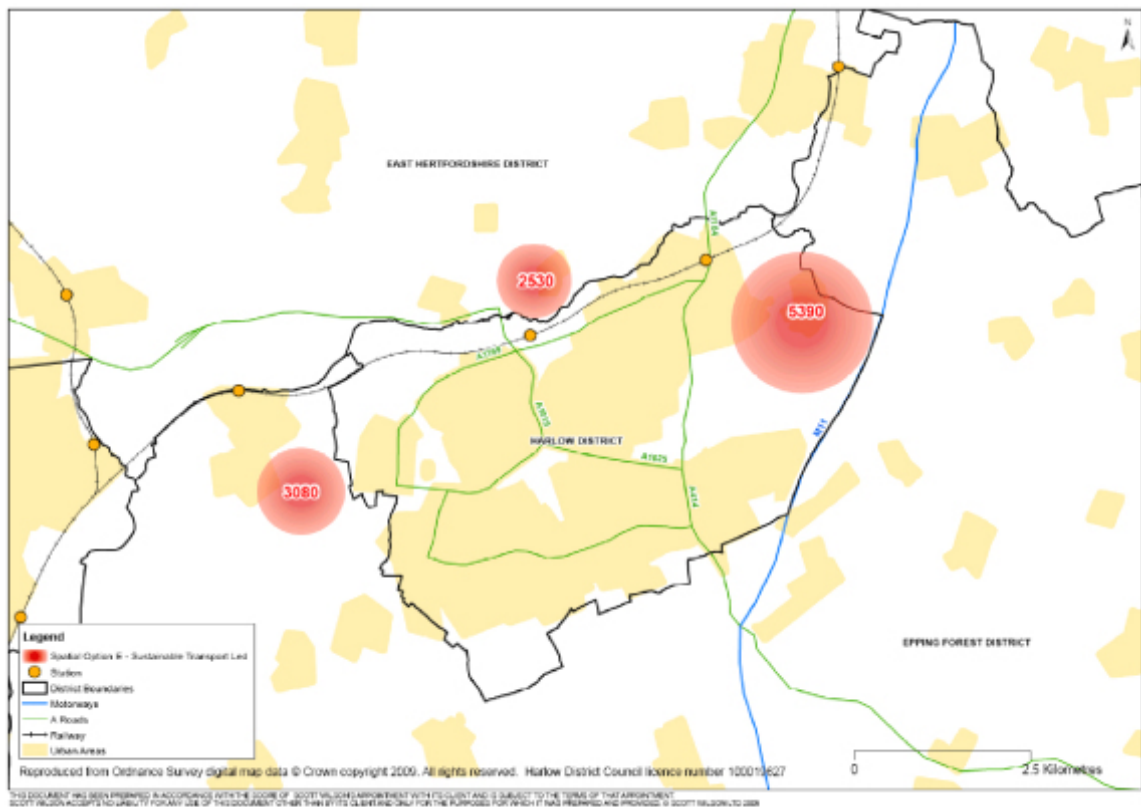
*Note to Figure 10.6: distributions of development are purely illustrative and do not represent fixed boundaries. The specific location of new development will be identified at subsequent stages of the planning process.*

## Option E: Sustainable Transport-led

**10.5.14** Option E is based on proximity of bus and rail transport. To the north this is based on bus routes along the A414 and proximity to Harlow Town railway station. The eastern quota is based on proximity to a number of bus routes. The western quota is based on proximity to Roydon station and bus routes. There are few passenger transport options to the south and this is reflected in the absence of a southern quota.

**10.5.15** In accordance with this, the distribution of development under Option E is shown in Figure 10.7.

Figure 10.7 Option E: Sustainable Transport-led



*Note to Figure 10.7: distributions of development are purely illustrative and do not represent fixed boundaries. The specific location of new development will be identified at subsequent stages of the planning process.*

## 10.6 The Consultants' Study: Options Testing and Suggested Approach

**10.6.1** The five spatial options A to E above were then tested and refined. The testing process involved two components. Firstly, using information gathered from infrastructure and service providers and from landowners, each option was tested for “reasonableness”: that is whether,

- implementation of the option would fulfil the objectives of the (regional) plan;
- the resources will be available to deliver the option, and where from;
- there will be sufficient time within the plan period to deliver the option;
- there is an acceptable risk that the option might not be fully implemented;
- the option is sufficiently flexible to accommodate changing circumstances;
- the option generally conforms to national and regional policy.

