



Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards

2014–2031

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1 Introduction

1.1 WHAT IS A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

1.1.1.1 A Neighbourhood Plan is a part of the overall planning system, i.e. the system used to regulate and control building and development. The right to create one was introduced by the Localism Act 2011. A Neighbourhood Plan is created at a local level, in our case by Bishop's Stortford Town Council. Once a Neighbourhood Plan is formally made¹ it sits alongside other planning policy documents and forms part of the statutory Development Plan for use by East Herts District Council as Local Planning Authority in determining planning applications. The most important are the Local Plan 2007² created by East Herts Council, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF - created by the Government) and Hertfordshire County Council's Minerals and Waste Plans. Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are used to assess all planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area and will take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the adopted Local Plan where they are in conflict.

1.1.1.2 The Neighbourhood Plan can deal with any matters which would be the subject of a planning application. These could include, for example, design standards, community facilities, transport and access,

¹ Technically the process of bringing a Neighbourhood Plan into force is called making the plan and the plan is then said to be 'made'.

² To be replaced, once adopted, by the District Plan which is in preparation at the time of writing of this Neighbourhood Plan.

the protection of important buildings and historic assets such as archaeological remains, green spaces and many more areas. The Neighbourhood Plan can also comment on matters which are not strictly planning matters, but any influence over these matters will be indirect only.

1.1.1.3 However, there are some limitations. A Neighbourhood Plan must be 'in general conformity' with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan and cannot stop development that is already part of the Local Plan. It must not conflict with the NPPF or EU legislation. It cannot deal with major infrastructure or national projects for which central government has a separate system. Finally, because it is part of the planning system, it can only directly influence matters which would be dealt with as part of a planning application and cannot force any particular development to take place.

1.1.1.4 Before a Neighbourhood Plan is made it must be subjected to a formal consultation process and appropriate amendments made based on the consultation feedback. It must then be considered by an independent examiner who will check that it meets the legal requirements outlined above. The Plan will then go to referendum and must achieve a simple majority. Electors in the Neighbourhood Area will be entitled to vote and the examiner may decide that the referendum area should be larger than the Neighbourhood Area.

1.2 WHY ARE WE PREPARING THIS PLAN?

1.2.1.1 A Neighbourhood Plan allows the local community to have a direct say about the development within the area. This Plan covers two of the five electoral wards in Bishop's Stortford. The Town Council selected

this area because it a focus for growth in the town. It was felt that a Neighbourhood Plan for the whole town would be too ambitious in view of the relative immaturity of the neighbourhood planning process at the time and the breadth of matters to be covered. The area selected lies entirely within the civil parish of Bishop's Stortford and the boundaries are well-established.

1.3 VERSION NOTES

1.3.1.1 The Examination Copy of the Neighbourhood Plan was issued on 28th April 2014 and approved by the Town Council on 6th May 2014.

1.3.1.2 This version includes changes and

modifications suggested by an Independent Examiner to ensure that the plan complies with the Basic Conditions.

1.4 THE PLAN IN CONTEXT

1.4.1 Bishop's Stortford as a Whole

1.4.1.1 Bishop's Stortford is a prosperous market town with a distinctive character of approximately 37,000 residents. It is the largest town in East Hertfordshire and the population has grown quickly over the last thirty years owing to its strategic location: close to Stansted Airport and the M11. It is well served by rail to London and Cambridge and by road in all directions. It has excellent

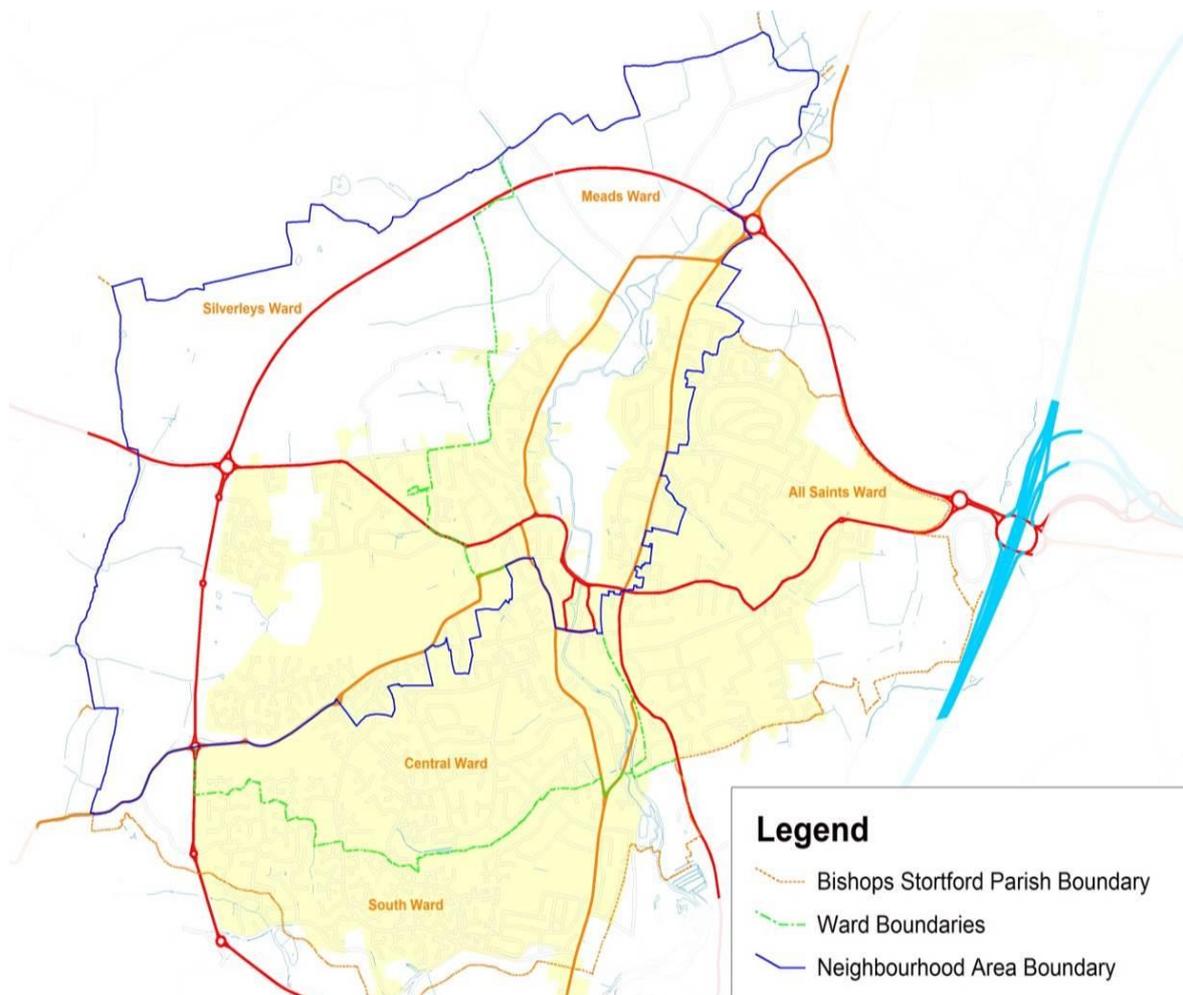


Figure 1 – The Neighbourhood Area

schools, a thriving community and good employment opportunities both in the town and through commuting. The main employment in the town itself is a flourmill, distribution services, light industry, office-based and leisure services and retail.

1.4.1.2 Bishop's Stortford is widely viewed as a desirable location for young families and this has created a problem balancing demand for housing and services with the need to protect the heritage of a medieval town, which is a large part of what makes it desirable.

1.4.2 The Two Wards

1.4.2.1 Silverleys and Meads wards are two of the five electoral wards of Bishop's Stortford and are situated on the north-west side of the town. The area comprises a mix of residential, town centre and green spaces. It includes most of the medieval heart of the town which has been well preserved as a conservation area and which was first developed at least a thousand years ago. The River Stort runs through the area supporting a wide variety of wildlife. Residents of the two wards have excellent access to the rural areas around the town and to the riverside, and there are well-maintained rights of way to facilitate this. There are also several important green spaces within the area, namely Swoorder's Field, Grange Paddocks, The Town Meads (riverside), Hoggate's Wood, Ash Grove and the area bordered by Rye Street and Farnham Road. These have recreational uses and significant ecological value.

1.4.2.2 The wards have an older demographic than average and as the average life expectancy grows there will be increased needs for care of the elderly. There is also a clear need for affordable housing for young families and individuals, including low cost market housing for private purchase. Retail is

focused on the town centre and, whilst there is some churn, the occupancy rate of town centre retail space remains favourable relative to comparable locations.

1.4.2.3 Two major developments are proposed within the area: the housing development to the north-west comprising 2650 houses and a mixed town centre development on the Causeway site for retail, a hotel, a cinema and flats. There are also several smaller sites with the potential for development.

1.4.3 Major Housing Development

1.4.3.1 Within the two wards is a large area of agricultural land, parts of which are designated as 'Areas of Special Restraint' (ASRs) and a 'Special Countryside Area' (SCA). Subject to certain conditions these are reserved for future housing needs. Although the housing demand did not emerge in the manner forecast, these areas were brought forward in 2008 by East Herts Council for the building of new homes after 2011³. A number of planning applications were submitted during 2013 for construction of approximately 2,600 homes and associated community services on this site.

1.4.3.2 At the time of writing East Herts District Council has resolved that, upon completion of a Section 106 agreement, outline consent will be given, subject to certain conditions, for the construction of up to 2,200 houses and associated infrastructure on ASRs 1-4 and the Special Countryside

³ Recommendation made by the 'LDF Executive Panel' on 6th November 2008 adopted by Full Council 19th December 2008. The decision was influenced by the need to satisfy Government demands that a five year housing land supply be maintained

Area⁴. Certain policies in the plan were modified during the course of compiling this plan to take this decision into account.

1.4.3.3 The policies in this plan will apply to all applications in the Neighbourhood Area determined after it is made. This is likely to include a proportion of the development on the ASRs and SCA as well as developments on other sites within the Neighbourhood Area.

1.5 HOW WAS THE PLAN DEVELOPED?

1.5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Team

1.5.1.1 The development of the Neighbourhood Plan was led by a Neighbourhood Plan Team (NPT), under the general guidance of Bishop's Stortford Town Council. The NPT, twelve people in total, comprised representatives of local residents' associations, the Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation, The Bishop's Stortford Chamber of Commerce, a representative of the Bishop's Stortford Retail Association, three Town Councillors (two of whom are also East Herts Councillors and one also a County Councillor) and the developers of the proposed housing on the ASRs/SCA (namely Countryside Properties and the BSN Consortium). Volunteers were sought through newspaper advertisements and three un-affiliated volunteers joined the NPT. The two developer members were asked to leave when they submitted a full planning application as it was felt that they would be compromised at this point. The NPT was supported by a planning

⁴ Resolution made at meeting of the Development Management Committee of East Herts Council held on 30th January 2014 in respect of planning application 3/13/0075/OP

officer from East Herts Council and two officers from Bishop's Stortford Town Council.

1.5.1.2 All team members were briefed to consult with other residents and interested parties during the initial phases of plan preparation to supplement the formal consultation stages.

1.5.2 The Town Plan and Survey

1.5.2.1 The NPT had at its disposal a survey of residents of the town (The 'Town Plan Survey') that had been conducted in October 2008. Around 4,000 completed questionnaires were received. This survey provided an easily accessible document giving a detailed analysis of the community view on a range of topics, against which the Town Council has reported progress. The survey led to the creation of a Town Plan setting out numerous actions, many of which have been implemented. The plan was updated in 2011 and several of the longer term actions continue.

1.5.3 2020 Vision for Bishop's Stortford

1.5.3.1 Around the same time as the Town Plan Survey (and based on the same data), a vision for Bishop's Stortford, the '2020 Vision', was created by a group led by East Herts Council and which included representatives from many organisations connected with the town. This Vision document has provided a further high level input to the Neighbourhood Plan.

1.5.4 Initial Public Engagement and Partial Draft

1.5.4.1 The Town Plan Survey provided the Neighbourhood Plan Team with a framework to work within when establishing the objectives of the plan. The public were further engaged throughout this initial stage. As each section (for example Vision, Transport, Housing etc.) was drafted, it was published on

the Town Council website and comments invited and received. In June 2013 a series of 'focus groups' was organised to concentrate on specific topics and a range of bodies and individuals invited to attend. In parallel a wide variety of organisations, including the major statutory consultees, were asked to comment on early documentation. A public consultation day was held in July 2013 and was widely advertised; the publicity included a leaflet delivered to every household and business in the whole of Bishop's Stortford as well as posters, tweets, Facebook postings and newspaper articles. The day provided excellent feedback on the early draft of the plan.

1.5.5 Professional Review and First Full Draft

1.5.5.1 Following this initial consultation stage all the comments received were reviewed and considered and the first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan was amended. This was reviewed by a professional planning consultant who was asked to recommend changes, particularly to policies, to ensure that they were effective and in accordance with the statutory requirements. The amended text was formally approved by the Neighbourhood Plan Team on 13th August 2013⁵ and subsequently reviewed, approved and adopted by Bishop's Stortford Town Council on 2nd September 2013.

1.5.6 First Full Draft and Public Engagement

1.5.6.1 This first full draft was published in September 2013. Comments were again

invited, and a publicity campaign launched to raise awareness. Specific groups were targeted, including disability groups, young people, commuters and parents, through a variety of engagement strategies.

1.5.6.2 Following this feedback the objectives and policies in the plan were amended and the plan rearranged to make it easier to read.

1.5.7 Formal Consultation and Examination Copy

1.5.7.1 The formal consultation period for the Plan commenced on 1st February 2014 and ended on 25th March 2014.

1.5.7.2 Following consultation the comments made were individually logged and assessed. Where appropriate, changes were made to the policies and supporting text. The team also engaged further with selected consultees in order that their comments could be better understood. Further details are given in the Consultation Statement.

1.5.7.3 The amended text was approved by Bishop's Stortford Town Council on 6th April 2014. Following this the plan was then submitted to EHDC for a further consultation.

1.5.7.4 All information was then submitted for independent examination by EHDC.

⁵ Bishop's Stortford North Consortium has requested that it be noted that its representative was asked to withdraw before the approval of the draft plan.

2 Vision and Objectives

2.1 OVERALL VISION

2.1.1.1 The overall Vision for the Neighbourhood Plan is that the Neighbourhood Area should be a great place to live, work and play embracing development and relating to Bishop's Stortford as a whole in a way that retains the unique market town characteristics and medieval charm but at the same time provides the additional infrastructure and housing needed to support growth. There are some principles to the vision:

- Development must be suitable, sustainable and demonstrate excellent design so that people's quality of life both now and in the future is enhanced by well thought out housing, infrastructure, and other facilities creating a sense of local community.
- Development should complement and support the existing character and cultural heritage of the market town and create an attractive mix of well-maintained residential and green spaces within a safe environment.
- Major development, on the edge of the current built up area, should be designed along the principles of a Garden City⁶, specifically incorporating its own green infrastructure (gardens, parks and landscaping) so as to create a smooth transition between the historic centre and the rural hinterland beyond.
- The transport infrastructure should evolve in a way which facilitates economic and social activity without undermining the features that makes the town desirable.

⁶ See glossary

- Schooling and health infrastructure should meet the needs of the population and be accessible.
- The town centre should remain the primary location for retail and service provision and be attractive, prosperous and vibrant. It should remain the heart of the town with appropriate connections to it.

2.1.1.2 This Vision is supported by a set of objectives under individual policy themes as set out below.

2.2 HOUSING AND DESIGN

2.2.1.1 Housing, and the design of the urban environment, has a direct impact on quality of life and excellent design is critical to creating desirable and sustainable neighbourhoods with a sense of community and place. This Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate housing land; this is left to the Local Plan prepared by East Herts Council. Instead it seeks to influence development to ensure that it complements the town, is of a high quality, and is supported by appropriate



infrastructure. The Neighbourhood Plan includes policies which will apply to new developments on land allocated in the Local Plan as they come forward.

Objectives

- Promote an attractive and harmonious living environment
- Promote high functionality and quality
- Provide housing for all and create community cohesion
- Exploit opportunities for renovation and conservation
- Protect archaeological sites

2.3 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

2.3.1.1 The residents of Bishop's Stortford are fortunate to live in a town surrounded by a mix of attractive rural areas which provide a great variety of opportunities for healthy and enjoyable activities. The River Stort provides valuable leisure activities and biodiversity. New development should protect existing green spaces, other than those specifically identified as development sites, improve biodiversity and should take the opportunity to create and exploit new green infrastructure and leisure facilities whilst minimising environmental risks.



Objectives

- Enhance and protect green spaces; exploit them appropriately for leisure use
- Protect and enhance wildlife and biodiversity



- Provide access to the countryside and create opportunities for exercise and leisure
- Provide essential community facilities

2.4 TRANSPORT

2.4.1.1 Excellent transport links are a vital contributor to the economy of the town. At the same time some of the features which make the town desirable, for example the historic town centre and prime geographical



location, create practical challenges for growth which must be very well managed if the essence of its desirability and economic vitality are to be preserved.

Objectives

- Address traffic issues
- Promote sustainable travel choices
- Manage traffic speeds and prioritize pedestrian traffic
- Provide adequate car parking having regard to considerations of sustainability

2.5 EDUCATION

2.5.1.1 Schools in Bishop's Stortford are generally recognised to have very good standards and attract pupils from a wide catchment area. There is a demand for secondary places which exceeds the places available and this gap is forecast to widen as the population of the town grows. The unbalanced geographical distribution of secondary schools contributes to traffic congestion in the town. Primary provision, while under a lesser pressure, will need to be expanded in line with demand. There is a wide variety of non-statutory early-years provision available which can be expected to grow over the coming years.

Objective

- Create a sustainable schooling provision in the area

2.6 HEALTH

2.6.1.1 Primary health care in the town is already stretched and many residents complain about difficulties with getting timely appointments with GPs, about a lack of mental health services, A&E facilities and care for the elderly. The expansion of the town and the ageing population will put additional strain on these facilities.

Objective

- Working with health providers, provide reasonable access to health services for residents of all ages

2.7 SPORT

2.7.1.1 Whilst the Neighbourhood Area and the town as a whole benefits from a number of high quality sports facilities there is a high demand for additional or enhanced space, both indoor and outdoor, and a relatively low

public satisfaction rating for current sports facilities within the town. The competing demands for land use create real challenges in meeting the need.

Objective

- Provide for residents' sports needs within a manageable framework while minimising land use

2.8 BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

2.8.1.1 Bishop's Stortford is a prosperous town close to Stansted Airport with excellent transport links to London, the M25 and Cambridge. It is well positioned in relation to the UK's most dynamic economies. There is an inadequate supply of modern business space to accommodate the potential for employment growth but relatively low unemployment. There is some tension between those who wish to see local employment opportunities expand, and those who are concerned that expansion does not damage the attributes which make the town attractive.

2.8.1.2 The town centre still has the character of a historic market town. Whilst it has suffered, like many others, from a movement towards online and out of town shopping, the occupancy rates remain high. The Neighbourhood Plan contains policies which seek to ensure that the centre remains a vibrant and attractive focus for both retail and other activities.

Objectives

- Create new employment opportunities for local residents while protecting amenities
- Create a welcoming, prosperous and dynamic town centre

3 Policies

3.1 HOUSING AND DESIGN

3.1.1 Introduction

Current Character

3.1.1.1 Bishop's Stortford has a range of architectural styles that present an attractive and recognisable local character, of which the Silverleys and Meads wards are representative. Throughout the wards there is a varied and sometimes intricate pattern of streets and roads resulting from the development of the town through many phases over several hundred years, as well as northward along each side of the Stort Valley and westwards to the Hertfordshire uplands. More recent residential developments have occurred on the western town boundary inside the edge of the Green Belt marked by the A1184 Bishop's Stortford bypass, as well as large scale developments of flats and improvements to the shopping facilities close to the town centre. Most central areas of the town are within a conservation area that extends outwards along the Hadham Road, Dunmow Road and South Street.

