



East Herts District Plan

Chapter 13 - East of Welwyn Garden City

Note on the Extent of Landfill in
Relation to the Proposed Development
Area

East Herts Council District Plan Examination

Matters and Issues – Part 2

This Note is prepared in response to a query regarding the extent of the former landfill and any possible implications on the proposed allocation, the part of which lies within East Herts.

1. Land to the east of Welwyn Garden City has, in the past, been subject to mineral extraction followed by infilling. The illustration overleaf shows the extent of former landfill in relation to the proposed development area of the site. Figure 2 shows the recorded area of historic landfill.
2. The two residential areas to the north of the red hatched area lie within East Herts and as such are not affected by the former landfill area.
3. A series of reports has been prepared by the site promoter which provide an assessment of monitoring data for land to the east of Welwyn Garden City, one of which covers the East Herts portion of the proposed allocation (an extract of which is included at Appendix 1). This report indicates that there are no impacts from the former landfill to the area north of the B195. However, as part of the proposed East Herts development to the south of the B195 are reasonably close to the former landfill detailed exploration would be necessary. The report therefore undertook a series of boreholes and pit investigations across the site to better understand if there are any forms of pollution that may represent a barrier to future use of the site for residential purposes.
4. Section 7 of the report sets out the risk evaluation following the detailed technical assessment. The report indicates that there may be unexploded ordnance in the area to the south-east corner of Birchall Wood. Apart from the disturbance risks which can be mitigated against during the design and site preparation stages, it is considered that the risk of contamination from the unexploded ordnance would have a 'low to moderate' risk.
5. A former moat adjacent to the listed Birchall Farm House has historically been filled using 'made ground' comprising sand, brick, asphalt, clinker and ceramics, which is the source of some localised contaminants which could represent a potential unacceptable risk to human health. However, such risks can be mitigated through design and other remedial methods. The masterplan parameters which have already been agreed with Historic England will retain an area of undeveloped land around the farm and moat in order to preserve its setting, therefore it is not considered that this localised contamination represents a barrier to the remainder of the East Herts portion of the development from coming forward.
6. In terms of ground gas, whilst it is recommended that further investigations occur, the survey indicates a very low risk and does not require special precautions to be installed. The survey also looked at groundwater and soil quality. The assessment concludes that on-site soils are not considered a risk to groundwater or a constraint to redevelopment of the site for a mixed end use including residential. It is important to note that the results of assessment sites nearest the former landfill area recorded limited abnormal contaminants, none of which were considered to represent unacceptable risks or a constraint to development for residential purposes.

7. To conclude, East Herts Council is satisfied that there is no history of landfill within the East Herts portion of the proposed allocation. Localised contamination associated with Birchall Farm and the potential unexploded ordnance can be managed through avoidance of disturbance and appropriate mitigation measures. The emerging masterplan will be the appropriate mechanism to ensure that these matters inform the overall site planning.

Figure 1: Site Promoter's public exhibition display showing the extent of former landfill.



Figure 2: Historic Area of Landfill as Submitted to Welwyn Hatfield's Core Strategy Consultation 2013