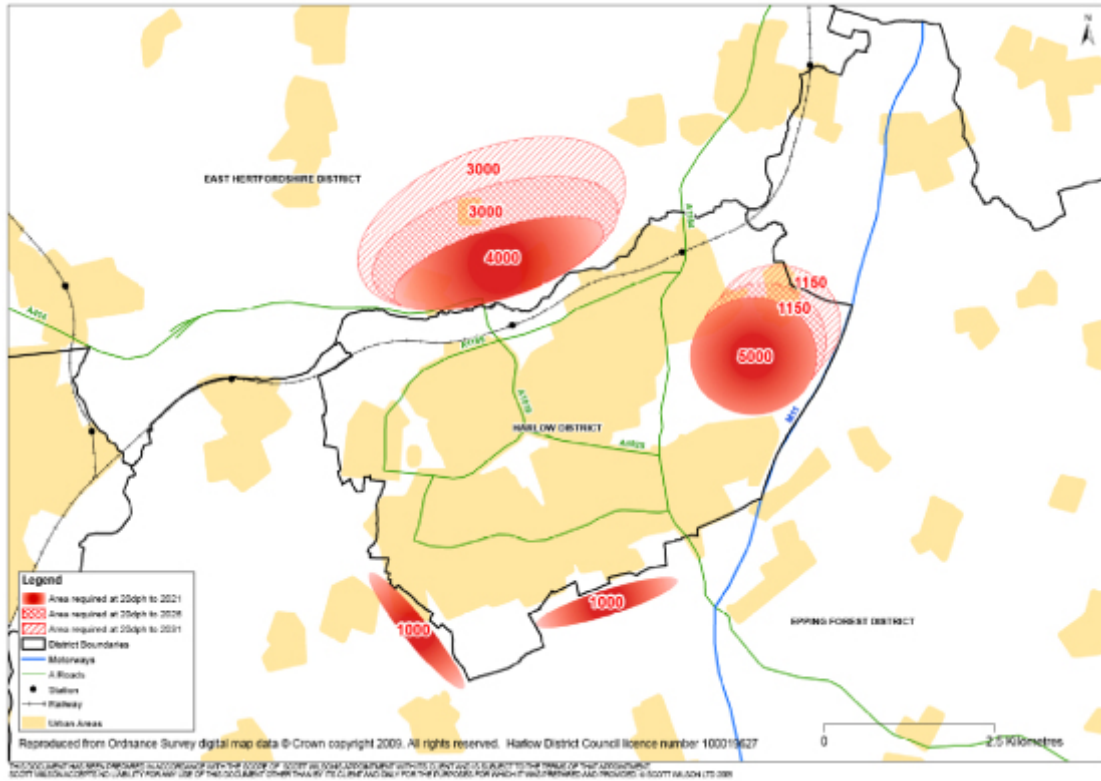
**10.6.2** Secondly, each option was also tested for ‘sustainability’: that is, the likely effects of each option when measured against a range of social, economic, and environmental issues. The list included air quality, biodiversity, climate change, community and well-being, economy and employment, historic environment, housing, land, landscape, rural areas, transport, waste, and water. A wide range of information was drawn on, including detailed local information for each of the 34 defined areas around the town (see Section 10.5 above), existing studies and reports, discussions with the partners, and field visits to the Harlow Area.

**10.6.3** The application of the two tests enabled the consultants to refine their options into a suggested approach, shown in Figure 10.8.

**10.6.4** The study makes two key points about this suggested approach:

- While the number provided within the suggested distribution for each broad spatial area should not be taken as an absolute recommendation, the proportional levels of new dwellings distributed to each area should remain relatively unchanged. That is, there is a small degree of flexibility built into the suggested distribution.
- The purpose of the study is not to define exact boundaries for urban extensions. However, the suggested locations indicated (in Figure 10.8) should not be significantly changed. For example, in the western area development should be concentrated towards the southern half and adjacent to the existing neighbourhoods of Harlow.

Figure 10.8 Consultant's Suggested Approach



Note to Figure 10.8: distributions of development are purely illustrative and do not represent fixed boundaries. The specific location of new development will be identified at subsequent stages of the planning process.

10.6.5 The study recommends the following phasing and distribution of development to 2021:

Table 10.1 Suggested phasing and distribution to 2021

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Total to 2021
	2010-13 (4 years)	2014-17 (4 years)	2018-2021 (4 years)	
North (East Herts)	0	1,000	3,000	4,000
East (Harlow/Epping Forest)	666	1,334	3,000	5,000
South (Epping Forest)	700	300	0	1,000
West (Epping Forest)	500	500	0	1,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,866</b>	<b>3,134</b>	<b>6,000</b>	<b>11,000</b>



- 10.6.6** As noted in Section 10.5, the total of 11,000 dwellings to 2021 reflects development completed since 2001, under construction or with planning permission. The consultants acknowledge that there remains uncertainty in respect of infrastructure provision, and this is reflected in the suggested phasing into four-year periods to 2021.
- 10.6.7** Beyond 2021 there is greater uncertainty, since the East of England Plan Review to 2031 has not yet been finalised, and there is even less certainty over the funding of significant transport proposals and other infrastructure. Therefore, the suggested phasing is based on five-year periods:

Table 10.2 Suggested phasing and distribution 2021 to 2031

	Phase 4		
	2022-6 (5 years)	2027-31 (5 years)	Total 2022-31
North (East Herts)	3,000	3,000	<b>6,000</b>
East (Harlow/Epping Forest)	1,150	1,150	<b>2,300</b>
South (Epping Forest)	0	0	<b>0</b>
West (Epping Forest)	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,150</b>	<b>4,150</b>	<b>8,300</b>