Major expansion

3.1.1.2 The Local Plan will establish the amount of development required to meet needs in Bishop's Stortford and across the district. At a meeting in 2008 East Herts Council⁷ decided that the ASRs should be brought forward for development. The exact scale of development will need to be established through the Local Plan and is not

⁷ East Herts Council approved minutes of meeting of the Local Development Framework executive panel 6th Nov 2008

something that can be established through this Neighbourhood Plan.

3.1.1.3 At the time of writing East Herts Council has resolved that, upon completion of a Section 106 agreement, outline consent will be given, subject to certain conditions, for the construction of up to 2,200 houses and associated infrastructure on ASRs 1–4 and the Special Countryside Area⁸.

3.1.1.4 The Neighbourhood Plan focuses on shaping how development is brought forward to ensure that growth can take place which complements and enhances the unique character of the town and in a way which does not undermine the integrity of the Green Belt.

Objectives

3.1.1.5 The objectives underlying the policies in this chapter are grouped under the headings below (further detail on the objectives is provided in the Vision and Objectives chapter):

- Promote an attractive and harmonious living environment
- Promote high functionality and quality within the living environment
- Provide housing for all and create community cohesion
- Exploit opportunities for renovation and conservation
- Protect and enhance known archaeological sites of local interest, and support the provision of appropriate archaeological mitigation measures

⁸ Resolution made at meeting of the Development Management Committee of East Herts Council held on 30th January 2014 in respect of planning application 3/13/0075/OP

Policy Context and Background

3.1.1.6 The following plans and documents support the policies in this chapter:

- National Planning Policy Framework (para. 47 to 68)
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 (the East Hertfordshire Local Plan)
- Hertfordshire County Council Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document 2011-2026 (Adopted) November 2012
- Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2002-2016 (Adopted 2007)
- East Herts Council's Affordable Housing and Lifetime Homes Supplementary Planning Document
- Bishop's Stortford Draft Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan', prepared in August 2012
- Bishop's Stortford North Public Consultation Report (June 2012)
- The vision as set out in the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group document (2009/10)
- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)
- Building for Life 12
- LCB East Sub-region Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2012 (March 2013)
- Town and Country Planning Association: Creating Garden Cities and Suburbs Today (2012)
- Secured by Design (Guidance owned by the Association of Chief Police Officers)
- East Herts Council Annual Monitoring Requirement 2011/12
- East Herts District Council Strategic Housing Market assessment January 2010 and update March 2013

3.1.2 Objective: Promote an attractive and harmonious living environment

3.1.2.1 Bishop's Stortford has a blend of character liked by its residents and represented within the Neighbourhood Area. Generous gardens are a feature of existing housing within the two wards and it is expected that particularly larger scale developments will continue to follow this in keeping with a Garden City concept⁹. This is consistent with the NPPF paragraph 52 that also suggests the creation of Green Belt surrounding such developments and argues strongly for the remaining Green Belt within the Neighbourhood Plan area to stay in place. Furthermore, this will help to keep the scale and character of Bishop's Stortford as a historic market town and to prevent an urban sprawl towards Stansted Mountfitchet.

3.1.2.2 Hertfordshire is the home of the Garden City and, although the character of the Neighbourhood Area was never intended as such, the predominance of green open spaces accord with those of a mature Garden suburb. The Garden City approach to neighbourhood planning organises streets, homes and gardens in a much more efficient way so as to achieve a comparable density of development while providing residents with substantially more generous gardens, outdoor amenity space and tree-lined streets. As a result, the benefits of the Garden City concept can be secured at a more affordable cost without necessarily threatening viability.

3.1.2.3 Bishop's Stortford should only receive the very best, attractive and sustainable development. Building for Life 12, a Government-backed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods, is

⁹ See glossary for definition

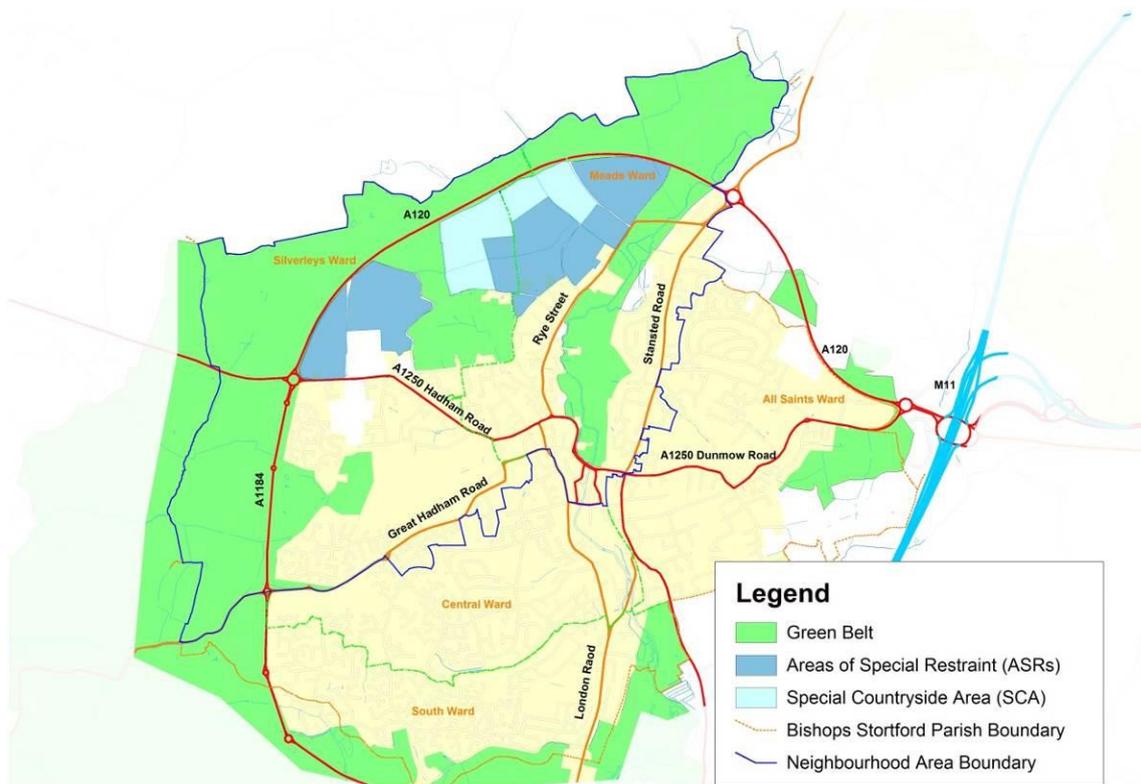


Figure 2 – Land designations

an effective way of achieving high quality through compliance with policy. Building for Life 12 sets out twelve criteria to assess the quality of a development scheme. Proposals coming forward in Bishop’s Stortford should be exemplary, ideally scoring twelve out of twelve greens when assessed against these criteria. In this context a ‘green’ against a specific criterion means that all relevant recommendations for that criterion are met. The NPPF in paragraph 62 states ‘Local Planning Authorities should have local design review arrangements in place to provide assessment and support to ensure high standards of design.’ and the East Herts Council Annual Monitoring Requirement 2011/12 appears to confirm they have the expertise. It is envisaged that developers make their own assessment which can be reviewed as part of the East Herts Council formal review and decision making process for planning applications. Bishop’s Stortford

North planning applications to date have included such assessments.

3.1.2.4 These policies seek to continue traditional building and landscape forms whilst recognising that large scale development is a significant opportunity to create a townscape using materials and styles with a local flavour in a modern and innovative way.

HDP1 – Residential Development and Redevelopment

a) New residential development will be supported as long as it is found to be meeting the findings of the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment and subject to made Local and Neighbourhood Plan policies in force. It is envisaged such housing will come forward through significant housing developments¹⁰

¹⁰ See glossary for definition

on the outer edge of the built up area and through utilising opportunities for infill and brownfield development within it.

b) Residential Development Proposals beyond the existing edge of the built up area should be designed to incorporate the principles of Garden Cities (as defined in the glossary in Appendix 4 and as applicable to the size of development) delivering housing at lower densities than in the built up area and specifically incorporating its own green infrastructure (e.g. gardens, parks, landscaping) so as to create a smooth transition between the historic centre and the rural hinterland beyond. Gardens should be of a size commensurate with the type of dwelling and make best use of possible aspects to ensure they enjoy some direct sunlight during the day.

c) Brownfield development and the redevelopment of existing residential properties to create higher density developments shall be supported subject to the achievement of high quality design that meets the requirements of other policies and does not compromise to an unacceptable level the amenity value in either neighbouring properties or for the future occupiers of the proposed development.

HDP2 – Setting and character of buildings, streets and spaces

Developments which can demonstrate high quality and empathy with their setting within the Neighbourhood Area will be supported.

This means:

a) Schemes which are accompanied by a Building for Life 12 Code Assessment and that score green or amber against all applicable

criteria (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11¹¹). An amber score will only be acceptable where it is accompanied by a clear justification in terms of local circumstances or viability explaining why a green score cannot be achieved.

b) The use of materials which are in keeping and complement the predominant existing character in the neighbourhood plan area of pitched tiles, roofs and brick.

c) Development proposals in the Conservation Areas which incorporate the recommended styles and materials set out in the Conservation Area Character Appraisal.

d) Innovative design of a high quality will be approved in appropriate locations where it can be demonstrated that it also contributes positively to the immediate surroundings.

e) Schemes where buildings, streets and spaces can be shown to relate well to their location and surroundings, particularly in prominent areas, such as above the Stort Valley and close to Ash Grove and Hoggate's Wood.

f) Where possible and viable, keep the routes of existing roads and lanes to provide continuity with the history and morphology of the local area, for example Dane O'Coys Road.

3.1.3 Objective: Promote high functionality and quality

3.1.3.1 High functionality and quality through good design, whether on the detailed scale within homes or on the wider scale for, say crime prevention, is encouraged by looking to meet or exceed current standards as they evolve. Best practice design principles shall be followed to ensure current and future needs are anticipated, thereby avoiding

¹¹ For criteria 3 and 10, see Transport policies. For criterion 12, see HDP3.

subsequent disruptive changes and contributing to the sustainability of the neighbourhood in the long term.

3.1.3.2 The aim is for new development to deliver homes that are fit for purpose. This can relate to simply having enough space, for example for visitors and guests to promote social interaction, for bikes and push chairs to encourage sustainable transport and to store sorted waste awaiting collection under the multiple wheelie bin local policy.

3.1.3.3 Although the Neighbourhood Area has low rates of crime, increased use of non-car transport encouraged within this Plan may heighten concerns about security and threaten quality of life and community cohesion.

3.1.3.4 Recent changes in local lighting times have resulted in concerns about night time safety and security within Bishop's Stortford. It is important that the quality of lighting in new developments is able to address those fears.

3.1.3.5 In order to mitigate the impacts of new development on climate change, development proposals should demonstrate how they will ensure that new dwellings and business premises include energy saving and carbon dioxide reducing measures that at least match, and ideally exceed, proposed regulations.

HDP3 – Design standards

Whilst assessment of the design merits of new developments under the existing Local Plan will not be limited to the following, applications for development will be required to meet all of the following criteria unless they include a clear justification for not meeting the standard on the basis of specific circumstances or viability:

- a) Meet the guidelines on internal space set out in good practice guidance prepared by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) in its 2011 publication 'The Case for Space: The Size of England's New Homes'¹², or any guidance which explicitly supersedes it.
- b) Achieve a 'green' for criteria 12 of the Building for Life 12 code that deals with external storage and amenity space.
- c) Achieve Part 2 Secured by Design accreditation as a minimum, and ideally should achieve full SBD accreditation. Features such as gated developments, that invoke a fear of crime, are to be avoided.
- d) Street lighting should achieve the standard as described in the Secured by Design publication 'Lighting Against Crime' or subsequent documents which explicitly supersede this.
- e) Meet the Government target for new buildings to be carbon neutral, ideally ahead of the proposed date (currently 2016).

3.1.4 Objective: Provide housing for all and create community cohesion

3.1.4.1 The future housing mix policy within the East Herts District depends mainly on an objective housing needs assessment over the Plan period and updated at appropriate intervals by the East Herts Council planning

¹² The RIBA advice for minimum space requirements is drawn from the HATC Ltd recommendations in the London Housing Design Guide Interim Edition (Design for London for the Mayor of London, August 2010) as detailed on pages 14 and 15 of the RIBA publication.'

authority as part of their housing provision strategy. This is currently the LCB East Sub-region Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2012 (SHMA), forecasting requirements to 2033.

3.1.4.2 The SHMA looks at many factors, one of which is market housing prices and, despite a small temporary fall in 2008–10, this has now reached the point where in 2012 only 10% of properties sold for less than £150k and 50% sold for more than £250k (SHMA p8). The SHMA also shows the District Housing Register waiting list for Affordable Homes growing steadily to over 2,700 in 2012.



3.1.4.1 The fact that the Neighbourhood Area is only 15 minutes travel time to the major employment centre of Stansted Airport and less than 45 minutes to London and Cambridge along the M11 corridor means housing demand is likely to exceed the District average. Feedback from consultation shows that for local people, particularly young people starting families, difficulty in obtaining a place to live is a major concern.

3.1.4.2 The Local Plan seeks up to 40% affordable housing on new residential sites, which is capable of being adjusted to reflect the specific circumstances of any particular development. The latest actual figure available (2011 Census) for the proportion of affordable housing in the Neighbourhood Area is just 7.4%. This last figure does not yet include the impact of approximately 2,000

homes for Bishop's Stortford North, for which partial permission is already granted under planning application LPA 3/13/0075/OP, and about 450 homes under the pending Countryside Properties planning application reference 3/13/1501/OP.

3.1.4.3 The high demand for housing coupled with the large difference between Affordable Home provision policy and the status quo clearly supports the need for a pragmatic and sensitive approach to policy implementation. This needs to take account of the local conditions driving demand and the nature of the area itself to avoid damaging both its character and social fabric.

3.1.4.4 The policy for Dwelling Mix Strategy requires an assessment to be carried out by developers of how the mix they propose meets with local needs, within the whole of Bishop's Stortford, for schemes above a certain size. The assessment will be reviewed as part of the East Herts Council's formal decision making process for planning applications, taking into account local factors such as affordability and availability of market homes and the trend of affordable housing waiting lists.

HDP4 – Dwelling Mix Strategy

a) On schemes where there is a net gain of fifteen or more homes, developers are required to submit a Dwellings Mix Strategy with any planning application. The strategy must clearly demonstrate how the proposed development addresses the objectively identified needs within Bishop's Stortford. This must cover all needs including those for market, sheltered, supported and 'affordable' housing.

b) On such schemes, affordable housing will, other than in exceptional circumstances, be provided on-site as part of the residential development. Exceptional circumstances will

principally relate to circumstances where on-site provision will clearly compromise the deliverability of the scheme.

c) For schemes with a net gain of between three and fourteen homes, a contribution towards the funding of other initiatives to secure affordable residential accommodation may be made as an alternative to on-site provision.

d) All schemes shall consider alternative types of purchase funding such as the various forms of shared equity for affordable housing and self-build for market housing.

e) The Affordable Housing units should be integrated into the open market housing development using appropriate design methods, i.e. tenure blind.

3.1.4.5 As a commuter town primarily for London, but also for Cambridge, Bishop's Stortford sometimes suffers from a lack of community. Provision of 'Lifetime Homes' above the 15% specified by the Local Plan is a way to encourage stability and social cohesion by making it easier to avoid unnecessary uprooting of households to 'upsize' or 'downsize'. Additionally, provision for a wider range of occupiers lifts the overall quality of homes contributing towards meeting the objective to promote high quality, as encouraged elsewhere in this Plan.



3.1.4.6 The 2011 census does not show the Neighbourhood Plan area differing significantly in the proportion of disabled households from that of the East Herts

Council average. However, there is evidence from disabled groups within the town that it is difficult to find suitable accommodation for those with specialist needs.¹³ It is therefore important that opportunities arising from developments make a contribution to this provision through S106 contributions. Integration with residential areas is encouraged to promote inclusion and community cohesion.

HDP5 – Adaptable housing

a) New housing shall be of a type and size which is capable of meeting the changing needs of residents over their lifetimes, is accessible to those with limited mobility and capable of adaptation for residents who are wheelchair users. At least 20% of homes shall be built to the 'Lifetime Homes' or an equivalent or superior standard.

HDP6 – Sheltered and Supported Housing

a) Housing (including specialist provision) for the elderly (such as residential care homes), those with limited mobility and other disabilities shall be sited to provide easy access to local retail, medical and other facilities.

b) Wherever possible, such specialist provision for those needing assistance with their care shall be integrated within areas of residential housing.

3.1.4.7 The East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 policy LRC11 addresses the retention of community facilities such as libraries, places of worship, schools, allotments etc. However, it pre-dates the Localism Act under which voluntary and community organisations can nominate an

¹³ Information received Consultation February 2014.

asset to be included on a list of 'assets of community value'. This list is managed by East Hertfordshire Council and controls the disposal or loss of a wider range of small but important facilities such as post offices, public houses, meeting halls, local shops and so on. Such facilities act as the focus of community activity and contribute towards community cohesion.

3.1.4.8 Some local faith groups have been unable to find suitable premises or land for places of worship and would benefit, along with many other local and voluntary groups, from supportive policy when significant new developments are considered.

HDP7 – Community facilities

a) Proposals that result in the loss of use, buildings or land for public or community use will not be supported unless:

- i) An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown that the facility is no longer needed in its current form; or
- ii) The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by enhanced provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- iii) The development is for an alternative community facility, the need for which clearly outweighs the loss.

b) Proposals that retain or enhance the provision, quality and accessibility of existing uses, buildings or land for public or community use will be supported, where they do not conflict with other policies within this Plan.

c) Proposals for new uses, buildings or land for public or community use:

- i) Should be in suitable locations, served by a choice of sustainable travel options; Should be of an appropriate scale and flexible design to enable multiple uses throughout the day;

ii) Where new facilities are being constructed in association with new residential development they should be completed to ensure they are available for the new and existing community before one third of the housing development is complete.

d) Proposals should aim to provide for the dual or multiple use of facilities for wider community access.

e) Facilities should be accessible to all, with built-in features like the 'hearing loop', and take account of existing provision within and beyond the Neighbourhood Area, particularly towards Bishop's Stortford town centre.



3.1.5 Objective: Exploit opportunities for renovation and conservation

3.1.5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan strongly supports the development of a register of buildings and locations in need of renovation or replacement and the development of a strategy to foster their improvement in keeping with their surroundings following the Neighbourhood Plan policies.

3.1.5.2 This will initially be led by Bishop's Stortford Town Council in conjunction with the appropriate heritage and conservation bodies represented within wider Bishop's Stortford.

3.1.5.3 The Bishop's Stortford Conservation Area Appraisal lists many buildings at risk, vulnerable buildings, detracting features and suggested improvements as the result of a

character analysis of the whole Conservation Area. Many of these lie within the Neighbourhood Area and should be automatically included within the scope of the Neighbourhood Plan as opportunities for improvement. It should be noted that the National Planning Policy Framework places considerable importance to the setting of heritage assets, not just the assets themselves, and this is particularly so in the centre of Bishop's Stortford where a large number of listed buildings create a unique historic character that extends beyond the boundary of the Conservation Area.

HDP8 – Promoting renovation

a) Development proposals coming forward for disused or dilapidated buildings and locations will be favoured where they support the improvement and innovative use of the buildings whilst preserving their character and essential architectural features.'

b) Schemes that recognise the importance of the historic setting of significant heritage buildings within and around the Conservation Area, notably close to the Market Square and along North Street, Windhill and Bridge Street, will also be supported.

3.1.6 Objective: Protect and enhance known archaeological sites

3.1.6.1 The area has been settled and exploited by humans for many centuries and archaeological investigations in and around Bishop's Stortford have already identified numerous archaeological sites dating from the early prehistoric through to the Later Iron Age, Roman and Medieval periods. Significant and well-known archaeological sites within the Meads and Silverleys wards include the Roman road 'Stane Street' and the small Roman urban settlement that developed alongside it (at Grange Paddocks and Cannons Close), and Waytemore Castle, but there are

many other sites within their boundaries. Current planning legislation provides the means by which new development sites with archaeological potential can be investigated to determine if important archaeological remains ('heritage assets') are present, and to enable appropriate mitigation measures (further surveys, excavations, etc.) to be put in place. This process is being followed by the Bishop's Stortford North Consortium in the development of ASRs 1 – 4 and the SCA. Bishop's Stortford Museum should take priority on exhibiting any remains found.



HDP9 – Archaeology

The identification and protection of local sites of archaeological interest and their investigation and enhancement where appropriate, and also the archaeological investigation of sites where new developments or improvements are planned will be supported. Major new developments must be contingent upon appropriate archaeological investigation being carried out prior to construction.

3.2 CONTRIBUTIONS TO COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

3.2.1.1 Bishop's Stortford has a range of infrastructure needs and on-going requirements. In order to make sure there is a consistent approach to community infrastructure and to ensure that the objectives within the Neighbourhood Plan are supported with any future development proposals, financial contributions should be made accordingly.

CI – Community Infrastructure

Where policies in this plan require contributions to community infrastructure, they will be made through planning obligations in accordance with Policy IMP1 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 or a successor policy in the emerging East Herts District Plan where they comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and any subsequent amendments to them.

3.3 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

3.3.1 Introduction

3.3.1.1 The residents of Bishop's Stortford are fortunate to live in a town surrounded by a mix of attractive rural areas: fields, the riverside, grassy recreational areas, sports fields, footpaths and allotments. These provide a great variety of opportunities for residents to undertake a range of healthy and enjoyable activities including walking, running, boating, wildlife observation, and gardening. The River Stort is a chalk stream with a nationally important habitat and a unique ecology. It also provides valuable

leisure activities and biodiversity benefits. New development should protect existing green spaces, other than those specifically identified as development sites, improve biodiversity and should offer the opportunity for the creation and maximum usage of new green spaces and leisure facilities.

3.3.1.2 Bishop's Stortford is, however, subject to a number of environmental risks. The river presents a flood risk for parts of the town centre and recent major housing and retail developments have decreased the natural absorption of rainwater. These, along with further proposed development, are likely to increase the risk of flooding.



3.3.1.3 Rapid expansion has also put the environment of the town under pressure. The town is not self-sufficient in water which must be pumped in from outside sources. Sewerage facilities are stretched. Any major new development must therefore take these factors into account, manage the environmental risks and improve the area's resilience to climate change.

3.3.1.4 The objectives underlying the policies in this chapter are grouped under the headings below. Further detail is provided in the Vision and Objectives chapter.

- Enhance and protect green spaces, utilise them appropriately for leisure use
- Protect and enhance wildlife and biodiversity

- Provide access to the countryside and create opportunities for exercise and leisure
- Provide essential municipal facilities
- Protect the environment

Policy Context and Background

3.3.1.5 The following plans and documents support the policies in this chapter.

- National Planning Policy Framework (para. 77, 94, 95, 97 109)
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 (the East Hertfordshire Local Plan)
- Local Plan 2007 and the Open Space, Sports and Recreation Supplementary Policy Document
- East Herts Council's draft Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2013-2018
- East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan 2011
- Everyone Matters – A Sustainable Community Strategy for East Hertfordshire 2009-2024
- Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan 2006
- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)
- The vision as set out in the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group document (2009/10)
- Bishop's Stortford Draft Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Plan, prepared in August 2012 – see green spaces elements.
- East Hertfordshire Council's Affordable Housing and Lifetime Homes Supplementary Planning Document

3.3.2 Objective: Enhance and protect green spaces, utilise them appropriately for leisure use

3.3.2.1 Four tracts of land in the Neighbourhood Area act as green lungs and are vital in maintaining the balance of green space and development that has been so important to Bishop's Stortford's evolution.

Major housing development, if not carefully planned, could cause the loss of important green spaces, suffocation of the northern side of the town and restrict access to green space by existing and new residents.

3.3.2.2 It is essential that considerable effort is given to on-going planning and management of green space. A new Community Trust or Trusts may be required to ensure that the local residents take a real interest in maintaining these facilities for future generations, while working with landowners, the Town Council and East Herts Council. A useful reference document for considering these issues is 'Community Green space and New Development'.

3.3.2.3 An example of a green space protected and enhanced during a recent development is the Southern Country Park. It has won the Green Flag Award in 2008, 2009, and 2010. The 'Friends of Southern Country Park' have assisted East Herts Council in the preparation of an action plan for the years 2008-2013. A similar action plan should be prepared for Hoggate's Wood and Foxdells Farm and other key areas.

Hoggate's Wood

3.3.2.4 The development of the Areas of Special Restraint (ASRs) and the SCA will allow a degree of opening up of Hoggate's Wood, which is fenced off at present and not accessible. This ancient wood is an important

site for wildlife and this should be protected, while footpaths may be made through part of the wood to provide access for walkers. It will be essential to balance public access with biodiversity management.

Farnham Bourne Brook

3.3.2.5 At present, Farnham Bourne Brook is a stream that fills after heavy rain. The developers of the ASRs/SCA are proposing to surround the brook with a set of balancing ponds, this strategy is supported. The aim would be to increase biodiversity in the area.

Foxdells Farm

3.3.2.6 The farmhouse and the barn are listed buildings and are currently the home of



Figure 3 - Green lungs

A – Hoggate's Wood, B- Farnham Bourne Brook, C – Foxdells Farm, D – The Town Meads

an Animal Rescue organisation. They have been offered alternative accommodation nearby. If they move, the buildings could be used as a rural community centre, or there could be joint use. Various protected species reside nearby presenting opportunities for leisure/educational use. Ownership, funding, management, access and parking will need to be carefully considered.

The Town Meads & Stort Riverside

3.3.2.7 Grange Paddocks, Castle Gardens, The Meads and the areas of Green Belt to the north and east of the bypass serve to provide many of the town's leisure needs and must be protected and enhanced in the period of the plan. There needs to be a good balance between leisure usage and wildlife protection, between ornamental areas, play areas and those for fitness and health. It is widely considered by the community of Bishop's Stortford that the best use has not been made of the River Stort.

3.3.2.8 The proposed development of the ASRs/SCA and the associated flood management scheme provides a unique opportunity to create a major step forward in the management of the River Stort and the riverside. It would create a way for residents and visitors to relate more closely with the riverside areas and enhance the rural hinterland of our growing town. The structural integrity and navigational safety of the waterway must not be compromised by future development.

3.3.2.9 The land at Ash Grove between Dane O'Coys and Cricketfield Lane is well-used for general recreation and by dog walkers. It is also both rich in wildlife and 'local in character', therefore achieving the criteria in the National Planning Policy Framework for designation as a Local Green Space.



3.3.2.10 Farnham Bourne Park's primary function, after its creation, will be to serve as a local green space for residents of the new development at Bishop's Stortford North. Once created it is likely to be appropriate to designate Farnham Brooke Park as a Local Green Space. The Town Council will support this designation in a review of the Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan

GIP1 – Areas with a general presumption against development and retention of 'green lungs'

a) Any proposals for development must respect the following areas as 'Green Lungs' which penetrate the urban area and will principally be used for recreation and open space uses while maintaining their biodiversity:

- Hoggate's Wood
- Farnham Bourne Brook
- Foxdells Farm
- The Town Meads from Hockerill Bridge to Michaels Road

b) New development will be expected to incorporate these open spaces into their design without encroaching on them and they will be protected in perpetuity. The layout around Foxdells Farm will be expected to preserve an open setting for the buildings respecting the historical agrarian setting of this designated heritage asset.

c) Ash Grove - the land between Dane O'Coys and Cricketfield Lane – shall be designated as

a local green space where development that is incompatible with the importance of the space as an attractive publicly accessible informal recreation area will not be allowed unless there are very special circumstances where the benefit of the development clearly outweighs any harm.

d) In recognition of their value as green space assets within Bishop's Stortford, development which is incompatible with this purpose will not be permitted in the following areas:

- If the existing consented development of the Causeway site (planning application reference: 3/10/1964/OP) does not go ahead, the part of the Town Meads containing the Flood Compensation Zone south of Grange Paddocks in the Meads.
- The moat in Castle Gardens

GIP2 – Improve areas for leisure

a) The enhancement of Castle Gardens and Sworder's Field to create new attractive areas for three leisure areas: ornamental gardens, fitness & health activities, and play, and specifically the creation of a new paddling pool, multi-use tennis courts, a skate park and a café will be supported where it is not harmful to the historic character, appearance or setting of the site.

b) Proposals to improve usage of green spaces and enhance communication to residents and visitors (especially school children) regarding the open spaces available in the area will be supported. This would include:

- improved signage;
- provision of seating, preferably from natural products (logs);
- guided visits from primary schools;
- river trips (where navigable and while protecting river wildlife);
- routes for regular walks;

- proposals which support interaction with and activity around the River Stort navigation while protecting the navigational safety of river users.

- weather-protected information boards;

c) Incorporation of some footpaths in the Hertfordshire Way. Any open spaces created to have access by the general public must allow reasonable access for people with disabilities.



GIP3 – Green space management

Developers will be expected to cooperate with the establishment of appropriate long-term arrangements for the management of open spaces which form part of any development scheme for over 100 houses. The developer may be required to provide financial contributions to support initial costs and/or to transfer land to an appropriate body, by agreement with the planning authority

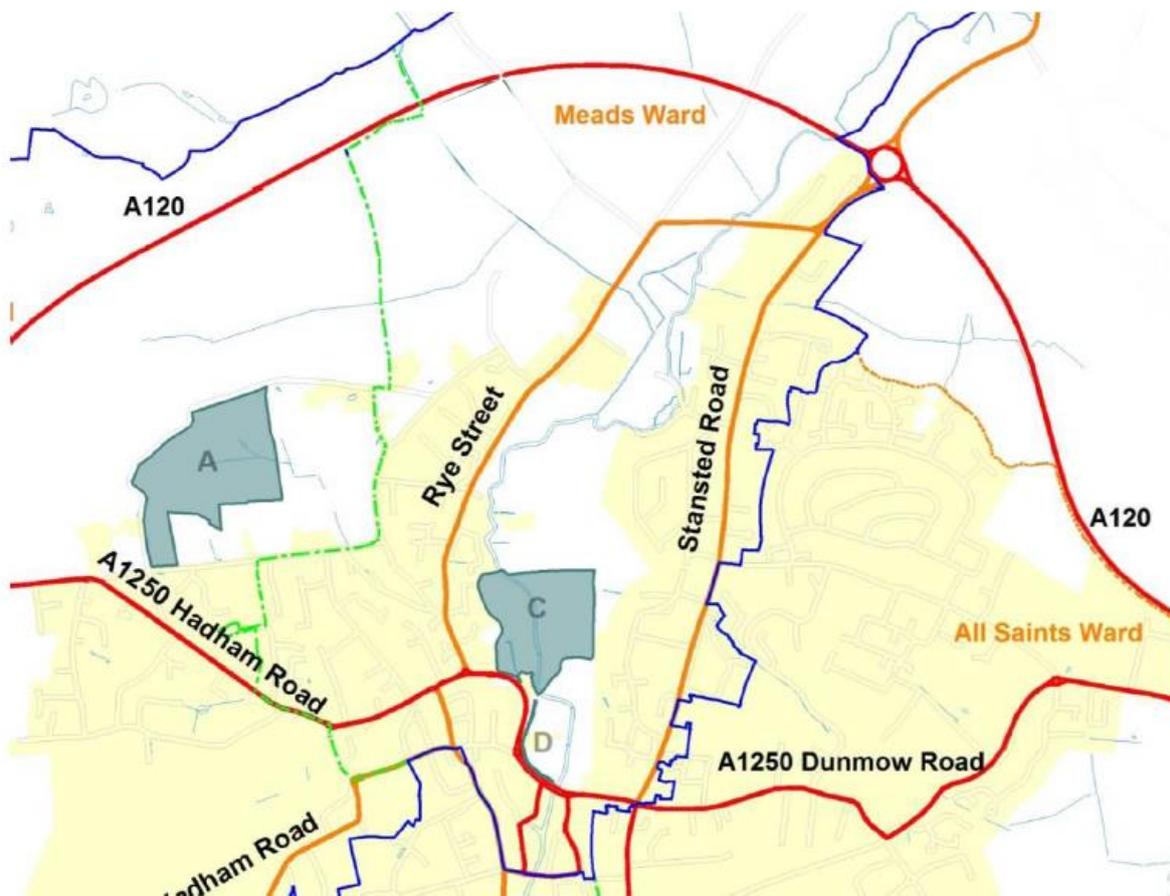


Figure 4 – Local Green Spaces and other green spaces

A - Ash Grove, C - Part of Town Meads, D – The Moat (the label is to the East of the Area in the diagram)

3.3.3 Objective: Protect and enhance wildlife and biodiversity

3.3.3.1 The protection of woodland and wildlife was a key concern expressed at the Focus Group on Environment and Green Spaces held in June 2013 and at the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation day held in July 2013.

GIP4 – Protect wildlife and increase biodiversity

a) As part of the development of land at Bishop's Stortford North, trees and hedgerows (as far as practicable) shall be retained. New planting and other initiatives shall be incorporated as an integral part of the scheme to promote biodiversity. Existing trees should continue to be part of any

development proposal unless it is demonstrated that it is necessary for them to be felled or that an arboricultural survey clearly demonstrates that they are not worthy of retention. Replacement tree planting should be undertaken on a minimum of a one-for-one basis.

b) Watercourses are a vital asset and therefore must be retained as part of any development. Proposals must show how the watercourse is to be incorporated as a vital asset within a development but must also ensure that wherever possible an appropriate buffer zone is incorporated between the built form and the watercourse. Where possible, the re-naturalisation of modified watercourses will be sought.

c) Where significant new development

restricts natural habitats, corridors for wildlife movement will be protected in order to maximise local biodiversity.

d) It will be especially important for wildlife corridors to remain between The Mead/Riverside and Foxdells Farm where practical, and between Hoggate's Wood and the countryside to the north of the A120 bypass.

e) In order to protect and enhance wildlife in the area and increase biodiversity, opportunities to incorporate new wildlife habitats (for example bat and bird boxes) into significant new developments must be sought. Guidance should be sought from Natural England where habitats of wildlife and protected species (e.g. badgers) are affected.

3.3.4 Objective: Provide access to the countryside and create opportunities for exercise and leisure

3.3.4.1 The plan area is a popular place for walking, riding and cycling. Feedback from the Focus Group on Environment and Green Spaces held in June 2013 identified strong support for footpaths and bridleways to be protected when new development takes place.

GIP5 – Enhancement of footpaths and bridleways

a) Working with local and national associations such as the Bishop's Stortford & District Footpaths Association, East Herts Ramblers, East Herts Footpaths Society and the British Horse Society, proposals to ensure that existing footpaths and bridleways are well maintained and signposted and that new footpaths are created and officially designated will be supported.

b) The character of existing public rights of way (PROWs) must be protected in terms of safety, directness, attractiveness and convenience. No new obstructions to PROWs

should be introduced and any amendments should follow the guidelines in the relevant Department of Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) circular.

c) Bridleways for horse riders should be protected and proposals should seek, where possible, to create cycle paths so as to provide safe and effective routes across the Neighbourhood Area. New and existing cycle tracks should be linked with the National Cycle Network.

d) Footpaths across the Neighbourhood Area will provide an accessible and safe way for residents and visitors to enjoy the rural hinterland of Bishop's Stortford.

e) As part of any development proposals, financial contributions or direct provision of new infrastructure will be sought to secure improvements to rights of way and other links within the area surrounding a site that would be used by future occupiers.

3.3.5 Objective: Provide essential community facilities

3.3.5.1 Allotments in Bishop's Stortford are currently managed by Bishop's Stortford Town Council. Residents must wait up to eighteen months for a plot on the more popular sites in the Neighbourhood Area, despite efforts over recent years to manage demand by reducing plot size and evicting tenants who do not tend plots adequately.

3.3.5.2 New development will cause the demand to increase which must be matched by increased supply. Allotment holders and considerations of sustainability favour allotments close to the communities they serve.

3.3.5.3 Town Council policy BSP010¹⁴ sets out the rationale and standards for developer contributions.



GIP6 – Improving/expanding allotments

a) To support the population increase arising from new developments, developers of 10 residential units or more will be required to either:

- To provide space with appropriate facilities for new allotments or,
- Contribute towards the expansion and/or improvement of existing allotments.

b) For developments in excess of 500 dwellings (or groups of adjacent developments which together amount to more than 500 dwellings) it will normally be expected that land either on or immediately adjacent to the development site is provided and prepared by the developers (including facilities, fencing, land preparation, soil improvement if required) and transferred to the allotment authority (currently the Town Council) at no cost. The provision of space for new allotments will be at the rate of 0.24ha per 1000 population. Vehicular access will be required and the site must be chosen accordingly.

c) For smaller developments it will normally be expected that contributions will be made towards existing allotments. Where there is available land – particularly where it is part of the proposed development area - this could include the expansion of the existing allotments. Financial contributions will be calculated based on the cost of acquiring and facilitating space at the same rate as for on-site provision.



3.3.6 Objective: Protect the environment

GIP7 – Flood mitigation

a) Development will only be permitted in Flood Zone 2 or 3 (illustrated on the Environment Agency map reproduced in Figure 5) where it has been demonstrated that it meets the requirements of the NPPF in relation to the Sequential Test and the Exception Test and a site specific flood risk assessment, or other tests specified in the Local Plan have demonstrated that the risk of flooding has been minimised and that any residual flood risk can be safely managed.

¹⁴ www.bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk/document_library/Town%20Council%20Policies/Planning%20Policies.doc

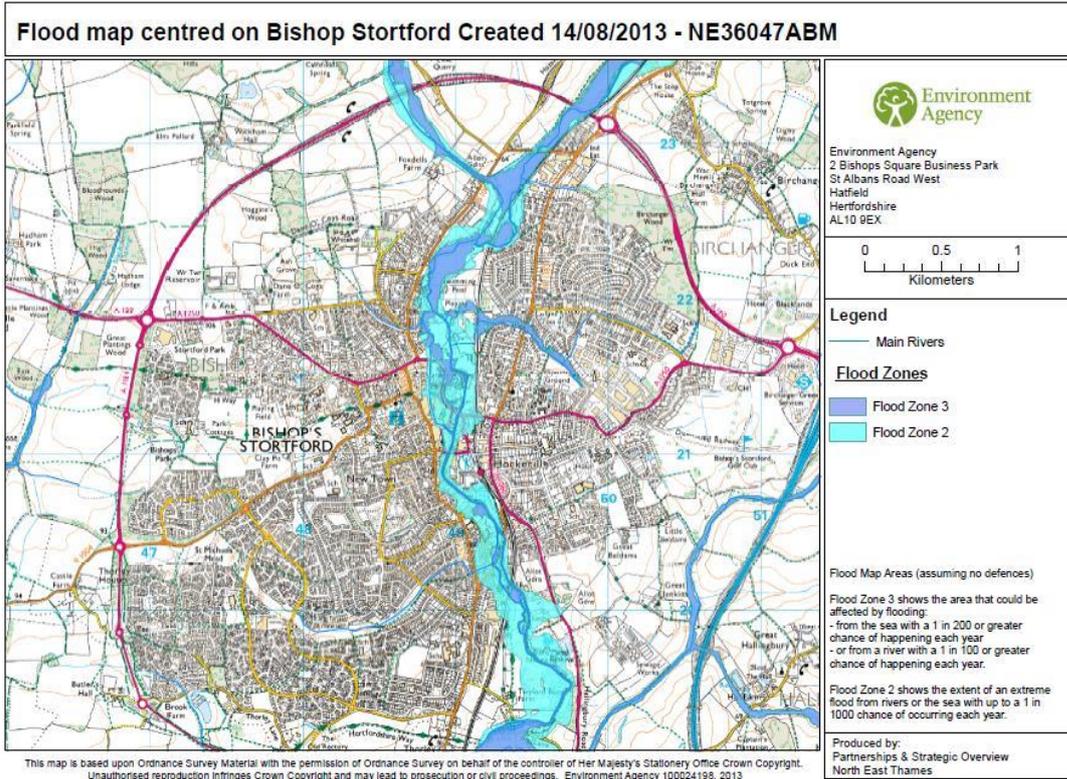


Figure 5 - Flood map

3.4 TRANSPORT

3.4.1 Introduction

3.4.1.1 Excellent transport links are a vital contributor to the economy of the town. At the same time some of the very features which make the town desirable, for example the historic town centre and prime geographical location, create practical challenges for growth which must be very well managed if the essence of its desirability is to be preserved.