- 10.6.8** The consultants recommend that 10,000 is the maximum number of dwellings that can be accommodated north of Harlow to 2031 (4000 to 2021 and 6000 from 2021 to 2031). Beyond 2031 the main determinant of the ultimate size of any urban extensions will be the Green Belt review (see Section 3.6), which will provide a defined limit to how far development could extend. Additionally, a range of sustainability and infrastructure issues will need to be considered and funding sources identified.
- 10.6.9** The study concludes that whilst there are technical solutions to the outstanding infrastructure issues, the necessary funding will need to be available. Scott Wilson also advise that there are difficult trade-offs inherent in the growth strategy. For example, while the high levels of growth provided by development to the north of Harlow may facilitate the wider regeneration of the town, it is reliant on the provision of significant amounts of road building which will have a highly negative impact on the landscape.



- 10.6.10** It should be noted that this Issues and Options document has been prepared in the context of the East of England Plan which identified the area to the north of Harlow, in East Herts for development as part of the regeneration and growth of Harlow. As such, this area has been specifically excluded from the Development Strategy options set out in Chapter 3.
- 10.6.11** The Government has announced its intention to make changes to the planning system, including the abolition of the East of England Plan. Should this be the case, and growth to the north of Harlow is no longer required as part of the regeneration and growth of Harlow, it is considered reasonable to ask whether the area to the north of Harlow is a suitable broad location to meet some of the East Herts district wide housing requirement as set out in Chapter 3.

### Question 43

Do you agree with the consultants' Suggested Approach in respect of growth to the north of Harlow? If not, how would you distribute development in accordance with Policy HA1 of the East of England Plan and why?

If development to the north of Harlow is no longer required by the East of England Plan, should we consider north of Harlow as a broad location to meet some of the East Herts district wide housing requirement?

## 10.7 Further Technical Work

- 10.7.1** Following on from the Harlow Options Appraisal described in this Chapter, further technical work will need to be undertaken prior to the next stage of the Core Strategy. Work includes the following:
- Green Belt Review
  - Transport modelling
  - Infrastructure delivery
  - Employment and regeneration
- 10.7.2** A strategic Green Belt review is required in order to meet the requirements of the East of England Plan. Further information on the Green Belt review is contained in Chapter 3, Section 3.6. The review should test the most sustainable eventual scale of urban extension in this area to 2031 and beyond. The review should also identify a compensating strategic extension to the Green Belt north of Harlow. The review will be needed to safeguard against the coalescence of Harlow with nearby settlements such as Sawbridgeworth.

- 10.7.3** Transport modelling will be required in order to scale and phase development to 2021 and 2031. In particular, there remains uncertainty over whether and at what stage a road link connecting development north of Harlow and the M11 should be provided. Additionally, there remains uncertainty regarding transport crossings of the River Stort between Harlow and area north of Harlow.
- 10.7.4** There are a number of other outstanding infrastructure issues which must be resolved prior to any development, for example, funding of proposed sewerage network upgrades. The study cautions that there remains a particular evidence gap in relation to higher levels of development (over 10,000 dwellings north of Harlow).
- 10.7.5** The consultants advise that there is a danger that development to the north could undermine regeneration efforts, and work will be needed in order to guard against this. In addition, whilst Harlow District Council has recently completed an Employment Land Review for the existing town, this contains very limited information in respect of job creation north of the River Stort.



# Glossary

<b>Adaptation</b>	See Climate Change
<b>Adoption</b>	The final confirmation of a Development Plan or Local Development Document status by a Local Planning Authority (LPA).
<b>Affordable Housing</b>	The government’s definition of affordable housing includes both ‘social rented’ affordable housing and ‘intermediate’ affordable housing. Social rented is available to those households in housing need. Intermediate housing refers to housing set at prices above social rented prices but below market prices and is a way of helping householders start on the housing ladder. It can include shared ownership products, lower cost homes for sale and for discounted rent and is often targeted at key workers such as nurses, teachers and police officers.
<b>Allocated Sites</b>	To meet its housing requirement the Council allocates land for particular types of land use, such as housing, as part of its planned approach to managing development and shaping the future of our towns and villages. Infrastructure providers can then take the planned growth of a settlement into account when delivering their services to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place to support growth.
<b>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)</b>	Part of the Local Development Framework, the annual monitoring report assesses the implementation of the local development scheme and the extent to which policies in local development documents are being successfully implemented.
<b>Appropriate Assessment (AA)</b>	An Appropriate Assessment, also known as a habitat regulations assessment, is the process of considering emerging policies against the habitats regulations.
<b>Biodiversity</b>	The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations, including plants and animals.
<b>Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)</b>	A strategy prepared for a local area aimed at conserving and enhancing biological diversity. The Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan includes East Herts.
<b>Biomass</b>	Living matter within an environmental area, for example plant material, vegetation, or agricultural waste used as a fuel or energy source.
<b>Brownfield Land and Sites</b>	Previously developed land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. Also see 'Previously-Developed Land'.