3.4.1.2 In the response to the Town Plan Survey, transport received the second lowest category rating. Traffic congestion, town centre pedestrianisation, bus and train services and improvement of the A120 were all cited as important areas. Issues of congestion, particularly with additional development, dominated the responses during the Neighbourhood Plan consultation and car parking was seen to be a vital consideration.

Objectives

3.4.1.3 The objectives underlying the policies in this chapter are grouped under the four headings below.

- Address traffic issues
- Promote sustainable travel choices
- Provide adequate car parking
- Manage traffic speeds and prioritize pedestrian traffic

Policy Context and Background

- The following plans and documents support the policies in this chapter:
- National Planning Policy Framework (para. 29, 30-32, 35, 36, 39, 40)
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007
- Supplementary Planning Document, Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development, June 2008
- The Hertfordshire Local Travel Plan - see 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 3.2
- Hertfordshire County Council Bus Strategy 2011-2031, June 2011
- Hertfordshire County Council Rail Strategy, April 2011
- 'Roads in Hertfordshire', Highway Design Guide 3rd Edition
- Hertfordshire Air Quality Management Plan (Policy 13.9)
- Travel Plan Guidance for Business and Residential Development, Hertfordshire County Council (Emerging document, Consultation January 2014)
- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)

3.4.2 Objective: Address Traffic Issues

3.4.2.1 Major developments during the plan period are likely to increase the number of residents of the town by about 20%, creating additional demands on the transport network. The Neighbourhood Area has high levels of car ownership compared to the county and national average (86% of households have access to a car, compared to 83% in the county and 74% nationally¹⁵) and whilst the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote alternative forms of travel, it is inevitable that such major development will create

¹⁵ Source: 2011 Census

	2008/09*	2015/16	2020/21	2025/26	2030/31
Minutes per mile	2.87	2.80	2.75	2.70	2.65
MPH	20.9	21.4	21.8	22.2	22.6

* Actual, Hertfordshire

Table 1 – Herts CC Target Morning Peak Hour Journey Speeds

significant additional movements on the road network.

3.4.2.2 As an historic market town, Bishop’s Stortford has a road network not designed for such volumes of vehicular movement. County policy includes a goal of *improving* average morning peak hour journey speeds within ‘defined towns’ including Bishop Stortford and achieving this or something close, is necessary to realise the vision for the Neighbourhood Area. Herts County Council has established targets for average peak-hour journey times within specified urban areas including Bishop’s Stortford¹⁶ (excluding weekends and school holidays) set out in Table 2.

3.4.2.3 The current average within Bishop’s Stortford or the Neighbourhood Area is not known, but the average speed on several key routes within the Neighbourhood Area is 19.0mph¹⁷, i.e. *worse* even than the 2008/09 County figure and substantially worse than the target. The figure below shows the main

routes where there are significant levels of congestion at present.¹⁸

3.4.2.4 Aside from inconvenience, congestion compromises the vitality of the town centre. Residents, particularly those on the periphery of the town, will choose to travel to surrounding shopping centres or shop online if they cannot conveniently access the facilities in the town.

3.4.2.5 Taking the above into account it is vital that the design of new development and the associated mitigations are strongly challenged to ensure that the best viable design is created and unnecessary impacts avoided. Particular attention must be paid to the congested routes and innovative solutions (including infrastructure, modal shift and the location of key facilities) fully explored. If this does not take place the future expansion of the town will be frustrated by inadequate design of earlier developments in the plan period and the vitality of the town centre compromised by poor access.

3.4.2.6 The objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to ensure that the best possible design,

¹⁶ LTP3 Volume 1 Page 46, Indicator N167, Herts County Council

¹⁷ Source – Planning Application 3/13/0075/OP Transport Analysis Routes 7-16

¹⁸ Sources: Planning Application 3/13/0075/OP Transport Assessment Appendix J Routes 7-16; Report to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. Appeals by the Governors of the Bishop’s Stortford High School and others, 6th February 2012 at pages 36, 52

within the bounds of viability, is achieved in respect of congestion management and that all design options are thoroughly explored.

3.4.2.7 The threshold for applying these policies (particularly TP1), which concern only to developments affecting congested routes, has been the subject of careful consideration. Since they are based on predicted results some tolerance should be made for modelling uncertainty. Verbal advice from the Highways Agency indicated that a threshold of 5% increase in delay or journey time has frequently been applied in broadly similar circumstances in the past. Hertfordshire Highways have suggested that the threshold be set at 'a notable increase' however several consultees have questioned the use of undefined terms of this nature. Others have suggested that, in view of the overwhelming importance of achieving the best possible design consistent with viability, a threshold of 0% should be set. Taking all representations into account the figure of 5% has been adopted as a reasonable level at which to set the threshold.

3.4.2.8 The intention of the Neighbourhood Plan is not to be prescriptive in respect of how mitigation is to be achieved, rather it is to be clear as the circumstances in which mitigations must be considered and included within proposals.

TP1 – Traffic congestion

a) All significant¹⁹ proposed developments will be supported by a Transport Assessment which must demonstrate predicted levels of

¹⁹ Defined as developments for which Transport Assessments in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council's Roads in Hertfordshire – Design Guide, 2011 (or as subsequently superseded by the local highway authority)

generated traffic and the impacts of this on key roads and junctions within the town. This will include, in particular, the routes within the bypass set out in paragraph e) and other routes designated by the Highways Authority.

b) In the event that the Transport Assessment shows a predicted increase in congestion or average journey times on these routes which exceeds 5%, or such other figure designated by the highways authority, mitigating works shall be identified and implemented to bring predicted journey times back to pre-development levels unless it can be demonstrated that this is not viable through a thorough assessment of the options and viability or other means.

c) Travel plans will be required for major developments in accordance with adopted Local Plan and will have regard to policy TR4 of this plan.

d) Any transport modelling work undertaken as part of the Transport Assessment process will take due account of actual local conditions and patterns of traffic movement and to include identification of key assessment periods for combined development and background traffic levels (which may on occasion fall outside of the traditional morning and evening peak hours).

e) The restrictions and traffic carrying capacity of present highways into/out of town (Rye Street, Hadham Road, Stansted Road, Great Hadham Road/Windhill, London Road, Dunmow Road, Hallingbury Road) and on the Causeway and Hockerill Street must be recognised and appropriately modelled under a range of normal and adverse conditions. Models will need to be tested.

f) The measurement criteria for this policy are:

- Average morning peak hour journey speeds across specified routes within

Bishop's Stortford to be agreed with Hertfordshire County Council and Bishop's Stortford Town Council, measured in minutes per mile.

- Average morning peak hour journey speeds through the Hockerill junction, measured in minutes per mile.

TP2 – Improving Air Quality

a) In the event that the Transport Assessment associated with a new development predicts increases in congestion at the Hockerill junction exceeding 5%, an assessment of the predicted impacts on the Air Quality Management Area will be carried out and mitigating actions (which may be at the junction or elsewhere) identified to bring levels of predicted pollutants back to pre-

development levels. The scope and content of the assessment will be agreed between the planning authority and the applicant having regard to national guidance.

b) This policy will also apply to any other Air Quality Management Area designated during the currency of the plan

c) The responsible planting of trees which reduce or absorb air pollution from traffic will be supported throughout the Neighbourhood Area.

d) The measurement criterion for this policy is:

- Levels of recorded and predicted pollutants at receptors related to the Hockerill junction.

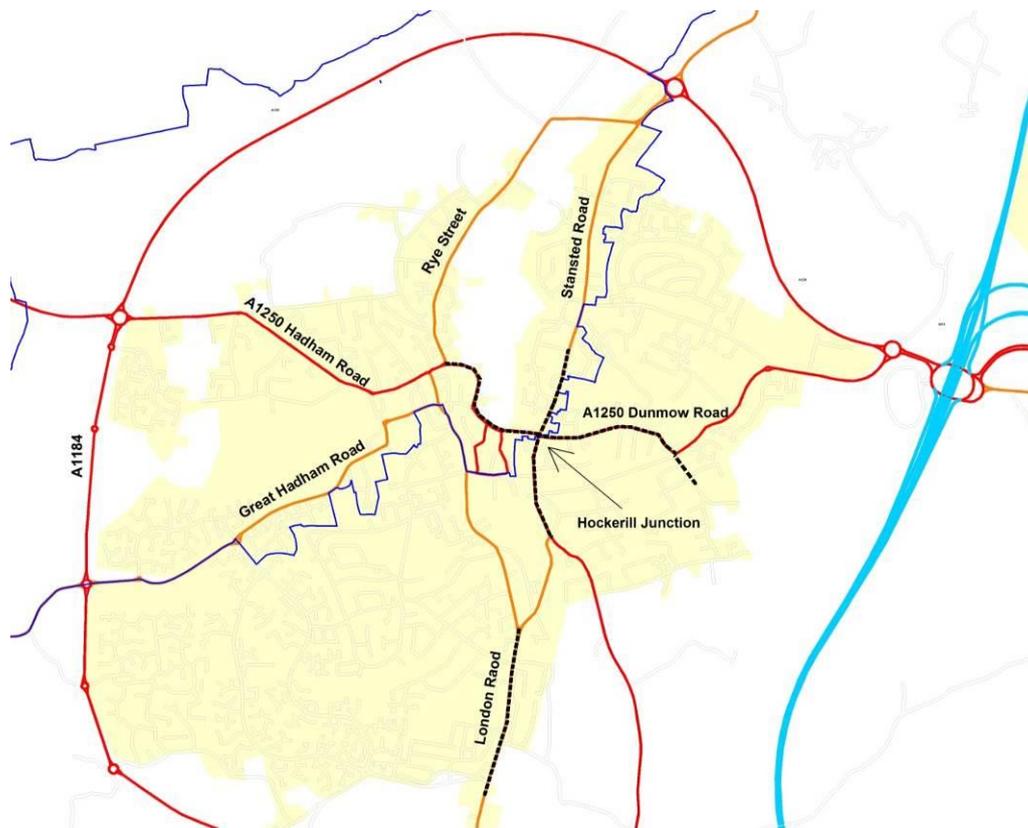


Figure 6 – Principal Congested routes

Principal Congested routes shown thus -----

3.4.3 Objective: Promote travel choice

3.4.3.1 With any significant new housing development it is vital that new residents have access to the full range of community facilities that one reasonably expects in a town the size of Bishop's Stortford.

3.4.3.2 The existing community of Bishop's Stortford has made it clear that infrastructure provision has not kept pace with development in the past, creating issues relating to a lack of facilities in certain locations. Whilst new development cannot be expected to address these historic deficits in provision, major developments justify provision of additional services to support the increased population which will be generated. These should be provided when the community needs them, not late in the development programme as has happened in the past.

3.4.3.3 Whilst it is not always possible to ensure that every new resident is an acceptable distance from the full range of facilities, a sustainable development will ensure that the majority of residents are close to the majority of facilities. This supports Paragraph 38 of the NPPF.

3.4.3.4 For entirely new neighbourhoods, where the facilities are an integral part of the development, this may be largely a matter of layout and masterplanning. For lesser developments which use facilities already present, care must be taken to ensure that pedestrians can follow the shortest possible path rather than necessarily following vehicular paths which are frequently circuitous. This may involve the creation or retention of pedestrian 'cut throughs' for example.

TP3 – Walkable neighbourhoods

a) The concept of 'Walkable Neighbourhoods' should be used in justifying the layout of new

developments and the location of new community facilities.

b) Where new developments include both housing and community facilities the design and layout should seek to ensure that those new facilities which are included within the development fall within reasonable walking distances of the new housing. Department for Transport (DfT) guidelines for reasonable walking distances²⁰, should be applied, in particular:

- Bus Stops – 400m
- Food Store – 800m
- Primary School – 800m
- Doctors – 800m
- Local Play Areas – 800m
- Secondary School – 1000m

c) Where the distance between part or all of a proposed development and any of the above facilities provided on-site exceeds these guidelines, developers will be expected to justify any deviation and the impact of the design on sustainability.

d) Where new residential developments are to be served either wholly or in part by existing community facilities, the design and layout should ensure that pedestrian routes to the facilities (or to the existing paths serving the facilities) follow direct rather than circuitous routes. The provision of pedestrian only (or pedestrian/cycle only) routes to avoid circuitous road links must be considered.

3.4.3.5 In order for the significant levels of new development in Bishop's Stortford to create sustainable patterns of movement, it is important that alternatives to the private car

²⁰ WebTag (January 2014) Unit A4.2 paragraph 6.4.5, Department for Transport

are created as part of new developments. In an historic market town such as Bishop's Stortford, it is recognised that the ability to create new routes within the town centre are limited. However, new developments can create physical linkages between themselves and the edge of the town centre which will help to encourage walking and cycling to the town centre.

3.4.3.6 Equally, it must be recognised that movements are not only to and from the town centre. There are significant levels of movement to the main employment centres within Bishop's Stortford and also to the railway station for commuters. New developments will add to these movements so should consider carefully how best to provide realistic walking and cycling routes to these common destinations.

3.4.3.7 The existing network of foot and cycle paths should be protected unless there are compelling reasons to accept a loss and mitigation strategies are in place.

TP4 – Pedestrian and cycle routes

a) All significant²¹ residential and commercial developments must deliver, through planning obligations or otherwise, an appropriate package of pedestrian and cycle improvements. These should seek to create routes (either by enhancing existing paths or by creating entirely new paths) that encourage walking and cycling within the development and particularly to Bishop's Stortford town centre, the main employment centres within the town, schools and the railway station.

b) Routes should aim to keep road crossings and changes in level to a minimum and cycle routes should avoid unnecessary gradients.

²¹ See glossary

Where possible, pedestrian and cycle routes shall be separated either physically or with lane markings. Routes should normally be suitable for those with wheelchairs, frames, buggies or other mobility aids.

c) Proposals which support the development of a network of paths and cycleways within the Neighbourhood Area, using existing infrastructure and rights of way where appropriate, will be encouraged. This should have the aim of improving links to areas outside the A120 bypass road, in towards the town centre, to schools and across the railway line to Grange Paddocks and the Meads.

d) Proposals including any or all of the designated elements below will be encouraged.

e) Unless there are compelling reasons to accept the loss of these elements and sustainable alternatives can be demonstrated there will be a strong presumption against proposals which frustrate or prevent the achievement of these elements.

f) The relationship of the designated elements in g) below to specific development proposals will be determined having regard to the location and nature of the development. Where it is determined that any or all of the designated elements should reasonably be provided, planning permission will not be granted where they are not provided unless it can be demonstrated that it would make the development unviable to do so.'

g) The designated elements are as follows:

- Maintaining existing bypass crossings for pedestrians and cyclists.
- New crossings and improved pavement along the Hadham Road, particularly at the town centre end.
- Forming a continuous cycle and pedestrian link between the eastern end of the ASRs and the bus/train station along the Stort

Valley, using existing routeways where appropriate to do so.

- Maintaining and improving the footbridge over the railway line between Grange Paddocks and Cannons Close (Johnson's Crossing) and similarly at King's Court.
- Maintaining the rail crossing at Cannons Mill Lane for pedestrian, cyclist and non-ambulant use.
- Safety improvements to the pavements on the North side of the river bridge in Station Road²², so that pedestrians can pass each other safely and without having to step into the road.
- Where practical, improving cycle and pedestrian links to existing schools whose catchment area includes the proposed development.

3.4.3.8 Buses can play a vital role in maximising modal shift to non-car modes. For many people and for many journeys, the only reasonable non-car alternative is the bus. However, to increase bus patronage in Bishop's Stortford, the community has said that it is necessary to provide a regular, reliable service, close to where people live, with good 'live' information. For major developments, this is considered to be a fundamental requirement. These have the capacity to contribute significantly towards bridging transient funding gaps, particularly where existing services can be diverted.

3.4.3.9 It is important that Bishop's Stortford has an effective transport interchange between the train and other modes of transport. The current transport interchange is just outside and on the border

²² Similar safety improvements on the South Side would also be desirable, however this is outside the Neighbourhood Area



of the Neighbourhood Area. Pedestrian connections are poor and dangerous; the two main routes towards the town centre along Station Road and Dane Street both suffer from narrow footpaths immediately adjacent to fast moving traffic. While the location of the transport interchange is most unlikely to change, a major upgrade is required and developments at neighbouring locations within the plan area could have a material (positive or negative) effect on it.

Furthermore in some circumstances there may be a case for contributions to improvement costs.



TP5 – Bus services

a) Significant²³ developments should normally be served by a regular bus service to the town centre. Where existing routes do not already serve the proposed development area, new development may be expected to fund an expanded service. Developers will provide, through a planning obligation or otherwise,

²³ See glossary

such subsidy as is necessary to ensure that the service runs for a period commencing and ending at points during the development to be agreed with the planning and highway authorities.

b) Bus stops, the location of which shall conform to policy TP4 above, shall be of an appropriate high standard of design and shall be 'all weather'. Ideally they shall provide real time information.

c) Facilities provided under this policy shall have regard to the bus strategy published by Hertfordshire County Council from time to time.

TP6 – Transport interchange

a) Developments within the Neighbourhood Area which facilitate or contribute towards the creation of a modern Transport Interchange or to the improvement of connections to the Transport Interchange will be encouraged, subject to other neighbourhood, local or national policies. Developments in the vicinity of the interchange will be expected to show that opportunities have been taken, wherever feasible, to improve pedestrian and cycle access.

b) There will be a strong presumption against development proposals within the Neighbourhood Area which materially interfere with or prejudice the eventual creation of such an improved interchange.

3.4.3.10 Many residents of Bishop's Stortford commented through the engagement process that, if they cycle to the town centre or to work, there is a lack of places for them securely to park their bicycle. It is therefore important, as part of a package of transport measures designed to maximise modal shift to non-car modes, that such secure parking is provided to accompany new developments and, where possible, in existing centres.

TP7 – Cycle parking

a) Secure cycle parking shall be provided at local centres in all new residential and commercial developments. The size of the facility should be in accordance with the East Herts District Council Supplementary Planning Guidance on Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development, commensurate with the scale of development proposed (and where one exists the Travel Plan associated with that development) and should provide secure, covered parking with clear natural surveillance.

b) The provision of secure and covered cycle parking facilities in the town centre will be encouraged, either by converting already existing cycle parking facilities or creating new ones.

3.4.4 Objective: Provide adequate car parking

3.4.4.1 A significant concern amongst the community of Bishop's Stortford, based on the experience of recent developments, is that there is insufficient off-road parking for new dwellings leading to dangerous on-street parking and inconvenience both to residents and visitors.

3.4.4.2 Whilst the intention is to increase modal shift away from the private car, levels of car ownership in Bishop's Stortford are high as shown in the 2011 Census. Most residents are reliant on car use for some or all day to day activities such as social activities travel to work and shopping. Bishop's Stortford is surrounded by a rural area, with generally poor public transport, further increasing the need for private cars.

3.4.4.3 The Local Plan guidance, contained within an SPD²⁴, specifies maximum parking

²⁴ Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development SPD, Jun 2008

provision. It is founded on government policy which has subsequently been superseded.

3.4.4.4 The area is prosperous and there is a consequent tendency for larger cars which are also necessary to transport household purchases.

3.4.4.5 The dimensions of garages are often too small to accommodate a family car with adequate room for ingress and egress together with bicycles and a reasonable amount of storage. As a result they are frequently used for storage rather than parking. Many planning and highways authorities have recognised this and provided updated guidelines for the minimum dimensions necessary for a garage to be counted as a parking space²⁵.

3.4.4.6 High levels of on-street parking create congestion and are a safety hazard to pedestrians and emergency vehicles. An approach of ensuring that new development is designed to provide appropriate levels of off-street parking is both appropriate and necessary.

3.4.4.7 Parking courts have proved unpopular and, where poorly designed, lead to a poor visual appearance due to ambiguous responsibilities for maintenance, unattractive expanses of hard surfacing or cars, and a poor street scene. Residents have complained about the inconvenience created by a separation between parking and the corresponding property, particularly when heavy objects must be transported.

3.4.4.8 Parking, whether in parking courts or allocated, which is located further from the distributor/access road than the kerbside

²⁵ For example Essex: 7m*3m, Basingstoke: 6mx3m, Reading:7mx3m

outside a property leads, from experience, to a situation where residents choose to park on the kerb in preference to the areas designed for parking.²⁶

3.4.4.9 The NPPF places a strong emphasis on design requiring in particular, that developments

- function well and add to the overall quality of the area
- establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit

The design of parking, particularly shared parking, is critical to both the street scene and function of a residential area.

TP8 – Residential Parking

a) Proposals for new developments will have adequate off-street car and cycle parking provision to meet current and reasonably assessed future needs. Developers will normally be expected to provide parking equal to the level set out as a maximum in the Local Plan 2007. These are as follows:

Bedrooms	Zone 2 ²⁷	Elsewhere
1	0.75	1.25
2	1	1.5
3	1.5	2.25
4	2	3

b) Where the level of provision deviates materially from these numbers developers

²⁶ This can be seen, for example, at Foresthall Park, Stansted. This recent development is located less than two miles from the Neighbourhood Area and the catchment has a similar demographic. Poor parking design has caused resident disaffection and may have contributed to accidents which have occurred

²⁷ As defined in the Local Plan 2007.

will be required to justify the level of parking provision in relation to:

- Local car ownership levels
- The type, mix and use of the development
- The accessibility of public transport to a range of destinations which users can reasonably be expected to visit

c) Garages may be counted as parking spaces provided they have a minimum clear internal dimension of 3m*6m.

d) Off street parking which is contiguous with, and part of, each numbered property is strongly preferred. Parking courts may be permitted provided that they

- are built to Secured by Design standards or equivalent and adequately lit
- serve a small number of properties, for example no more than five²⁸, except in the case of flats where a single block or two closely adjacent blocks may be served.
- are overlooked by surrounding dwellings
- are clearly visible and easily accessible from the property served
- are aesthetically pleasing and complement the street scene both when full and partially empty
- have a sense of place and are designed to encourage ownership
- have regard to any design guide published in association with this plan.

The road layout at the approaches to parking courts must be designed so that residents will be encouraged to use them in preference to parking on the street. This will normally be achieved by ensuring that

- the entrance to parking courts precedes the dwelling when approached from the distributor road or other access serving the development
- the distance to be travelled from the distributor or access road to the parking space is comparable with or less than the distance to the 'on street' parking opportunity nearest to the property
- access to the parking court is easy to negotiate and that parking spaces are sufficiently wide that they are easy to use

The walking distance between the vehicle and the dwelling to which it belongs (or to the relevant entrance to the block in the case of flats) must normally be no more than 20m²⁹ via a paved route.

e) A reasonable level of car and cycle parking must also be provided for visitors to residential developments. Developers will normally be expected to provide 0.5 visitor car spaces per dwelling in addition to the above unless they can show that the demand is likely to be materially different.

3.4.4.10 Good quality parking at an acceptable cost near to the main retail centres is regularly cited as the most important issue preventing the town centre becoming better used and it is indisputable that good access is vital to town centre vitality. If the town centre is, or is perceived to be, difficult to access residents will choose to use out of town shopping areas or go

²⁸ Building for Life criterion 10

²⁹ Vehicle Parking Provision at New Development SPD, Jun 2008

elsewhere entirely.



3.4.4.11 The NPPF places significant emphasis on measures to stimulate town centres and the increase in population of the town will inevitably cause more pressure on the already stretched car parking. Shifting to online shopping may reduce this impact and the pressure to encourage modal shift and to reduce congestion is potentially in conflict with the argument for additional car parking. However, traffic caused by shopper parking would not generally coincide with the peak commuter traffic and insufficient town centre car parking is itself a source of congestion as people queue for a vacant space. This effect is already evident in the town in the weeks immediately preceding Christmas.

3.4.4.12 A balance is therefore required between ensuring that adequate provision is made for parking demand to maintain and enhance town centre vitality, whilst at the same time encouraging modal shift.

TP9 – Parking within and around the Town Centre

a) Developments resulting in the net loss of public car parking spaces in the Neighbourhood Area which are designed to serve the town centre will be permitted only where an appropriate level of mitigation measures are provided which encourage modal shift away from car use or otherwise result in a reduction in demand resulting from the development. Reductions in the number or significant changes in the location of car park spaces should be justified by past and

forecast usage statistics provided by the car park owning authority.

b) Developments leading to the increase of public parking provision on existing parking sites within the Neighbourhood Area (for example by multi-decking) will be supported provided

- they are designed to be in keeping with the surrounding area;
- there is a demonstrated need, based principally on considerations of town centre vitality, which will not realistically be fulfilled by modal shift.

c) Developers may be required to contribute to accompanying measures to encourage modal shift, which will be agreed between the developer and the planning authority.

d) Short period free parking places, sponsored by or integral to retail developments, will be encouraged, where appropriate. Similarly, reserved places for disabled parking close to shops and other facilities should be an integral part of any development which includes parking spaces.

3.4.4.13 In larger settlements such as Cambridge and Ipswich, Park & Ride is appropriate. Local retailers are very supportive of such a scheme in Bishop's Stortford as a means to relieve the pressure on town centre parking by providing additional spaces principally for those working in the town centre or commuting from the rail station. They have not shown support for a Park & Ride scheme aimed at shoppers.

3.4.4.14 At the time of writing the Neighbourhood Plan the financial viability of a Park & Ride scheme has not been demonstrated to the extent required to justify a policy; this should be reviewed, however, during the currency of the plan and in the context of other transport developments

within the town as a whole.

3.4.5 Objective: Manage traffic speeds and prioritize pedestrian traffic

3.4.5.1 Creating safe neighbourhoods is a principal concern for the residents of the town, particularly given the high levels of car ownership that there are in the Neighbourhood Area. Traffic must travel at appropriate speeds in residential areas and there are a variety of means by which this can be achieved. This is recognised in Manual for Streets and the Roads in Hertfordshire Design Guide. Traffic calming measures which have been proven to work elsewhere and consistent with policy TR17 of the Local Plan (or successor) and Hertfordshire Highways traffic management policies should be included as part of the design of new developments.

TP10 – Traffic speeds within new developments

a) New residential developments shall include a readily understandable street hierarchy with a design speed of not more than 20mph for roads outside main access routes, unless there are overriding reasons for accepting higher speeds. It must also enable their use by refuse, emergency and delivery vehicles. In order to achieve this, the use of alternative strategies is encouraged, including the use of shared spaces and speed-activated signage. Traffic calming and other measures should be designed to permit safe passage by cyclists.

3.5 EDUCATION

3.5.1 Introduction

3.5.1.1 Schooling in Bishop's Stortford is generally recognised to be of a very high quality. Respondents to the Town Plan Survey gave a satisfaction rating of 91% in the category education and childcare. When respondents were asked to grade the importance of different issues within the local education and childcare system, 'secondary school places' were deemed most important. 'Primary school places' were deemed second most important and 'adult education' third.



3.5.1.2 Recurring concerns about educational facilities in Bishop's Stortford were:

- It is difficult to get a child into a primary school near to where they live;
- There are not enough secondary school places to keep up with the expansion of the town;
- There is a lack of daytime and evening courses for adults;
- The relocation of the Bishop's Stortford High School and Herts and Essex High School to a new, shared site was undesirable.

3.5.1.3 The current provision in the Neighbourhood Area is:

- Primary:
 - *St Joseph's*
 - *Hillmead*

- *Northgate*
- Secondary:
 - *St Mary's Catholic School*
 - *Bishop's Stortford College*

3.5.1.4 It should be noted that neither of these secondary schools can be considered to be 'general admission' schools; St Mary's is a faith school drawing from a catchment area which extends well beyond the town boundaries and Bishop's Stortford College is fee paying. This geography is significant in the context of proposed new development in the Neighbourhood Area since, if not rebalanced, a significant and unnecessary level of cross-town traffic is created.

3.5.1.5 The wider provision of secondary and primary schools is shown in the accompanying figure.

3.5.1.6 Hertfordshire County Council data indicates that 50% of the 2012 student intake to Bishop's Stortford schools (excluding Bishop's Stortford College), totalling 414 pupils, were residents of the town.



3.5.1.7 Currently all primary schools are at or near capacity in Bishops' Stortford and current forecasts suggest that demand is likely to increase in line with house-building. Secondary schools are also at or near capacity.

3.5.1.8 Following the inquiry into a new schools site at Whittington Way, both the Inspector and the Secretary of State indicated

that the Hadham Road reserved site is sufficient for a five form entry school. To close the gap between demand and provision it is clear that provision must be made for a new school, not for relocating one of the existing schools.

Objective

3.5.1.9 The policies in this section seek to achieve the following objective:

- Create a sustainable schooling provision in the area minimising traffic impact

Policy Context and Background

3.5.1.10 The following plans and documents support the policies in this chapter.

- Paragraph 89 of the National Planning Policy Framework
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007

(Policy LRC11, BIS7 and paragraph 10.12.3)

- East Herts District Plan (currently emerging). See text relating to educational provision in respect of the ideal size and other criteria for primary schools and by current provision.
- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)

3.5.2 Objective: Create a sustainable schooling provision in the area minimising traffic impact

3.5.2.1 At present there is a shortage of primary and secondary school places in Bishop's Stortford. This is especially true of the Neighbourhood Area where neither of two secondary schools can be described as 'general entry'. With any new development the extent of under-provision is inevitably going to escalate. Public opinion, as

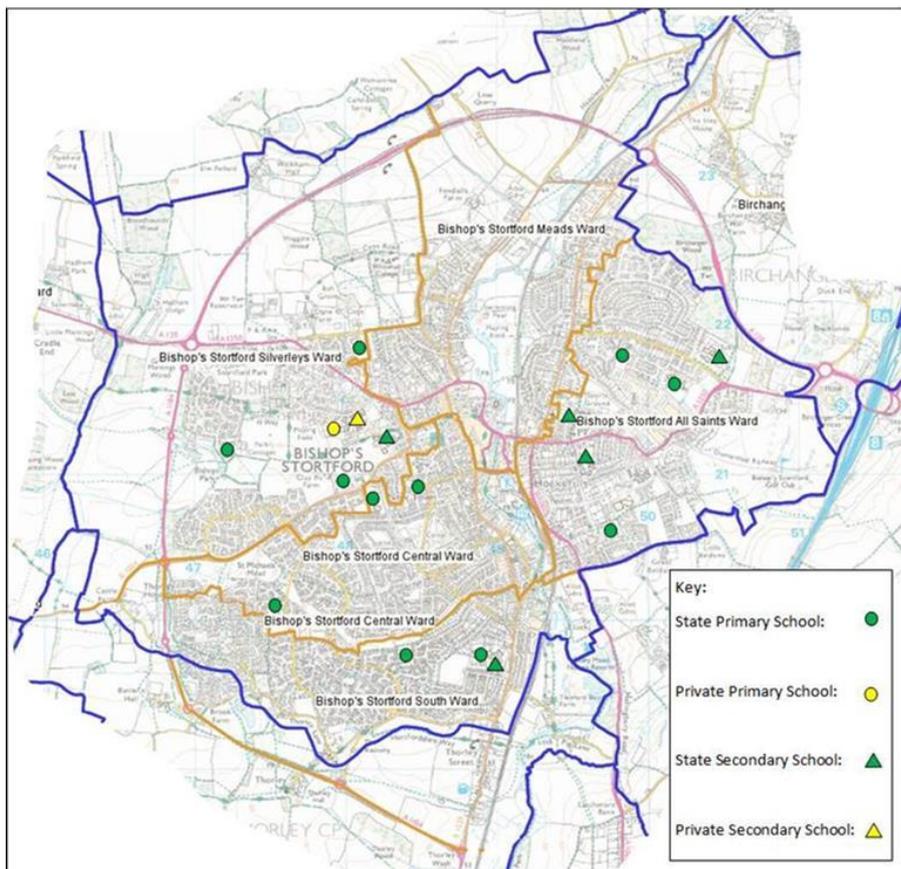


Figure 7 - Location of primary and secondary schools in Bishop's Stortford

demonstrated by comments at the Neighbourhood Plan consultation day and responses to the Town Plan Survey, is aware of this reality and sees a need for new schools. The policies have been created to address this under-provision and also to contribute to the sustainable development of the town as a whole.



3.5.2.2 They will help ensure that children and young people in Bishop's Stortford, both now and in the future, are able to go to high quality schools of their choice within the town. They combat the undesirable impact of extra educational facilities on the town's infrastructure by encouraging walking and the use of public transport and advocating the construction of designated drop off points. And finally, they ensure that schools not only provide for the needs of students but also for the community at large, by supporting the construction of sports halls and fields on school premises which can be used by local residents outside school hours.

EP1 – School availability

a) New developments will only be acceptable if primary school places are made available for all additional children within or immediately adjacent to the Neighbourhood Area and secondary school places are available in Bishop's Stortford in schools that are reasonably accessible from the proposed development location. Developers must have regard to policy TP4 when siting schooling facilities and large scale major developments.

EP2 – New secondary school

A proposal for a new Secondary School, easily accessible to the new residential development planned for Bishop's Stortford North will be welcomed. The location and access arrangements should minimise vehicular congestion and traffic impact. A travel plan including measures to encourage the use of transport other than private cars will be required. Opportunities to share facilities (sports facilities and meeting space) with the wider community should be utilised.

EP3 – New primary schools

a) Proposals for new primary schools and pre-school provision within the Neighbourhood Area to serve the new development envisaged and taking account of guidance from Hertfordshire County Council in terms of planning for school places will be welcomed.

b) New school sites should be flat, sustainably located and of sufficient size. Schools should be available ahead of residential occupancy and in any case no later than the academic year in which 25% occupancy is anticipated.

3.6 HEALTH

3.6.1 Introduction

3.6.1.1 East Herts Council's 2013 draft for the new District Plan, Essential Reference Paper B, outlined the five main types of healthcare facility:

- District General Hospitals provide acute care services including Accident and Emergency and maternity functions³⁰.
- Local General Hospitals which offer a wide range of primary care services that patients use most often including outpatient, therapies, diagnostics and urgent care³¹.
- Urgent Care Centres which treat most injuries or illnesses that are urgent but not life threatening.
- Community Hospitals providing outpatients services, for example a Minor Injury Unit. The Herts & Essex Hospital serves Bishop's Stortford.
- GP Surgeries. Of the 70 practices in East Herts, three are located in Bishop's Stortford. Some of these have multiple locations.

3.6.1.2 Respondents to the Town Plan Survey gave a satisfaction rating of 66% in the category 'Health'. When asked to grade the importance of different services, access to a GP surgery was rated as 'most important'. The second most important service was availability of Accident and Emergency (A&E)

³⁰ Although outside of the district, Lister Hospital in Stevenage and Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow serve East Hertfordshire.

³¹ It is proposed that the QEII Hospital site in Welwyn Garden City be redeveloped as a Local General Hospital in 2014.

services in the town. The third was availability of NHS dentists.

3.6.1.3 Recurring concerns about the present services included:

- A lack of A&E facilities at the Herts and Essex Hospital
- A lack of many NHS dentists in the town
- A lack of affordable long term care and respite centres for the elderly
- A severe lack of mental health services
- A lack of maternity services. At present patients have to travel to Harlow or Cambridge.

3.6.1.4 At the Focus Group for Health, held as part of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, those in attendance identified the following problems:

- Existing GP surgeries are already over-capacity. A whole new surgery or 'federation' of existing practices is essential to deal with the predicted population growth. This is because expanding existing surgeries would result in there being too many GPs per surgery to effectively manage. The national average is 1,800 patients per GP.
- There is an under provision for mental health. Oxford House is over capacity.
- GPs can no longer accommodate specialist treatment and therefore almost all secondary care takes place at Herts and Essex Hospital. All practices in Bishop's Stortford would like to be able to accommodate secondary care services again.
- There is some concern about the strain of increased immigration on current health care provisions.

3.6.1.5 Current hospital provision lies outside the Neighbourhood Area and there is no realistic prospect that this will change,

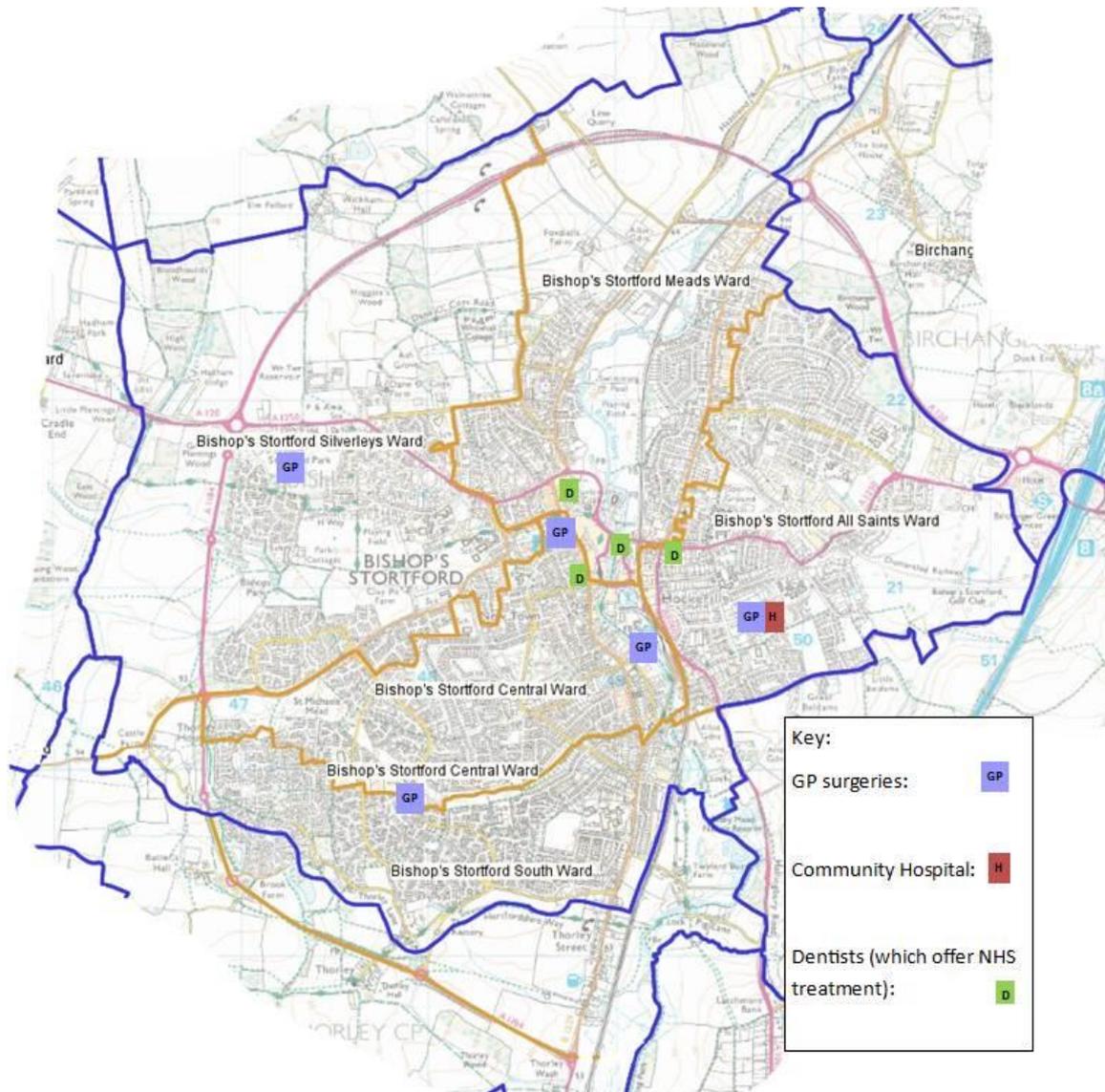


Figure 8 - Location of healthcare facilities in Bishop's Stortford

though Princess Alexandra Hospital is planning to extend its facilities in the light of local population increases. Accordingly the Neighbourhood Plan is confined to addressing issues related to the more local services.