<b>Call for Sites</b>	Technical work which seeks suggestions from landowners, developers, and other interested parties for all types of potential future development and land-use, including housing, employment, leisure, and community uses.
<b>Carbon emissions</b>	See Greenhouse Gases
<b>Carbon footprint</b>	A carbon footprint is "the total set of GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions caused directly and indirectly by an individual, organisation, event or product" (UK Carbon Trust 2008).
<b>Category 1 (2, or 3) Villages</b>	See Village Development Strategy.
<b>Character</b>	A term relating to Conservation Areas or Listed Buildings, but also to the appearance of any rural or urban location in terms of its landscape or the layout of streets and open spaces, often giving places their own distinct identity.
<b>Climate Change</b>	Long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind and all other aspects of the Earth's climate. Often regarded as a result of human activity and fossil fuel consumption.
<b>Climate Change Adaptation</b>	This involves adjustments to natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities.
<b>Climate Change Mitigation</b>	This involves taking action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate systems primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
<b>Clusters (a term used in economic regeneration)</b>	A group of businesses or organisations who, owing to the goods they produce and/or services they provide have common customers, technology or use similar specialist skills. They group together in order to enhance the overall competitive advantage of individual companies.
<b>Coalescence</b>	The merging or coming together of separate towns or villages to form a single entity.
<b>Conformity</b>	Requirement of Local Development Frameworks to be in general conformity/ agreement with the policies of the relevant Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The Local Planning Authority (LPA) must seek a written statement of general conformity from the regional planning body (RPB). The secretary of state will adjudicate in matters of conflict.

<b>Conservation Area</b>	Areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.
<b>Core Strategy</b>	A Core Strategy sets out the long term spatial vision for the Local Planning Authority area, as well as the spatial objectives and the strategic policies to deliver that vision. The Core Strategy has the status of a Development Plan Document. There are three principal stages of formal public consultation in preparing a Core Strategy: firstly, the Issues and Options Stage; then the Preferred Options Stage; and finally the submission stage.
<b>County Council</b>	The local authority that is responsible for waste and minerals planning functions in non-unitary, and non-national park, local authority areas. A county council may provide advice and proposals on strategic planning issues to the Regional Planning Body.
<b>Decentralised Energy</b>	Local renewable energy and local low-carbon energy usually but not always on a relatively small scale. Decentralised energy is a broad term used to denote a diverse range of technologies, including micro-renewables, which can locally serve an individual building, development or wider community and includes heating and cooling energy.
<b>Demography</b>	Demography is the study of the size, growth, and age and geographical distribution of human populations, and births, deaths, marriages, and migrations.
<b>Density</b>	<p>Density is a calculation of the number of houses that can be built on a particular piece of land. It is usually expressed as the number of dwellings per hectare (dph).</p> <p><b>Net density</b> includes those sites which will be developed including directly associated uses, such as access roads within the site, private garden space, car parking areas, incidental open space, landscaping and children’s play areas, where they are provided.</p> <p><b>Gross density</b> includes large-scale open space, roads, schools, hospitals, and other major supporting infrastructure.</p>
<b>Development</b>	Development is defined under the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operation in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land." Most forms of development require planning permission (see also "permitted development").



<p><b>Development Plan</b></p>	<p>A document setting out the Local Planning Authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings in the authority's area. It includes Unitary, Structure, and Local Plans prepared under transitional arrangements.</p> <p>It also includes the new-look Regional Spatial Strategies and Development Plan Documents prepared under the Planning &amp; Compulsory Purchase Act of 2004.</p>
<p><b>Development Plan Documents (DPDs)</b></p>	<p>Development Plan Documents are prepared by local planning authorities and outline the key development goals of the Local Development Framework.</p> <p>They can include a Core Strategy, site specific allocations of land, area action plans (where needed) and other documents deemed necessary by the council to deliver the spatial strategy in a justified and effective manner.</p> <p>All DPDs must be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement, consultation and independent examination, and adopted after receipt of the inspector's binding report. Once adopted, development control decisions must be made in accordance with them unless material considerations indicate otherwise. DPDs form an essential part of the Local Development Framework.</p>
<p><b>District Heating</b></p>	<p>District heating is a system where the heat for an area is produced centrally, and hot water or steam is transported to the buildings through a network of pipes. Heat is transferred into individual properties through a heat exchanger, and then used in conventional heating systems (in flats, for example, there may just be one heat exchanger for the whole block). District heating networks vary widely in scale from individual developments or apartment blocks to whole cities.</p>
<p><b>Dwelling and Dwelling house</b></p>	<p>A self-contained building or part of a building used as a residential accommodation, and usually housing a single household. A dwelling may be a house, bungalow, flat, maisonette or converted farm building.</p>
<p><b>East of England Plan</b></p>	<p>See Regional Spatial Strategy.</p>
<p><b>Emissions</b></p>	<p>See Greenhouse Gases</p>

<b>Employment Land</b>	Land reserved for industry, comprising Use Classes B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution). Such land tends to be located in urban areas or close to transport networks, often containing a cluster of similar business activities.
<b>Environment Agency</b>	A government body that aims to prevent or minimise the effects of pollution on the environment and issues permits to monitor and control activities that handle or produce waste. It also provides up-to-date information on waste management matters and deals with other matters such as water issues including flood protection advice.
<b>Evidence base</b>	An evidence base is the evidence that any Development Plan Document, especially a Core Strategy, is based on. It is made up of the views of stakeholders and background facts about the area.
<b>Flood plain</b>	Generally low-lying areas adjacent to a watercourse, tidal lengths of a river or the sea, where water flows in times of flood or would flow but for the presence of flood defences.
<b>Fossil Fuels (a non-renewable fuel)</b>	Carbon-rich fuel (coal, oil and natural gas) formed from the remains of ancient animals and plants. Their combustion is considered to contribute to the 'greenhouse effect'.
<b>Front-loading</b>	Front loading is the idea that a strong emphasis needs to be placed upon work at the early stages of the plan making process, so that the later stages will run more smoothly.
<b>Geodiversity</b>	Is the variety of geological (rocks, minerals and fossils), geomorphological (land form, processes) and soil features. This underlying geodiversity supports the biodiversity of our landscape.
<b>Green Belt (not to be confused with the term 'greenfield')</b>	<p>A designation for land around certain cities and large built-up areas, which aims to keep this land permanently open or largely undeveloped. The purpose of the Green Belt is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</li> <li>● prevent neighbouring towns from merging</li> <li>● safeguard the countryside from encroachment</li> <li>● preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</li> <li>● assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</li> </ul> <p>Green Belts are defined in a Local Planning Authority's Development Plan.</p>

<b>Green Infrastructure</b>	Green Infrastructure is a strategic network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life in sustainable communities. It provides habitats for and aids migration of wildlife, flood water storage, urban cooling and local access to shady outdoor space as well as creating attractive spaces for recreation.
<b>Green Wedges</b>	Green wedges comprise the open areas around and between parts of settlements, which maintain the distinction between the countryside and built up areas, prevent the coalescence (merging) of adjacent places and can also provide recreational opportunities.
<b>Greenfield Land or Site</b>	Land (or a defined site) usually farmland, that has not previously been developed.
<b>Greenhouse Gases</b>	Naturally occurring examples include water vapour, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and ozone. Some human activities increase these gases, including fossil fuel combustion within motor vehicles and some power stations.
<b>Gypsies and Travellers</b>	Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such.
<b>Habitats Regulations Assessment</b>	See Appropriate Assessment
<b>Historic Parks and Gardens</b>	A park or garden of special historic interest. Graded I (highest quality), II* or II. Designated by English Heritage.
<b>Housing Mix</b>	The mix of different types and tenures of housing, for example, affordable and market housing, owner-occupied and private-rented.
<b>Housing Requirement</b>	A requirement arising from higher-tier plans (the Regional Spatial Strategy) for a Local Planning Authority to plan for a given amount of new housing over a specified timeframe. The 'to-find' figure is the number of houses remaining to plan for once housing completions, commitments, and outstanding planning permissions have been deducted.

<b>Infrastructure</b>	Providing the necessary supporting ‘infrastructure’ of utility services, transport, schools, open space, community, health and leisure services. See also Green Infrastructure.
<b>Infrastructure Delivery Plan</b>	The Infrastructure Delivery Plan will establish a framework for private and public investment. It will identify as far as possible the infrastructure needs of new development, and the associated costs, phasing, funding sources and responsibilities for delivery.
<b>Issues and Options</b>	See Core Strategy
<b>Landfill</b>	The permanent disposal of waste into the ground, by the filling of man-made voids or similar features, or the construction of landforms above ground level (land-raising).
<b>Lifetime Homes</b>	‘Lifetime Homes’ standards seek to make homes more flexible, convenient, safe, adaptable and accessible than most new homes. Policy HSG6 of the East Herts Local Plan 2007 requires that 15% of all new homes be constructed to the Lifetime Homes standards.
<b>Listed Building</b>	<p>A building of special architectural or historic interest. Listed buildings are graded I, II* or II with grade I being the highest. Listing includes the interior as well as the exterior of the building, and any buildings or permanent structures (e.g. wells within its curtilage).</p> <p>English Heritage is responsible for designating buildings for listing in England.</p>
<b>Local Development Documents (LDDs)</b>	Local development document is the collective term in the planning and compulsory purchase act for the Development Plan Documents, the supplementary planning documents, and the statement of community involvement.
<b>Local Development Framework (LDF)</b>	<p>The Local Development Framework is the name for the portfolio of local development documents consisting of Development Plan Documents, supplementary planning documents, a statement of community involvement, the local development scheme and annual monitoring reports.</p> <p>Together these documents provide the framework for delivering the spatial strategy for a council area.</p>