Objective

3.6.1.6 The policies in this section seek to achieve the following objective:

- Provide reasonable access to health services for residents of all ages.

- Meet the specialist health needs of residents including for example the physically and learning disabled and those with mental health problems.

Policy Context and Background

3.6.1.7 The following plans and documents support the policies in this chapter.

- National Planning Policy Framework (para.70)
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007
- East Herts Draft District Plan (Preferred

Options Consultation) January 2014.

- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)

3.6.2 Objective: Provide reasonable access to health services for residents of all ages

3.6.2.1 An analysis of the provision of surgeries which serve the Neighbourhood Area shows that there is a deficit of provision. The average number of patients per GP stands (in June 2012) at 2,007, over 10% higher than the national average of 1,800. It follows that no spare capacity is available to accommodate new developments which must therefore make appropriate provision or contribution.

3.6.2.2 The South Street practice, in 2012, made a proposal to move its main surgery to the Silverleys sports complex site but this was not approved, mainly due to issues of sustainability. An alternative proposal was made by a developer to move the main practice to Tanner's Wharf and this was approved by EHDC but is not a favoured option for the practice.

3.6.2.3 The following options for the provision of additional healthcare services are being considered:

- Establish a new centrally-situated 'federation' of integrated services by putting together the central practices of South Street and Church Street onto one central site, while maintaining some satellite locations around the town and providing new local surgeries for the new development. This 'federation' could also include ancillary services such as physiotherapy, dentistry, midwifery, psychiatry, gynaecology, dermatology, blood testing etc.

- Either Church Street or South Street to find a new central site and to provide satellite surgeries on the new development.
- Retain the existing pattern of provision but with an entirely new GP surgery as part of a new development at Bishop's Stortford North.

3.6.2.4 Consultation with residents has shown a mixed set of views as to which of these would be preferable. However, there was unanimous agreement that the present provision is insufficient, and that any new development would exacerbate the need for improved GP services. It was noted that some of the present GP premises are not fit for purpose and that purpose-built premises would be essential in the future.

HP1 – Accessible GP practices

a) Any new development of 10 residential units or more must, by means of financial contributions or otherwise, support the provision of facilities so that new residents have access to a GP practice within a reasonable distance, subject to agreement with the healthcare provider and unless the existing services are already capable of providing this service to the new residents.

b) For developments in excess of 500 dwellings appropriate provision must be addressed as part of the development proposal. Applicants must engage with the relevant health authorities at the earliest possible stage.

c) Contributions should take account of East Herts Council policies for community infrastructure contributions and the effect of contributions on the viability of development.

3.6.2.5 In addition to GP services, there is a need for high quality specialised provision for care of the elderly, the mentally ill, and the mentally and physically disabled. Most of the elderly residential services are provided by private care homes which where possible

should be sited in residential areas and specifically built for purpose.

HP2 – Services for the elderly, disabled and for mental health

Proposals to improve specialist care for the elderly, the physically and learning disabled and mental health services will be encouraged.

3.7 SPORT

3.7.1 Introduction

3.7.1.1 Access to a variety of high quality indoor and outdoor sports facilities is essential to the continuation of good physical and mental health within the community.

Bishop's Stortford is fortunate to have high quality sports clubs. It is important, in order to maintain high standards, that it continues to expand and improve the supporting facilities to meet the demands of the town. This involves constructing new facilities and expanding, or improving accessibility to the existing ones (shown in Figure 15).

3.7.1.2 The Neighbourhood Area contains numerous indoor and outdoor sports facilities of varying degrees of accessibility and quality. A detailed list appears in Appendix 2 and Table 3 summarises the current provision against their respective target provisions:

3.7.1.3 Respondents to the Town Plan Survey gave a satisfaction rating of 61% in the

category 'Sport'. Out of the ten categories surveyed the satisfaction level was lower only in Housing/Environment and in Transport. Respondents to the Town Plan questionnaire, and those at the Neighbourhood Plan consultation day, felt that the following action needed to be taken:

- A major upgrade to the swimming pool and gym with crèche and café/bar facilities (Subsequent to the survey a major upgrade programme has been carried out which has, in part, addressed the issues identified by respondents.)
- Improved public playing facilities and particularly changing areas at Grange Paddocks.
- A large, purpose built indoor sports/leisure centre.
- Improved facilities for BMX, skateboarding and rollerblading.
- Facilities for additional fitness classes.
- More sports facilities which cater for those with physical disabilities.

Facility	Current Provision	Target Provision per Head	Current Provision per Head	See Note
Outdoor Sports	106.07 ha	3.79ha/1000	3ha/1000	1
Sports Halls	12 courts	One court per 3,750	One court per 3,101	2
Swimming pools	16 lanes	One lane per 3,500 population	One lane per 2,326	3
Gym	250 stations	One station per 170	One station per 149	4

Table 2 – Major Sports Provision in Bishop's Stortford

Notes:

1. Pitches, courts, greens, based on 2009 Supplementary Planning Document
2. Birchwood High School, Bishopsport at the Bishop's Stortford High School, St Mary's and Bishop's Stortford College all of which offer limited public access
3. Grange Paddocks, Nuffield Health Fitness and Wellbeing Centre, the Herts and Essex High School and the Bishop's Stortford College only one of which offers ad-hoc public access
4. Grange Paddocks, Nuffield Health Fitness and Wellbeing and Challenge Gym

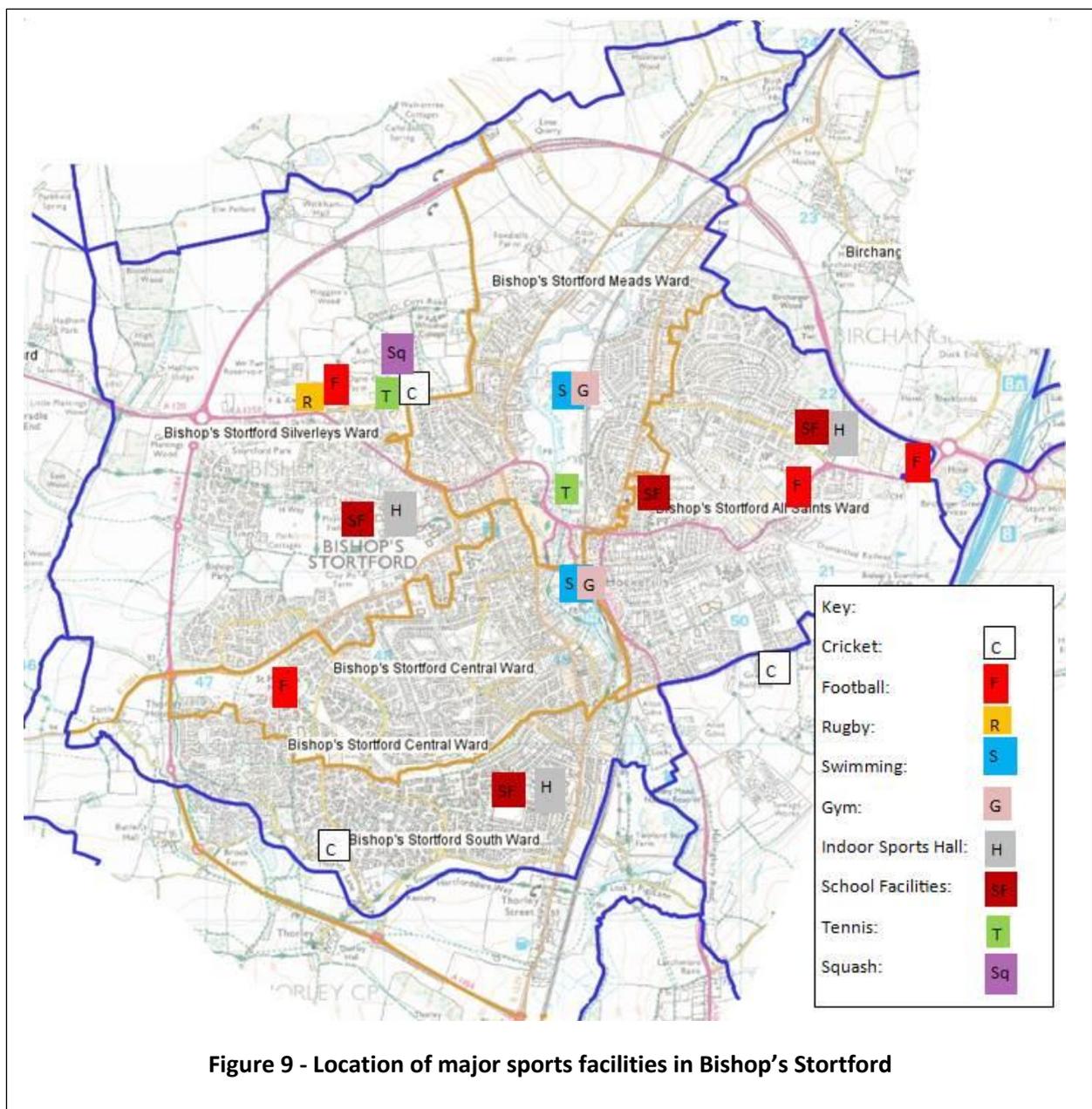
3.7.1.4 At the Focus Group for Sport, held as part of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, the sports clubs identified the need for:

- a running track suitable for able-bodied and inclusive use (which might be co-located with the all-weather football/hockey pitches);
- shared use all-weather 5 aside football pitches/hockey pitches;

- all-weather tennis courts (possibly achieved by converting existing courts);
- additional rugby and football pitches.

3.7.1.5 The need for additional football pitches has been identified repeatedly during consultation.

3.7.1.6 Sports clubs, when consulted, emphasise the need for manageability of facilities which generally requires co-location. There is a tension between this requirement



of manageability and the desire for sports facilities to be close to residents to provide for a sustainable community. There is also tension between the provision of increased sports facilities, particularly playing pitches, and preservation of natural green space.

3.7.1.7 By way of resolving these tensions several key individuals have identified the potential for better utilisation of existing pitches which can be achieved, in some cases, by upgrading surfaces or other facilities, or through more cooperative arrangements. Many feel that the creation of a sports facilities strategy for the entire town is necessary to reconcile the needs of the various interests, however at the time of writing no such strategy exists.

Objective

3.7.1.8 The policies in this section seek to achieve the following objective:

- Provide for the needs of residents within a manageable framework while minimising land use

Policy Context and Background

3.7.1.9 The following plans and documents support the policies in this chapter:

- National Planning Policy Framework (para.73)
- East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007
- 2009 Supplementary Planning Document 'Open Space, Sport and Recreation'
- East Herts Playing Pitch Strategy 2010
- Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)

3.7.2 Objective: Provide for the sports needs of residents within a manageable framework while minimising land use



SP1 – Provision of additional outdoor sporting facilities

a) Contributions towards new or enhancement of existing outdoor sports facilities (including appropriate ancillary buildings) will be expected as set out in policy LRC3 of the East Herts Local Plan or successor policy.

b) The provision of facilities under this policy will have regard to any Bishop's Stortford or neighbourhood sports strategy that is in place at the time and the balance between manageability, which favours centralised facilities, and locality, which favours distributed facilities.

c) The mix of facilities (in terms of the sports provided for) will be determined in consultation with the local planning authority, Bishop's Stortford Town Council, local sports clubs and other stakeholders.

d) Any developments for new or enhanced sports facilities must be inclusive (i.e. suitable for residents with disabilities), be accompanied by an adequately-sized car park having regard to the likely modes of transport to and from the venue and parking availability in the vicinity. Sites which are easily accessible by public transport, walking and cycling will be more strongly supported.

SP2 – Development or expansion of multi-purpose facilities

Developments in sustainable locations that enhance existing sporting facilities, whether indoor or outdoor, by way of increasing their utilisation or capacity for multiple use and/or level of public access, will be strongly encouraged where they do not conflict with other neighbourhood, local or national planning policies. Provision for inclusive use must be considered in any such development unless this adversely affects the viability.

SP3 – Enhancement of specified facilities

- a) The development of an improved swimming pool facility and expansion, enhancements or construction of additional sports facilities that are needed to serve the town's population, including residents with disabilities, will be supported where they do not conflict with other neighbourhood, local or national planning policies.
- b) The conversion of existing open air sports facilities to covered facilities to increase their availability throughout the year will be encouraged.

3.8 BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

3.8.1 Introduction

3.8.1.1 The Silverleys and Meads wards make up a substantial proportion of Bishop's Stortford as a whole and therefore the current levels of available employment premises need to be taken into consideration when commercial proposals are put forward in the area. Bishop's Stortford has a successful existing business and retail community in the town centre therefore any proposed development needs to provide employment facilities which complement rather than compete with this. The Silverleys and Meads areas are currently heavily weighted towards residential occupation, therefore it is an important consideration that employment and retail facilities are provided to provide a local economic base and subsequent economic benefit to the community.



3.8.1.2 Large scale employment, although useful (particularly given the proximity to Stansted Airport) is unlikely to be supported given that the Local Plan 2007 and subsequent East Hertfordshire Employment Report 2013 requirements suggest a move towards smaller scale B1 (General Business) and B8 (Storage and Warehousing) uses which are expected to grow the local economy over the plan period. Alongside the general business provision a basic level of retail and service provision is important to ensure

facilities provide a good mix of convenience and small scale comparison retailing, provided it does not compete with the offer in Bishop's Stortford town centre. It is therefore recommended that priority be placed on providing business use facilities in the B1 class and an appropriate mix of A-class facilities areas as part of any major developments. There are some examples existing in the town of successful local centres such as Thorley Park and Snowley Parade which do not compete with Bishop's Stortford town centre. These provide valuable supporting services and local employment facilities equivalent to those that the Neighbourhood Plan is seeking to encourage.

Policy Context and Background

3.8.1.3 The following plans and documents support the policies in this chapter:

National Planning Policy Framework (paras.19, 21, 42)

East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007

Wessex Economics, Town Wide Employment Study for Bishop's Stortford, for East Herts Council (2013)

DTZ Economic Development and Employment Growth report for East Herts Council: Executive Summary 11.

Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)

Objectives

3.8.1.4 The policies in this section seek to achieve the following objectives:

- Create new employment opportunities for local residents while protecting amenities for residents
- Create a welcoming, prosperous and dynamic town centre

3.8.1.5 They have been informed by paragraphs 19, 21 and 42 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and by the objective of the 2007 Local Plan “To maintain high and stable levels of economic growth and employment in the district by encouraging a strong and diverse local economy with a wide range of employment opportunities, whilst ensuring effective protection and enhancement of the environment and the prudent use of resources.”

3.8.1.6 Likewise, the 2007 Local Plan Shopping and Town Centre policies have the aim to “enhance the vitality and viability of its town centres” and “to protect the key shopping and trading roles of towns”. The NPPF also describes the sequential and impact tests that determine whether the main town centre uses of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential remain located within a town centre.



3.8.2 Objective: Create new employment opportunities for local residents while protecting amenities for residents

3.8.2.1 The need for a business incubation hub has been identified through consultation with the local business community. Bishop's Stortford and the Neighbourhood Area has a level of self-employment in line with the district, county and national average (6%, source: 2011 Census) and for many, the need to have small, cheap business premises which offer the opportunity to network with other

business professionals is crucial to the ongoing success of their business. It will be important that a variety of stakeholders contribute to the identification of a suitable location.

BP1 – Provision of a business incubation centre

Proposals for the provision of a business incubation centre will be supported. This should be similar to a scaled down version of the Harlow Enterprise Hub. It should seek to address the following considerations:

- i) On-site parking facilities, good public transport links, cycle storage and links to the pedestrian and cycle network, allowing residents to work and live in the area.
- ii) The facility should be appropriate for the needs of small 'start-up' type business activity and would comprise of small rooms and one or two meeting rooms to allow for 'easy-in, easy-out' terms allowing for entrepreneurial activity.



3.8.2.2 The purpose of creating new employment opportunities is to provide employment for local people and bring workers into the Neighbourhood Area. Access to supporting facilities from their place of work will enable people to link work and other activities minimising additional trips outside of the working day. This contributes to sustainability and an improvement in amenity by reducing the need to undertake additional car journeys.

3.8.2.3 Snowley Parade, in the Parsonage Estate, is an example of a thriving local centre which is amply supported by the community. The provision of similar types of retail facilities to support commercial as well as residential developments where they are presently unavailable would be of benefit to the community.

BP2 – Local retailing facilities

Proposals for local retail facilities which provide services to large-scale residential

development will be supported. These local centres must provide for an appropriate mix of A1 to A5 use classes but must not be at a scale that detracts from the offer in Bishop's Stortford town centre.

3.8.2.4 The East Herts 2007 Local Plan supports the growth of employment in Bishop's Stortford and the Bishop's Stortford Town-Wide Employment Study identifies a need for up to 5ha of class B1 floorspace to meet future demand in the town. Proposals to identify and bring forward an appropriate site or sites to deliver this employment land will be welcomed, subject to the other policies in this plan.

BP3 – Provision of new employment land

Sustainable proposals for commercial office facilities in use classes A2 or B1 that create opportunities for commercial businesses will be supported, subject to applicable policies elsewhere in this document. These proposals must not have an unacceptable impact on highways and traffic and also on residential amenity if located within or adjacent to a residential area.

BP4 – Enhancement of existing commercial premises

Proposals to enhance the quality of existing commercial premises will generally be supported, subject to the other policies in this plan. In particular, proposals that provide enhanced employment and economic benefit to the local community will be strongly supported.

3.8.2.5 There is a need to improve digital connectivity within Bishop's Stortford, both for businesses and residents. The investment in the business infrastructure can create opportunities that are of wider benefit to the community and therefore such opportunities to provide collective benefits should be taken where they arise.

BP5 – Provision of electronic communications infrastructure

a) Proposals for development or redevelopment of employment sites should incorporate enhanced communications infrastructure within the locality.