<p><b>LDF Vision</b></p>	<p>Will be a statement setting out what East Herts and its settlements will be like in 2031 and must explain how the district will change both in terms of its geography and its socio-economic characteristics.</p> <p>The first part of the LDF Vision is shared with the East Herts Sustainable Community Strategy. The shared vision re-emphasises the pivotal role that planning and the LDF have in delivering better outcomes for the district.</p>
<p><b>Local Development Scheme (LDS)</b></p>	<p>The Local Planning Authority's time-scaled programme for the preparation of Local Development Documents that must be agreed with the Government and reviewed every year.</p>
<p><b>Local Distinctiveness</b></p>	<p>Local distinctiveness is the physical, environmental, economic or social factors that characterise an area (and most likely a combination of all four), as well as how an area interacts with others.</p>
<p><b>Local Nature Reserve</b></p>	<p>Non-statutory habitats of local significance designated by local authorities where protection and public understanding of nature conservation is encouraged. (See also Site of Nature Conservation Importance or Site of Biological Interest).</p>
<p><b>Local Plan</b></p>	<p>East Herts Local Plan 2007 sets out the current local planning policy for the district. It sets out development control standards by which planning applications will be judged, allocates land for development, and includes a wide range of local policy designations. It is comprised of two parts: a Written Statement and Proposals Map (see below). The Local Plan will eventually be superseded by the Local Development Framework.</p>
<p><b>Local Planning Authority</b></p>	<p>The local authority or council that is empowered by law to exercise planning functions. Often the local borough or district council. National Parks and the Broads authority are also considered to be local planning authorities. County Councils are the authority for waste and minerals matters.</p>
<p><b>Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)</b></p>	<p>A Local Strategic Partnership is a partnership of stakeholders who develop ways of involving local people in shaping the future of their neighbourhood in how services are provided. They are often single, multi-agency bodies which aim to bring together locally the public, private, community and voluntary sectors.</p>
<p><b>Local Transport Plan</b></p>	<p>A five-year integrated transport strategy, prepared by local authorities in partnership with the community, seeking funding to help provide local transport projects. The plan sets out the</p>

	resources predicted for delivery of the targets identified in the strategy. Local Transport Plans should be consistent with the policies and priorities set out in the Regional Transport Strategy as an integral part of the Regional Spatial Strategy.
<b>Mitigation</b>	See Climate Change
<b>Mixed Use Development</b>	A development which contains a variety of uses such as businesses, housing, leisure and recreation. Such developments contribute towards building sustainable communities by increasing accessibility to a range of activities and promoting non-car modes of travel.
<b>Modal shift</b>	A change of transport mode (for example, car, bus, train, bicycle, walking). In planning terms this usually implies a shift away from the car to more sustainable transport modes, whether passenger transport or walking and cycling.
<b>Monitoring</b>	See Annual Monitoring Report
<b>Natural England</b>	<p>Natural England is the Government's statutory adviser on landscape in England, with responsibility for landscape designations such as National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Heritage Coasts.</p> <p>Natural England is also concerned with England's future landscapes, with involvement in planning policy and a range of environmental land management projects.</p>
<b>Open Space</b>	All space of public value, including public landscaped areas, playing fields, parks and play areas, and also including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs, which can offer opportunities for sport and recreation or can also act as a visual amenity and a haven for wildlife.
<b>Passive Solar Heating</b>	A solar heating system using a simple solar collector, building materials, or an architectural design to capture and store the sun's heat. Very simple examples include a garden greenhouse, or a south-facing window in a dwelling.
<b>Permeability</b>	The extent to which an environment allows for a choice of routes both through and within it, and allows opportunities for movement.
<b>Plan-led system</b>	The principle that the decisions upon planning applications should be made in accordance with the adopted Development Plan, unless there are other material considerations that may indicate otherwise.