3.8.3 Objective: Create a welcoming, prosperous and dynamic town centre

3.8.3.1 Bishop's Stortford town centre is described in the East Herts 2007 Local Plan as a "Minor Sub-Regional Centre" and as the "main shopping centre in East Hertfordshire". However, most residents of the town want it to remain as a historic town centre, whilst expecting it to be improved in the same way as say, Hertford, with which it compares unfavourably in terms of quality, diversity and use of resources, such as the river.

3.8.3.2 Whilst the town centre buildings are relatively well maintained and a somewhat limited range of shops and enterprises present, there are some vacant premises and evidence of churn that present challenges for the appearance of the existing town centre. Evidence from the online town centre survey of shops and businesses carried out in November 2013 suggests that increasing the range and scale of good quality retail shops, particularly, is the best way to encourage footfall and bring the revenue needed to maintain the fabric of the town centre.

3.8.3.3 It is also important that the retail offering for the town centre remains located where the main shop frontages are now and does not lose vitality and accessibility by being distributed over a wider area. Most of the recognised town centre is within the Bishop's Stortford conservation area and this should provide a useful reference point for maintaining the character and standard of buildings generally within the town centre.

Issues of parking in the town centre are addressed in the Transport Policies section.

3.8.3.4 National policy aimed at reversing the decline of town centres over recent years is likely to bring opportunities and challenges to the nature of our town centres. Bishop's Stortford town centre already has the Henderson's development on the Old River Lane car park, planning application reference 3/10/1964/OP in progress and, whilst this could be welcome in bringing about much needed improvements, it must be appropriate for the town as a whole and for the town centre in particular.

3.8.3.5 The town centre has attracted a number of large blocks of flats in recent years, still not fully occupied. So, whilst residential dwellings can be advantageous in bringing more people to the town centre, this type of imposing building is not liked by residents of the town and will not be favoured.

3.8.3.6 The primary shop front area of the town centre is bisected by a through route for vehicle traffic along South Street, Potter Street and Market Street. This leads to a barrier to pedestrian movement and undesirable levels of noise and air pollution as well as discouraging use of the street market. Schemes coming forward that seek to improve this situation will be favoured.

3.8.3.7 The town centre with its many listed buildings, narrow pavements and hills is not easily accessible and has poor facilities for those of reduced mobility. There is a need to go beyond the statutory minimum, and East Herts Council policy, provision for such individuals when considering the merits of new developments.

3.8.3.8 The criteria in the following policies are designed as a baseline against which the profile of a significant development, say more

than five units, can be compared. The weight given to different criteria could vary depending on the size and exact location of the development.

BP6 – Future development of the town centre

Significant³² development which lies both within the Neighbourhood Area and the town centre will be considered against the following criteria:-

- New retail uses close to, or adjoining, existing primary retail frontages will be supported as will changeable modular structures.

- Developments within or adjoining the conservation area will be expected to harmonise with the aesthetic character of existing buildings. Elsewhere, more innovative styles can be adopted with emphasis on light and space.
- Developments that seek to reduce the volume of traffic flow and instances of stationary traffic along South Street will be encouraged. Contribution towards transport improvements should be in line with HCC's Planning Obligations Toolkit and should seek to promote sustainable modes, encouraged through effective



Figure 10 – Bishop's Stortford Town Centre

³² See Appendix 4 – Glossary for definition.

travel planning.

- Developments that go beyond the minimum provision for those of reduced mobility, for example by including disabled toilets under the Disability Rights UK 'Radar' scheme, or by providing suitable premises for motorised scooter hire, will be favoured.
- Developers, as part of their plans, will be expected to provide a construction management plan during implementation work. They will also be expected to use proven methods of communicating progress during new development, both onsite and online.

BP7 – Prosperity and character of the existing town centre

a) A flexible approach to change of use will be encouraged where it contributes to a range of services aimed at supporting a strong base of quality retail shops concentrated, as far as possible, close to the primary retail frontages..

b) In order to maintain the shopping function of the primary retail frontages (as defined in Table 3) the introduction of new non-retail uses such as banks and building societies, cafes, restaurants and the like (Classes A2, A3, A4 and A5) will be restricted at ground floor

level to a maximum of 30% of the sum total of the length of primary retail frontages.

Community services such as the library, post office, tourist office, CAB, GP surgery etc. will also be encouraged to remain in the town centre area.

c) Temporary concessions will be considered for 'pop-up shops' and similar short term or seasonal enterprises, providing they do not conflict with the character of the town centre, aimed at meeting a target of at least 90% occupancy. Where vacant premises are unavoidable use of creative methods will be encouraged to disguise the empty condition.

d) The street market operating two days a week in North Street and South Street should be supported wherever possible as a valuable contribution to the vitality of the town centre.

PRIMARY FRONTAGES	SECONDARY FRONTAGES
1-3, 3a-13, 13a, 17 Bridge Street (Odd)	12-22 Bridge Street (Even)
2, 2a-10 Bridge Street (Even)	1-13 Devoils Lane
1-19 Jackson Square (All)	1-15 Florence Walk (All)
2-4, 10-34 North Street (Even)	1-4 Hadham Road (All)
1-23 North Street (Odd)	1-7 High Street (Odd)
9-15 Palmers Lane (Odd)	38-42 North Street (Even)
1-35 Potter Street (Odd)	25-31 North Street (Odd)
1, 1b-37 South Street (Odd)	2-5 Riverside Walk (All)
	1-5 Station Road (Odd)
	1-12, 12a-14, 19 Sworders Yard
	6 The Causeway
	1-5 The Dells

Table 3 – Primary and Secondary Retail Frontages within the Neighbourhood Area

4 Monitoring and Review

4.1 MONITORING

4.1.1 Introduction

4.1.1.1 This plan covers the period 2014-2031. Development will take place during this time, both in the Neighbourhood Area and outside it. This will have an impact on the area and on its relationship to the town as a whole. In addition during the currency of the plan the current saved policies of the Local Plan will be superseded by the new District Plan. During the compilation of this Neighbourhood Plan the Town Council has had regard to the emerging District Plan as well as the extant Local Plan, so this is not expected to be a significant issue, nevertheless it is important that the effectiveness of the plan is monitored in the light of these developments.

4.1.1.2 The monitoring framework must answer two questions, namely:

- Are the policies being applied effectively?
- Are the policies achieving the objectives of the plan?

4.1.1.3 These will be monitored principally by the Town Council as a part of the process for review of planning applications. The Town Council already tracks and comments on all applications made and furthermore tracks the determinations made by East Herts Council and compares them to recommendations made by the Town. This process can be extended to track cases where decisions rest on or are influenced by policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, and thereby whether the policies are being applied effectively. This will be monitored approximately on an annual basis and reported through the appropriate Town Council committee (currently the Planning Committee). The monitoring period may be adjusted based on initial results.

4.2 REVIEW

4.2.1.1 If monitoring shows that the policies in the plan are not being applied effectively, or the Plan is failing to achieve its objectives, action may be necessary to address the shortfall. This action could include

- working with the East Herts Council and other partners to establish measures to make policies more effective
- negotiating with developers to secure the plan objectives and influence the shape of development, acting as a broker between landowner, developer and community
- supporting partner bids for funding to deliver key facilities
- supporting the creation of forums for strategic planning, for example for sports and leisure facilities
- a partial or whole review of the Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads wards.



Bishop's Stortford Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for Silverleys and Meads Wards

2014–2031

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Appendix 3 – References

General

Reference	Description	Location
National Planning Policy Framework	Sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2
East Herts Council Local Plan (2007)	Current Council planning policies	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=24627
East Herts Council District Plan	Emerging planning strategy and planning policies to replace the 2007 Local Plan	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=15325
Bishop's Stortford Town Plan (2009)	Produced following a survey of the town's residences and businesses	http://www.bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk/town-plan
Bishop's Stortford 2020 Vision	Developed by the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group to help deliver the best possible outcomes for the town in the longer term	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/k/b/Bishops Stortford 2020 Vision Document.pdf

Housing and Design

Reference	Description	Location
National Planning Policy Framework	Sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2
Bishop's Stortford 2020 Vision (2009/10)	Developed by the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group to help deliver the best possible outcomes for the town in the longer term	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/k/b/Bishops Stortford 2020 Vision Document.pdf
Bishop's Stortford Draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (August 2012)	Produced by Officers of East Herts Council to assess the current condition of the Bishop's Stortford Conservation Area	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/f/o/Bishops Stortford Draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.pdf
Building for Life 12 (The Sign of a Good Place to Live)	The industry standard, endorsed by Government, for well-designed homes and	http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/Documents/OurWork/CABE/Building%20for%20Life/Building%20for%20Life%2012.pdf

	neighbourhoods	
Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2012 (SHMA 2012)	The London Commuter Belt LCB East Sub-region Strategic Housing Market Assessment that examined the mix of dwelling and tenure types required for the region up to 2031	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=15675
East Herts Council Annual Monitoring Requirement 2011/12	East Herts report on tracking performance against policy	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/j/3/Final_AMR_(Post-panel_amended_version_for_web).pdf
East Herts Council Local Plan (2007)	Current Council planning policies	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=24627
East Herts Council District Plan	Emerging planning strategy and planning policies to replace the 2007 Local Plan	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=15325
East Herts Council Affordable Housing & Lifetime Homes	Supplementary Planning Document to the East Herts Local Plan Second Review 2007 governing provision of non-market housing	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/m/c/Affordable_Housing_SPD_-_inc_Front_Cover.pdf
Tenure – Households – B/S Meads Ward	Office for National Statistics 2011 Census	http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?a=7&b=6160690&c=meads&d=14&e=61&g=454126&i=1001x1003x1032x1004&m=0&r=1&s=1368733680217&enc=1&dsFamilyId=2505
Tenure – Households – B/S Silverleys Ward	Office for National Statistics 2011 Census	http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?a=7&b=6499833&c=Silverleys&d=14&e=61&g=6433170&i=1001x1003x1032x1004&m=0&r=1&s=1368738018480&enc=1&dsFamilyId=2505
Secured by Design	Secured by Design (SBD) is owned by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and is the corporate title for a group of national police projects focusing on the design and security for new & refurbished homes, commercial premises and car parks	http://www.securedbydesign.com/professionals/guides.aspx

Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan

Silverleys and Meads

Lighting Against Crime	Professional Guide aimed at reducing crime through good lighting	http://www.securedbydesign.com/pdfs/110107_LightingAgainstCrime.pdf
Neighbourhood Plan Website	The Bishop's Stortford Town Council site to receive comments specifically on the draft Neighbourhood Plan	http://www.bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan
The Bishop's Stortford North Interim Planning Brief Comments website	The East Herts Council site to receive comments specifically about the planning brief used for the Bishop's Stortford North development	http://consult.eastherts.gov.uk/portal/bishops_stortford_north_interim_planning_brief?tab=list
Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)	General Survey carried out by Bishop's Stortford Town Council to gauge Public opinion of the current state of Bishop's Stortford	http://www.bishopsstortford.org/sites/default/files/basic_pages/Town%20Plan%202010%20Full%20Report.pdf

Green infrastructure

Reference	Description	Location
Bishop's Stortford 2020 Vision (2009/10)	Developed by the Bishop's Stortford 2020 Group to help deliver the best possible outcomes for the town in the longer term	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/k/b/Bishops_Stortford_2020_Vision_Document.pdf
Bishop's Stortford Draft Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (August 2012)	Produced by Officers of EHDC to assess the current condition of the Bishop's Stortford Conservation Area	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/f/o/Bishops_Stortford_Draft_Conservation_Area_Appraisal_and_Management_Plan.pdf
Community Greenspace and New Development: Creation through the planning system and lessons for the future	Final Report for the CMS, WCCF and the Countryside Agency (Vincent & Gorbing, 2004)	
Defra (2009) Rights of Way Circular 1/09: Guidance for Local Authorities Version 2. London: Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	Gives advice to local authorities on recording, managing and maintaining, protecting and changing public rights of way	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69304/pb13553-rowcircular1-09-091103.pdf

Everyone Matters: A Sustainable Community Strategy for East Hertfordshire 2009 – 2024 (2009)	The strategy sets East Herts Council's vision and ambitions for the future well-being of East Hertfordshire	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/b/g/scs_document_2009_web_edit.pdf
East Herts Green Infrastructure Plan (March 2011)	Helps bridge the gap between strategic planning and site design and management, providing messages to inform spatial land planning and development management decisions	www.eastherts.gov.uk/gip
How to Build a Living Landscape (Hertfordshire & Middlesex Wildlife Trust)	Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust's vision for the future of the natural environment	http://www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk/Living+Landscapes
Parks and Open Spaces Strategy 2013–2018 (EHDC)	Sets out the policy framework for the parks and open spaces owned and managed by East Herts Council for the next five years	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/n/6/Draft_Parks_Open_Spaces_Strategy_2013_-_consultation_copy.pdf
Planning for a Healthy Environment – Good Practice Guidance for Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity (Town & Country Planning Association/Wildlife Trusts July 2012)	Designed to provide resources to maintain, enhance, restore and connect the natural environment through the provision of Green Infrastructure	http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/news/2012/07/06/planning-healthy-and-natural-environment
Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan 2006	Identifies those habitats and species which are a priority for conservation	www.hef.org.uk/nature/biodiversity_vision

Bishop's Stortford Neighbourhood Plan

Silverleys and Meads

Transport

Reference	Description	Location
National Planning Policy Framework	Sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2
East Herts Council Local Plan (2007)	Current East Herts Council planning policies	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=24627
East Herts Council District Plan	Emerging planning strategy and planning policies to replace the 2007 Local Plan	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=15325
Hertfordshire County Council Third Local Transport Plan	Sets out the county council's vision and strategy for the long term development of transport in the county	http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/tranpan/ltp/
Bishop's Stortford Town Council Website Transport feedback	Communications from organisations and the public expressing their views on transport issues	http://www.bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-plan/neighbourhood-plan-your-comments

Schools

Reference	Description	Location
Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)	General Survey carried out by Bishop's Stortford Town Council to gauge public opinion on the current state of Bishop's Stortford.	http://www.bishopsstortford.org/sites/default/files/basic_pages/Town%20Plan%202010%20Full%20Report.pdf
East Herts Local Plan (2007)	Current Council planning policies	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=24627
Herts County Council Education team information	Data concerning Bishop's Stortford Secondary Schools	Hertfordshire County Council

Health

Reference	Description	Location
East Herts Council District Plan	Emerging planning strategy and planning policies to	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=15325

	replace the 2007 Local Plan	leid=15325
Herts & Essex Observer 20 th June 2011	Local newspaper article on health care in Bishop's Stortford	http://www.hertsandessexobserver.co.uk/News/Bishops-Stortford/Stortford-surgeries-among-worst-in-country-over-access-to-doctors-17062011.htm
National Patient Survey	NHS GP surgery performance monitor	http://www.nhs.uk/Services/GP/Performance/DefaultView.aspx?id=41705
Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)	General Survey carried out by Bishop's Stortford Town Council to gauge Public opinion of the current state of Bishop's Stortford	http://www.bishopsstortford.org/sites/default/files/basic_pages/Town%20Plan%202010%20Full%20Report.pdf

Sport

Reference	Description	Location
East Hertfordshire District Council Playing Pitch Strategy and Outdoor Sports Audit, (July 2010)	A Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Assessment Report for East Herts Council prepared by Knight Kavanagh & Page	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/ij/3-012-0910_East_Herts_PPS_FINAL.pdf
Open Space, Sport and Recreation SPD (2009)	This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out the East Herts Council's approach to the provision of open space, sport and recreation in conjunction with new housing development	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/7/b/SPD_web_version.pdf
PPG17 Audit and Assessment (2005)	An assessment of local needs and audit of open space and indoor sport and recreational facilities	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/0/n/CD_LRC_002a_1.pdf
Sport England response to Planning Application No: 3/13/0075/OP	Sport England emailed Bishop's Stortford Town Council giving their verdict on the Bishop's Stortford North Development	Bishop's Stortford Town Council
Sport England response to initial Neighbourhood	Sport England emailed Bishop's Stortford Town Council reviewing the draft	Bishop's Stortford Town Council

Plan Policies	Neighbourhood Development Plan	
East Herts Assessment of Sports Facilities (June 2011)	A review of the current state of indoor and outdoor sports facilities in the district and recommendations for future minimum standards	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/3/2/SportsFacilitiesAssessmentJune2011final.pdf
Bishop's Stortford Town Plan Questionnaire, Full Report (2010)	General Survey carried out by Bishop's Stortford Town Council to gauge Public opinion of the current state of Bishop's Stortford	http://www.bishopsstortford.org/sites/default/files/basic_pages/Town%20Plan%202010%20Full%20Report.pdf

Business and Employment

Reference	Description	Location
East Herts Council Local Plan (2007), specifically section 6 Economic Development and Employment	Current Council planning policies	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=24627
DTZ Economic Development and Employment Growth report: Executive Summary 11.	Considers the future pattern of employment growth in East Hertfordshire and the surrounding area in order to inform the development of the East Herts District Plan	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/k/d/Executive_Summary_ERPB.pdf
Wessex Economics, Town Wide Employment Study for Bishop's Stortford, for East Herts Council (2013)	Sets out an overall vision for economic development in Bishop's Stortford and offers advice to EHDC on how best to maximise Bishop's Stortford's potential for economic growth	http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/pdf/f/t/Bishop's_Stortford_Town_Wide_Employment_Study_-_Final_Report_130612.pdf

Appendix 4 – Glossary

Term	Definition
Affordable Housing	Housing made available, based on the evidence of need, to people who are unable to afford housing at market prices. Affordable housing includes social, rented and shared ownership housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market, and that specifically excludes low cost market housing.
Air Quality Management Area	An area where air pollution is likely to exceed National Air Quality Objectives under the Environment Act (1995), particularly due to road traffic emissions. The area is subject to a programme of assessing air quality against national targets and the development of remedial measures to improve air quality.
Ancient Woodland	Woodland known to have existed continually in a location since before 1600.
Brownfield Site	Land that has been previously developed on.
BSN	Bishop's Stortford North Consortium. A consortium of developers which has received planning permission to develop ASRs 1–4, and consisting of Bovis Homes, Taylor Wimpey, The Fairfield Partnership, Persimmon, and Keir.
Business Incubation Centre	A facility which provides micro business the opportunity to work in an office/ workplace environment within the same building as others. All occupants have access to shared facilities such as reception, Wi-Fi, telephony and meeting rooms along with the ability to meet informally and discuss business matters not necessarily in the same industry.
Conservation Area	An area designated under Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as being of 'special architectural or historical interest', the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.
Construction Management Plan	A plan detailing how construction will be managed in order to ensure the effects of construction on residents and businesses is kept to a minimum.
Developer Contributions (or S106 Contributions)	Contributions required under a Section 106 agreement from development to be set aside for future works and services directly related to the development.
Development Plan	Statutory Plans, including Local or District Plans and Neighbourhood Development Plans which are used to determine planning applications.

Exception Test	See Sequential and Exception Tests.
Floodplain	An area of land liable to flood from a watercourse, defined by the Environment Agency.
Garden City	The Town and Country Planning Association characterises a Garden City or Suburb as having generous green spaces linked to the wider natural environment, including a surrounding belt of countryside, with a well-managed network of public parks, private gardens, tree-lined streets and open spaces. It should have beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the very best of town and country living to create healthy homes in vibrant communities. Furthermore, it should enjoy strong local cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable neighbourhoods and have integrated and accessible transport systems. Communities should be fostered by long term stewardship of assets, such as allotments, and be sustainable through having a variety of employment opportunities within easy commuting distance of homes. A variety of mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are affordable for ordinary people should also be available.
Green infrastructure	A network of green spaces and other features, such as parks, open spaces, woodlands, playing fields, allotments and gardens providing a range of quality of life benefits for the local community.
Greenfield Site	Land where there has been no previous development.
Housing Associations	Independent, not-for-profit organisations that work with councils to offer flats and houses to local people on the Housing Register.
Infrastructure	Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.
Lifetime Homes	The 'Lifetime Homes' standards seek to make homes more flexible, convenient, safe, adaptable and accessible than most new homes, as defined in the EHDC Affordable Housing & Lifetime Homes Supplementary Planning Document.
Listed Building	Any building or structure which is included in the list of 'buildings of special architectural or historic interest' as defined in the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
Local Referendum	A direct vote in which communities will be asked to either accept or reject the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Major Development	A development defined as major development in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 i.e. Development involving any one or more of the following— (a) the winning and working of minerals or the use of land for mineral-working deposits; (b) waste development; (c) the provision of dwellinghouses where — (i) the number of dwellinghouses to be provided is 10 or more; or (ii) the development is to be carried out on a site having an area of 0.5 hectares or more and it is not known whether the development falls within sub-paragraph (c)(i); (d) the provision of a building or buildings where the floor space to be created by the development is 1,000 square metres or more; or (e) development carried out on a site having an area of 1 hectare or more;
Mitigation	Measures taken to reduce adverse effects of a development.
Modal Shift	The trend that sees more journeys made by a sustainable form of transport, usually away from cars and towards walking, cycling or public transport.
National Planning Policy Framework	Sets out national policy and how this is expected to be applied.
Neighbourhood Area	Area to which a proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order will relate.
Neighbourhood Plan	A local plan prepared by a parish council and community representatives for a particular neighbourhood area, which includes land use topics. If accepted by an independent examiner and passed by a simple majority at referendum, the Plan carries equal weight to other adopted local plans.
Objective	An aim or a goal to assist in achieving the overall vision for the area.
Open Space	All open space of public value including land, rivers, canals and lakes which offer important opportunities for recreation and can act as a visual amenity.
S106 Contributions	See Developer Contributions.
Secured by Design	The official flagship initiative of the Association of Chief Police Officers, supporting the principles of 'designing out crime'.
Sequential and Exception Test	The methodology recommended by the National Planning Policy Framework to ensure that new developments are sited in the most appropriate locations.

Shared Equity Housing	Shared equity is where more than one party has an interest in the value of the home, with the aim of reducing the cost of occupancy, e.g. an equity loan arrangement or a shared ownership lease.
Shared Space	Shared space is a design approach that seeks to change the way streets operate by reducing the dominance and speed of motor vehicles. No particular class of usage within the space has priority over any other when moving around and responsibility for safe and free movement is shared by all.
Sheltered Housing	Housing which is purpose built or converted exclusively for sale to elderly people with a package of estate management services and which consists of grouped, self-contained accommodation usually with communal facilities and normally with a warden.
Significant Development	A development of a scale sufficient to trigger the requirement for a Transport Assessment in accordance with Roads in Hertfordshire: Highway Design Guide 3 rd Edition i.e.: Residential development in excess of 80 units Non-food retail development of more than 1,500m ² Gross Floor Area (GFA) Class B1 Business of more than 2500m ² GFA Class B2 General industrial of more than 4,000m ² GFA Warehousing (use class B8) of more than 5,000m ² GFA
Social Housing	Subsidised housing for rent allocated on the basis of need.
Supplementary Planning Document	Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local or District Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for a development of specific sites or a particular issue.
Supported Housing	As for 'Sheltered Housing', but designed for those with physical or learning disabilities rather than just the elderly.
Sustainable Communities	Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future.
Sustainable Development	Development that allows change without damaging the environment or natural resources and that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
Town Plan Survey	A survey of Bishop's Stortford residents carried out in October 2008 to which 4,000 replies were received. The survey led to the creation of a Town Plan setting out numerous actions many of which have been implemented. The plan was updated in 2011 and several of the longer term actions continue.
Vision	A series of statements describing how an area would like to be at some time in the future.

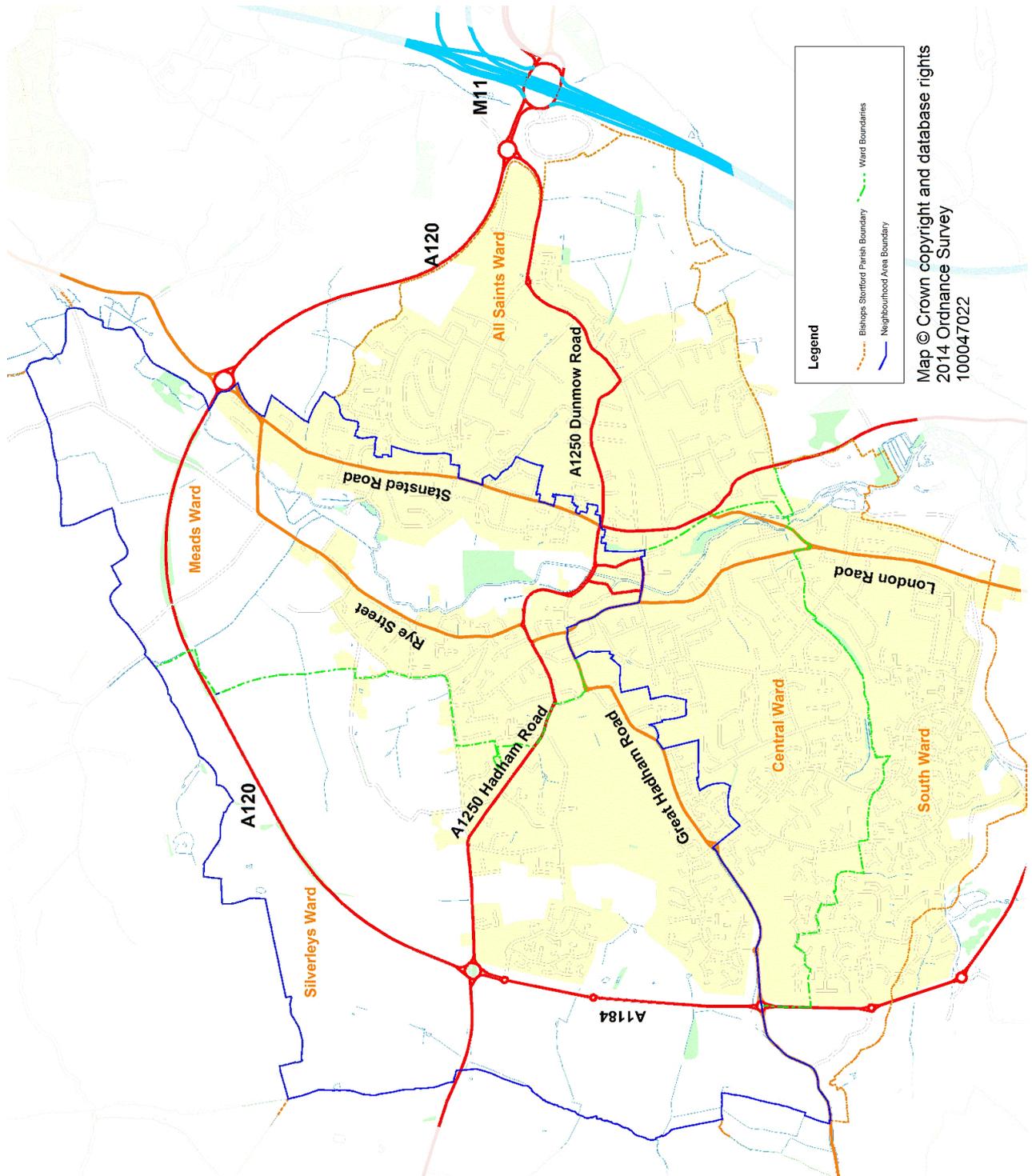
Appendix 5 – Policy Maps

Where policies apply to a specific geographical area, this appendix presents larger scale versions of the figures which appear in the main body of the text. Maps within this document are based on the Ordnance Survey and used under the Public Service Mapping Agreement © Crown copyright and database rights 2014 Ordnance Survey 100047022.

- Large scale maps are provided for the areas identified in Figure 1 (The Neighbourhood Area) Figure 3 (Green Lungs), Figure 4 (Areas with a presumption against development)
- The areas defined in Figure 2 is are based on the local plan which should be referred to for definitive boundaries of the ASRs, SCA and Green Belt
- Figure 11 (Bishop's Stortford Town Centre) is displayed at a large scale in the main text
- Other figures are indicative only.

Large Scale maps for Figure 1

The Neighbourhood Area

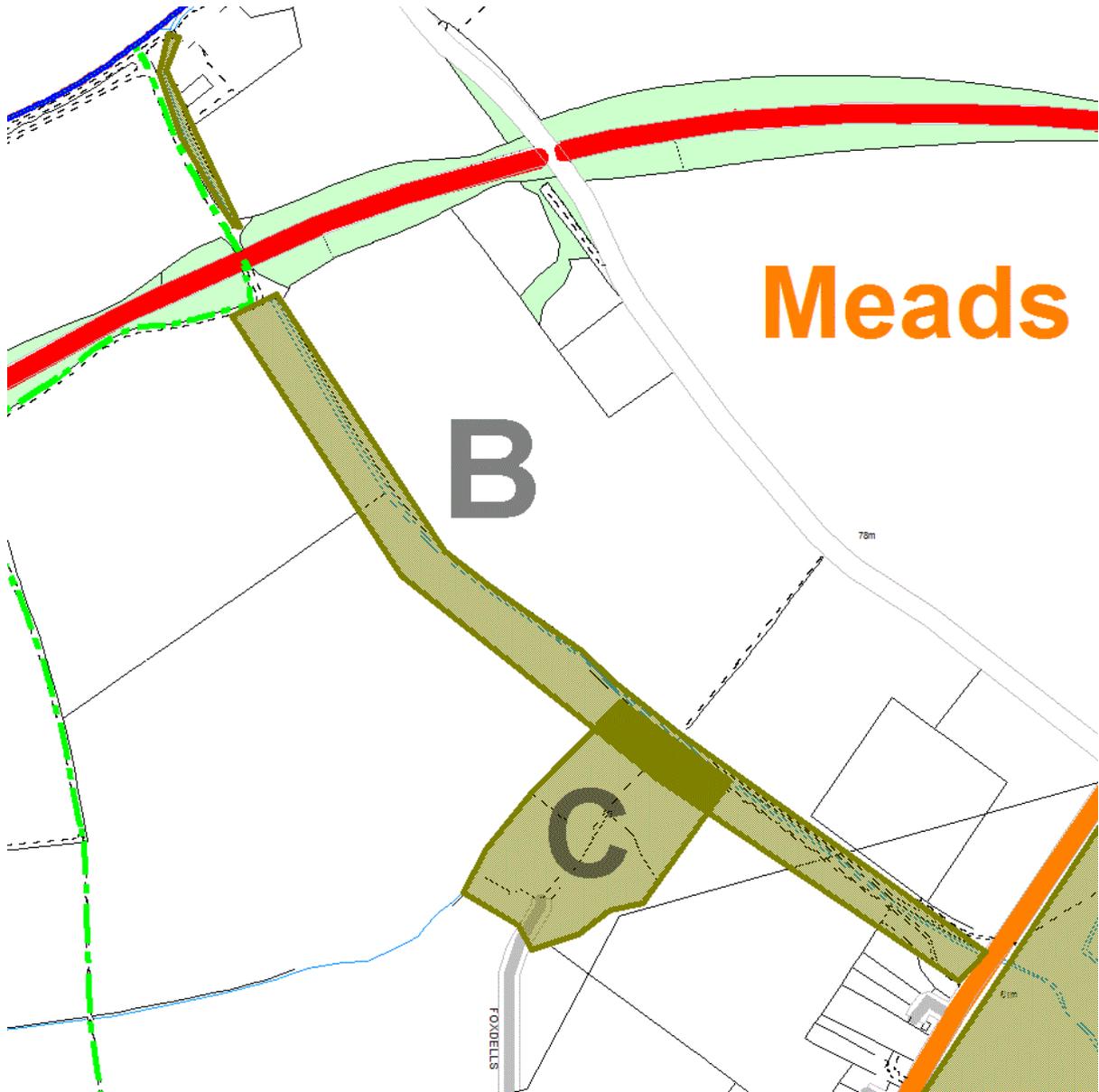


Large scale maps for Figure 3

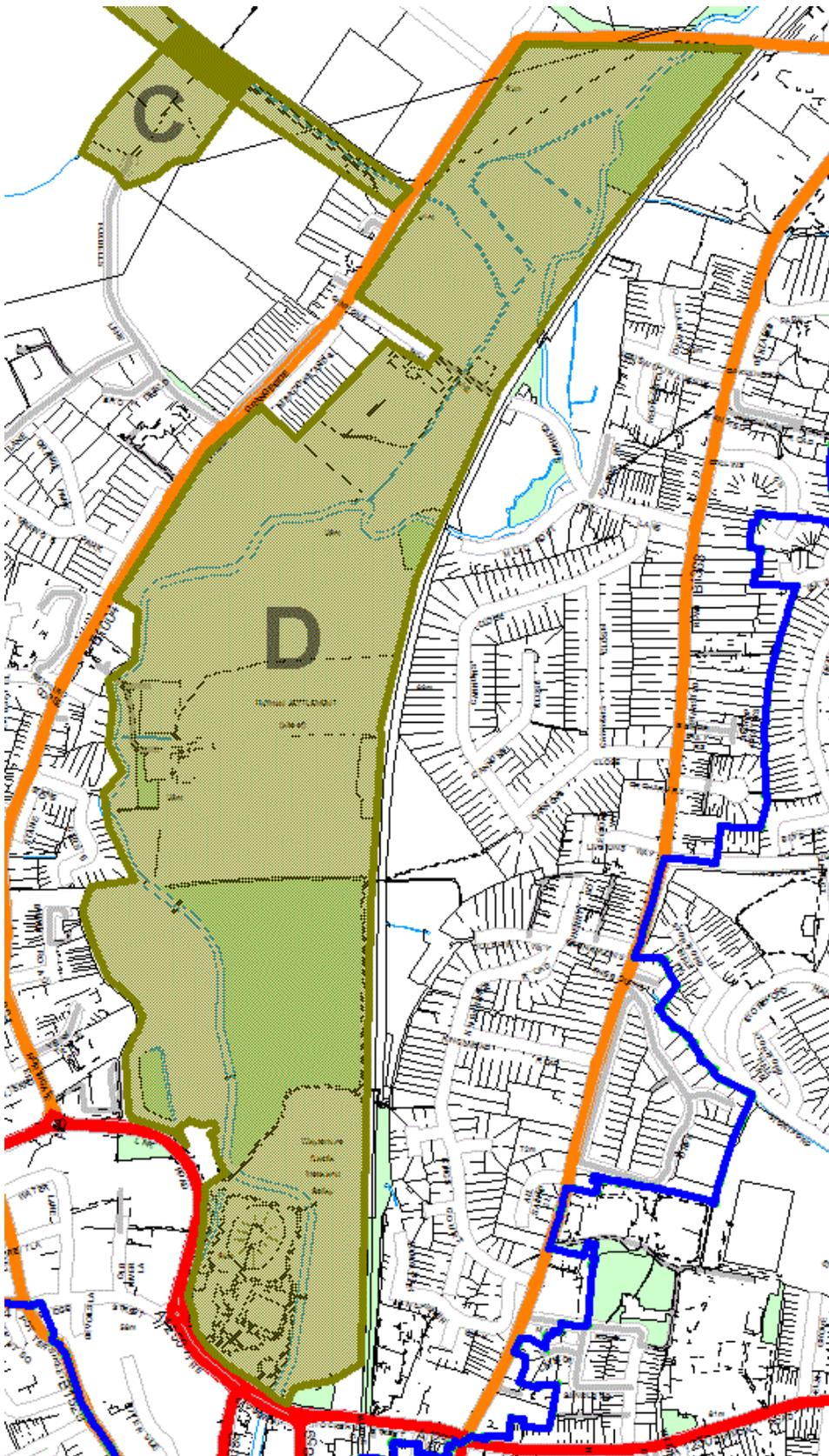
Hoggate's Wood



Farnham Bourne Brook (B) and Foxdells Farm (C)

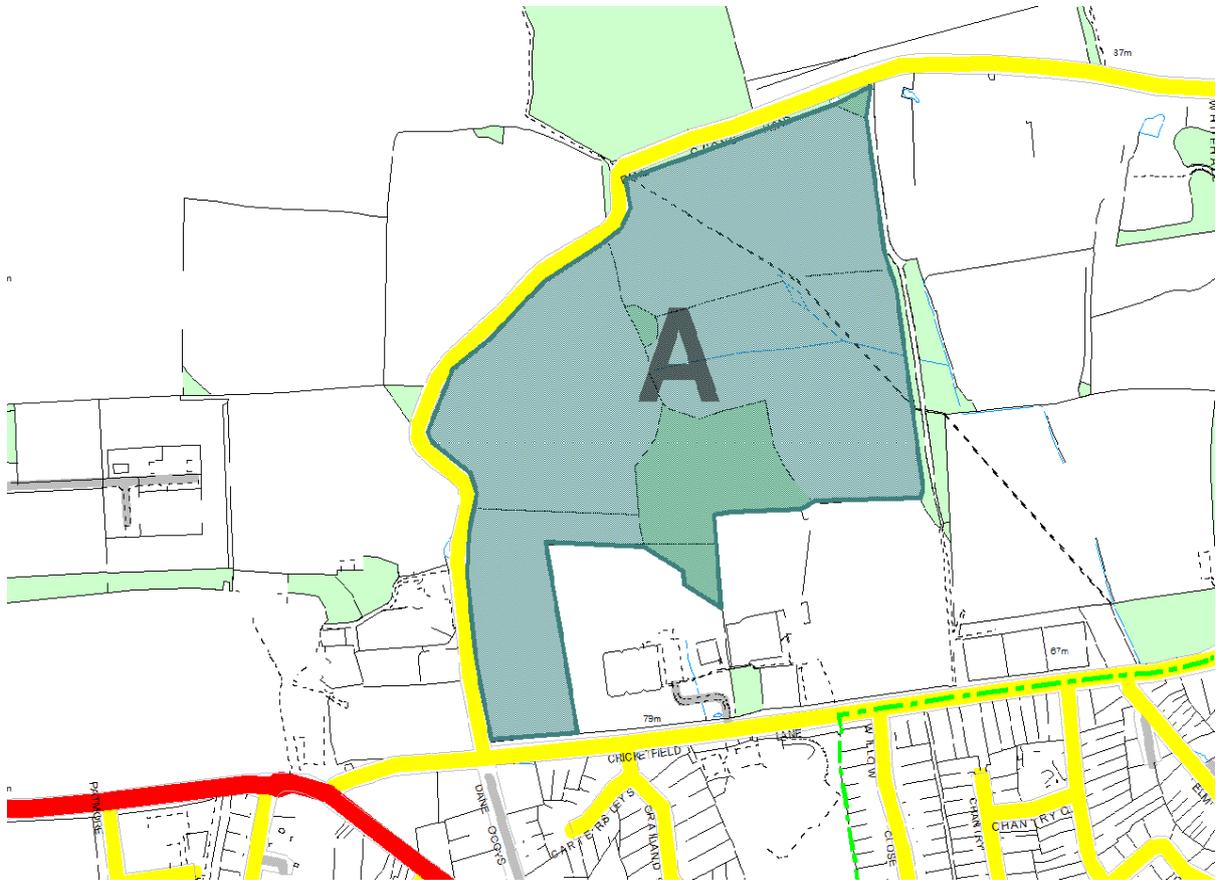


The Town Meads (D)



Large Scale maps for Figure 4

Ash Grove



Part of the Town Meads (C), The Moat (D)