<p><b>Planning &amp; Compulsory Purchase Act 2004</b></p>	<p>The Act updates elements of the 1990 Town &amp; Country Planning Act. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a statutory system for regional planning</li> <li>• a new system for local planning</li> <li>• reforms to the development control and compulsory purchase and compensation systems</li> <li>• removal of crown immunity from planning controls.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)</b></p>	<p>Issued by central government setting out its national land use policies for England on different areas of planning. These are gradually being replaced by Planning Policy Statements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PPG2: Green Belts</li> <li>• PPG8: Telecommunications</li> <li>• PPG13: Transport</li> <li>• PPG14: Development on Unstable Land</li> <li>• PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment</li> <li>• PPG16: Archaeology and Planning</li> <li>• PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation</li> <li>• PPG18: Enforcing Planning Control</li> <li>• PPG19: Outdoor Advertisement Control</li> <li>• PPG24: Planning and Noise</li> </ul>
<p><b>Planning Policy Statement (PPS)</b></p>	<p>Issued by central government to replace the existing Planning Policy Guidance notes in order to provide greater clarity and to remove from national policy advice on practical implementation, which is better expressed as guidance rather than policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development</li> <li>• PPS: Planning and Climate Change - Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1</li> <li>• PPS: Eco-towns - Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1</li> <li>• PPS3: Housing</li> <li>• PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth</li> <li>• PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment</li> <li>• PPS6: Planning for Town Centres (Cancelled)</li> <li>• PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas</li> <li>• PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation</li> <li>• PPS10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management</li> <li>• PPS11: Regional Spatial Strategies</li> <li>• PPS12: Local Spatial Planning</li> <li>• PPS22: Renewable Energy</li> <li>• PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control</li> <li>• PPS25: Development and Flood Risk</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PPS25 Supplement: Development and Coastal Change</li> <li>Consultation PPS - Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment (to replace PPG17 and part of PPS7, PPS9 and PPS25)</li> </ul>
<b>Plateau</b>	A landscape of fairly level high ground, which in rural areas tends to be a prominent landscape feature, often supporting a unique biodiversity.
<b>Preferred Options</b>	See Core Strategy
<b>Previously Developed Land (PDL) or 'Brownfield' land</b>	Land that is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings), and associated fixed-surface infrastructure. The definition covers the curtilage of the development. Planning Policy Statement 3 (Housing) has a detailed definition.
<b>Proposals Map</b>	<p>A Proposals Map is an illustration on a map, reproduced from or based upon a map base to a registered scale, of all the policies contained in Development Plan Documents.</p> <p>It must be revised as each new Development Plan Document is adopted and it should always reflect the up to date planning strategy in the area.</p> <p>Proposals for changes to the adopted proposals map accompany submitted Development Plan Documents in the form of a Submission Proposals Map.</p>
<b>Public Open Space</b>	Urban space, designated by a council, where public access may or may not be formally established, but which fulfils or can fulfil a recreational or non-recreational role (for example, amenity, ecological, educational, social or cultural usages).
<b>Public Realm</b>	Those parts of a village, town or city (whether publicly or privately owned) available, for everyone to use. This includes streets, squares and parks.
<b>Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)</b>	A strategy for how a region should look in 15 to 20 years time and possibly longer. The Regional Spatial Strategy identifies the scale and distribution of new housing in the region, indicates areas for regeneration, expansion or sub-regional planning and specifies priorities for the environment, transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, minerals and waste treatment and disposal. Most former Regional

	Planning Guidance is now considered RSS and forms part of the Development Plan. Regional Spatial Strategies are prepared by Regional Planning Bodies.
<b>Regulations</b>	The regulations refer to the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2004.
<b>Renewable Energy</b>	Energy sources that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment, for example from the wind, water flow, tides or the sun.
<b>Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt</b>	A policy in the Local Plan 2007 which operates a similar level of restraint to Green Belt (see above). The Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt covers two-thirds of the district not covered by Green Belt, outside designated settlement boundaries.
<b>Rural Diversification</b>	The expansion, enlargement or variation of the range of products or fields of operation of a rural business (branching out from traditional farming activities, for example new income generating enterprise like renewable energy, tourism and food processing).
<b>Rural Exceptions Policy / Site</b>	A Development Plan or Development Plan Document may allocate small sites within rural areas solely for affordable housing, which would not otherwise be released for general market housing.
<b>Rural Proofing</b>	A process of checking the effect that policies and individual projects could have on rural communities. It ensures that the particular needs of people in rural areas are not overlooked and that policies or projects do not have any unintended negative outcomes for rural communities.
<b>Saved Policies / Saved Plan</b>	Policies within Unitary Development Plans, Local Plans and Structure Plans that are saved for a time period during replacement production of Local Development Documents.
<b>Scheduled Monument</b>	Nationally important monuments usually archaeological remains, that enjoy greater protection against inappropriate development through the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.
<b>Section 106 Agreement</b>	A legal agreement under section 106 of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act. Section 106 agreements are legal agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken.

<b>Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</b>	A site identified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) as an area of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features (basically, plants, animals, and natural features relating to the Earth's structure).
<b>Site Specific Allocations</b>	Allocations of sites for specific or mixed uses of development to be contained in Development Plan Documents. Policies will identify any specific requirements for individual purposes.
<b>SME (Small to Medium Enterprise)</b>	An independent business managed by its owner or part owners and having a small market share either by number of employees or turnover.
<b>Soundness</b>	To be considered sound, a Development Plan Document must be justified (founded on robust and credible evidence and be the most appropriate strategy) and effective (deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored). This is consistent with PPS12.
<b>Spatial Planning</b>	<p>Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function.</p> <p>This will include policies which can impact on land use by influencing the demands on, or needs for, development, but which are not capable of being delivered solely or mainly through the granting or refusal of planning permission and which may be implemented by other means.</p>
<b>Statutory</b>	Required by law (statute), usually through an Act of Parliament.
<b>Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)</b>	The statement of community involvement sets out the standards which authorities must achieve in involving local communities in the preparation of local development documents and development management decisions.
<b>Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA)</b>	A generic term used to describe environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. The European SEA directive (2001/42/EC) requires a formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes, including those in the field of planning and land use.
<b>Strategic Site</b>	A strategic site is a site that is central to the delivery of the Core Strategy. This could include, for example, a site for a key piece of infrastructure upon which further housing growth is dependent.

<b>Submission Document</b>	A Development Plan Document submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination by a government-appointed planning inspector.
<b>Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)</b>	Supplementary Planning Documents provide supplementary information about the policies in Development Plan Documents. They do not form part of the Development Plan and are not subject to independent examination.
<b>Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)</b>	A Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the strategic visions for a place and provides a vehicle for considering how to address difficult issues such as the economic future of an area, social exclusion and climate change. It is a vision document which needs to be aligned with the Core Strategy.
<b>Sustainability Appraisal</b>	A sustainability appraisal is a tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, environmental and economic factors), and are required to be undertaken for all local development documents.
<b>Sustainable Development</b>	<p>A widely used definition drawn up by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987: "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."</p> <p>The Government's aim of achieving sustainable development is set out in <i>Securing the Future – Delivering the UK Sustainable Development Strategy (March 2005)</i>. The strategy identifies five guiding principles that form the basis of policy in the UK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Living within environmental limits</li> <li>● Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society</li> <li>● Achieving a sustainable economy</li> <li>● Promoting good governance</li> <li>● Using sound science responsibly.</li> </ul>
<b>Technical Studies</b>	Studies conducted as part of the evidence base of the Local Development Framework. They often contain the recommendations of external consultants. Technical studies are not Council policy, but may feed into and inform policy development.
<b>To-find figure</b>	See Housing Requirement
<b>Town Centre</b>	A defined area, including the primary shopping area and areas of predominantly leisure, business and other main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. Primary

	shopping areas are where retail development is concentrated. It generally comprises primary and secondary shopping frontages, the former containing a high proportion of retail uses and the latter providing greater opportunities for a diversity of uses.
<b>Travelling Showpeople</b>	See Gypsies and Travellers.
<b>Urban Extension</b>	Involves the planned expansion of a city or town and can contribute to creating more sustainable patterns of development when located in the right place, with well-planned infrastructure including access to a range of facilities, and when developed at appropriate densities.
<b>Urban Sprawl</b>	The uncontrolled or unplanned extension of urban areas into the countryside.
<b>Use Class</b>	<p>The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 2007 puts uses of land and buildings into various categories. Planning permission is not needed for changes of use within the same use class. Classes are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A1: Shops</li> <li>● A2: Professional and Financial Services</li> <li>● A3: Restaurants and Cafés</li> <li>● A4: Drinking establishments</li> <li>● A5: Hot Food Take-Aways</li> <li>● B1: Business</li> <li>● B2: General Industrial</li> <li>● B3-B7: Special Industrial Groups</li> <li>● B8: Storage and Distribution</li> <li>● C1: Hotels</li> <li>● C2: Residential</li> <li>● C3: Dwellinghouses</li> <li>● D1: non-residential institutions</li> <li>● D2: Assembly and Leisure</li> </ul>
<b>Vernacular</b>	The way in which ordinary buildings were built in a particular place, making use of local styles, techniques and materials.
<b>Vitality</b>	In terms of retailing, the capacity of a centre to grow or develop its likeliness and level of activity.
<b>Village Development Strategy</b>	A strategy contained in the East Herts Local Plan 2007 which seeks to locate development in suitable locations. The strategy identifies three types of locations or categories of village:

	<p><b>Category 1 Villages</b> – villages where limited small-scale and infill development for housing, employment, service and community facilities may be permitted, in order to help sustain vital and viable rural communities.</p> <p><b>Category 2 Villages</b> – villages where infill development only, that meets an identified housing need of the village or parish, may be permitted.</p> <p><b>Category 3 Villages</b> – the remaining villages where no new building may be permitted except for that appropriate in the rural area.</p>
<b>Village Envelope</b>	A boundary around a village, or part of a village, usually quite tightly drawn, within which development might be allowed in principle.
<b>Vision</b>	See LDF vision.
<b>Waste Local Plan</b>	A statutory Development Plan prepared (or saved) by the waste planning authority under transitional arrangements, setting out policies in relation to waste management and related developments.
<b>Wildlife Sites</b>	Designated land of local and regional importance defined as discrete areas of land considered to be of significance for their wildlife features. They are the most important places for wildlife outside legally protected land such as SSSIs.
<b>Windfall Site</b>	Windfall sites are those which have not been specifically identified as available or allocated for development in the local plan-making process and normally comprise previously-development sites that have become unexpectedly available and could include, for example, large sites resulting from a factory closure or small sites such as a residential conversion or a new flat over a shop.
<b>Zero Carbon</b>	A zero carbon home is one whose net carbon dioxide emissions, taking account of emissions associated with all energy use in the home, is equal to zero or negative across the year. The Government's definition of 'energy use' will cover both energy uses currently regulated by the Building Regulations and other energy used in the home.

